

PRINCE OF TIDES

Based on the novel by

Pat Conroy

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Director's 5th Draft
Director - Barbra Streisand

PRINCE OF TIDES

FADE IN:

EXT. SOUTH CAROLINA LOW COUNTRY - DAY

1

A vast, encompassing view of South Carolina low country: fertile, semitropical archipelagos and marshes, teeming with exotic wildlife.

SERIES OF CUTS:

CYPRESS TREES growing out of the water, OYSTER BEDS in the mud, HERONS - standing on one leg, an ALLIGATOR, CRAB POTS - floating in the sea, a FOREST.

TOM (V.O.)

There are families who live out
their entire lives without a
single thing of interest
happening to them...

(beat)

I've always envied those
families.

CAMERA is low amongst the MARSH GRASS, rises up to reveal a small white house..

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Mine lived in a dilapidated house
beside the tides and marshes of a
Carolina sea island.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLLETON RIVER - DAY

2

The town of Colleton gently unfolds - on one side of the river its mansions set like chess pieces above the marshes.

Two SHRIMP BOATS sound their HORNS, as they cross paths on their way up the river.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I was a shrimper's son in love
with the shape of boats.

CUT TO:

ANGLE - SHRIMP BOAT

YOUNG TOM WINGO (7) steers the boat. His FATHER behind him keeps watch. Nearby his brother, LUKE (10) sits with Tom's twin sister SAVANNAH (7) on his lap.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... I suppose Henry Wingo would have made a pretty good father if he hadn't been such a violent man.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERBANK - DUSK

3

Like a Pied Piper, Tom's mother, LILA WINGO, a gardenia in her hair, leads her three children along a riverbank. They follow her, walking in a row like ducks. To the west, the sun is setting.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

From my mother I inherited a love of language and an appreciation of nature.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOCK - DUSK

4

Lila and the children sit on a dock, the children have grown sleepy. She holds them as she points to something.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

As a child I thought she was the most extraordinary woman on Earth.

ANGLE - HORIZON TO THE EAST

The moon is rising, a forehead of stunning gold above the skyline. It rises rapidly and in breathtaking ascent.

ANGLE - MOTHER AND CHILDREN

They watch the moon rise with expressions of pure joy and wonderment. They turn to the West to observe the sun disappearing behind the water.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I wasn't the first son to be wrong about his mother.

CUT TO:

EXT. WINGO HOUSE - DAY

5

We hear loud shouting. The three children run out of their house and down to a dock.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I don't know when my parents
began their war against each
other. But I do know the only
prisoners they took were their
children.

ANGLE:- DOCK

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
When my brother, sister and I
needed to escape, we developed a
ritual...

The children dive into the water...

ANGLE - UNDER WATER

The children swim to the bottom of the river.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
We would seek out the silence of
a motherless, fatherless world...

The children clasp hands and float like embryos in the
sunlit water.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Form a circle bound by flesh and
blood and water...

As they begin to need air, the children rise through the
water still clasping hands.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And only when we felt our lungs
betray us would we rise toward
the light...

ANGLE - SUNLIT WATER

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
...And the fear of what lay in
wait for us above the surface.

In an explosion of breath, they burst out of the water.

A single credit comes up:

THE PRINCE OF TIDES

CAMERA MOVES across the water...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SOUTH CAROLINA BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON

6

CAMERA CONTINUES PANNING along a beach; the light has changed, it is now the warm, rich orange of sunset. CAMERA KEEPS MOVING, picking up LUCY WINGO, a girl of eight as she leaps out of the water shouting:

LUCY

Daddy! I think something bit me!

Her two sisters, JENNIFER, (10) and CHANDLER, (6) are combing the beach for shells with an ELDERLY NEIGHBOR.

ANGLE - BEACH HOUSE

Sitting on the porch of his rambling, well-worn beach house, drinking a beer is their father, TOM WINGO. He's a handsome, sun-bronzed man of indeterminate age and is watching his girls with unabashed pleasure.

TOM

(calling out)

Mr. Brighton, are you selling
dope to my girls again?

ANGLE - MR. BRIGHTON AND GIRLS

Totally deaf, Mr. Brighton waves and moves away. Jennifer rolls her eyes.

JENNIFER

Stop bugging us, Dad.

Lucy comes out of the water, holding something.

LUCY

It's a conch!

TOM

(shouting from
porch)

Bring him home. I'll send him to
college.

CHANDLER

How do you know it's a boy?

TOM

Well, let's examine him.

ANGLE - TOM ON PORCH

Lucy and Chandler scramble up to the porch and over to Tom. Jennifer lags behind. She's at that age when she's starting to feel like an outsider.

TOM
(taking conch)
Girls, have I ever told you the facts of life?

JENNIFER
(coming up steps)
Oh no, not this again.

They HEAR a CAR PULL into the driveway and a DOOR SLAM. Jennifer bolts inside the house.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
Mom!

TOM
(to Lucy and Chandler)
Stay away from boys. They're all disgusting, self-indulgent beasts who pee on bushes--

CHANDLER
--Gross, Dad. You are completely gross!

In the b.g. through a screen door we see Tom's wife, SALLIE WINGO, pulling off a doctor's smock as she gives Jennifer a hug. Hers is a quiet beauty and there's the no nonsense strength of the pragmatist about her.

LUCY
Anyway, I'm not gonna stay away from boys.

TOM
That's the spirit, Lucy. Never do a thing your parents tell you.

Sallie comes out to the porch and is immediately surrounded by the girls.

LUCY
(jumps up)
Mom! Look what I found.

She examines Lucy's conch, then glances over at Tom, who gives her an enigmatic smile. There are complicated emotions buried under the surface of this marriage.

TOM
You look tired, Doctor, I'll fix
you a drink.

SALLIE
That would be real nice. I'm
pooped.

TOM
Hey, Honey, it's tough work being
a saint.

STAY ON Sallie after he leaves. She is hurt.

CUT TO:

INT. DEN - LATE AFTERNOON

7-8

Tom moves to a bar and begins fixing Sallie's drink. Above
the bar are shelves with football trophies on them. The
TELEPHONE RINGS as Tom goes into the kitchen to get some
more ice.

TOM
Sal, can you get it?

ANGLE - SALLIE

She enters the living room. The girls run in behind her.

SALLIE
Something smells good.

GIRLS
Dad, come and play with us!

TOM
Later.

SALLIE (O.S.)
It's your mother.

TOM
(yelling)
I'm not here!

He opens the refrigerator. Taped to the door are colorful
drawings done by the girls. One of Tom in a football
uniform. Another drawing of Sallie in a doctor's uniform.

SALLIE (O.S.)
(as she goes back
out on the porch)
She's coming over.

Tom goes out to the porch with Sallie's drink.

TOM

Why didn't you tell her we were under quarantine?

SALLIE

(taking the drink)

She said it was urgent. She was crying.

TOM

I can't remember a day when Lila wasn't crying.

SALLIE

Be nice to her, Tom.

TOM

(only half-joking)

I hate my mother, Sallie. Please don't kill the small pleasures in my life.

SALLIE

Then let's talk about something else.

TOM

Sure. What?

SALLIE

Us.

TOM

We're always talking about 'us'...

SALLIE

No, we always talk about talking about us.

TOM

I need more than a beer for this conversation.

He turns and enters the living room.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DARKER

As Tom goes through the living room he pauses to watch his daughters, who are playing Monopoly.

TOM

Would anyone like to sit on
Daddy's lap?

The girls let out a resounding "NO." He sits down and pats his thighs.

TOM (CONT'D)

There's money involved.

The girls jump on his lap. He kisses each on the nape of the neck.

TOM (CONT'D)

Girls, I'm going to ask you a
question and I want you to answer
it with brutal honesty...

JENNIFER

(groaning)

Oh brother, I already know the
question.

TOM

Who is the greatest human being
on this earth?

LUCY

Mama!

TOM

I've got to develop some new
routines.

Sallie comes back into the house. She won't look at Tom.

SALLIE

Come on, girls. Help me clean
up.

TOM

Yeah, we've got to pass
inspection, troops. Lila's
coming over.

Chandler and Jennifer begin helping Sallie straighten up the living room. Lucy follows Tom into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

10

LUCY

Daddy, why do you always yell out
"I'm not here" when Lila calls?

Tom checks the pot of stew simmering on the stove. It begins to boil over and he expertly removes it from the fire, gives it a few stirs with a wooden spoon.

TOM

It's a protective device,
sweetheart. You know how a
blowfish puffs up when there's
danger? That's what I do when
Grandma calls.

LUCY

Will I turn into a blowfish when
I'm grown up?

TOM

Probably.

At that moment, Sallie enters the kitchen with Chandler and Jennifer in tow.

TOM (CONT'D)

How does a little bouillabaisse
sound to you, Mrs. Wingo?

CHANDLER

Yuck. Can't we ever have normal
food?

JENNIFER

(the authority)

It's not normal for the man to
cook, anyway. Mr. Brighton says
it's 'cause Mama makes twice as
much money as you do.

TOM

That's not true. Mama makes five
times as much as I do.

SALLIE

God, you play the martyr's role
brilliantly.

TOM

Hey, if I'm going to be a
housewife, I want to be a classic
housewife.

A laugh from the three girls.

SALLIE

(to girls)

Go and wash up, girls. Lila will
be here soon.

The girls scoot out of the kitchen. Chandler grumbles.

CHANDLER

Lila, Lila, Lila. Why can't we
call her Grandma?

SALLIE

You'll know when you're a
Grandma.

After they leave, Sallie turns to Tom.

SALLIE (CONT'D)

Think we could talk seriously,
for just a few minutes?

TOM

Not now, Sallie. My mother's
getting close. Can't you tell?
The air stopped moving...

SALLIE

Sometimes I think all you need is
a good, swift punch in the jaw.

TOM

(looks out window)

Uh-oh. Here she is. Quick, tie
some garlic around my neck. Do
we have to invite her for dinner?

SALLIE

She won't stay.

TOM

Then let's invite her.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - SUNSET

11

A black Lincoln Continental pulls to a stop in front of the
house. The woman inside it pauses to examine her face for
signs of crying, applies powder to her cheeks. This is
LILA WINGO.

11a
Revised 6/14/90

SALLIE
Taking baths, why?

*

LILA
I have some bad news.

*

ANGLE - LILA

As she emerges from the car, her face hardens, as if bracing herself for battle.

Lila Wingo bears herself with regal dignity. At sixty-nine years of age, this is a woman who still possesses astonishing presence and beauty.

ANGLE - FRONT DOORWAY OF HOUSE - FROM INSIDE

Sallie opens the door for Lila, who enters and kisses her cheek.

LILA
Your primroses need watering.

Lila then walks briskly down the hallway into the living room. Sallie shuts the door and leans against it. It's going to be a long night.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - SUNSET

12

Tom is mixing himself a stiff drink as Lila enters the living room with Sallie in tow. He raises the drink in greeting.

TOM
You're looking well, Lila.

LILA
Don't be glib, Tom.

TOM
(trying to restrain
himself)
Will you be having dinner with
us?

LILA
No. I can't stay long.

TOM
What a shame.

He exchanges a look with Sallie. Lila, sensing this is some kind of private joke at her expense, launches into the matter at hand as she sits on the sofa.

LILA
Where are the children?

*

TOM
Don't tell me. They cancelled
your American Express card.

LILA
Your sister tried to kill herself
again. You want to make another
joke?

Everything in the room seems suspended and frozen for a
moment. Tom's movements become stiff and mechanical.

SALLIE
Oh my God, Lila. When?

LILA
They're not sure. She was in a
coma when they found her.

TOM
How is she now?

LILA
She's alive, thank God.

Tom sits down, trying to absorb all of this. Sallie
instinctively reaches for him, touches his shoulder. Lila
seems to be fighting to keep her emotions in check.

LILA (CONT'D)
I spoke to her psychiatrist...
some Jewish woman in New York...
she feels that one of us should
go up there right away.
(beat)
I told her you would go.

TOM
What are you saying, Lila? If
she's a shrink and a Jew, you
can't go?

Sallie shoots Tom a silencing look. Lila snaps back.

LILA
I didn't say that. I'm just not
entirely sure I'd be welcome.
You know Savannah, she'll
probably blame me. My children
seem to blame me for everything.

TOM
Do I detect a note of guilt,
Mama?

*

LILA

--Don't give me that psychological horseshit. Why don't you come out and say it? I'm responsible for all your problems.

(pointedly)

Including your being out of a job.

TOM

Let's hit way below the belt now, Lila. It's fun.

LILA

Don't pretend you didn't start this. The truth is, I just can't go now. It's your stepfather's birthday this weekend.

Astonished by her cavalier attitude, Tom mocks it with gentle but cutting irony.

TOM

Well, gee, Mom. I can't go, either... I've got to wash out Sallie's pantyhose, take the dog--

LILA

--Why don't you get a job as a stand-up comic. It must pay better than teaching did--

TOM

--Which was far beneath me, anyway... wasn't that what you were going to say?

SALLIE

Please stop it. Both of you.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

13

The three girls are sleeping. The moonlight seeps through lace curtains forming delicate patterns of light on their faces. Tom gently kisses them.

He starts to leave when Lucy whispers from bed.

LUCY

You're going away tomorrow, Daddy?

TOM
Yes, sweetheart. Aunt Savannah
needs me.

LUCY
We made her something.

She points to a table.

ANGLE - TABLE

On it is a conch shell painted with the girls' names,
covered with sparkles and feathers.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

14

Tom steps out of the house, down to the beach where:

ANGLE - SALLIE

is sitting by herself, staring at the waves crashing along
the shoreline.

After a moment, Tom joins her. Sits beside her. She wraps
her arms around him and holds him close.

SALLIE
I'm sorry you're hurting.

He seems as defenseless as a child. Tries to smile.

TOM
You wanted to talk?

SALLIE
It can wait.

She gently pushes hair from his eyes. He stands up, puts
his hands in his pockets.

TOM
Let's go for a walk.

ANGLE - SHORELINE

They walk in silence along the water's edge.

SALLIE
Tell me what you're thinking.

TOM

I'm trying to calculate the exact moment everything got so fucked up. I'm also worried that the Braves are going to finish last.

SALLIE

I don't feel like laughing.

Tom wraps his arm around her.

TOM

Hey, come on.

SALLIE

Do you realize this is the first time you've touched me in weeks?

TOM

My life is a mess, Sallie.

SALLIE

Our life is a mess.

Tom looks away, unable to answer. He points to the sky.

TOM

There's the Big Dipper.

SALLIE

I don't give a shit about the Big Dipper. I give a shit about us. I care about why you keep pushing me away.

TOM

(gently)

I thought you said all this could wait, sweetheart.

SALLIE

(upset)

I've been waiting for two years, Tom! Ever since Luke died. I know how you feel about him. What I don't know is how you feel about me anymore!

TOM

(joking)

Don't take it personally, Sal. I don't know how I feel about anything anymore.

SALLIE
God, you're pathetic.

*

She turns away and heads toward the house. Tom looks around, doesn't know quite what to do, where to go. He starts to run. He's breathing heavily as he breaks into a sprint and begins to push his body to its absolute limits.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAGUARDIA AIRPORT - CLOSE ON A MAN

15

running to catch a plane. The terminal doors open and Tom steps out slowly, holding his bags and the conch shell. He hails a cab.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRIBORO BRIDGE - DAY

16

A cab hurtles across the bridge, advancing toward the imposing New York skyline looming across the river like Oz.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST 70'S - LATE AFTERNOON

17

The sound of jackhammers tearing up the street battles with the loud blaring of car horns. Tom's cab is stuck in traffic in a side street.

ANGLE - CAB

Frustrated and annoyed, Tom gets out of the cab and pays the cabbie. He walks up the street, carrying his luggage, surveying the surroundings with a mixture of awe and disdain. He stops in front of a well kept brownstone.

CUT TO:

INT. DR. SUSAN LOWENSTEIN'S WAITING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

18

He enters a tweedy world of over-refinement and good taste; all leather, mahogany and rows of books meticulously arranged in cases.

Tom nervously sets down his luggage and looks around the office. Magazines are on a side table.

*

He takes out a cigarette and lights it. Only then--with a * cigarette in one hand and a still burning match in the other, does he see the "No Smoking" sign. When he looks around, though, there's no ashtray. He hears footsteps approaching and quickly puts out the match and stubs out the cigarette on the sole of his shoe. As the door begins to open, he glances around, then takes his best shot: both the dead match and the just-barely-out cigarette go into the air-conditioner vent.

ANGLE - DR. LOWENSTIEN

Steps out of her office. She is one of those striking, self-confident New York women... with an incorruptible sense of professionalism.

LOWENSTEIN

I'm Dr. Lowenstein. You must be Tom.

TOM

Yes, Ma'am.

LOWENSTEIN

Come on in.

Tom starts to gather his things.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT)

It's all right. They'll be fine there.

Tom follows Lowenstein into her office.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

19

The Vienna Secession office is as cool and professional as Lowenstein, filled with books, antiquities, one sofa, some chairs.

Tom indicates a sofa.

TOM

Am I supposed to lie on the couch or do we make polite chit-chat first?

LOWENSTEIN

How about a cup of coffee?

TOM

Oh. We make polite chit-chat first.

LOWENSTEIN

Was that 'yes' or 'no' to the coffee?

TOM

Yes, Ma'am.

Lowenstein moves to a coffee machine on a counter nearby. As she pours two cups of coffee, she looks back at him.

LOWENSTEIN

Cream and sugar? And you don't have to call me 'ma'am.

TOM

It's my good home training. And I'm a little nervous. Cream no sugar.

ANGLE - BOOK

Tom sees a copy of Savannah's book on the coffee table. The Shrimper's Daughter, A Book of Poems by Savannah Wingo. Tom looks at the photograph on the back cover, a picture of Savannah Wingo. She is an ethereal blonde with a generous yet serious expression reflecting extraordinary intelligence. *

LOWENSTEIN

Why do you think you're nervous?

TOM

I get nervous every time my sister tries to kill herself. It's a quirk of mine.

LOWENSTEIN

A quirk?

TOM

I was being cynical. It's a family trait.

LOWENSTEIN

I don't think Savannah's cynical.

TOM

No, she's suicidal. I wish she were cynical. How is my sister?

LOWENSTEIN
She's out of physical danger,
but...

TOM
When can I see her?

LOWENSTEIN
You'll have to wait until
tomorrow.

TOM
Why? Why can't I go now?

LOWENSTEIN
She's been very agitated today.
We're still trying to quiet her
down. I think it would be too
upsetting.

TOM
It wouldn't upset me.

LOWENSTEIN
No, but it might upset her.
(beat)
Is the coffee hot enough?

TOM
(tasting)
It'll do.

They both appraise each other silently.

LOWENSTEIN
In Savannah's poems are you the
shrimper or the coach?

TOM
The coach. Luke's the shrimper.
Was.

LOWENSTEIN
Savannah's last suicide attempt
was right after his death, is
that correct?

TOM
Yeah, she had a few bad days over
it.

LOWENSTEIN
Were there other times?

Tom gets up and takes out his cigarettes.

TOM
I think there was another time
when she was young. I'm not sure.
How're you getting paid?

LOWENSTEIN

Why are you changing the subject?

TOM

I don't like it much. Is it OK if I smoke?

LOWENSTEIN

I'd prefer it if you didn't.

Lowenstein gets up and adjusts the shutters on the window. Tom reluctantly puts away his cigarettes.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT)

How well do you know your sister's poetry?

TOM

I said I was a coach, Lowenstein, not an orangutan. I was also an English teacher. Of course I know her poetry. She's my twin sister and I know her stuff a hell of a lot better than you do.

LOWENSTEIN

You don't like psychiatrists much do you?

He paces.

TOM

Why should I? What good do you people do? Ask a lot of questions. I'm sick of the whole damn routine. I'm sick of my sister's attraction to razor blades and I'm sick of shrinks who can't do a fucking thing to help her.

Lowenstein listens quietly, letting Tom vent his anger.

TOM (CONT)

Hell, why should you be able to figure her out. You're a big city shrink and she's born and bred in Colleton, South Carolina, population 12,500. You don't even know the capital of South Carolina, do you? Help Savannah? You're just not equipped, Lowenstein.

LOWENSTEIN
(beat)

Columbia....

Tom looks impressed.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT)
And I don't know if I can help
your sister either, but I know I
won't give up trying.

TOM
Why not? Maybe she wants to die
just too damn much.

LOWENSTEIN
Is that OK with you? You sound
resigned to losing her.

TOM
Hell No, it's not OK with me.
(beat)

He's surprised by what he discovers now.

TOM (CONT)
But, yeah, I am resigned.

LOWENSTEIN
Then I don't think you can help
me with Savannah.

She stands. Offers her hand.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT)
Sorry you had to come all this
way.

Surprised, he says nothing for a moment, even seems
prepared to leave but then:

TOM
What do you want from me?

LOWENSTEIN
Information. There are periods
in her life that she can't tell
me about, won't tell me about.
They're blocked, blotted out. I
need you to be her memory, Tom.

TOM
(it makes him smile)
Her memory?

LOWENSTEIN
Why are you smiling?

*

Tom looks at her. He won't answer, instead:

*

TOM
(rubbing his head)
God, she's a pain in the ass...
What time tomorrow?

LOWENSTEIN
I'll meet you at the hospital at
noon.

She shows him to the door.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT'D)
What's the matter, do you have a
headache.

TOM
A doozy. You wouldn't have some
morphine handy, would you?

LOWENSTEIN
Morphine?

TOM
(picks up his bags
in the waiting
room)
That's a joke, Lowenstein.

LOWENSTEIN
Oh.

And she closes the door.

CUT TO:

20

EXT. PRINCE STREET - EARLY EVENING

Tom is standing on the sidewalk of a bustling Greenwich
Village street, his eyes scaling the five stories of an old
apartment building in front of him.

He gathers his luggage and unlocks the door.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - AFTERNOON

21

He fumbles with the keys in front of apartment 3B. Pushes the door open.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

22

He takes a few steps into the darkened apartment, groping for the light. A VASE CRASHES to the floor... then a MAN's VOICE booms out from behind him in the hallway.

VOICE

Move an inch, motherfucker, and you can kiss your ass goodbye.

Tom flicks the light on and spins around. Standing behind him, pointing a Saturday night special at his chest, is Savannah's neighbor, EDDIE DETREVILLE. Eddie is a raffish, jaded homosexual who came out of the closet years ago.

TOM

(raising hands in mock surrender)

Hi, Eddie. Go ahead and shoot. I've had a rotten day.

EDDIE

Tom! You should have told me you were coming. I heard noises.

Tom points to the gun still in Eddie's hand.

TOM

The gun, Eddie.

EDDIE

(lowers gun)

Oh, sorry. Savannah and I've been robbed twice this year. They're leaping from fire escapes now. One guy landed on my air conditioner - So I greased my window sills. That didn't help.

TOM

I love New York.

EDDIE

Tell me about it.

CUT TO:

INT.HALLWAY OF SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

23

Tom is moving his bags down the hallway, through the living room and into the bedroom. Eddie stays in the living room, which looks untended and dusty. He examines the conch shell.

TOM
(calling from
bedroom)
How's Andrew?

EDDIE
Gone. Said he needed space and
found a younger man with a
duplex.

TOM
His loss, Eddie.

EDDIE
Bless you.
(then)
Savannah was an angel. I
practically lived over here.

Tom reappears from the bedroom.

TOM
So you're alone how, huh?

EDDIE
Unless I can tempt you to cross
the line, Coach.

TOM
Got enough trouble, Eddie.

EDDIE
Well, you look terrible Tom.
You're hardly even cute anymore.

TOM
If that's your idea of seduction,
no wonder you're alone.

Tom completes some unpacking chore, and:

TOM (CONT)
Did you know Savannah was seeing
a psychiatrist again?

EDDIE

I was the one who recommended
her. She's a friend of mine.

Tom sits down, notices a large, rust-colored stain on the carpet, washed out but still visible. *

EDDIE

It was a bitch washing it out.

TOM

You found her? *

EDDIE

Yeah. *

Eddie shakes his head at the appalling memory and realizes it's time to leave Tom alone. He starts out of the apartment.

EDDIE (CONT)

Call me if you need anything.
I'll fix you dinner tomorrow if
you're in the mood.

He gone. Tom's gaze returns to the stained carpet. *

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

24

Scattered on the floor are stacks of letters, pads, notebooks, photos. We find Tom in the process of removing the contents of a CARBOARD BOX, which contains small books, clippings from newspapers and a couple of old film cans in 8mm size.

Next to him is a bottle of Jim Beam, a glass with ice, and a very large bottle of aspirin.

ANGLE on the PICTURES:

Tom and Luke in football uniforms with Savannah as a cheerleader, her arms raised in victory. A picture of Luke on his shrimp boat. A picture of Luke as a teenager with a rifle, holding a duck. Another of Luke, Tom and Savannah as adults, posing in front of Savannah's apartment building in New York, arms around each other. Luke in Army uniform. *

He takes out a framed picture of Luke, Tom and Savannah as young teenagers on the prow of their father's boat. Savannah has her arm around them both - looking at Luke with a smile of adoration.

ANGLE - TOM

There is an aspect of dogged resolve to his study of his life.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

25

Lowenstein and TWO DOCTORS emerge from a hospital room, speaking in hushed tones.

DOCTOR

We've been giving her 50 milligrams three times a day.

LOWENSTEIN

I'd bring it down to 25.

She looks up and sees Tom coming up the corridor, carrying magazines, a single gardenia and the conch shell his children painted.

Tom reaches Lowenstein. She indicates the loot he's brought.

LOWENSTEIN

Don't expect too much.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S ROOM - DAY

25A

It is a small private room, almost devoid of furniture. SAVANNAH lies in her bed still and ghostlike. Her long, pale hair is damp and matted. There is an intravenous tube in her arm, and her hands are tied down with leather straps.

Lowenstein leads Tom in. He is not prepared to see her like this.

Tom sets his gifts on Savannah's bed table, then leans down and tenderly kisses her forehead.

TOM

(whispers)

Hey, Savannah. Hey darlin'. It's me. Tom.

No response. Tom pushes the damp hair away from her face. Pulls up a chair, sits down and takes her hand.

TOM (CONT'D)

Everything's going to be all right now. Sallie and the girls send their love. They're all fine. And guess what? Jennifer's growing breasts. I tried to talk her out of it, but she wouldn't listen.

TOM (CONT)
(pauses, searching
for anything to
say)
What else? They cut a ribbon on -
a new barbecue house out on the
highway.

A nurse pops her head into the room.

NURSE
Doctor Lowenstein...

The nurse indicates that Lowenstein is wanted outside.
Lowenstein leaves the room.

TOM
Savannah, I'm going to be right
here with you till you get well.
You hear me? Then we'll go
dancing and I'll say shitty
things about New York and you'll
call me a redneck. Okay,
darlin'?

He starts to get up to leave, notices the conch shell. He
moves it as close to Savannah as he can.

TOM (CONT'D)
The girls made you this.

Nothing, absolutely nothing crosses Savannah's face.

CUT TO:

In the foreground, Lowenstein is on the phone at the
nurse's station. Unseen by her, Tom steps out of
Savannah's room behind, shaken.

LOWENSTEIN
(into phone)
I have a cancellation. Why don't
you meet me here in forty-five
minutes?

*

As she hangs up the phone, Tom grabs her arm.

TOM
What the hell is going on here?
Why is she strapped down like
that?

LOWENSTEIN

Her team felt she had to be restrained.

TOM

Why? She has enough drugs in her to anesthetize a whale.

LOWENSTEIN

Her team decides what medication...

TOM

Would you quit calling them her team? Sounds like she's trying out for the New York Giants.

LOWENSTEIN

What would you like me to call them?

TOM

Let's be creative. Call them assholes.

LOWENSTEIN

Let me tell you something about those assholes, Mr. Wingo. I'm very grateful to them because they saved your sister's life.

TOM

Well I don't like to see her tied up that way.

LOWENSTEIN

I don't care what you like. She's still a danger to herself and there's no point to any of this if we can't keep her alive. And I don't care if it takes drugs or voodoo or reading the tarot cards, I want her alive.

TOM

You're tough, Lowenstein, and I'm starving. Any interest in lunch?

LOWENSTEIN

Only if you let me pay.

TOM

I insist.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHILI STAND - CLOSE ON PAPER CUP - DAY

27

being filled with chili. WIDER to reveal Tom and Lowenstein standing beside a chili cart.

TOM

I wouldn't have objected to Lutace or LeCirque.

LOWENSTEIN

Their chili isn't as good.

She takes her change and she and Tom move over to a bench where scores of other people are sitting.

LOWENSTEIN

Why didn't your father answer my telegram?

TOM

Dad only likes good news. Besides - the shrimp are running good.

LOWENSTEIN

Why didn't your mother come? She was the one I spoke to...

TOM

Priorities. She was too busy hiring a caterer for my stepfather's birthday.

LOWENSTEIN

Do you always make jokes in place of conversation?

TOM

It's the Southern Way, m'am.

LOWENSTEIN

The Southern Way?

TOM

My mother's own immortal phrase. When things get too painful we either avoid them or we laugh.

LOWENSTEIN
And when do you cry, according to
the Southern way?

TOM
We don't.

He looks at his chili cup distastefully.

TOM (CONT)
Jesus. Even Sallie makes better
chili than this. I have a really
good recipe, if you're
interested.

LOWENSTEIN
No thanks, I never cook.

TOM
What is it with you doctors?

Tom gets up to throw his chili in the trash can.

LOWENSTEIN
Tom, does the word Callanwolde
mean anything to you?

TOM
(uncomfortably)
No, why? *

LOWENSTEIN
It was something Savannah kept
repeating when she first came out
of the coma. Callanwolde. *

TOM
I don't know.

Lowenstein stands up and looks at her watch. Then throws
her chili cup in the trash can.

LOWENSTEIN
I have to get back to the
hospital. I can see you tomorrow
at five. *

She starts walking to the street. *

TOM
Lowenstein, what's your first
name?

LOWENSTEIN

Why?

TOM

Why not?

(a bit flustered)
Well, it's just that my patients
call me 'Doctor Lowenstein'.

TOM

But I'm not your patient.

LOWENSTEIN

(after a pause)
...Susan. My name's Susan.

TOM

Thank you, Doctor. I won't use
your name. I just wanted to know
it.

LOWENSTEIN

Be on time.

Dr. Lowenstein walks toward the hospital.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S BEDROOM - ALMOST DAWN

28

Tom tosses and turns, finally puts on light and sits at the
edge of the bed, thinking.

EXT. SOUTH STREET SEAPORT - EARLY MORNING

29

Fishing boats tied up at the docks.

Tom jogs past them, comes into an area where fish are being
sold. He picks up a live crab by the back fin. Takes a
handful of shrimp and puts them in a big bag, pays the
fisherman.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

30

Tom is cleaning the shrimp in the kitchen sink. He
unbuttons his shirt, which is stuck to his sweaty body like
flypaper.

ANGLE - SINK FULL OF SHRIMP

We HEAR the voice of Henry Wingo in b.g.

HENRY (V.O.)
Shrimp Newburg? For Chrissakes,
Lila, it's got wine in it.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. WINGO DINING ROOM - 36 YEARS AGO - NIGHT

The Wingo house is small and somewhat shabby.

Henry spits out his Shrimp Newburg onto his plate as Lila, Tom, Luke and Savannah watch. Tom is a boy of nine.

HENRY
This is garbage.

LILA
It's elegant food, Henry, and
it's going to get me into the
Colleton League.

HENRY
That's a joke. What do you think
they have a Colleton League for?
To keep people like you out.

Henry sets his plate of food on the floor for their dog,
Joop, -- a black Labrador -- to eat. *

SAVANNAH
Why do you wanna join anyway,
Mama if they don't want you?

The dog sniffs the food and troddles off. *

LILA
Oh, they want me, they just don't
know it yet. *

HENRY
You see? Even the dog won't eat
it. Goddamn it, I work all day
long to come home and eat this
shit -- *

TOM
I think it's good.

HENRY
Who asked you?
Henry slaps Tom across the face. Tom starts to well up.

TOM

Nobody.

HENRY
(imitating Tom)
Nobody. What are you
gonna start crying now,
little girl? Savannah
go get him one of your
dresses.

ALT-HENRY (If Tom cries)
What are you gonna do, start
crying now? Shut up little
girl or I'll really give you
something to cry about.

Everyone at the table freezes except Luke.

LUKE

Why do you have to be so mean,
Dad?

Lila gets up to avoid any further outbursts.

LILA

There's some leftover hash and
rice. I'll heat it up for you,
Henry. Come with me, Tom.

HENRY

Yeah, go into the kitchen with
the rest of the girls.

SAVANNAH

I'll help, Mama.

Luke punches Henry's arm.

LUKE

Why don't you bully on somebody
your own size?

HENRY

(laughing)

Can't anyone take a joke around
here? French. What am I French?
I hate the goddamn French. I'm an
American. I want American food.
Steak, potatoes, okra, corn. I
don't want to eat any of that
crap that them French jack off
about? I've gotta come home and
eat food that even the dumbest
dog in the world won't eat.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM IN SAVANNAH'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tom is peeling garlic and outer layers of onions.

FLASHBACK - INT. WINGO KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

As Lila is opening the refrigerator:

SAVANNAH
I'm sorry, Mama.

Note: We will also do this section as is in the 5/8/90 draft of the script ("I'm sorry, etc.. comes later)

LILA
Sorry? There's nothing to be sorry for. You marry into nothin', you get nothin'. Now, melt some butter and heat up this rice, Savannah. Chop that onion, Tom, into fine little pieces.

The two children do as they're told.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM IN SAVANNAH'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

32

Tom is expertly chopping an onion and putting it into sizzling skillet.

FLASHBACK - INT. WINGO KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Lila opens a can of Alpo dog food. Tom and Savannah watch in stupefaction as she spoons the dog food into the rice.

LILA:
What do you expect from a natural born loser who smells like shrimp. Add some pepper, Tom

Tom peppers the mixture.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM IN SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

32 A

Tom adds pepper to his meal and starts to empty the mixture onto his plate.

FLASHBACK - INT. WINGO DINING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Lila carries in the plate of cooked dog food, sets it down in front of Henry. As he sticks his fork into it and brings it up to his mouth, the children watch as he begins to chew. Henry smiles.

HENRY
Now this is food, Lila.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM IN SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

33

Tom is sitting in front of a table set elegantly with his flowers and candles. He has a painful smile on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

34

HERBERT WOODRUFF, an impeccably groomed, fastidious man steps out of Lowenstein's inner office.

He passes Tom sitting in the waiting room, leafing through a magazine. Tom stares after Herbert as he leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

35

Lowenstein gets up from the couch and walks to her desk.

LOWENSTEIN

(amused)

So your mother fed him dog food,
huh?

TOM

He even asked for a second helping.

LOWENSTEIN

Maybe that's where you got your sense of humor. From your mother.

TOM

Very funny.

LOWENSTEIN

She called me today. Very concerned about Savannah.

TOM

Don't believe a word she says - she's a liar.

LOWENSTEIN

Interesting. She said you'd tell lies about her.

~~Tom gets up and pours himself a cup of coffee~~

TOM

Figures. I saw Herbert Woodruff come out of your office - He sure can play the fiddle...

LOWENSTEIN

Let's get back to your mother.

TOM

(looking through her books)

What else did she say?

LOWENSTEIN

She said she was the one responsible for Savannah becoming a poet. She was the one who encouraged her to write.

TOM

(laughing)

Jesus Christ! That woman has no shame! You want to know how she encouraged her to write? By burning the journals Savannah kept as a child.

LOWENSTEIN

Why would she burn them?

TOM
Savannah was being "disloyal"
writing about our hideous family:

LOWENSTEIN
What did she write about?

TOM
You're asking me to be disloyal?

LOWENSTEIN
I'm asking you to help Savannah.

TOM
I guess she wrote about everyday
things... Dad using Mom as a
punching-bag, beating the shit
out of us as a warm-up.

LOWENSTEIN
What did Savannah do after your
mother burned her journals?

TOM
She took her finger and wrote in
the sand. In the air. That's
when she began writing poetry -
so my mother wouldn't understand
it.

LOWENSTEIN
So in a sense your mother was
right. She did create a poet.

TOM
Bullshit, Lowenstein. She
created a schizophrenic. My
mother should have raised cobras,
not children.

LOWENSTEIN
Can you tell me anything good
about your parents?

TOM ...
No.

LOWENSTEIN
Try.

TOM

O.K. They did two really good things - Luke and Savannah. Incredible people - passionate, defiant... Not for sale.

LOWENSTEIN

What about you?

TOM

I was the courteous Southern boy who did what he was told... responsible, normal...dull.

LOWENSTEIN

I don't know what normal is and you're anything but dull.

TOM

Compared to them I was.

LOWENSTEIN

Meanwhile, your sister's in the hospital and your brother's dead. You must have done something right.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

36

Tom is sitting in the chair beside Savannah's bed, reading from e.e. cummings "100 Selected Poems". Savannah's eyes are open, but other than that, she registers little emotion or recognition.

TOM

"Women and men (both little and small) Cared for anyone not at all. They sowed their isn't, they reaped their same. Sun moon stars rain. Children guessed (but only a few) And down they forgot as up they grew."

CUT TO:

EXT. NEWSTAND - AFTERNOON

37

Tom holds the "Sports" section of the NY Times and buys postcards for his daughters.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAKERY - DAY

38

Tom comes out of a bakery, a croissant in his mouth, holding a bag of groceries.

CUT TO:

OMIT (39)

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

39A

People come out, mostly in pairs. Tom comes out alone, walks down the street and stops, unsure which way to go, then turns and goes in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - AFTERNOON

40

Tom sits, writing letters.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

41

Tom brushes Savannah's hair.

LOWENSTEIN (V.O.)
How old was Savannah when you first realized something was wrong with her?

TOM (V.O.)
I guess she was about seven or eight.

LOWENSTEIN (V.O.)
What happened?

CUT TO:

IN LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - DUSK

41A

TOM
My mother had a stillborn baby at home - told us it died because we were bad... Anyway, that night before we buried it I came into the kitchen to get a drink of water... I found Savannah rocking this dead baby in her arms, saying 'you're the lucky one 'cause you don't have to live with us.'

LOWENSTEIN
Did you say anything to her?

TOM
The next day I did - but she
didn't remember anything about
it. When I told her what
happened, all she said was, "Why
would anyone do a crazy thing
like that?"

LOWENSTEIN
So you were her memory even then?

TOM
I guess so.

CUT TO:

OMIT SC.42

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

43

Tom is coming up the stairs to Savannah's apartment
carrying a bag of groceries and a stack of mail. *

ANGLE - DOOR OF SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT

44

A note is taped to Savannah's door. We hear locks open as
we read the note: TOM: I'M HAVING A PARTY FRIDAY NIGHT.
BE THERE, ASSHOLE. AND DRESS UP! XXOO, EDDIE.

ANGLE - TOM

laughs and takes the note off the door. *

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

45

He rips open a manila envelope. Inside it are drawings and
letters from his daughters. He starts taping the drawings
to the refrigerator when the PHONE RINGS.

Tom picks up a portable phone mounted on the kitchen wall.

TOM
Yo.

SALLIE (O.S.)
What was that again?

TOM
I'm learning to speak the
language of the natives here...
Hi, Sallie. I got the girls'
drawings today. Did they get my
letters?

SALLIE (O.S.)
Yes, they loved them.

CUT TO:

INT. WINGO HOUSE - SOUTH CAROLINA

46

Sallie is on the telephone in their bedroom. She seems sad
and apprehensive.

TOM (O.S.)
Did you get my letter?

SALLIE
Yeah, I did. That's why I'm
calling. I don't think it's a
good idea to come home this
weekend, Tom.

TOM (O.S.)
Why not?

SALLIE
I'm not sure I want to see you
right now. I have a lot to
figure out.

He moves into the living room and sits down.

TOM
Uh-huh:

SALLIE (O.S.)
I mean, let's face it. We don't
make each other feel good
anymore.

TOM
Right.

SALLIE (O.S.)
Look, I didn't want to tell you
this on the phone...

TOM
Tell me what?

*

ANGLE - SALLIE ON TELEPHONE

There's a long pause before Sallie answers.

SALLIE

I wanted to tell you before you
left but the way you left...

TOM

What's his name, Sallie?

ANGLE - SALLIE ON TELEPHONE

SALLIE

...there was no time.

TOM (O.S.)

What's his name? The man must
have a name.

SALLIE

What difference does it make?

ANGLE - TOM ON TELEPHONE

TOM

(forcefully)

It makes a difference to me. Who
is it?

SALLIE (O.S.)

Jack Cleveland.

TOM

(it finally sinks
in)

Oh, no... Oh, Jesus, Sallie.

(cannot help
himself)

Jack Cleveland? That creep from
the hospital? That pompous aging
hippie who still rides a
motorcycle, for Chrissakes? Why
him, Sallie? Why him? Why him?

ANGLE - SALLIE ON TELEPHONE

SALLIE

Because he knows how he feels
about me.

ANGLE - TOM ON TELEPHONE

TOM

(devastated)

Look, this is too difficult to
talk about over the phone... Just
think about it carefully, okay?

SALLIE (O.S.)

I hardly think about anything
else. Goodnight Tom.

Tom is about to hang up, then stops himself.

TOM
(incredulous)
Sallie, are you really in love?

SALLIE (O.S.)
I'm not sure. I might even be
doing this to hurt you.
(upset)
I have to go.

She hangs up the phone.

TOM
Yeah.

Tom turns off the phone. He sits motionless for a while, thinking. Then he goes to the liquor cabinet and pours himself a glass of wine, picks up a pad and pencil from desk, and walks out onto the fire escape.

TOM (V.O.)
Dear Sallie, I wanted to write
you a love letter, but I'm
beginning to think love is
something I've always talked
about but never really touched.

He pauses momentarily, then continues writing.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I disappoint you,
Sallie. I seem to disappoint
anyone who tries to find the best
in me.

He stops writing and leans his head back, lost in thought.
We HEAR his MOTHER'S VOICE as a YOUNG WOMAN:

LILA (V.O.)
You're the only one I can count
on Tom.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. LILA WINGO'S BEDROOM - ANGLE ON A DOOR - NIGHT

A ten-year-old Tom is peeking into his mother's room.

LILA (O.S.)
Come over here, Tom.

Tom moves into the room. A young Lila Wingo is lying in bed. Tom stands stiffly a few feet away from the bed.

LILA

Lie down beside me.

Tom trundles into bed and lies beside his mother. She wraps her arms around him. He is both intoxicated and terrified by this sudden intimacy.

LILA (CONT'D)

(whispers)

You're going to be the only Wingo who amounts to something. Luke can't do it because he isn't smart. Savannah can't do it because she's just a girl.

TOM

Luke's smart, Mama.

LILA

Not like you. Or me. No one knows this yet but I'm an amazing woman. Do you believe that?

TOM

Yes, Ma'am.

LILA

I'm not going to die in a house like this, I promise you that.

(kisses him)

Something else, Tom. I love you more than I love any of them.

TOM

But Mama...

LILA

I do. You're my favorite. And that'll be our secret. Can you keep a secret?

TOM

(wracked with guilt)

Yes, Ma'am. Can I go now?

He wriggles out of her embrace and gets half out of bed when Lila grabs him.

LILA

Not until you tell me you love me.

TOM
I love you, Mama.

He moves quickly out of the room and shuts the door.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

47

Tom has just finished telling Lowenstein the story of the previous flashback. His face is puffy and he looks haggard, hung-over.

TOM
--It took me twenty years to tell
Luke and Savannah about my
"secret." When I did, they just
fell on the floor, howling. You
see, my mother had told each of
them exactly the same thing.

Lowenstein has listened attentively, but with a slightly confused expression.

LOWENSTEIN
Why did you tell me that story?

TOM
(falters for a
moment)
To prove that Lila Wingo ...to
show why Savannah could never
trust her.

LOWENSTEIN
Maybe why you could never trust
her....

TOM
(annoyed, snaps at
her)
Sorry. Wrong story. Let's just
skip it, okay?

LOWENSTEIN
What's bothering you, Tom?

Tom shrugs and rubs his face. He's a physical wreck.

TOM

Nothing much, really - Global warming. Acid rain. The national debt. And my wife is having a goddamn affair with a heart surgeon in South Carolina. Jesus, I feel like such an idiot. I never even knew this was going on.

LOWENSTEIN

Maybe you weren't paying attention.

TOM

Bullshit! Let's face it Lowenstein. Women are more devious than men. They're great at hiding things... keeping secrets... smiling when they lie.
(really on a roll now)

You expect a man to be a tower of strength, and when he turns out to have a few weaknesses, you turn around and betray him.

LOWENSTEIN

You feel your mother betrayed you?

TOM

I was talking about my wife.

LOWENSTEIN

Oh.

TOM

(trying to restrain
rage and annoyance)
Look, I hate this Freudian crap! It's not your job to listen to my problems, anyway. And if you don't mind, I'd like to go.

LOWENSTEIN

You're free to leave anytime you want.

TOM

Good.

He turns and walks out of the office.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI CAB - LATE DAY

48

Tom is riding home from Lowenstein's office, staring out the window, thinking deeply. He seems overwhelmed and defeated.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

49

The sound of LAUGHTER and MUSIC drifts in through the open living-room window. Tom is changing his shirt; still pensive and reflective.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDIE DETREVILLE'S APARTMENT - CLOSE ON A DOOR - NIGHT 50

The door opens to NOISE and LAUGHTER. TOM steps into a party which feels like an updated version of the Breakfast at Tiffany's party scene. Milling about the room, dancing and carousing, is a stylish cross section of inveterate New Yorkers.

He takes a few steps into the foyer when a man in leather approaches him.

MAN

Would you like to dance?

Tom looks around thinking the man is talking to someone else.

TOM

Who, me?

MAN

Yes, you.

Eddie approaches them. He pushed the man away and says:

EDDIE

He's spoken for.

(talking to Tom)

Why didn't you dress up?

TOM

I did. I just didn't know it was a costume party.

Eddie shrugs. Tom's hopeless.

EDDIE
How's Savannah? Can I visit her
yet?

TOM
I don't know, Eddie. It's a
little like talking to a fern.

EDDIE
I'm glad she's improving. Let's
dance.

TOM
Oh come on, Eddie. Give me a
break. I'm a lousy dancer.

EDDIE
This is the big city. Walk on
the wild side.

Tom hesitates as Eddie starts to shimmy and shake.

TOM
What the hell.

Tom awkwardly attempts a few dance moves. Eddie laughs.

EDDIE
You're right. You are a lousy
dancer. Go mingle.

Tom looks around in embarrassment, wondering if anyone has
seen him. To his mortification, he sees Lowenstein
watching him, smiling, from across the room. Tom moves
over to Lowenstein. She smile warmly, concerned about him.

TOM
Don't laugh. I'm surprised to see
you here.

LOWENSTEIN
I like Eddie.

TOM
(begrudgingly)
You really pissed me off today
but...you made me think about
some things.

LOWENSTEIN
Just don't make it a habit or
I'll have to start charging you.

TOM
You do have a sense of humor. I
was beginning to think you had it
surgically removed.

Lowenstein smiles.

LOWENSTEIN
Are you alright?

TOM
Great. Now that I've finished
lying can I ask you to dance? *

LOWENSTEIN
I'd rather not. *

TOM
You'll be the first woman I've
danced with in New York City..
(at her hesitation)
Come on it's a party. Walk on the
wild side. *

She let's him take her hand. *

TOM
Don't worry. I can't dance and
make a pass at the same time.
I'd lose count. *

ANGLE - DANCE FLOOR

There are a few couples slow dancing. Tom and Lowenstein
join them and awkwardly begin dancing together.

ANGLE - TOM AND LOWENSTEIN

It takes a few beats for them to feel comfortable with
their bodies in such close proximity.

TOM
You came alone, huh?

LOWENSTEIN
Yes.. It's funny, I never went
anywhere alone until I got
married.

TOM
That speaks well for matrimony.

LOWENSTEIN
(defensively)
It's just that my husband travels
a lot.

TOM
What does he do?

LOWENSTEIN
(looks at her watch)
It's late. I should go.

TOM

I'll take you home.

LOWENSTEIN

No, no. I'm fine.

TOM

(graciously)

I'm a Southerner, Ma'am. We take
ladies home.

CUT TO:

EXT GREENWICH VILLAGE STREET - NIGHT

Tom and Lowenstein are walking up a quiet, tree-lined residential street. The city is almost pastoral and dream-like at this hour.

TOM

How do you do it? How do you
listen to people's sob-stories
all day? Doesn't it depress you?

LOWENSTEIN

You learn to separate your
patient's problems from your own.

*

They turn onto 7th Avenue, where stores and boutiques are closed for the night.

TOM

Now yours, I think I could
handle.

LOWENSTEIN

Don't be so sure.
(beat)
Tell me something. You said you
used to be an English teacher.
What happened?

TOM

You're changing the subject,
Lowenstein.

LOWENSTEIN

It's a technique I'm learning
from you.

They're passing a record store. Tom glances at the window.

TOM

There he is again.

*

ANGLE - RECORD STORE WINDOW

Lowenstein turns and sees copies of Herbert Woodruff's latest recording and publicity pictures of him.

TOM (CONT'D)

So you're shrink to the stars,
huh?

LOWENSTEIN
He's not my patient - he's my
husband.

TOM
No kidding. Herbert-fucking-
Woodruff is your husband... How'd
you two meet?

She stares at her husband's image with a mixture of
affection and sadness.

LOWENSTEIN
I saw him perform at Carnegie
Hall on my 22nd birthday. I'd
never heard anything like it...
That kind of passion...
artistry... whatever you call it.
Like Savannah's. It's a gift...
to make people feel.

(beat)
I fell in love with him
instantly.

Lowenstein walks away. Tom follows.

TOM
So you married him and lived
happily ever after.

LOWENSTEIN
(evasively)
I married him.

TOM
Are you telling me mine isn't the
only screwed-up union on the
planet?

LOWENSTEIN
I'm not telling you anything
more.

TOM
Wait a minute-no fair! I spill my
guts to you, I tell you my
marriage is full of holes but
when I ask you anything, you've
got nothing to say...

(beat)
I think it's your turn to give a
little.

*

Lowenstein isn't used to being teased but we can see she likes it. Although she tries for dignity, a smile keeps curling the edges of her mouth.

TOM

Come on. Tell me something personal.

LOWENSTEIN

No.

TOM

Something you've never told anybody else.

LOWENSTEIN

No. God, why are there never any cabs...

Looks around.

TOM

Oh, be human, Lowenstein. Talk to me. Tell me something about yourself.

He moves in front of her, blocking her way, and she stops, giving in to his persistence. It's amazing Lowenstein has bloomed under his attention. She absolutely glows as she begins to relate to Tom as a man.

LOWENSTEIN

Alright, alright, alright. What do you want to know?

TOM

I'll ask you some questions and you have to answer. Agreed?

Lowenstein nods.

TOM

(quick)

What's your father's name?

LOWENSTEIN

Douglas.

TOM

Who was the first boy you ever kissed?

LOWENSTEIN

Dick Berkowitz--he was cute.

TOM

What's your favorite car.

LOWENSTEIN

I like those old Ford Woodies.

TOM

Do you have any idea how
beautiful you look in that suit?

Lowenstein deflects the compliment with an off-hand gesture. She smiles. The joking, the questions, and a new spark of physical attraction between the two of them combine to make Lowenstein particularly beautiful just now.

TOM

And you've got a great smile. You should smile more.

LOWENSTEIN

What is this? "Make Lowenstein Feel Better Day"?

TOM

You don't believe me? Come here, I want to show you something.

Tom leads her to the window of a dress shop and points to her reflection. Lowenstein is laughing now. Protesting a bit but having a fine time. As he straightens her necklace:

TOM

Look at that smile, that face, that suit. I'm talking great stuff here.

LOWENSTEIN

OK, you convinced me. Now would you get me a cab please?

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING CENTRAL PARK WEST - NIGHT

52

A cab stops in front. Lowenstein gets out, then leans into the open door to speak to Tom.

ANGLE - LOWENSTEIN AND TOM

LOWENSTEIN

Come up for a minute. I'd like you to meet my son.

CUT TO:

INT. WOODRUFF'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

53

A light goes on. Tom and Lowenstein are standing in the parquet-floored foyer of a vast, spectacular apartment, the kind that makes living in New York a magical experience.

He follows her into a den, where the blue light of the television set seeps out an open doorway.

CUT TO:

INT. DEN - NIGHT

54

BERNARD WOODRUFF is slouched on the sofa, surrounded by the remnants of a fast-food dinner.. He is a darkly handsome eighteen-year-old, tall and gangly for his age... and in the dead center of a troubled adolescence. He doesn't look up as they enter.

LOWENSTEIN

Bernard, I'd like you to meet a friend of mine.

Bernard waves languidly and continues watching TV. Tom walks over to him and stands between Bernard and the television, extends his hand.

BERNARD

Would you mind stepping out of the way?

He's watching The Godfather on TV.

LOWENSTEIN

Mr. Wingo is a football coach, Bernard.

BERNARD

Yeah.

(beat)

Dad called from Vienna today. He said to say hi to you.

(pointedly)

When I saw you.

LOWENSTEIN

Did you practice this afternoon?

BERNARD

(turns up volume)

No. I've been too busy watching TV.

LOWENSTEIN

You're being rude, Bernard.

TOM

No, he's being a teenager. I used to be one myself.

BERNARD

No kidding.

(beat)

Where are you from? Your accent's weird.

TOM

South Carolina.

BERNARD

(engrossed with TV)

Huh.

BERNARD
(engrossed with TV)
Huh.

TOM
How many times have you seen this
movie?

BERNARD
Could you please stop talking?
Sonny Corleone's about to get
shot.

LOWENSTEIN
(angry and
embarrassed)
Bernard, it's time for bed.
Let's go, Tom.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF WOODRUFF APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

.55

Tom and Lowenstein walk toward the elevator.

LOWENSTEIN
I'm sorry he was so...

TOM
You don't have to apologize,
Lowenstein. Teenagers by
definition are not fit for
society.

LOWENSTEIN
(shrugs)
Well, Bernard wants to play
football. That's why I brought
you up to meet him.
(a long pause)
I was wondering... if I might
hire you to coach him, a couple
days a week.

Tom is surprised by the request, and a little suspicious of
her motives. She senses it and tries to mollify him as she
presses the elevator button.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT'D)
You see, he never gets a chance
to play when his father's around.
So, while Herbert's on tour...

TOM
Is this a job offer?

LOWENSTEIN

Yes...

(awkwardly)

And I would insist on paying you.
What would you consider a
reasonable rate?

TOM

What are your rates?

LOWENSTEIN

I charge a hundred and fifty
dollars an hour.

TOM

Fine. I'll take it.

The elevator doors open. He steps in. Lowenstein is
speechless.

LOWENSTEIN

You must be a very good coach.

TOM

(grinning)

Forget it, Lowenstein. I'm not a
charity case. Yet.

(presses button)

Tell Bernard we'll start on
Monday.

The elevator doors close.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

56

Tom is standing by a tree, desultorily tossing a football
in the air and catching it. He checks his watch, looks up
and sees Bernard Woodruff, sauntering through a field,
taking great pains to avoid making eye-contact with Tom.

Bernard reaches Tom.

TOM

First rule of thumb, Bernard.
Never be late.

BERNARD

I didn't want to come anyway.

TOM

No, your mother thinks you want
to play ball. Any truth to that?

BERNARD

Maybe, maybe not. Where do you coach, Mr. Wingo? Hillbilly country?

TOM

I used to coach at Beaufort High.

BERNARD

Used to?

TOM

I quit. A year ago.

BERNARD

You mean you're not even a real coach? My mother hired me a fake?

TOM

If we ever get to tackle, kid, you'll wish I was a fake.

BERNARD

Beaufort High School, huh? Real big time.

Tom's face tightens but he assumes a jaunty, good-natured pose.

TOM

You didn't get to play last year, did you?

BERNARD

(caught off guard)

How'd you know?

TOM

Because any rich, snot-nosed punk who'd dare talk to his coach like that wouldn't get to haul water, let alone play. You belong in the bleachers, Bernard.

(beat)

When you're ready to play football, get my number from your mother.

He throws the ball to Bernard, who misses it having been so undone by Tom's outburst. Tom turns and walks out of the park.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

57

Tom sits at a desk in the living room, writing a letter to his daughters. He searches through the drawers for more paper and finds something in one which puzzles him.

ANGLE - DRAWER

In it are stacks of unopened letters and bills. The letters are addressed to Renata Halpern, at Savannah's address. Another folder with poems and manuscripts.

ANGLE - TOM

He removes the letters and manuscripts, looks at one of the manuscripts.

ANGLE - MANUSCRIPT

It is a poem, titled: "Holocaust" by Renata Halpern.

ANGLE - TOM

He begins to read the poem. As he does, his expression becomes troubled. Something does not sit well with him.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY OF SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

58

On his way out of the lobby, Tom stops to check Savannah's mailbox. It is crammed full of letters and magazines. He takes them out.

ANGLE - LETTERS

Most of the letters are addressed to Renata Halpern.

ANGLE - TOM

As he is contemplating opening one of the letters, Eddie Detreville comes in off the street, elegantly dressed in a linen suit. He sees Tom in rumpled khakis and sneakers and he shakes his head.

EDDIE

Babe, you need help. This is not an attractive look for a middle-aged man.

TOM

You can take me shopping.
(holds up envelopes)
Ever hear of a woman named Renata
Halpern?

EDDIE

Nope. Who is she?

TOM

I don't know but she writes good
poems... About growing up Jewish
in Brooklyn. You sure she wasn't
staying with Savannah recently?

EDDIE

Not that I know of, but I was out
of town a lot.

(points as he
leaves)

Bloomington on Saturday, big
boy.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

59

Tom emerges from Savannah's apartment building and starts
walking toward Sheridan Square when he hears a voice behind
him.

BERNARD (O.S.)

Coach Wingo.

He turns and faces Bernard, who walks toward him trying to
swallow his pride. Bernard doesn't quite know what to say.

A pause as Tom takes this in.

TOM

I accept your apology, Bernard.

BERNARD

I didn't get to play last year
because I never made the team.
They laughed at me...called me
names.

TOM

If I coach you, Bernard, I
promise they won't laugh; they
won't call you names, but you've
got to promise me some things.

BERNARD

What?

TOM

You've gotta shut up, Bernard.
Your mouth pisses me off.

Tom starts to walk up the street fast. Bernard has a hard time keeping up with him.

BERNARD

Yeah, okay, okay.

TOM

'Yes sir' is the correct way to address me. First thing you're going to do is follow certain forms and courtesies. You'll do whatever I tell you to do and you'll do it with enthusiasm.

(beat)

I'm going to teach you how to play football and I'm going to teach you well. I'm going to run your ass off every day--

Tom crosses the street, Bernard lags behind him.

BERNARD

-- Wait a sec. My violin lessons--

TOM

Shut up, Bernard.

BERNARD

Yes, sir.

TOM

--And after I run you till you drop, make you lift weights till you can't move, and make you tackle till your arms cramp, something's going to happen that's never happened in your miserable little life.

BERNARD

What's that, sir?

Tom stops and looks at Bernard.

TOM

You're going to be happy, Kid.

CUT TO:

OMIT 60

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

61

The door to Savannah's room opens and Lowenstein steps out. She sees Tom sitting in an alcove across the hallway, waiting.

LOWENSTEIN

(smiles)

I have a surprise for you.

INT. SAVANNAH'S ROOM - DAY

62

Tom enters the room behind Lowenstein. He looks over to the bed and is shocked to see:

ANGLE - SAVANNAH

is sitting up in bed, fully conscious. Still pale and very weak, but vastly improved. She sees Tom and smiles weakly.

SAVANNAH

Hi.

Tom moves over to the bed and kisses her tenderly, then sits down and takes her hand.

TOM

You've been gone a long time, sweetheart.

SAVANNAH

I'm not sure I'm back.

TOM

If you're not, you're doing a great imitation of yourself.

SAVANNAH

(tries to laugh)

You haven't changed one bit, brother.

TOM

I'm trying to, Savannah. I'm trying to.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH STREET SEAPORT - DAY

63

Tom is on a pay phone outside the seaport. He's in a feisty, good mood.

ANGLE - TOM ON PHONE

TOM

--Girls, I'm going to ask you a question, and I want you to answer it with brutal honesty--

We hear the VOICES of Lucy and Chandler chime through.

LUCY/CHANDLER (O.S.)

--You are the greatest person in the whole world, Daddy!

TOM

(laughing)

What's this? I don't even get the pleasure of asking the question anymore?

CUT TO:

INT. WINGO HOUSE (SOUTH CAROLINA) - DAY

64

Lucy and Chandler are fighting for the telephone, laughing hysterically. Sallie sits on the sofa, looking distracted and upset. Jennifer sits beside her.

CHANDLER

When're you coming home, Daddy?
I mean, if you miss my birthday,
I'm gonna kiiiiilll you.

TOM (O.S.)

How could I miss your birthday,
Chandler? I was there the day
you pushed your way into the
world.

CHANDLER

I want an alligator.

ANGLE - TOM ON TELEPHONE

TOM

Go down to the marsh and get one.

CHANDLER (O.S.)

No. I want a stuffed alligator.
So he can sleep in bed with me.

TOM
That's a dangerous habit, kiddo.
(beat)
Is Mommy there?

ANGLE - GIRLS ON PHONE

They turn to Sallie, holding up the phone.

CHANDLER
Daddy wants to talk to you.

Sallie hesitates a moment before picking up the phone.

ANGLE - TOM

TOM
Do you mind if I come home for
Chandler's birthday, Sal? It
would only be for a couple days.
(pause)
I don't want to make it awkward
for you.

SALLIE (O.S.)
It's awkward no matter what, Tom.
But we'd all be upset if you
weren't here.

TOM
Thanks, Sallie.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

65

Tom and Bernard, in grubby sweats and T-shirts, go through the fundamentals of football: The three point stance, how to throw, how to tackle (over a period of time).

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - DAY

66

Lowenstein is sitting on her desk. Tom is in his football practice clothes. He has his football with him. She's talking to him, animatedly. He's watching her closely.

As the scene ends, Tom walks to the door of her office. He indicates the football, then throws it to her. She throws it back. As the ball sails through the air we

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

67

where Bernard receives the football in a perfect catch and slaps the football against the back of his hand in applause.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

68

The two of them are filthy, covered with mud and grass-stains. They walk out of the park together and pass well-heeled uptowners who glance at their dishevelment with either amusement or disdain.

One Park Avenue dowager in particular shoots them a look as they start to cross the street.

TOM

I'm going to tell you something most New Yorkers don't know about their city.

BERNARD

What's that?

TOM

This land was once surrounded by deep extraordinary marshes. An entire civilization of salt marshes lies beneath these grimy streets.

(shouts)

And I do not like cities that dishonor their own marshes.

A cab almost hits Tom.

CUT TO:

EXT. MADISON AVE. - DAY

68A

Tom and Bernard walk down the street.

TOM

It's an art form to hate New York properly.

BERNARD

No it isn't, it's a cliché.

TOM

You're not such a dumb kid after all, Bernard.

TOM (CONT.)
(puts his arm around
Bernard)

They approach a bookstore.

Revised 6/14/90

TOM (CONT.)

It's my daughter's birthday next week. She wants an alligator. There's a crocodile in Peter Pan. Think she'll buy it?

Bernard seems to have just remembered something.

BERNARD

It's my mom's birthday next week, too.

TOM

And I bet you got her exactly nothing.

Bernard shrugs sheepishly. He hasn't. They go in. *

CUT TO:

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY-LATER

69

Bernard is in the photography section, leafing through a book of Greek architecture. *

ANGLE - TOM

is in the children's section, perusing the titles for a book for Chandler. His gaze stops at one book displayed on a table. His expression becomes incredulous.

ANGLE - BOOK

It is called The Southern Way. The author is Renata Halpern.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - DAY

70

Still dressed in the filthy sweats and t-shirt, Tom sits at a downtown bar, filled with good-looking men and women putting the make on each other.

ANGLE - TOM

He is reading The Southern Way, totally absorbed. And astounded. After a while, he can't help reading a passage aloud.

62A

* Revised 6/14/90

TOM

"The spiders were dancing when
the three stray dogs came out of
the woods. They were the dogs of
chance, the dogs of surprise and
no smiles danced in the 3 dogs
eyes."

TOM (CON.)
(beat)
Renata Halpern, my ass.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

CLOSE ON Tom's hands riffling through Savannah's desk drawer. He pulls out the file with Renata Halpern's poems and mail in it. He starts to sift through the letters, trying to find out whatever he can about this person. He stops when he sees:

INSERT - ENVELOPE

A bill addressed to Renata Halpern. The letterhead says:
Dr. S. Lowenstein.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

72

Lowenstein is sitting at her desk, leafing through a file. The door opens and Tom comes in, so angry he's shaking.

TOM
(holding up a copy
of The Southern
Way)
Who the hell is Renata Halpern
and what does she have to do with
my sister?

LOWENSTEIN
(calmly)
Why don't you sit down and cool
off for a minute?

He sets her bill to Renata Halpern on the desk.

TOM
You've known about this the whole
time, haven't you?

LOWENSTEIN
Tom, I find it difficult
conducting a session with you an
inch away from my face.

TOM

This is not a session, dammit.
I'm asking you a question and
you're doing a shitty job of
evading it.

(slams the book
on the desk)

Tell me who wrote this book.

LOWENSTEIN

What's in it that's so
disturbing?

TOM

That's not the issue! The issue
is why you didn't tell me.

LOWENSTEIN

It wasn't my place to tell you.
Your sister...

TOM

You're a piece of work,
Lowenstein. I come in here and
tell you everything and you
withhold (or hold back) an
important piece of information
from me.

LOWENSTEIN

Maybe it's you who's withholding. (or holding back) *

TOM

(yelling)
--This is not about me!

LOWENSTEIN

Then why are you so upset?

TOM

I don't like being lied to. I
don't like secrets. I could
report you to the authorities and
have your goddamned license
suspended.

LOWENSTEIN

Tom, stop acting like a petulant
child!

TOM

You haven't answered my question,
Lowenstein. Who wrote this book?

LOWENSTEIN

Why don't you tell me?

TOM

I'll tell you who wrote it. My sister wrote it. It's all about my family. And if my mother ever read it, she'd rip out Savannah's pancreas with her teeth.

LOWENSTEIN

Why? Why would she do that?

TOM

I don't answer anymore questions until you answer mine.

LOWENSTEIN

Then sit down and listen. That is if you're not too exhausted by your temper tantrum.

Tom sits down and faces her. Both feel wounded and betrayed.

Tom reaches for a cigarette, realizes he has quit and mutters and savage:

TOM

shit!

A pause.

LOWENSTEIN

(after a pause)

The first few times Savannah came to see me, she told me her name was Renata Halpern.

TOM

Jesus, she's even crazier than I thought-

LOWENSTEIN

Shut up or I won't continue.
(beat.)

She said her father was a furrier and that her parents were survivors of the Holocaust. She couldn't fool me about being Jewish but what fascinated me was why she chose to be the child of survivors. What was she trying to survive?

TOM

Come on Lowenstein. You're supposed to be answering my questions. Why did she do it?

LOWENSTEIN

Something about writing that book
made her want to become someone
else.

TOM

And that was okay with you?

LOWENSTEIN
(restraining her

anger)
No, it was not okay with me. I
told her unless she resolved her
own problems, no one else she'd
become would have a chance.

TOM
Is this what people pay you to
do? Turn them into someone else?

LOWENSTEIN
You're not listening to me!

TOM
Bullshit! What do you think I'm
doing here every day? *

LOWENSTEIN
Complaining. Pointing the
finger. Avoiding - refusing to
take responsibility.

TOM
(stands up)
--Fuck you, Lowenstein. Fuck you
and Sigmund Freud -- my sister -
- Renata Halpern. The whole
thing makes me sick.

LOWENSTEIN
The way you're acting makes me
sick. *

TOM
How'd you expect me to react?
What if I'd done the same thing
to your son? "Come to South
Carolina, Bernard. I'll change
your name and turn you into a
Presbyterian quarterback."

LOWENSTEIN

It's quite different, Mr. Wingo.
My son didn't try to kill
himself.

TOM

Give him time, Lowenstein. Give
him time.

LOWENSTEIN

You son of a bitch.

In blind rage, she reaches for a dictionary on her desk and
hurls it at Tom, catching him squarely on the nose.

Tom immediately puts his hand to his nose and blood
trickles between his fingers.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT'D.)

Oh, my God. I'll get you some
ice.

Lowenstein gets up and hurries to a refrigerator.

TOM

I see a big malpractice suit
coming out of this, Doctor.

LOWENSTEIN

I'm so embarrassed.

TOM

(starts laughing
hysterically)

What a day. I get dropped by a
dictionary and find out my
sister's become a Brooklyn Jew.

She reaches him with the ice, wrapped in a napkin.

LOWENSTEIN

Here.

TOM

I don't need that. I'd rather
act like a man and bleed to
death.

LOWENSTEIN

Be quiet and take it.

(beat.)

And after you've stopped
bleeding, I'd like to take you to
dinner.

TOM
No chili today, Doctor. This
time it's going to cost you.

CUT TO:

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DUSK

73

Tom and Lowenstein are seated at a table, checking out the menus. Tom is wearing a jacket that seems too tight on him and a borrowed tie from this most elegant of New York restaurants. He has a puffy nose and seems almost giddy.

TOM
When my drink comes, don't be
embarrassed if I stick my nose in
it. The alcohol will disinfect
the wound.

LOWENSTEIN
I still can't believe I did that.

TOM
Face it, Lowenstein. I bring out
the animal in you.
(smiles)
I owe you an apology.

The WAITER comes with Tom's drink.

LOWENSTEIN
Would you like me to order for
you? I eat here all the time.

TOM
How am I supposed to trust a
woman to order for me who can't
even cook?

LOWENSTEIN
Just because I don't know how to
cook, doesn't mean I don't know
how to eat.

TOM
Go ahead, Lowenstein. I'll do
anything to make you happy
tonight.

LOWENSTEIN

(to waiter)

I think we'll start with the
mousse de canard aux baies
sauvage, and then we'll have the
soupe de poisson au crabe. And
for our main course, rable de
lapin.

WAITER

Merci, Madame.

The waiter leaves. Tom gives Lowenstein an admiring look.

TOM

God, there's nothing sexier than
a beautiful woman ordering food
in French. Why don't you read me
the whole menu?

LOWENSTEIN

Are you flirting with me?

TOM

I think I am. I'd like you to
find me attractive, bloody nose
and all.

LOWENSTEIN

And I'd like to ask you something
about Savannah. *

TOM

(groans)

God, don't you ever take a night
off? *

LOWENSTEIN

No. Savannah told me her
children's book came out of a
dream. And there were images in
it that terrorized her, but she
didn't know why. Now, you've
read the story. What do you
think it means? *

TOM

Lowenstein, you're incorrigible. Here we are at a four-star restaurant and you want me to interpret my sister's dream. You want to interpret dreams, do mine. I had a great one about you last night.

LOWENSTEIN

(surprised)

You had a dream about me?

TOM

Yeah. Want to hear it?

LOWENSTEIN

I'm not sure.

TOM

Don't worry, this one is "G" rated.

(beat)

There was a blinding snow storm, right here in New York City. I went out for a walk and ran right into you. We decided to go to the Rainbow Room. No one was there. And we started to slow dance. What do you think it means?

LOWENSTEIN

Well..blinding snowstorm...maybe there's something you're afraid to see.

TOM

Maybe I have cold feet.

LOWENSTEIN

Maybe you're trying to snow me.

TOM

Maybe I want to get to know you better.

LOWENSTEIN

Maybe you just miss winter.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

74

Bernard is wearing a helmet and pads. He and Tom run through a tackling drill; Tom is trying to be fancy on an open field run, with Bernard holding onto Tom's leg, then losing him as Tom shakes him off. Tom runs a few yards and stops. Then they start up again.

ANGLE - FIELD

Lowenstein is approaching them; she's dressed casually in slacks and a sweater and carries a shopping bag. She stops by the edge of the field, taken aback by Bernard's new appearance.

LOWENSTEIN

Is that my son? Is that you
in there, Bernard?

ANGLE - TOM AND BERNARD

Bernard ignores Lowenstein and pushes Tom, who catches Bernard in the solar plexus and drives him to the ground.

ANGLE - LOWENSTEIN

looks alarmed and worried.

LOWENSTEIN

I'm not sure this was such a good idea.

ANGLE - TOM AND BERNARD

Bernard rolls his eyes and doesn't respond. He and Tom watch Lowenstein coming towards them.

TOM

Stop being a Jewish mother, Lowenstein.

LOWENSTEIN

I am a Jewish mother.

(holds up shopping bag)

I even brought sandwiches.

TOM

(leaps up and comes toward her)

Oooh, good. I'm starving.

Bernard slowly rises, he's not sure he likes this easy banter between his mother and coach.

BERNARD

Did you slave away in the kitchen all morning making those, Mom?

LOWENSTEIN

No, I paid for them, like I usually do.

BERNARD

Big shock.

LOWENSTEIN

(uncomfortable, tries to ignore the last comment)

Can I watch you play? I promise not to be over-protective.

BERNARD

I don't feel like playing any more.

Tom senses the tension between them. He puts down his sandwich and tries to keep it light by throwing Bernard the ball.

TOM

Come on, let's just throw the ball around for a few minutes.

BERNARD

(lets ball fall to ground)

What am I? A trained seal? I gotta do whatever she wants?

TOM

You've got it tough, kid.
(affectionately,
grabs him in a neck
hold and tries to
wrestle him to the
ground)

Let's lie on the grass and cry
for all the terrible misfortune
in your life.

BERNARD

(pushing him away)

You know, you turn into a real
jerk every time my mother's
around. What're you trying to
do, impress her?

LOWENSTEIN

Bernard, you're totally out of
line. You're not mad at him,
you're mad at me.

BERNARD

(gets away from Tom)

Save that crap for your patients,
Mom.

He storms away. Lowenstein stares after him.

LOWENSTEIN

He's right. He's absolutely
right. I don't know how to talk
to him.

TOM

I think you should try a new approach.

LOWENSTEIN

What's that?

TOM

Laugh, Lowenstein. Laugh.

LOWENSTEIN

(with gentle irony)

Oh yeah, the Southern Way.

TOM

And if that doesn't work, bop him on the head.

Lowenstein finally turns to look at Tom.

LOWENSTEIN

What do you think of me, Tom?

TOM

Well, you seem to have it made. You're rich, you live like a queen. Your kid needs some work, but overall, you're way up there in the top one percent.

LOWENSTEIN

You're lying.

TOM

(after a beat)

You're a very sad woman, Lowenstein.

LOWENSTEIN

Now you're not lying. I think you're the first friend I've made in a long time.

Tom takes her hand.

TOM

Come on, let's go to the movies.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - CLOSE ON HOME MOVIE FOOTAGE - DAY75

Grainy, hand-held, slightly out-of-focus footage of Tom, Luke, and Savannah on the twin's graduation day. WE SEE them on the dock, Savannah in a white dress. The three of them jump off into the water, holding hands as they dive under.

TOM (O.S.)

Rare footage from the Savannah Wingo Archives. My father bought this camera one year, thinking if he made a fortune in film he could give up shrimping - the only thing he was good at.

WIDER to reveal Tom and Lowenstein in Savannah's living room, watching the movie being projected on a window shade. The scene is lit only by a beam of light emanating from a projector.

LOWENSTEIN

Savannah told me your father was always losing money.

TOM

An understatement. Henry Wingo had the opposite of the Midas touch: everything he touched turned to shit.

ANGLE - HOME MOVIE FOOTAGE

The footage changes - to the Wingo family in front of an Esso gas station. Tom and Savannah are huddled a distance away from a cage in which a tiger is pacing. Luke is feeding it raw meat. Lila stands, shaking her head in disapproval of the whole thing.

TOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

—Oh, here's one of Dad's all-time cockamayme schemes. He was sure this tiger would draw people to his gas station by the thousands. It just scared the hell out of them.

(beat)

The only person who wasn't afraid of that animal was Luke. He had a lot of courage.

LOWENSTEIN

And you?

TOM
I didn't need any. I had Luke.

Shots of the island appear on the shade - the FOREST, the BARN, the MARSHES.

TOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
This is our island, really the only thing Dad ever owned... and at the time this was taken, worthless.

Footage changes to LUKE fooling around, adopting a mock-heroic pose on the island, brandishing a makeshift flag of a torn shirt tied to a stick. TOM and SAVANNAH help.

TOM (CONT'D)
Not to Luke, though. To him, our island was the most precious place in the world.

(beat)
He came back from Vietnam a hero -- and vowed he'd never leave it again. He didn't.

The film noisily reaches its end and goes to white leader. Tom stops it.

LOWENSTEIN
What happened?

TOM
My mother got the island in the divorce settlement, and immediately sold it to the government for a lot of money. They wanted to put up a power plant. Luke went crazy, made threats. The government laughed. He blew up a construction site - they quit laughing.

LOWENSTEIN
(softly)
And then...

TOM
He went on waging his own private war. Savannah and I tried to stop him but the government stopped him first. Shot him in the head. Bingo.

Tom gets up and starts to put equipment away.

TOM
 (trying to break the mood)
 Can I get you anything? A cold drink, beer?

LOWENSTEIN
 How did you deal with his death?

TOM
 I shut down like a broken motor.

LOWENSTEIN
 And according to the Southern Way, no tears.

TOM
 Oh, I cry sometimes, Lowenstein. At weddings. The Olympics. When I hear the National Anthem.

LOWENSTEIN
 Did you cry over Luke?

TOM
 Hell no. That would be like admitting he was gone.

LOWENSTEIN
 (a beat)
 He is gone, Tom. Maybe it's time to admit it.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH CAROLINA BEACH - NIGHT

76

A full moon casts a brilliant silver light over the beach in front of the Wingo house.

ANGLE - WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

Tom is standing by the porch, carrying a canvas shoulder bag and an unwieldy pile of presents, including a life size alligator. He watches as a cab retreats up the drive, then heads up the porch steps. It feels strange to be back home.

ANGLE - FRONT DOOR

The front door opens and MEGAN DANIELS, the sixteen-year-old babysitter, steps out. She helps Tom with the presents.

MEGAN

Dr. Wingo had an emergency down
at the hospital.

TOM

That's okay, Megan. Are the
girls asleep?

Megan nods as Tom enters the house.

INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

77

He takes a few of the presents and heads upstairs towards
his daughters' bedroom.

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - ANGLE ON GIRLS - NIGHT

78

The three girls are sleeping soundly. Tom tiptoes in and
places toys and presents on each of their beds. Then leans
down and kisses each one on the forehead.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

79

Tom walks out to the deck, sits down and looks out at the
ocean.

TOM'S POV - NIGHT

The moon forms a long ribbon of light on the water. Waves
hit the rocks of the jetty in a steady, lulling rhythm.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

80

Sallie enters the house through the front door and sees Tom
sitting on the porch. His back is to her. She moves out
toward him, her steps uncertain and slow.

ANGLE - DECK

He finally looks up and sees her. She speaks first.

SALLIE

Hey, Coach.

TOM

Hey, Sallie. How you doing?

He rises and they embrace, but it is an embrace of
friendship, of shared history and affection. Then they
turn and walk back into the house, arm in arm.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

81

Sallie is making drinks at the bar as Tom watches her from
the couch. Neither knows what to say.

TOM

What's the proper form in a situation like this? Do we talk, fight, or ignore the whole thing altogether?

SALLIE

I don't know. How's Savannah?

TOM

One day up, one day down.

(nods, okay, then
let's change the
subject)

Do you want me to make a fire?

SALLIE

I don't think so. It's ninety degrees outside.

TOM

You've always been such a traditionalist.

Sallie smiles weakly and hands him a drink. Then musters the courage to tell him what she has to.

SALLIE

Jack Cleveland wants to marry me, Tom.

TOM

(after a pause)

Do you need a letter of recommendation?

SALLIE

That's not funny.

TOM

Considering my other options, I thought it was the kindest, most restrained thing I could say.

(beat)

What do you want to do?

Sallie moves to the fireplace and turns her back to Tom. She's upset.

SALLIE

I don't know.

(softly)

Part of me wants to pack up and walk away from a life that doesn't seem to work anymore.

(beat)

And part of me says no life will work if I can't make this one right.

TOM

How can I help you, Sallie?

SALLIE

By trying to understand, I guess.

Tom nods affirmatively and gives his wife a reassuring smile. Sallie is surprised. She looks at him with a mixture of gratitude and real love, sensing a renewal of the old Tom, the man she had first fallen in love with.

There's a long silence as both try to dissipate the emotion rising to the surface. Sallie moves over to Tom and runs her fingers through his hair, needing to make some connection. He takes her hand and holds it, speaks more tenderly to her than he has in a long time.

TOM

I'm sorry... if I ever made you feel unsure of yourself, Sallie.

(pause)

I know I can be a closed, defensive, son of a bitch.

SALLIE

Sometimes. Only sometimes.

She kisses the top of his head and moves toward the staircase. Turns to Tom before going up.

SALLIE (CONT'D)

Coming up?

TOM

I'll bunk down here. It would be too confusing to sleep next to you.

Sallie starts up the staircase.

TOM (CONT'D)

Sallie...

(pauses)

Thanks for asking, though.

CUT TO:

INT. GIRLS' BEDROOM - MORNING

82

Chandler wakes up and finds herself surrounded by the toys Tom has brought from New York. She looks over at her sisters and sees that they, too, are encircled by gifts.

CHANDLER
(screaming)
Daddy's home!

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

83

The three Wingo girls burst out of the bedroom and scramble pell-mell up the hallway, toward their parents' room. They fling the door open and rush in.

ANGLE - BEDROOM

The room is empty. The bed is made.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

84

Tom is crashed on the sofa, a blanket pulled up to his chin.

Suddenly, three little bodies leap on top of him, tickling him into the most jarring awakening of his life.

Tom groans, tries to look mad, then makes a hideous monster face and starts attacking them.

TOM
Who are these three squealing
piglets jumping on my chest?

The girls giggle. Tom lunges forward, grabs Chandler and pulls up her pajama top, then blows against the flesh of her stomach. Takes a mock bite.

TOM
Boy, I'm hungry. And you taste
good. Just a little mustard and
hot sauce and you'd be perfect.

Lucy is hitting him, laughing hysterically.

TOM (CONT'D)
Who missed me most? Careful now,
there's money involved.

GIRLS IN UNISON
Me! Me! Me!

He swats their butts and pushes them off him.

TOM

Get your deck shoes on. We're going out on Grandpa's shrimp boat later.

Lucy and Chandler trot off, but Jennifer stays behind. She looks worried. He goes into the kitchen and gets some orange juice.

JENNIFER

Dad...are you and Mom having a bad fight or something?

TOM

(flashes a smile)

No, honey, everything's fine.

JENNIFER

You guys don't fool me.

TOM

What am I gonna do with all you smart women?

(holds out arms)

Come here and gimme a hug.

INT. DEN. - DAY

85

Chandler is ripping open her birthday presents, howling with delight. Tom is screwing on the training wheels to a bicycle.

TOM

Be sure and thank Grandma Lila for this.

CHANDLER

I got a fishing rod from Grandpa. And Daddy, look! Look what Mommy got me. The oven lights up and everything. Just like yours.

SALLIE (O.S.)

(calling from kitchen)

Chandler, come on in if you want to help. You too, Tom.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

86

In the kitchen, Sallie is finishing the last bit of frosting on the cake. Lucy and Jennifer are putting in the candles.

LUCY

Did we do it right, Mama?

SALLIE

Beautifully. Maybe this one is a tiny bit off the edge.

She moves it.

JENNIFER

Lucy did that one.

LUCY

(pointing)

I did that one, that one, and that one.

CHANDLER

I wanted to do one.

SALLIE

It's Chandler's birthday, so she gets to do all of them.

CUT TO:

INT. DOORWAY - DAY

87

Tom is standing in the doorway. Camera moves in on his face.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. WINGO KITCHEN - DAY

Lila Wingo is placing candles on a birthday cake with young Tom (8), Luke (11) and Savannah (8) around her.

In the adjacent living room, Henry sits watching television with no apparent interest.

LILA

(calling out)

Henry, come to the table. The kids are going to blow out their candles.

HENRY

I'm watching TV.

Lila goes to the living room and turns off the television.

LILA

Get in there and help your
children celebrate their
birthday, for Christ's sake.

Quick as lightning, Henry grabs her wrist and twists it.

HENRY

Don't you ever tell me what to
do, Lila. This is my house and
you're just a guest in it. Now
turn the goddamn TV back on!

The three children stand frozen in the entrance to the
living room. Luke disappears, as Savannah says in
childlike panic while Tom is holding her:

SAVANNAH

Please, Mama, it's all right.
Turn the TV back on! Do what
Daddy says!

LILA

I will not.

Henry rises, yanks Lila's hair and smashes her face into
the coffee table. Blood streams from her nose.

Satisfied, Henry moves away from her and turns on the
television. Savannah is screaming.

Suddenly, the sound of GUNFIRE. The television explodes.
Luke is standing in the middle of the room holding a rifle.

LUKE

TV's broken. Now you can watch
your kids blow out their candles,
Dad.

DISSOLVE TO:

PRESENT DAY - INT. WINGO HOUSE

Chandler takes a deep breath and blows out her candles.
Everyone applauds and sings "Happy Birthday." The song
continues as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SHRIMP BOAT - DAY

Tom stands at the bow of the boat with Lucy. He lets the warm breeze graze his skin, like a salve.

ANGLE - CABIN

Jennifer and Chandler are in the cabin. Chandler is sitting on HENRY WINGO's lap. Henry has a rough, weather-hammered face and the build of a retired stevedore. He is uncharacteristically gentle with his granddaughters.

Chandler is steering the shrimp boat with Henry's help.

HENRY

I think you oughta be a little
starboard, Captain Chandler.
That's it. That's the program,
birthday girl. You might wanna
remember there's a sandbar coming
up off Gaffer's Point.

JENNIFER

When is it gonna be my turn,
Grandpa?

HENRY

Hold onto your britches, Captain
Jenny. We got a long way to go
before we drop the nets.

CUT TO:

POV - THROUGH WINDSHIELD

Through the windshield we see Tom coming down to the cabin.
Lucy calls out to her sisters.

LUCY

Jennifer! Chandler! Come here!
I think I saw a porpoise!

The two little girls race out of the cabin, screaming, as
Tom enters and pours himself a cup of coffee.

He moves over to his father, who stares straight ahead.

TOM

You look good, Dad.

DAD

Well I feel like shit.

DAD (CONT.)

(beat)

Everytime I pass that island...
It was my island, my father's
island, my grand-goddamn-father's
island. Hell, she marries the
richest s.o.b. in the low
country, and the law says I got
to give her my only home. I got
a raw deal on that one, son.

TOM

We all got a raw deal on that
one, Dad.

HENRY

Not like me.

Tom studies his father's face. Wonders how much of his
intransigence has passed on to him.

TOM

Would you like to know how your
daughter is doing?

HENRY

Not if she's bad. You ask me, I
think she pulls this shit just to
get attention.

TOM

You now, Henry, I never
understand why Savannah tries to
kill herself until I get around
you and Lila. Then I'm surprised
I never gave it a shot myself.

He turns and walks out of the cabin.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHORE - DAY

89

The shrimp boat trawls the deep waters of the Atlantic.

EXT. SHRIMP BOAT - DAY

90

The nets are being brought up on deck. Tom stabilizes,
then unties them. A vast moving pile of sealife spills
onto the deck.

Tom and his daughters begin culling the varieties of
sealife, putting the blue crabs in one basket, the fish in
another, the shrimp in a third.

Henry kills the engine and comes out to the deck to help them. He gets on his hands and knees and separates fish with his granddaughters.

HENRY

That's good work, girls. You got a knack for this.

(points)

Grab me that crate over there for this good-for-nothin' trash fish, would ya?

The three girls race off to another part of the deck to get a wooden crate. Tom has been watching his father and daughters; he gives Henry a look of both pity and compassion.

TOM

They love you, Dad.

There's a long pause before Henry speaks.

HENRY

The Braves lost to the Dodgers last night, three-zip. You know that, son?

TOM

Yeah. I know that, Dad.

EXT. OCEAN - DUSK

91

We see the shrimp boat at a distance moving away from us toward the magnificent sunset.

CUT TO:

INT. WINGO HOUSE - MORNING

92

Tom comes in, carrying a newspaper and some groceries.

MEGAN

A boy named Bernard called. Said to tell you it's his mom's birthday tomorrow. A Dr. Lowensomething.

I couldn't understand a word he
said. He talked funny.

*

Tom laughs, thinking of Lowenstein and Bernard.

TOM
New Yorkers have strange accents,
Megan.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

93

Tom walks over to the phone, dials.

TOM
Yeah...I'd like to send a dozen
roses to New York. And please
write on the card..."Lowenstein,
that's S-T-E-I-N: In the South we
send camellias for luck and roses
for love. I went for the roses.
Happy Birthday, Tom." Would you
please read that back?

As the card is read back to him, he looks out the window
and sees Sallie and the girls wandering along the shore,
collecting beach glass, and having a good time. He turns
away from them, obviously pained.

CUT TO:

EXT. WINGO HOUSE - DAY

94

Tom hugs and kisses each of his daughters goodbye and gets
into a waiting car. Sallie is in the driver's seat. Megan
stands by the girls, who leap and wave as the car pulls out
of the driveway.

INT. CAR - DAY

95

Tom waves a last farewell to his daughters.

*

*

SALLIE
How will you get to the airport?

TOM
Don't worry, I'll get a cab.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

96

The car heads toward the city.

INT. CAR - DAY

97

They ride in silence for a while. Tom stares out the window.

TOM

I never realized how much I loved
this place until I went away.

SALLIE

"My soul grazes like a lamb on..
the beauty of indrawn tides."

(smiles)

You wrote that in a letter to me
once. A long time ago..

TOM

Pretentious, wasn't I?

(beat)

But I meant it.

They STOP at a stop light.

SALLIE

You've met someone in New York,
haven't you?

TOM

(glances at her)

I don't know.

SALLIE

I know.

The light changes and they move on.

EXT. LILA'S STREET IN COLLETON - DAY

98

The car pulls to a halt on a street of splendid mansions.
Before Tom gets out:

SALLIE

So what do we do about things,
you and I?

TOM

Do we have to do something?

SALLIE

Sooner or later, yes.

Tom nods and gets out of the car carrying his canvas bag. He watches Sallie drive off. He looks up at a beautiful white antebellum house with large columns.

CUT TO:

*

FLASHBACK - SAME STREET IN COLLETON - DAY

As he comes through the gate, the shot reverses and we see *
young Lila Wingo dragging young Tom, age 13, up the stairs,
cuffing him in the head.

LILA

--Now you're going to do like I
said and apologize to the
Newburys.

TOM

(protesting)

--Todd Newbury insulted our
family, Mama! He called us cheap
white trash!

LILA

(cuffs him again)

And then you proved him right by
whaling him good, you stupid
cracker!

*

EXT. NEWBURY HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK CONT'D)

99

Still holding onto a resistant Tom, Lila taps the brass
knocker. While they wait for the door to be opened, Lila
peers around the verandah, clearly impressed.

LILA

Isn't this a lovely view?

TOM

I want to go home.

CUT TO:

PRESENT - EXT. NEWBURY HOUSE - DAY

The door is opened by REESE NEWBURY, a big, amply built man
of 70.

The adult Tom stands alone on the porch and greets him.

TOM

Hello, Reese. I'm here to see my
mother.

REESE

Come in, Tom. She's expecting
you.

FLASHBACK - INT. NEWBURY HOUSE - DAY

A young Tom and Lila enter the foyer following Reese (30 years younger). Reese glances back at Lila.

REESE
You're looking mighty pretty
today, Lila. As usual.

LILA
Why, I always say, the most
successful men are always the
nicest.

REESE
Lila, you wait right here. Tom
and I'll have a little talk in my
study.

Behind them in the far corner of the parlour, Isabel
Newbury; a gaunt-looking woman, is sitting at the table
with three of the ladies of the Colleton League playing mah
jong. *

LILA
Why, hello there Isabel. My son
Tom here has come to apologize.
I'll just wait here. *

The women start to laugh and whisper about the flower in
her hair. Lila sits down, reaches up and unpins it.

INT. STUDY - DAY (FLASHBACK CONT'D)

100

CLOSE on Tom's face being slapped.

WIDER to reveal Reese standing over him.

REESE
Don't you tell anyone I did that
or I'll run your family clean out
of town. And if you ever touch
my son again, you're going to be
crabmeat all over the river, Boy.
A Wingo never touches a Newbury.
Do you understand me?

TOM
(holding back tears)
Yes sir.

PRESENT - INT. NEWBURY STUDY - DAY

The study doors open and Lila Wingo steps into the room.

Tom and Reese are seated stiffly across from each other.
They both stand up for her.

Lila kisses Reese on the cheek before coming over to Tom.

LILA

Hello, Tom.

TOM

Hello, Lila.

They kiss perfunctorily.

TOM (CONT.)
Wealth becomes you, Mama.

CUT TO:

INT. PARLOUR - DAY

101

C.U. on a silver tea service. Lila is pouring Tom iced tea.

TOM (V.O.)
You really got what you wanted,
didn't you.

LILA
Don't start please. Tell me
about Savannah.

TOM
She still has a long way to go.

LILA
I cut out a whole slew of
articles on mental illness. I
want you to give them to her
psychiatrist.

TOM
I will, Lila.

LILA
Do you mind if I smoke?

TOM
No, I don't mind catching lung
cancer from my own mother.

Lila reaches into a silver cigarette case. Takes out a cigarette.

LILA
Aren't you going to offer me a
light?

TOM
You ever hear of women's lib?
The Equal Rights Amendment?

LILA
Hate 'em both. Never want to do
anything to make a man think he's
my equal. Now please light my
cigarette.

He does.

LILA (CONT.)

So, what kinds of things are you telling Savannah's doctor?

TOM

Anything that might help her get better.

LILA

Drink your tea before the ice melts.

TOM

(ignoring her)

I'm going to tell Doctor Lowenstein about Callanwolde.

Lila's face becomes a mask, stiff and unreadable.

LILA

I don't know what you're talking about.

TOM

Yeah, you do.

LILA

We made a promise never to speak about that. I expect you to keep it.

TOM

We were kids. It was a stupid promise. I think it would help all of us if I talked about it--

LILA

This is my life, too. My life is private. I want to keep it private.

TOM

Even at the expense of helping your daughter?

LILA

Stop exaggerating.

TOM

--Don't make me feel bad about this, Lila. I didn't even have to tell you.

Lila begins carefully arranging pastries on the tray.

LILA

I don't want to talk about it any longer, Tom.

TOM

(yelling)

--Jesus Christ, Lila. That's always been the problem.

LILA

You know what your problem is? You dwell too much in the past. I never look back. When I say goodbye to something, I shut the door and never think about it again.

TOM

How about Luke?

LILA

What?

TOM

Do you ever think about Luke?

Lila turns her face away. Tears come to her eyes.

LILA

Who taught you to be so cruel?

TOM

You did, Mama.

(pause)

You also taught me that even though someone nearly destroys your life you can still feel love for them.

LILA

Is that supposed to warm a mother's heart?

Tom smiles.

LILA (CONT.)

I can't change what's happened, Tom.. And I don't want to spend the rest of our lives as enemies.

He gives her a chaste kiss as he starts to leave.

TOM

You'll have to be patient with me, Lila. You've done a lot to piss me off.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - CLOSE ON ROSES - DAY

The roses are prominently displayed on her desk. WIDER to reveal Tom bent over the bouquet, inhaling deeply as Lowenstein watches in amusement.

TOM

Beautiful flowers. Who sent them?

LOWENSTEIN

Some hick from South Carolina.

TOM

I missed you while I was home, Lowenstein. Nobody hit me in the face with a book.

LOWENSTEIN

How did it go down South? *

TOM

We played status quo for the kids. I'm exhausted from being such a nice guy.

Lowenstein smiles, but then her smile fades as she notices something new in Tom's face: just beneath the surface, just below the familiar easy humor, is a tenseness, a distance. She sets the coffee down on the table.

TOM (CONT'D)

... So much noise in New York. Sirens, horns, screaming...

Lowenstein moves to the coffee machine, pours herself a cup of coffee. Then without asking, she pours a cup for Tom.

LOWENSTEIN

Cream, no sugar, right?

TOM

(he turns)

Huh? Oh, yeah. Thanks.

She takes the coffee cups to the table. Tom stays by the window; he's struggling with something big. Lowenstein sits down. She watches Tom for a few moments.

TOM
I have something to tell you.

LOWENSTEIN
I know.

TOM
I don't know how.

LOWENSTEIN
Just say it.

TOM
It was raining that night.
(beat)
My mother was teaching us to
dance.

Flashback - IN FRAGMENTS - INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT - 33
YEARS AGO.

WE HEAR the Carl Perkins song "Honey Don't" playing on the *
radio. Tom hovers by a window. Lila motions for him to
come over but he shakes his head, too shy to join them.
Savannah grabs him. They twirl around and around before

WE HEAR a KNOCK on a door. Moving toward the front door to
answer it, Tom LEAVES FRAME.

Suddenly a door behind Lila and Savannah is kicked open.
TWO MEN come in holding guns.

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN IN OFFICE

Lowenstein's eyes are puzzled and wide.

TOM

They broke into our house. Three men. Mama cried, "Help us, Tom." I wanted to, but I couldn't.

(takes a huge breath
and says it)

One of them raped Savannah and one of them raped my mother.

LOWENSTEIN

(a world of feeling
in one small word)

Oh.

Tom moves to the sofa and sits down.

TOM

I guess it's not the answer to all of Savannah's problems, but I thought you should know.

LOWENSTEIN

What's Callanwolde, Tom?

TOM

The prison they escaped from.

LOWENSTEIN

How old were you when this happened?

TOM

Thirteen.

LOWENSTEIN

What were you doing while this was going on?

TOM

I don't know.

LOWENSTEIN

Did you run for help?

TOM

No.

LOWENSTEIN

Why not?

TOM
I don't know.

LOWENSTEIN
You don't know?

TOM
Just because.

LOWENSTEIN
That's a child's answer, Tom.
(she remembers)
Didn't you say three men came in?
Tell me about the third man.

FLASHBACK - IN FRAGMENTS - INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

The Shirelles seem LOUDER. THE CAMERA MOVES to show us Tom opening the front door. No one's there. Then he hears the back door being kicked open. Lila screams "Tom". He tries to escape as a third man appears in the doorway holding a knife. He leads Tom back into the living room as Lila is being pulled into the kitchen. Savannah is struggling with the second man as he pulls her behind a sofa.

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN IN OFFICE

LOWENSTEIN (CONT'D)
It's okay Tom -- What about the third man?

Lowenstein knows she's very near to the source of something. She sits absolutely still, her coffee cup in her hand. Her eyes locked onto Tom's. The two of them sit staring at each other for one, two, three, four, five full beats.

FLASHBACK - IN FRAGMENTS - INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE UP -- a belt buckle being undone. CLOSE UP -- pants drop to the ground. The man grabs Tom's hair, pushes his face down.

TOM (V.O.)
What was happening to me was...

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN

TOM
I didn't know it could happen to a boy.

FLASHBACK - IN FRAGMENTS - INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA CLOSE on their faces. We see the man's eyes close in pleasure and Tom's mouth widen in a silent scream. The Shirelles grow EVEN LOUDER.

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN

TOM

All I wanted to do was die.

FLASHBACK - IN FRAGMENTS - INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

The man pulls Tom's head back to whisper something into the boy's ear. The song INTENSIFIES.

FROM TOM'S POV we see Luke's face at the window, watching. Tom shakes his head "No" in a warning to Luke, but the man pushes his head back down.

Three seconds later the butt of Luke's rifle separates Tom from his assailant. Before the man knows what hit him, Luke blasts him with a single shot. The man raping Savannah comes up from behind the sofa in time to get his head blown off. Lila's rapist comes out of the kitchen with a gun in his hand. As Luke tries to reload his shotgun, he drops the cartridges. Tom cringes as the man takes aim at Luke. As he's about to pull the trigger a look of horror comes over the man's face as he falls forward revealing Lila who has plunged a knife into her rapist's back.

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN

TOM

Luke, two, Mama, one. While I did nothing.

LOWENSTEIN

There was nothing you could do. I'm amazed that you and Savannah survived it at all.

(beat)

What happened afterward? How did the family deal with it -- your father?

TOM

(very soft)

Who said we told?

LOWENSTEIN

(surprised)

You didn't tell?

LOWENSTEIN (CONT.)
 (Tom shakes his
 head)
 No one?
 (Tom shakes his
 head)
 You must have told the police?

Again Tom shakes his head, and Lowenstein loses some of her analytical pose.

LOWENSTEIN (CONT'D)
Jesus Christ, Tom!

TOM
 Mama said, "It's over -- get
 these carcasses outside."

FLASHBACK - IN FRAGMENTS - INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

Luke and Tom drag the bloody bodies into the rainy night. Lila has brought in a garden hose and is washing away the gore from the walls and floors. Savannah stands catatonic in the middle of it all.

TOM (V.O.)
 She was insane that night. "This
 did not happen. This did not
 happen," she kept saying. Told
 us the minute we breathed
 anything about it was the minute
 she stopped being our mother.

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN IN OFFICE

TOM
 Told us morning would come and
 everything would look nicer in
 the sunlight.

FLASHBACK - IN FRAGMENTS - EXT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT - NEAR BARN

While Lila holds a wavering flashlight beam that cuts through the dark and rain, Luke and Tom begin to throw dirt on a wide, shallow grave.

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN IN OFFICE

TOM

I went in to check on Savannah, and she was trying to do what Mama had said -- Trying to act as if nothing had happened. She was putting up her hair in rollers, but her dress was on wrongside out. That always struck me so...

FLASHBACK - IN FRAGMENTS - INT. WINGO HOUSE - NIGHT

Luke, Tom and Savannah sit numbly at the dinner table, as Henry Wingo rails on about something. The seams and label of Savannah's dress are showing. Lila calmly serves them dinner.

TOM (V.O.)

My father came home for dinner that night. We sat around and ate as if nothing was wrong.

(beat)

God help me, I think the silence was worse than the rapes.

BACK TO TOM AND LOWENSTEIN IN OFFICE

TOM

And three days later, Savannah tried to kill herself: she could keep quiet, but she couldn't lie.

Tom stops talking but Lowenstein waits for him to go on, feeling that he hasn't finished. Tom's story has been so ugly that he feels the need to cut the horror. He spreads his arms wide and does an imitation of Phil Harris.

TOM (CONT'D)

(very broad)

And thass what I like about the Sou-u-uth.

Lowenstein says nothing in response, just sits quietly and studies Tom with a look of such compassion that it begins to unnerve him.

TOM

Say something, Lowenstein

LOWENSTEIN

(softly)

How do you feel, Tom?

TOM

I feel okay.

(becoming nervous)

I mean, I thought I'd be on the floor after telling you this... but I feel... surprisingly all right...

LOWENSTEIN

You sure?

TOM

Yeah, I'm just...

(sighs)

What am I? I'm relieved. You know, the laundry's clean, the ghost is out of the closet, and I'm--

LOWENSTEIN

--You've really learned how to cover your pain, haven't you? You've done that all your life.

(he shrugs)

What are you feeling now, Tom?

Tom is beginning to look cornered, almost frightened.

TOM

Don't do this to me, Lowenstein.

He does not want to give in to this process, so he averts his eyes and nervously taps his fingers on his leg.

LOWENSTEIN

This takes real courage, Tom... You can handle it. You're a strong, capable man. You're not that 13 year old boy anymore. You don't need your brother to save you. You're saving yourself, maybe even Savannah.

He keeps tapping his leg, breathing irregularly. He is losing this fight.

Lowenstein reaches over and gently puts her hand on his. And that small gesture puts him over the edge. He begins to weep.

Lowenstein strokes his hand, as he surrenders to his feelings and cries without shame.

LOWENSTEIN

You've kept this locked up for so long, Tom. Let it go... just let it go.

(beat)

You have so much to cry about.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

102A

An image of a boy in football uniform running directly towards us in SLOW MOTION. It's Bernard, who dives towards Tom's feet and sweeps his legs out from under him as CAMERA comes back to NORMAL SPEED. Bernard smiles as he observes Tom breathing heavily on the ground.

TOM

I'm too old for this shit. Let's try it again.

Tom lines up against Bernard again.

BERNARD

(teasing)

Must be tough to get old, huh, Coach? Out of shape and past your prime.

TOM

Bernard, I don't mean anything personal by this, but I'm going to leave cleat marks on your nose and cheeks.

BERNARD

It felt great putting you on your ass, Coach.

TOM

I can't believe I'm being outplayed by a violinist.

At the edge of the field, a man stands watching them. As Bernard pulls Tom to his feet -- laughing loudly -- he turns and sees the man. His expression instantly changes.

ANGLE - MAN ON FIELD

It is HERBERT WOODRUFF. He watches Tom and Bernard with an inscrutable expression. But the moment he knows that Bernard has spotted him, he grins and walks toward them. This is a man in full command of every situation; leading it with grace and tremendous charm. He stops a few feet away from them.

HERBERT

(smiling)

So this is how your mother lets you spend your summer. Professor Greenberg just called and said you've skipped two lessons this week.

BERNARD

I don't like Greenberg. He's a creep.

HERBERT

He's strict. The great teachers usually are.

TOM

I'm Tom Wingo, Mr. Woodruff. Bernard's football coach.

Herbert extends a hand warmly and shakes Tom's.

HERBERT

It's a pleasure, Mr. Wingo. I've heard a lot about you.

TOM

(to Bernard)

Let's call it quits for the day, Bernard. Go home and practice your fiddle. Maybe we can work something out tomorrow.

As Bernard heads out of the park, Tom turns to Herbert.

TOM

He's a good football player.

HERBERT

I had no idea he was so strong. But I'm not sure I want him playing the violin with broken fingers.

TOM

He's pretty careful. He said you'd be worried about that...

HERBERT

He's the one who should be worried.

HERBERT (CONT.)

(beat)

I'm sorry to cut your sessions short, but I've enrolled Bernard in the last two weeks at Tanglewood. With a little discipline, he might actually become a good musician.

TOM

You're the Maestro.

HERBERT

(smiles)

I'm glad you understand, Tom.

(turns to go; looks back)

Oh... Susan and I are having a dinner party next Friday. Why don't you join us?

TOM

Thanks, I'll look forward to it.

Herbert turns and walks out of the park.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY (OR HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY) 103

A nurse walks down a long hallway. As she passes Savannah's door, Lowenstein comes out.

Tom is seated across the hallway, waiting. He has a single gardenia in his hand.

TOM

How is she?

LOWENSTEIN

Considering what she's had to remember this week, she's doing very well. Why don't you go in for a minute?

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S ROOM - DAY

104

Savannah is sitting up in bed. She looks frail and exhausted; her eyes are rimmed and it's obvious that she's been crying.

Tom cautiously steps in.

TOM
How you doing, darlin'?

SAVANNAH
Well... I'm still here.

Tom gently places the gardenia in her hair and strokes her face. Both are at a loss for words.

SAVANNAH (CONT'D)
So...

TOM
So...

SAVANNAH
I don't know what to say.

TOM
Then just let me hold you.

He reaches out and takes her in his arms, holds her tightly. Savannah starts to cry.

SAVANNAH
I'm sorry I put you thru this,
Tom.

TOM
You did me a favor, kid - But
don't do it again. I just
couldn't bear to think of a world
without you in it, sweetheart.

CUT TO:

OMIT SC. 105

EXT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - DAY

106

Tom is carrying a Macy's bag and a suitcase, Bernard is carrying his violin case, as they get out of a cab. Tom tries to make light conversation.

TOM
I hear it's pretty up in
Tanglewood.

BERNARD
Who gives a shit?

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - DAY

107

Tom and Bernard angle past crowds through the main concourse.

TOM

I wrote to the coach at your school, pal.

BERNARD

Why?

TOM

I told him I was sending back a hell of a ball player next year. You're a tough kid, Bernard.

BERNARD

(surprised and moved)

I am?

TOM

Yep. You took everything I dished out and came back asking for more.

BERNARD

(finally smiles)

Well, you're the best coach I've ever had.

TOM

I'm the only coach you've ever had.

BERNARD

I mean teacher. You're the best teacher I've ever had, Coach Wingo.

TOM

(moved)

Thanks, Bernard. It's been a long time since a student of mine said that.

BERNARD

Why'd you quit? . . .

TOM

I thought I should be doing something better with my life.

BERNARD

Like what?

TOM
(smiles)
Well, that's the big question
I've yet to answer, buddy.

There's a pause as Tom checks his watch.

BERNARD
Maybe you'll go back to it.

TOM
I don't even know if they'd want
me back.

BERNARD
Well, maybe I could write a
letter or something. Just tell
me where to send it and I'll...

TOM
Thanks, Bernard, but I'd rather
you do something else for me.

BERNARD
What?

TOM
Play the violin. Your father
says you're pretty good.

BERNARD
Here? Now?

TOM
Why not? Cheer up this joint.

Bernard is surprised by the request, then enormously
flattered. He unsnaps the lock of his violin case and
pulls out his violin and bow. He runs the bow across the
strings once and pauses to tune the A string.

BERNARD
They're gonna think I'm nuts.

TOM
Do you really care?

BERNARD
No, maybe they'll throw money.

Then he begins playing the violin for his coach.

He plays with consummate skill, the rich strains of his
MUSIC ECHOING through the cavernous chambers of the train
station.

Tom watches him, profoundly moved by the leave-taking, by his love of the boy and by the music.

Bernard finishes as the train's engines make a noise. He puts the violin back in its case and looks up to Tom.

TOM
If I could play the violin like
that, I'd never touch a football.

BERNARD
What's wrong with doing both?

TOM
Absolutely nothing.

The two of them embrace.

BERNARD
My father hates you, Coach Wingo.
I'm sorry, but he does.

TOM
But he loves you. Goodbye,
Bernard.

Bernard hurries through the gate, down the ramp towards the train.

Tom realizes he's forgotten something. He reaches into the Macy's bag and pulls out a football.

TOM
Bernard! You might be needing
this!

As the train is moving down the tracks, Tom passes a perfect spiral to Bernard, who effortlessly catches it.

CUT TO:

INT. LOWENSTEIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

108

In the living room a group of dinner guests is gathered, listening to an impromptu recital of "Cavatina". Playing with Herbert is Monique, a live, beautiful PIANIST. Everyone is dressed elegantly... except Tom.

ANGLE -- TERRACE OFF LIVING ROOM

Lowenstein and Tom are out on the terrace, listening. Tom stands a few feet away from her and covertly observes her as she watches her husband play. She is mesmerized.

Tom leans over and whispers.

TOM
I thought classical musicians
were supposed to be pinched and
anemic-looking..

LOWENSTEIN

I'll seat you next to her, in case you want to make a pass.

TOM

No, thanks. She's not my type.

LOWENSTEIN

Good.

TOM

(surprised)

Why'd you say that?

LOWENSTEIN

I think she's having an affair with my husband.

ANGLE - HERBERT WOODRUFF IN LIVING ROOM

He finishes the piece as the other guests applaud.

Tom and Lowenstein enter the living room and head toward a bar, as Herbert and Monique join the dinner guests.

LOWENSTEIN

(to Tom)

You've met everyone?

TOM

Yeah, and I'm completely intimidated.

(indicates man in room)

I can't believe you know Madison Kingsley, he's one of my favorite writers.

The man in question -- MADISON KINGSLEY -- is a large, garrulous man who stands out among the others in the room.

LOWENSTEIN

(as they reach bar)

I'll be right back. I have to go check on dinner.

Lowenstein leaves. Herbert Woodruff approaches Tom, violin still in hand.

HERBERT

Tom, I'm delighted you're here.

TOM

Thanks. I'm delighted I got to hear you play in person again.

HERBERT

Again?

TOM

I saw you play at the Charleston
Music Festival last summer -
Brahms violin concerto.

HERBERT

Bartok.

TOM

Right.

HERBERT

(holds up his
violin)

Have you ever seen a Stradivarius
up close, Tom? It's the finest
instrument ever made.

(shows violin to
Tom)

Let me play something in your
honor. It's not often we have
Southern guests.

(raises bow to
violin)

What would you like to hear,
Coach? I'm afraid I don't know
many football songs.

Tom is aware that every eye in the room is on him and
Herbert.

TOM

Anything's fine with me.

Lowenstein comes back into the room and sees that Tom is
being baited but is helpless to stop it. With great flair,
Herbert lowers the bow to the strings and begins to play
"Dixie." Never has that song been played so flawlessly or
with such ironic intent.

As the song ends, Tom smiles slightly and speaks in a deep
Southern drawl.

TOM

Damn it all, Herb, that Mozart
sure cranked out some snappy
tunes.

Relieved laughter ensues from the other guests.

HERBERT

(to Tom)

Could you do me a favor and fix
me a Scotch and Soda?

TOM

Sure.

As Tom pours himself and Herbert a drink, he overhears
Herbert talking to Madison Kingsley.

HERBERT

(to Madison)

--A friend of Susan's. Some
football coach.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT.

109

The ten guests around the dining table, lit by candelabra
and the light of a Waterford chandelier. Herbert sits at
one end near Monique. Next to Monique is Tom. Next to Tom
is Madison Kingsley. The other guests are: SPENCER
RICHARDSON, a saturnine art critic, his Swedish model wife,
ANNA, Madison Kingsley's wife, CHRISTINE, and ED and RIVA
ROSENBERG, both musicians.

MADISON

How can you dismiss his work as
unimportant, Spencer? It's
hanging in the goddamn
Metropolitan.

SPENCER

So is toilet paper.

HERBERT

Tom, you should talk to Madison.
He's a great admirer of Southern
authors. Faulkner, Flannery
O'Connor, Eudora Welty.

MADISON

I love all those renegade
Confederates.

TOM

You mean you love excess and
eccentricity.

HERBERT

(laughs)

It's true, they're all mad as hatters, aren't they? I suppose you know a few things about madness, Tom.

TOM

A bit.

HERBERT

Tom's sister is the poet, Savannah Wingo, Madison. Are you familiar with her work?

MADISON

Yes. She's good. Very good.

HERBERT

She's a patient of Susan's.

LOWENSTEIN

Herbert, I don't think that's appropriate.

HERBERT

Darling, everyone knows you're the great psychic healer of the literary community. I'm surprised you don't get a share of your authors' royalties.

MADISON

(trying to turn this around)

What have you been drinking Herbert?

HERBERT

(laughs)

Ask Tom, he poured it. You weren't trying to poison me, were you?

TOM

Not intentionally. But you know how the subconscious mind works.

HERBERT

I like you Tom. I like your feistiness, your Tara-like pride.

LOWENSTEIN

You promised you wouldn't do this, Herbert.

Herbert is in perfect control of the situation and is playing it out slowly.

HERBERT

You're right, Susan. I shouldn't be picking on Tom. I should be picking on you -- for turning my son into Quasi Modo in a football uniform.

MONIQUE

I can't believe you'd let Bernard hurt his hands for a silly game, Susan.

LOWENSTEIN

Monique, I can't believe you'd come to my house when everybody knows you're fucking my husband.

There's absolutely no movement at the table. Then Monique abruptly rises from her seat and leaves the room.

Herbert smiles thinly, looks at Lowenstein.

HERBERT

Susan, I think you owe Monique an apology.

LOWENSTEIN

You son of a bitch. I think you owe me an apology.

HERBERT

Darling, where's your sense of humor?

Herbert goes back to talking to his guests. Tom rises from the table and leaves the room, to the visible relief of all the other guests.

Lowenstein is debating whether or not to follow Tom, when his voice is heard from the next room.

TOM (O.S.)

Yoo-hoo, Herbert. Southern boy's got hold of your fiddle.

Led by Herbert, the dinner party leaps to their feet and heads toward the sound of Tom's voice.

CUT TO:

EXT. TERRACE - NIGHT

110

When the dinner party arrives on the scene, Tom is holding the Stradivarius over the edge of the terrace.

HERBERT

What the hell are you doing?

TOM

Darling, where's your sense of humor?

HERBERT

That Stradivarius is worth over a million dollars, Tom.

TOM

If I drop it, it won't be worth shit.

LOWENSTEIN

Don't do it, Tom.

TOM

Apologize to your wife, Herbert.

HERBERT

You're bluffing.

TOM

I may be. But it's a powerful bluff, isn't it, asshole?

Tom throws the violin spinning in the air. He almost loses it as he catches it in midair, leaning far out over the balcony with the noise of the TRAFFIC beneath him.

HERBERT

(screaming)

I'm sorry, Susan!!! For Chrissakes, I'm sorry!

TOM

Sincerity becomes you, Herbie. Now apologize to me for your unforgivable breach of etiquette at the table tonight, you possum-breathed cocksucker.

HERBERT

I'm very sorry, Tom.

Tom hands the violin to Herbert.

TOM
Y'all sure know how to give a
party up here in New York City.

He turns and walks directly out of the apartment without
making a single farewell.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST - NIGHT

111

Tom is trying to hail a cab when Lowenstein runs out of her
apartment building and heads over to him, unable to speak.
They stand in silence for a moment, then he gently
straightens a knot in the string of pearls around her neck.

TOM
Now I know why you always seem so
sad.

She moves into his arms and he holds her tightly for a long
time. She whispers.

LOWENSTEIN
Please take me with you.

INT. SAVANNAH'S BEDROOM - CLOSE ON TOM AND LOWENSTEIN - NIGHT 112

kissing... tenderly, almost lightly at first.

ANGLE - BEDROOM

Tom is unzipping Lowenstein's dress. He leans forward and
kisses the back of her neck, her shoulders, and then her
shoulder blades. She turns to him and begins to unbutton
his shirt.

TOM
Let me warn you, the mere thought
of falling in love terrifies me.

LOWENSTEIN
(kisses him)
Then let's just be friends.

TOM
(kisses her)
Very good friends.

ANGLE - BED

Both nude, locked together. She moves her hands up and
down his back.

He kisses her throat, her mouth, her eyes and they are in rhythm now, moving through and passing beyond the veils of solitude that have entrapped them and kept them apart for so long.

FADE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

113

Lowenstein is lying in Tom's arms as Tom strokes her hair.

TOM

Lowenstein, I think I like adultery.

LOWENSTEIN

That's why they made it a sin.

She kisses him and they draw together again.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S KITCHEN - MORNING

114

Tom puts up coffee, singing along to an EVANGELICAL PROGRAM on TV.

TOM

Ree-pent, sinners! Cast your lot with the Lord!

He hears LOWENSTEIN LAUGHING LOUDLY from the next room. Then she emerges from the bedroom, tying the belt of one of Savannah's robes.

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

115

Tom stops to admire her tousled beauty.

TOM

I think I'm starting to like this city, Doctor.

LOWENSTEIN

What made you change your mind?

The doorbell rings.

TOM

(moving to door)
You have to ask?

LOWENSTEIN

I'm neurotic. I need a lot of reassurance.

TOM

Lowenstein, you could make me
change my mind about anything.

Tom opens the door. Eddie Detreville is outside. He's got
a bag of croissants, and a copy of the New York Times.

Eddie walks past Tom and sees Lowenstein in the bathrobe.

EDDIE

Did I interrupt something vile?

Eddie coolly sets down the bag of croissants and paper, then
looks over at Lowenstein.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

Oh, hello, Susan. You look
fabulous this morning. I'm so
glad you both got laid.

(flashes a devilish
smile)

Do you like butter on your
croissant, Darling?

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - MORNING

116

Lowenstein and Eddie are sitting on the fire escape outside
Savannah's window and Tom passes out a pot of espresso and
a tray of croissants, cups, jam, cream and sugar.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

117

Tom and Lowenstein are holding hands as they walk across
the Brooklyn Bridge.

LOWENSTEIN

What else would you show me in
the South?

TOM

Everything. I'd take you to the
marsh and say, "Breathe deeply -
that's the smell of the South in
heat." And I would open an
oyster and feed it to you from
the shell and say, "That's the
taste of my childhood."

LOWENSTEIN

There's only one problem.

TOM
What's that?

LOWENSTEIN
I'm allergic to oysters.

They both crack up laughing.

CUT TO:

OMIT 118

INT. SAVANNAH'S KITCHEN - DAY

119

The kitchen is a mess. Lowenstein keeps glancing at a cookbook as she mixes ingredients. Tom's sitting by the counter, watching a baseball game on a small TV.

LOWENSTEIN
I love Federal Express. It may
even get there warm.

He looks back and catches her as she's about to pour yeast into a bowl of liquids.

TOM
No, no, no. Don't put the yeast
in dry. Dilute it with water
first.

LOWENSTEIN
Does it really make a difference?

TOM
There's an order of things,
Lowenstein. Trust me on this one.
(beat)
You want me to show you?

LOWENSTEIN
No, just tell me what to do, and
I'll do it.

TOM
Okay. Take off your clothes.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

119A

Lowenstein is on top of Tom; she slowly moves down his body, kissing his chest, his stomach...

LOWENSTEIN

Qu'est-ce que tu veut, mon amour?
Des mousse au chocolat avec
Julienne d'orange?

TOM

(pulling her up)
You're making me hungry.

CUT TO:

EXT. GROVE STREET - DAY

120

Tom and Lowenstein come out of Savannah's apartment building carrying bags of groceries and two small overnight bags.

EXT. FDR DRIVE - DAY

121

Tom and Lowenstein are in a convertible, hurtling up the highway out of New York City.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

122

The convertible winds its way up an old country road, passing a small, rural village. Turns up a dirt driveway.

INT. CAR - DAY

123

Lowenstein leans against Tom's shoulder and he puts his hand on her leg. She seems so relaxed she's almost sleepy.

EXT. CABIN HOUSE - DAY

124

They unload the car outside a rugged cabin, set back off the road.

TOM

I miss the clean, fresh smell of carbon monoxide. I can't believe we're only an hour away from New York.

LOWENSTEIN

South Carolina's not the only state with trees; you know.

He follows Lowenstein up a path, peering all around at the spectacular landscape.

TOM

In my next life, I want to be you, Lowenstein. Make lots of money off crazy people, get a fabulous penthouse in the city, great country house, and a guy like me.

Lowenstein smiles as she unlocks the door with a bag of groceries in her hand.

CUT TO:

INT. CABIN - KITCHEN - DAY

125

Tom is sauteing vegetables in a wok. We hear Lowenstein hang up the phone.

TOM

How's Bernard?

LOWENSTEIN

He couldn't believe I baked him bread, but I could tell he liked it.

She moves her hands along his stomach.

TOM

If you want lunch today, you better do something else with your hands.

LOWENSTEIN

Like what?

TOM

Chop a carrot.

She laughs and takes a knife. Moves to a counter and chops vegetables. There is a sense of total ease and comfort in their silence. Then:

LOWENSTEIN

I spoke to Herbert today. He wants me to come back.

TOM

You're an incredible woman. Why wouldn't he want you back?

LOWENSTEIN

(radiant)

It's terrible how much I enjoy hurting him.

(beat)

I feel beautiful again, Tom. I feel absolutely goddamn, stinking beautiful!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

126

TOM

...Lowenstein, Lowenstein.

They were making love. Tom rolls off her body, breathing heavily. After a pause.

TOM (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Maybe I should be calling you Susan now.

LOWENSTEIN

(whispers)

No, I love the way you say 'Lowenstein.'

He holds her tightly and gazes at her with love.

TOM

Before I met you I was in a deep sleep and I never even knew it.

LOWENSTEIN

(curls up beside him)

I'm afraid.

TOM

Of what, sweetheart?

LOWENSTEIN

Of what's going to happen when Sallie wants you back.

TOM

Don't be afraid.

LOWENSTEIN

She'll want you back.

TOM

What makes you so sure?

LOWENSTEIN
(bites his neck).
I've sampled the merchandise.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN TRAIL - DUSK

127

They are walking up a mountain trail, both carrying backpacks. Tom is several steps ahead of her.

TOM
If we stay together, do I have to become Jewish?

LOWENSTEIN
Of course not. Herbert's not Jewish.

TOM
Look, I don't mind. Everyone in my family's doing it.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

128

Tom and Lowenstein have built a fire and are lying on a blanket beside a small lake. The sky is shimmering with stars. Tom is staring up at them.

TOM
There's Luke up there somewhere.
(calls out)
Stupid asshole!

There's a long silence. Lowenstein touches his face.

TOM
I want to see Savannah when we get back. Tell her some things.

LOWENSTEIN
Why don't you take her out for a few hours tomorrow?

TOM
(sadly)
Tomorrow? I hate to leave this place.

She moves closer to him.

LOWENSTEIN

Let's go back to the house and
make love.

TOM

(unbuttoning her
shirt)

You've still got a lot to learn
about the outdoors.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH STREET SEAPORT - DAY

129

Tom and Savannah walk along the water.

SAVANNAH

I'm glad you brought me here.

They stop and lean over the rail.

TOM

Do you remember when we first saw
the white porpoise?

SAVANNAH

We named her Carolina Snow. She
was the color of milk. And the
pilot whales that stranded
themselves on the beach? We
spent hours pulling them back to
the sea.

TOM

(laughing)

Remember when Luke put the dead
sea turtle in Reese Newbury's
bed? God, the smell...

SAVANNAH

It's amazing what you remember
when you remember.

They begin to walk again.

SAVANNAH (CONT'D)

I miss Luke, Tom..

TOM

You can always write about him.

SAVANNAH

(smiling)

That's true...

123A

TOM

Lowenstein says she's going to let
you go home soon.

SAVANNAH

I think I'm ready...What about
you? When are you going home?

TOM
I don't know... Sallie and I are
having problems.

SAVANNAH
I'm sorry, Tom.

TOM
(not wanting to draw
her in any further)
I thought I might stay up here
for a while.

SAVANNAH
You, in New York? I can't
picture that. You could never
leave the South.

TOM
You did.

SAVANNAH
Yeah, but it's not soul food for
me.

CUT TO:

OMIT SC. 130

EXT. SAVANNAH'S STREET - P.O.V. FIRE ESCAPE - DAY 130A

Children running in and out of the water, flowing freely
from a fire hydrant. We see Tom watching them, enjoying
them, as the phone rings.

INT. LIVING ROOM. - DAY 131

He goes over and picks it up.

TOM
Hello?
(beat)
Hi, Sallie.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOWENSTEIN'S OFFICE - DAY 132

Lowenstein leaves her office at the end of the day. She is
cool and professional as she carries her briefcase and
heads toward Fifth Avenue.

She stops abruptly when she sees:

LOWENSTEIN'S POV - TOM

He is standing across the street from her. Something is terribly wrong in his manner and demeanor. ..

ANGLE - LOWENSTEIN

She immediately senses that a curtain is drawing. She crosses the street and comes up to him.

LOWENSTEIN

She called you.

He nods. Lowenstein shouts.

LOWENSTEIN

It's not fair!

She stands stiffly before him, not moving, her lip trembling.

LOWENSTEIN

Goddamn her. Goddamn her for loving you before I did. Goddamn her for having your children before I could. Goddamn her for remembering Savannah's goddamn phone number.

Tom tries to laugh, then draws her to him and holds her as she starts to cry. She can't even put her arms around him.

LOWENSTEIN

One of the things I love about you is that you're the kind of man who'll always go back to his family.

TOM

Just hold me, please. I feel like I'm dying.

LOWENSTEIN

I've got to find me a nice Jewish boy. You guys are killing me.

She looks up at Tom and is surprised to see tears streaming down his face.

CUT TO:

INT. SAVANNAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

133

Savannah is looking out at the traffic on Grove Street. Tom comes into the living room and sets down her bags. His luggage is stacked in the bedroom. He's put new gardenias in.

Tom comes up behind Savannah. There is a new strength about her.

TOM

Now don't start doing half-gainers off the fire escape.

SAVANNAH

Are you okay about going home?

TOM

I think so.

SAVANNAH

I started a new book of poems last night. It's called "The Prince of Tides." And I dedicated it to someone very special.

TOM

(smiles)

...He'd appreciate that.

SAVANNAH

I dedicated it to my brother, Tom Wingo... My memory.

Tom takes her in his arms and whispers.

TOM

Thank you, Sweetheart.

CUT TO:

INT. RAINBOW ROOM - NIGHT

134

The city rises up in pillars of light beneath Tom and Lowenstein as they prepare to have their last meal together. Avoiding his eyes, she studies the menu, as he studies her face... with love.

LOWENSTEIN

What's the worst thing on the menu?

TOM

Why are you making this so hard,
Lowenstein?

LOWENSTEIN

Because I want you to stay with
me.

TOM

I have a family.

LOWENSTEIN

So did I. And I left Herbert.

TOM

He was hurting you. Sallie
wasn't hurting me.... I was
hurting her.

LOWENSTEIN

You love her more. Admit it.

TOM

No, Lowenstein. I loved her
longer.

She finally looks at him and attempts a smile. She knows
that's true.

LOWENSTEIN

Would you happen to know the
names of any football coaches
currently in Manhattan, you son-
of-a-bitch?

They both laugh. Tom leans over the table and kisses her.

INT. RAINBOW ROOM - CLOSE ON MUSICIANS - NIGHT

135

playing a slow song. CAMERA begins to PULL BACK, picking
up

TOM AND LOWENSTEIN

dancing a slow dance, bodies pressed close together.

CAMERA keeps PULLING BACK, revealing that the room is
almost empty. Windows all around the two solitary lovers
as they dance.

Outside, all of New York shimmers and glistens.

The only thing missing is the snow.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH CAROLINA - WINGO HOUSE - AFTERNOON

136

A cab pulls into the driveway of the Wingo house. Tom gets out.

EXT. PORCH - WINGO HOUSE - AFTERNOON

137

He sets his luggage down, looks out to the beach. Sees:

POV - BEACH

His daughters playing in the water. Sallie is on the beach, reading a book.

ANGLE - TOM

moves down to the beach. After a moment, Sallie looks back and sees him.

She rises. They move toward each other and embrace.

ANGLE - WINGO GIRLS IN WATER

They spot Tom and race out of the water.

GIRLS

Daddy!

ANGLE - BEACH

From a distance, we see the whole family reunited.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

138

Tom is mowing the field with precision, expertise and love. He bends down and picks up a stone, throws it off the grass.

TOM (V.O.)

So I returned to my Southern home
and my Southern life...

(beat)

And it is in the presence of my
wife and children that I
acknowledge my life, my destiny.
I am a teacher, a coach, and a
well-loved man.

(beat)

And it is more than enough.

INT. SCHOOLROOM - DAY

139

Tom sits cross-legged on a desk as a student answers a question.

Tom smiles and speaks to the students as five hands rise into the air.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In New York, I learned that I needed to love my mother and father in all their flawed, outrageous humanity... and that in families, there are no crimes beyond forgiveness.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - NIGHT

140

Tom sits at the top of an empty stadium and looks out to the sea and the stars.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But it is the mystery of life that sustains me now, and I look to the north and wish again that there were two lives apportioned to every man and woman.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

141

Tom is driving through the streets of Charleston with the top down on his convertible.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

At the end of every day, I drive through the city of Charleston...

EXT. BRIDGE - DUSK

142

Tom looks up at the sky as he drives.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...And as I cross the bridge that will take me home, I feel the words building within me. I cannot stop them or tell you why I say them. But as I reach the top of the bridge, these words come to me in a whisper. I say them as prayer, as regret, as praise...

ANGLE - TOM'S FACE

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I say...

(pauses)

'Lowenstein. Lowenstein'

FADE OUT

THE END