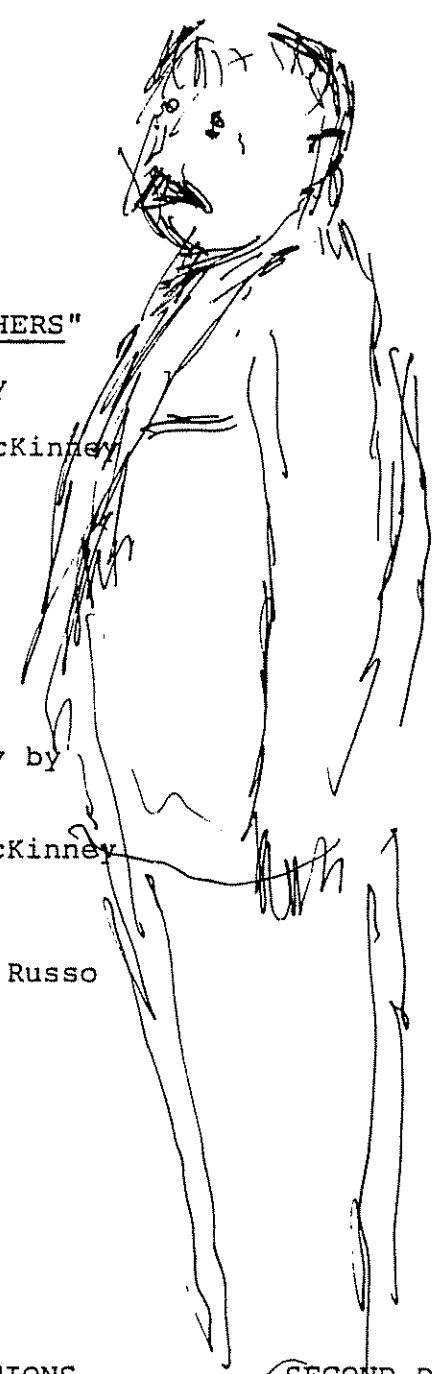




"TEACHERS"

by

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story by

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&

Irwin Russo

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SECOND DRAFT
August 5, 1983

FADE IN:

EXT. JFK HIGH - MORNING

A "FOR SALE" sign sits in the front yard of a small, middle class house.

WIDER ANGLE:

As we pull back we see BEYOND THE SIGN to JFK HIGH SCHOOL which lies ACROSS THE STREET. The large brick building has almost turned black from years of neglect. Above the front door is the name of the school, "~~JOHN F. KENNEDY~~ HIGH SCHOOL" written in bold letters that have tarnished.

A SERIES OF ANGLES:

show the large crowd of students waiting to get into the school. It is a cold, winter day and they are dressed accordingly. The crowd is pretty much divided by race and sex. Some are smoking, some girls are doing cheers, couples are making out, girls are fixing their makeup, boys are play fighting, etc.

INT. JFK, FRONT DOOR

A SECURITY GUARD opens the front door and the kids pour into the lobby with an explosion of NOISE. His PARTNER pulls several kids from the group and begins to search them. THERESA BLASER, a middle-aged lady, enters the lobby. Her coat is undone in disregard to the cold. As she looks around the lobby we can see a CRAZED, INSANE look in her eyes. She's probably on a mission from God.

ANOTHER SECURITY GUARD walks to the hallways and unlocks the LARGE CAGE DOOR which has closed off the hall from the lobby. He slides the door up and kids enter the hall. As he turns back to the lobby we see EDDIE PILIKIAN, age 16, sneak out from the formerly locked hall that he had entered earlier. Stuffing some papers under his coat, he makes his way into the lobby where he is met by another student, DANNY REECE. He opens his coat to show Danny the papers, and then smiles and together they melt into the crowd.

EXT. JFK HIGH

LISA HAMMOND parks her small foreign car in the school lot and locks her door. She is 27, very attractive and dressed much too expensively to be a teacher. Pulling her coat closer around her neck, Lisa heads for the school. She stops quickly as a large SEDAN nearly hits her as it speeds into the lot. She looks at the occupants and then smiles and shakes her head. She continues on into the school.

ANGLE ON:

The SEDAN SCREECHES to a halt right in front of a SCHOOL BUS, blocking it in. DR. DAVID BURKE, the school superintendent and JOSEPH LEVI, the school's attorney get out of the car and head for the school.

CUT TO:

The office is a MADHOUSE of SOUND AND COMMOTION with PHONES RINGING and people CROWDING into the room trying to get another school day started. A LARGE, SURLY-LOOKING KID is escorted into the office by the SCHOOL NURSE. He holds his side, trying to stem the flow of blood from a WOUND. There are SHOUTS from the crowd as they see the kid and gather around him, forcing him to sit down. He pushes people away, not wanting their help.

ANGLE ON:

ROGER McMAHON, the VICE-PRINCIPAL, stands in the midst of the school secretaries. He too rushes to the kid.

ROGER

What happened to him?

The nurse attempts to look at the wound but the kid stops her.

NURSE

Stab wound. He may live if he lets me fix it.

The kid won't and the nurse looks at him tiredly.

ROGER

Who stabbed you?

KID

I dunno.

ROGER

Of course.

(turns to secretary)
Call an ambulance.

KID

I don't want no ambulance.

ROGER

It's not for you, it's for the insurance company.

(to nurse)
Do what you can.

NURSE

Sure.

(beat)
Who's got the stapler?

The kid jumps and the nurse smiles wickedly. The rest of the people in the office forget the kid and go back to what they were doing.

LISA enters the office. She looks at the bleeding kid and then continues on. Roger is back doing paper work with the secretaries. He doesn't look up but he sees Lisa anyway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

3.

ROGER

Ah, Miss Hammond. What can I do for you today?

LISA

Do you know that kid's bleeding?

Roger finally looks up from his papers.

ROGER

Yes.

Lisa stares at the kid as an angry BURKE and LEVY enter the office. They head for Grace's desk and Levi picks up her phone as she hangs up. Grace works on some papers.

BURKE

Where's Prinicipal Holt?

GRACE

(doesn't look up)

No one really knows.

(she sees Levi)

Hey! We are trying to call some substistutes!

LEVI

Just one call.

Burke looks around the office and sees Roger. As he starts for him, Roger looks up.

ROGER

Good morning, Dr. Burke. I believe you know Miss Hammond...

Burke spots Lisa and immediately, his bright cheery smile is flashed.

BURKE

...of Kemmel, Keating and Haas attorneys at law, yes of course. Good morning, Miss Hammond.

LISA

(amused smile)

Dr. Burke. I believe we arrived together this morning.

BURKE

What? Oh, yes.

(turns to Levi)

Joseph Levi, our attorney.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Levi nods to her as he talks on the phone.

LISA

This is for you, Mr. McMahon.

She hands Roger a legal document. He looks at it.

ROGER

What's this?

LISA

(again looking at the kid)

It's a notice informing you that we're going to hold depositions here.

(turns to him, sarcastically)

If your teachers can't remember to bring their records with them, we'll come to the records. We'd like to start tomorrow.

Roger reads the paper and then hands it to Levi who is still on the phone. He glances at it.

LEVI

Miss Hammond, I think you'll find that we are trying our very best to cooperate with you on this matter.

LISA

Mr. Levi, our client is suing this school because he graduated but can't read or write. I would think that all of us would be cooperating to help clear this up.

LEVI

Uh-huh.

GRACE WENTZEL swivels around in her chair to face Roger.

GRACE

We've got at least 10% of the teachers out again today and we're having trouble finding subs.

ROGER

(nods)

Scrape the bottom of the barrel if you have to, Grace.

(goes back to his papers
and then has a thought)

Is Jarrell here?

GRACE

On a Monday?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

Call Jarrell.

Grace nods and spins back to her desk.

EUGENE HOLT, JFK'S PRINCIPAL, walks from the rear offices. He smiles at Burke and holds out his hand.

HOLT

Superintendent Burke...

BURKE

Well...Principal Holt.

As they shake hands, Holt looks beyond Burke to the kid.

HOLT

Is that kid bleeding?

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX JARRELL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The room is a mess, strewn with men's clothes and in the corner, women's clothes. There are TWO LUMPS under the covers on the bed. THE PHONE RINGS. One lump stirs. A hand snakes out from under the covers and searches for the phone. No luck. Finally a head appears. ALEX JARRELL, age 37, looks around the room trying to locate the phone. He finds it under the nightstand next to the bed and grabs it.

ALEX (into phone)

Yeah.

GRACE (over phone)

Mr. Jarrell?...Mrs. Wentzel from Kennedy. Are we coming in today or are we taking another of our famous three day weekends.

ALEX (into phone)

What? What time is it?

GRACE (over phone)

Seven-forty five, Mr. Jarrell.
You're already ten minutes late.

Alex runs his hand through his hair and tries to focus on the nightstand.

GRACE

Well?

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (into phone)
Well what?

GRACE (over phone)
Are you going to teach today?

ALEX (into phone)
(sighs)
Yeah, Gracie, I'll be there.

GRACE (over phone)
Why, thank you, Mr. Jarrell. It's
so nice of you to take into
consideration the trouble you cause
other people by your...

Alex hangs up in the middle of Grace's lecture. He rolls over and looks at the ceiling. The second lump stirs and an attractive BLOND appears.

BLOND
I thought you said you were an
airline pilot.

ALEX
I am.

BLOND
Didn't I hear that lady say
something about teaching?

Alex rolls out of bed and slips into a pair of jeans.

ALEX
Yeah, right...well, I've got to go
in and teach a class on cabin
pressure...you know, oxygen masks
and all that.

The Blond nods and gets out of bed and begins to dress. Alex leaves the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Alex walks through the equally messy living room and into:

INT. KITCHEN

ALEX
Want some coffee?

The Blond enters the kitchen, tucking in her blouse.

BLOND
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: .

Alex picks up the coffee pot from what looks like a WOODEN HOT PAD. He sets it on the burner and turns to get some coffee. The Blond picks up the HOT PAD and looks at it.

INSERT:

It's not a hot pad at all but a PLAQUE the reads, "TEACHER OF THE YEAR, 1973. ALEX JARRELL".

The Blond quickly puts it back before Alex sees her. He turns back and starts to make the coffee. The Blond finishes dressing.

BLOND

Look, I'm really running late here.
Maybe I'd better skip the coffee.

ALEX

Okay.

He turns to her. She looks at him sadly.

BLOND

Call me sometime?

ALEX

(smiles)

Sure.

She kisses him and then heads for the door. Alex watches her go and then pours a cup of coffee. He walks into:

INT. LIVING ROOM

and sits down at his desk. He takes a sip of the coffee, grimaces and then sets it down. He pulls out a piece of paper.

ANGLE ON PAPER:

It's Alex's resignation from JFK.

Alex stares at the resignation and then finally puts it into one of the drawers. Grabbing his coffee, he heads into the bedroom to finish dressing.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

Lisa is still trying to talk to Roger, but he's busy with his paper work. Levi is on the phone again and Burke is talking to Holt.

ANGLE ON:

A teacher stands next to the DITTO MACHINE making copies. Though well past middle age, the teacher is powerfully built. His name is KENNETH STILES, but everyone calls him DITTO for obvious reasons. THERESA BLASER, still looking MAD, walks up to Ditto and stares at him. He doesn't even notice her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lisa continues to argue with Roger.

LISA
You really don't seem to take this
lawsuit seriously.

ROGER
And you take things too seriously,
Miss Hammond. That was your
problem when you were a student
here and that's your problem now.

Lisa does a slow burn:

LISA
And you were a rotten English
teacher.

ROGER
(smiles)
I know.

ANGLE ON:

A UNIFORMED COP enters the office. He looks at the BLEEDING KID
and then goes to Grace who is still calling subs.

COP
You know that kid's bleeding? You
should report that.

Grace looks at the COP and then holds out her hand to the KID.

GRACE
Well?..

COP
Well, not to me! I'm here to give
a lecture.

GRACE
How thrilling.

She dials another number.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING HALLWAY - MORNING

The LANDLADY and a FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER are walking down the
shabby hall. Behind them is the Social Worker's charge, HERBERT
GEISER. He smiles sweetly as he follows them through the hall. A
PHONE RINGS in the b.g. Most of the doors to the apartments are
open. It is very hot in the hall and the Social Worker loosens
her coat.

LANDLADY
I must apologize for the heat.
This hall is the warmest part of
the whole building. Most of the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LANDLADY (cont'd)
 tenants just leave their doors
 open to get the heat.
 (leans closer)
 We're a friendly building here, ya
 know.

THE PHONE CONTINUES TO RING in the b.g. as the landlady looks at Herbert. He smiles and nods. She smiles back, somewhat uneasy and leans closer to the Social Worker.

LANDLADY
 Are you sure he's safe? I mean,
 he's not dangerous or anything.

SOCIAL WORKER
 (whispering)
 Oh no, I assure you there will be
 no problems with Mr. Geiser. He's
 completely harmless. He merely has
 a few problems with reality, that's
 all. And this place would be just
 marvelous for Herbert. It's only
 four blocks from the hospital.

The landlady doesn't look too convinced but she smiles bravely.

LANDLADY
 Yes...well, the apartment is
 upstairs.

They continue on and pass an open apartment door. The RINGING PHONE is in this apartment. The ladies continue on but Herbert stops and looks into the apartment. He looks back at the ladies and then into the room. He shrugs and walks into the apartment.

INT. APARTMENT

THE PHONE IS STILL RINGING. Herbert looks around the empty apartment. We can hear a SHOWER and someone SINGING. The PHONE RINGS and finally Herbert picks it up.

HERBERT (into phone)
 Yes?

GRACE (into phone)
 Mr. Stewart Vanzant?

Herbert looks around the room again and shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

HERBERT (into phone)

Yes.

GRACE (into phone)

Mr. Vanzant, this is Mrs. Wentzel from Kennedy High...We'd like you to come in and substitute one of our history classes. It may be for several days. Can you make it?

Herbert thinks for a minute and then his face lights up in a joyful smile.

HERBERT (into phone)

Yes!

INT. MAIN OFFICE -MORNING

The commotion of the office is still going strong. Roger talks to four people at once as students and faculty shuffle in and out. Lisa looks through her notes.

THERESA BLASER continues to stare at DITTO. Finally she blows.

THERESA

You are always hogging that machine!

DITTO

(confused)

What?

THERESA

Everyday, day in and day out you are on that machine!

The NOISE in the office dies down as people become aware of the argument.

THERESA

I have been trying to use that machine for three weeks! Everytime I try...you're here! Well, today is my day! I want to use this machine! I need this machine! This machine needs me!

DITTO

(flustered)

I fail to see....

THERESA

You fail to see? You fail to see? Can you see this, you son of a bitch!

Theresa grabs the INK DISPENSER for the ditto machine and begins to squirt ink on Ditto. He jumps back but Theresa presses on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

11.

THERESA

Can you see now? Can you?

She throws the ink dispenser at Ditto and begins to beat him with her fists. She is grabbed from behind by Roger, the COP and others. They wrestle her to the floor and she fights them all the way.

THE BLEEDING KID LAUGHS.

THERESA

Today is my day! MY DAY!!

Ditto stares at her, holding his arms away from his ink stained shirt.

Theresa is finally subdued and Roger gets up and straightens his clothes. Lisa moves next to him, an expression of horror on her face.

LISA

Who is that?

ROGER

Oh...that's our school
psychologist.

CUT TO:

INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

The entire student body of JFK has gathered in the auditorium. Once again they are divided by race, sex, etc.

ANGLE ON:

THE COP from the office is on the stage giving a lecture on drug abuse. He has several visual aids which the kids can't possibly see and a large screen next to him.

COP

Drug abuse has become a major cause
of dropped grades in our school
system.

A SERIES OF ANGLES:

show the kids as the COP drones on in the b.g. Some are eating, some sleep, some read and most talk. One kid lights a cigarette; RAY TROY, boy's gym teacher, yells down a row for quiet and smiles at a girl, etc.

ONE STUDENT sits in his seat and looks around uncomfortably. Even though he is dressed like a student, it is clear that he is at least thirty years old and as we will see, everyone knows that he's a NARC.

EDDIE PILIKIAN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

sneaks down one of the aisles, looking down the rows. He stops.

EDDIE'S POV

A beautiful 16 year old girl, DIANE WARRICK, sits in the middle of a group of older boys.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Eddie climbs over kids and comes to the seat next to Diane. The older boy in the seat looks at Eddie.

EDDIE

Do you mind?

Diane nods to the boy and he leaves his seat and Eddie sits. He pulls out the papers he had stolen earlier and hands them to Diane. As she studies them, he smiles.

EDDIE

The Pilikian express service never fails.

He smiles at Diane but she frowns.

DIANE

Eddie, these aren't our tests.
These are from fourth period.
Can't you read?

She hands them back to Eddie and he looks at them.

EDDIE

What're ya talking about?

Diane turns back to her friends as Eddie realizes his mistake.

EDDIE

(to himself)

Fuck.

He looks around the room and then turns to the kids in the row behind him.

EDDIE

Hey, anybody got Rowe for fourth period?

ALEX JARRELL slips into the auditorium. He wears jeans, a wrinkled shirt and sports coat, and his tie hangs loosely around his neck. He pulls out the morning paper and begins to read as he leans against the wall.

COP

Now that we've covered the basics I think we're ready to proceed with our slide presentation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE, having no luck selling the tests, slouches down in his seat.

THE LIGHTS DIM and THE COP punches up his first slide...a shot of WHITE POWDER AND A SYRINGE.

COP (VO)
This...is heroin. AKA horse,
smack, scag, the big H...

Eddie smiles incredulously and looks at the people around him as if to say "Can you believe this guy?"

THE COP punches up the next slide...a shot of pills.

COP (VO)
Amphetamine...uppers.

NEXT SLIDE...more pills.

COP (VO)
Barbiturate...downers.

Eddie slouches down in his seat and WHISTLES LOUDLY.

THE ROOM fills with LAUGHTER. THE COP is not amused. HE GLARES out at the audience. In defiance he punches up the next slide.

COP
Marijuana!

Eddie starts to APPLAUD.

AGAIN LAUGHTER. A few CLAP with Eddie.

THE COP is furious now. Next slide.

COP
Cocaine!

EDDIE
YEAH!

This time everybody applauds amidst laughter. The NARC looks around uncomfortably and then decides that the best thing to do would be to applaud along with the others, which he does.

THE COP won't be stopped. He goes to the next slide.

COP
(shouting to be heard)
QUAALUDES!!

The room ERUPTS, led by Eddie as he JUMPS to his feet. The whole room joins in giving this drug a standing ovation. Eddie begins to thrust his fist into the air and chant...

EDDIE
LUDES...LUDES...LUDES...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Soon the whole room is chanting.

STUDENTS
LUDES...LUDES...LUDES...

Eddie jumps around leading the cheers.

ANGLE ON:

Alex continues to read his paper, but we can see that he is using it to cover his laughter.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The hall is crowded with students, teachers, and security guards as everyone heads for their next class. Alex walks with another teacher, CARL ROSENFELD. Alex carries a TOOL BOX.

ROSENFELD
You hear they're going to close
Banyon School? I hear they're
going to convert it into an armory
for Chrissake.

HERBERT GEISER, wearing his best suit, walks down the hall carrying a slip of paper. He stops in front of Alex and Rosenfeld.

HERBERT
Excuse me...where might I find room
four twenty seven?

ALEX
Oh, up the stairs and around the
corner over there.

Herbert looks to where Alex points and then smiles.

HERBERT
Thank you.

He smiles again and is on his way. Alex watches him and then smiles.

ROSENFELD
Well, back to the trenches.

He leaves Alex at his room and walks down the hall. Alex walks into his room. THE BELL RINGS. The SECURITY GUARDS begin to sweep the hall.

GUARD
All right! That's the bell! Let's
move it!

Under the watchful eyes of the guards, the hall empties. ONE BY

(CONTINUED)

Wm Co HQ 15.

CONTINUED:

ONE the classroom doors CLOSE. The hall is now completely silent. It seems more like a prison than a hallway in a high school. One GUARD speaks into his walkie-talkie.

GUARD

Hall C clear.

INT. ALEX'S CLASSROOM

Alex's students are all over the room. They are still wearing their coats as the room is FREEZING. We hear a LOUD BANGING NOISE coming from the RADIATOR. Alex walks to his desk and sets the tool box on his chair. He opens his attendance book and looks at the class.

ALEX

All right troops, let's go. Settle down.

GARY HAHN is in the front of a group of kids acting out a story he's telling. Alex looks at him.

ALEX

What are you, running for President? Sit down.

He does and the class settles down. DIANE WARRICK sits close to the front of the class and SMILES SEDUCTIVELY at Alex. He smiles back.

ALEX

Okay, if you're not here today speak up. Good.

He drops his attendance book and picks up the tool box.

ALEX (cont'd)

Today, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, we are going to delve into the fascinating world of..... radiator repair!

He slams the tool box onto his desk. The class GROANS.

GARY

We're suppose to be learning about social studies, not radiators.

ALEX

Learning, Mr. Hahn, is limitless.

INT. CARL ROSENFELD'S CLASS

In contrast, Rosenfeld's class hasn't settled down as Carl tries to take attendance. He gets no cooperation. As he reads from his book, he goes to his closet and hangs up his coat. We can see his other personal things in the closet.

(CONTINUED)

ROSENFELD
Hold it down!
(looks at book)
Henson!

HENSON
Here.

ROSENFELD
Alvado!

ALVADO
Alvedo!

Rosenfeld looks at her.

ROSENFELD
What? You said Alvado yesterday.

ALVADO
No I didn't, Mr. Rosenfeld.

ROSENFELD
Yes you did. And the day before it
was Alveras.

ALVADO
No I didn't. You're trying to get
me into trouble, man!

Rosenfeld sighs and marks his book as the class LAUGHS.

INT. DITTO'S CLASSROOM

DITTO, wearing a clean shirt, sits in his chair and GLARES at the class. The students in the front row, who obviously have been well trained by Ditto, get up and each get a stack of papers from Ditto's desk. They return to their seats and pass the papers on. No one says a word...everyone is afraid of Ditto. Ditto leans back in his chair and begins to read some papers on his desk.

INT. HERBERT'S CLASS

Herbert stands in front of the class. He suddenly SMILES at them.

Some of the students laugh nervously while the others stare at Herbert...waiting. Finally they begin to fidget and look at each other.

Kid
Aren't you going to take
attendance?

Herbert's eyebrows shoot up and he raises a finger.

HERBERT
Attendance. Ahhhh.

The kids look at each other.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S ROOM

Alex and the class are gathered around the radiator. It no longer bangs. Gary Hahn is reading from the instruction manual. It is clear that the class is having fun as they joke around and work on the radiator.

ALEX
Sarah, I asked for a screwdriver...
this is a wrench.

SARAH
Well, I don't know.

She reaches into the toolbox.

SARAH
Which is it?

ALEX
Next to your right hand.

She pulls something out with her left hand.

ALEX
Your other right hand.

The class laughs.

GARY
Hey, Mr. Jarrell. We going to have
a quiz on this?

Alex stops what he's doing and looks at Gary.

ALEX
No. But if we make a mistake we
may blow up.

The others laugh. Gary smiles and then turns to the kid next to him.

GARY
(unsure)
He is kidding.

INT. DITTO'S CLASS

The class is still completely silent as they work on their papers. Ditto is leaning back in his chair, his paper held firmly in his hand. As we move closer we see that he is SOUND ASLEEP.

INT. ROSENFELD'S CLASS

The class is finally silent. A MATH problem is on the board and Rosenfeld is moving down the rows, checking on the kid's progress. As he passes them, the kids poke each other and point to DANNY REECE. Rosenfeld reaches Danny and stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROSENFELD

Come on, Danny. You forgot to
carry over here...

He sticks his hand in front of Danny and points. Danny LUNGES and
BITES Rosenfeld's hand. Rosenfeld SCREAMS.

INT. ALEX'S ROOM

Alex and the kids hear Rosenfeld's BLOODCURDLING SCREAM. They all
run for the door.

ALEX

No! You stay!

Alex heads for the door and the kids follow anyway. Rosenfeld's
SCREAM CONTINUES.

INT. ROSENFELD'S ROOM

The door flies open and Alex, followed by a security guard and
students, rushes into the room. Rosenfeld is still SCREAMING as
Danny still has a firm grip on his hand. Some students are trying
to pull Danny off while others just stand by and laugh.

ALEX

Rushes to Danny and grabs him under the nose and pulls. Rosenfeld
screams louder. The guard helps Alex and they finally pry Danny's
mouth open. Rosenfeld falls down in relief.

ALEX

Grab that!

One student hands Alex the AMERICAN FLAG from it's holder. Alex
stuffs the pole into Danny's mouth.

ALEX

Is this kid an epileptic?

BOY'S VOICE

I think he's just hungry.

CUT TO:

INT. ROGER'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

Roger is seated behind his desk. A NAMEPLATE with his name and title sits at the front. Levi and Holt are seated across from him, Levi with Roger's phone cradled on his shoulder. Burke paces around the room, running his hand through his hair.

BURKE

What the hell are you guys running here...a goddamn zoo? No wonder you're being sued.

HOLT

Now, David...

BURKE

(ignoring Holt)

Our hindquarters are hanging out on this and you've got a teacher flipping out in the middle of the goddamn office...right in front of the opposition's lawyer for Chrissake! You think that's smart? This is a school goddamnit, there should be at least one smart person!

Burke continues to pace. Levi half listens to him as he glances at the table on his right. It is filled with BEER, CIGARETTES, KNIVES, LEAD PIPES and other CONTRABAND taken from students. Levi picks up one KNIFE and tests its point with his finger.

BURKE

Look, I understand the problems but we're talking about publicity here, gentlemen, publicity which could kill this school. If this community loses faith in us, then we won't get a dime. They're not going to ask why we operate the way we do or even try to understand our limitations. They just won't support us...end of story. I was hired to see that that doesn't happen and I damn well intend to do my job. This school certainly has problems but for now it's all we have and we are going to protect it!

HOLT

Absolutely.

Grace enters the office and bypasses Holt to hand Roger some papers. Holt looks perfectly content to let this happen. Burke and Levi both take note of this. Grace leaves.

BURKE

I want to know who's on my team. I want to know who's with me and who's going to rock the boat. Because we've got to throw up road

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BURKE (cont'd)
blocks and stonewall them as much
as we can. And most importantly,
everyone has to agree on what will
be said at these depositions.

Roger pulls some files from his top drawer. He opens the first.

ROGER
I've pulled the files on the
remaining teachers involved. First
is Kenneth Stiles.

Holt stops picking LINT from his pants and looks up.

HOLT
Who?

ROGER
Ditto...
(to Burke)
The guy who got inked this morning.
No...Ditto's no problem. School
line all the way.

He hands the file to Burke who reads it as Roger continues.

ROGER
Next is Ray Troy, Phys Ed. All he
can tell them is if this John
Calvin kid had athlete's foot.

Holt laughs as Roger hands the file to Burke.

ROGER (cont'd)
Carl Rosenfeld, math.

He stops and Burke looks up.

BURKE
Yes?

ROGER
Well, Rosenfeld's highly motivated
but a weak disciplinarian...an
idealist. He could be trouble.

BURKE
(sighs)
Great. Let's separate them to keep
it straight.

He arranges the first group of files into a pile on Roger's desk.

BURKE
My team...
(second pile, Rosenfeld)
And...trouble.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER
....of course there's Principal
Holt and myself.

Holt smiles a Roger places these files into Burke's pile.

BURKE
Yes of course.

He reaches over and takes the last file from Roger's desk. They watch him as he reads it. Levi hangs up the phone and looks at Burke. Burke FROWNS.

BURKE
What about this guy, Alex Jarrell?

ROGER
Alex? I don't see any problems
there.

BURKE
Really?
(reads)
1969 started free school. Strong
advocate of student's rights.
Reading program cancelled in 1974
due to lack of funds...excellent
leadership qualities among
teachers...
(looks at Roger)
Sounds like trouble to me.

ROGER
Well, that was ten years ago. Alex
is all right now.
(smiles)
Hell, if they hold the depositions
on a Monday, he won't even show up.

BURKE
I hope you're right.

He hands Roger the file.

ROGER
I can handle Jarrell.

BURKE
(looks at watch)
I've got to run.

He starts for the door followed by Holt and Levi.

BURKE
Okay, gentlemen, if we stay on top
of the publicity then I think we
can ride out the storm. Let's just
remember that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

David. This may work, I mean it
 • may keep us going, but it's going
 to come up again. This won't solve
 it.

LEVI

Let's handle things one at a time.
 Just remember, Roger. If you think
 things are bad here now, what do
 you think'll happen if the teachers
 tell all they know?

Roger doesn't answer and they leave. He thinks about what Levi has said. He looks at the two piles and then at Alex's file in his hand. Slowly he places Alex's file over Rosenfeld's, in the TROUBLE PILE.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE - DAY

A CIGARETTE dangles from ALEX'S lips as he peers over his cards to the other players at the poker table. He looks like a pro. As we pull back we see the rest of the LOUNGE which is filled with SMOKE and NOISE from the teachers who are gathered in the room on their free period. It is a large room with several couches lining the walls and the POKER TABLE with Alex, in the middle. There's even a PING PONG TABLE in the corner. A FEMALE TEACHER is on the phone in the corner.

DEBORAH ROWE, an English teacher, stands by the ping pong table. Her briefcase hides her hands from the others but we can see that she is handling a GUN. She opens the CHAMBER and checks the bullets. Shutting it, she slides the gun back into it's holster and then puts it in her case. She tucks the case under her arm and leaves the room.

THE OTHER POKER PLAYERS aren't taking the game as serious as Alex. Ditto sits stoically in his seat, his cards held close. LINDA GRANT, another teacher, is busy doing her paperwork as she plays and two other teachers sits in their chairs. One seat is empty (Rosenfeld's) and the other has cards but no player (Malloy's).

TEACHER/PLAYER

They're closing Banyon School next
 week. Going to turn it into a
 Goddamn nursing home.

LINDA

(working on papers)
 Great. We're over crowded and
 they're closing schools. How do you
 spell tardiness?

ALEX

L-A-T-E.

The OTHER TEACHERS in the room are more or less giving their attention to LARRY MALLOY, their UNION REP. He paces the room and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

gestures wildly with his hands.

MALLOY

They want us here at seven thirty five but we say seven thirty eight or nothing. As your union rep I'm telling ya we gotta hold firm on the three minutes or they're just going to rape us on everything.

ALEX

What'dya say, Larry? It's up to you. You in?

MALLOY

Absolutely.

He goes to the table and picks up his hand. He frowns and then puts it down again.

MALLOY

I'm out.

The players GROAN.

ALEX

Did anybody here really vote for him?

Malloy goes back to the others.

MALLOY

Where was I? Oh yeah. Now listen, this is our school and we have to make sure they know that. We stick together like a team...we win.

(pause)

Now...about this lawsuit thing...

ANGLE ON:

Roger McMahon enters the lounge with a thick file under his arm. Malloy immediately shuts up and returns to his seat. Several teachers move away from Roger. He smiles to all and stands behind Alex and looks at his hand. He lets out a WHISTLE.

ROGER

Bet your lungs!

LINDA

I'm out.

The others follow suit and drop. Alex turns and gives Roger a sick look.

ROGER

(shrugs)

You were bluffing anyway. Come on,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER (cont'd)

I'll buy you a cup of coffee.

They get up and move away from the others who start a new hand. Roger pours two cups of coffee and hands one to Alex. He also hands him the THICK FOLDER.

ALEX

What's this?

ROGER

Well, Alex, I'll tell ya. You heard about Ditto and Theresa Blaser, right?

ALEX

(suspicious)

Yeah...

ROGER

Well, with our psychologist on temporary leave and no money to replace her, I need someone to fill in on the counseling chores.

ALEX

Me? Why me?

ROGER

Because you're sensitive, you're compassionate, you're caring, you've got a free period...

ALEX

So does everybody else here! And next period there'll be a lot of other teachers on a free period...

ROGER

And they'll be drafted too. Alex, we got a lot of misunderstood youth in this place. Everybody's got to pitch in. Starting with you.

Alex sighs and looks at the file.

ALEX

How many kids is this?

ROGER

One.

ALEX

One!?

ROGER

Name's Eddie Pilikian. He and his parents will be in the counselor's office in ten minutes.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER
(smiles)
I know you'll do well.

ALEX
One kid?

Roger starts to leave as Alex stares at the file. He turns back and looks at Alex. His mood turns serious.

ROGER
By the way, you remember a student
you had about ten years
ago...name's Lisa Hammond.

Alex thinks for a minute and then smiles.

ALEX
Oh yeah. Lisa Hammond. Bright
kid. Great ass.

ROGER
Yeah, well nothing's changed.

ALEX
Really? She's here?

ROGER
(nods)
She works for the law firm that's
handling the John Calvin case.
She'll be taking your deposition.

Alex loses his smile and shakes his head sadly.

ROGER (cont'd)
What are you going to say?

ALEX
(looks at Roger)
I'm not going to say anything. I'm
not giving a deposition.

ROGER
Alex...

ALEX
No, I mean it. I'm not getting
involved. I mean, this is crazy.
I'm suppose to be teaching, not
giving depositions and playing
nursemaid and all this other crap.
I haven't got time.

ROGER
She'll just subpoena you, Alex.
She knows where your classroom is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
(short laugh)
Yeah, well you haven't lived until
you've tried to serve me a
subpoena. I can handle that.

Roger looks at Alex seriously.

ROGER
Well, if she finds you, just
remember where you live, okay?

Alex looks at Roger and nods. Roger smiles to break the mood.

ROGER
I knew we should have flunked her.

Alex laughs.

ALEX
Welcome to higher education.

Roger smiles and then turns and leaves the lounge. Alex starts to
take a drink of coffee and then stops...and puts it down.

INT. COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

EDDIE PILIKIAN sits in one of the chairs in the office. He
doesn't look too happy. A MIDDLE AGED COUPLE sit in the other
chairs facing the desk. Eddie avoids looking at them.

ANGLE ON:

Alex enters the room. He holds out his hand and walks to the
couple.

ALEX
Mr. and Mrs. Pilikian? I'm Alex
Jarrell.

The man stands.

PROPEs
Ah, no...I'm Jeffery Propes, Mrs.
Pilikian's attorney.

Alex looks at him and then Eddie, an amused look on his face.

ALEX
Really? What'd he do this time?

PROPEs
Ah, no...I'm here in regards to
Mrs. Pilikian's recent divorce.

Alex stares at Propes, confused.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Oh...okay.

(to Eddie)

Eddie, you want to wait outside?

Eddie immediately gets up and leaves the room. Alex walks behind the desk and sits down. He looks at Mrs. Pilikian. She is very nervous and lights a cigarette. Alex opens Eddie's file and then searches his pockets and then the desk for a pencil.

PROPEs

Mr. Jarrell, Mrs. Pilikian has just been through a very trying divorce...

ALEX

(looks up)

You got a pencil?

Propes reaches into his coat pocket and pulls out a GOLD LEAD PENCIL. He hands it to Alex.

ALEX

Thanks. Go on.

PROPEs

Well, as I was saying...

ALEX

Yeah, right. Well, I can sympathize with Mrs. Pilikian having gone through one myself. Now, looking at Eddie's file here, I'd say we've got more than a slight problem.

PROPEs

If you will let me finish, Mr. Jarrell.

Alex looks up.

ALEX

Sure.

PROPEs

(hands Alex some papers)

As you see here, in regard to custody, Mrs. Pilikian enjoys full rights. Mr. Pilikian will of course be allowed to see Eddie under certain conditions and with Mrs. Pilikian's approval.

Alex reads the papers and then looks at Propes.

ALEX

Uh, excuse me here for a minute,
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX (cont'd)
Why are you telling me this?

Mrs. Pilikian fidgets even more and avoids Alex's look.

PROPEs
Because we want to make it clear that Eddie's father is not to see him during school hours nor is he to attempt to pick Eddie up from school. I think you should be able to figure that out.

ALEX
Hey buddy, I don't care.

Looks at Mrs. Pilikian.

ALEX (cont'd)
Look, Mrs. Pilikian, I'm sorry you've got problems but we're here to discuss your son and his problems. He's just been kicked out of his third class, he reads on a sixth grade level at best, and he's majoring in detention! I think that's a little more important, don't you?

Mrs. Pilikian starts to speak but is cut off by Propes.

PROPEs
Mr. Jarrell, it's very important to Mrs. Pilikian that we first settle this custody problem. She hasn't been able to function at full capacity since the divorce.
(looks at her)
I think we've said our piece.

They stand and start to leave. Alex jumps up.

ALEX
What about you son's education?

They turn back and look at Alex.

MRS. PILIKIAN
Isn't that your job, Mr. Jarrell?

With that Mrs. Pilikian turns and leaves the room. Propes holds his hand out for his pencil. Alex stares at him and then remembers and hands it to him. He too leaves. Alex shakes his head and then goes to the door.

ALEX
Eddie...you want to come in.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

Eddie! In!

Alex returns to the desk as Eddie enters the room. With the others gone, Eddie's mood is better...he can handle this. He sits and smiles at Alex...waiting. Alex finally leans forward.

ALEX

What're we going to do with you,
Eddie?

EDDIE

(shrugs)

I dunno.

ALEX

How'd you get this far?

EDDIE

(smiles)

I passed the state tests.

ALEX

That doesn't mean anything, Eddie.
I got goldfish who could pass that
test.

Eddie smiles again and looks out the window. Alex watches him.

ALEX

All right. How about going back
and taking the remedial reading
class again?

Eddie jerks back.

EDDIE

What? I passed that class! You
can't make me go back!

ALEX

Sure I can. I don't think you can
read.

EDDIE

I read just fine and I ain't taking
no reading class again!

Alex looks at Eddie and then picks up a magazine from the desk and tosses it to Eddie. Eddie catches it and stares at Alex.

ALEX

Read that.

EDDIE

Do what?

ALEX

Read it. Anything. Just open it
and start reading.

(cont.)

CONTINUED:

Eddie looks at Alex and then the magazine. He slowly opens it and flips through the pages, moving his lips as if he's reading.

ALEX

Out loud.

Eddie slams the magazine shut and tosses it back on the desk.

EDDIE

I don't like that magazine.

ALEX

Well, what magazine do you like?

EDDIE

Lay off me, okay?

ALEX

Quit dancing around, Eddie. I haven't got time...

EDDIE

So what else is new?

Alex stops and looks at Eddie. He nods and closes the file.

ALEX

All right, Eddie...but you just got kicked out of your social studies class. So you've got a choice. You can come to my class or you can take a study hall.

EDDIE

I'll take study hall.

ALEX

(nods)

Fine. My class is third period.
I'll see you there tomorrow.
That's all.

Eddie stares at Alex and then shakes his head and leaves. Alex watches him go and then leans back in his chair and stares at the ceiling.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment in dark. We hear someone trying to unlock the door and then LAUGHTER. The door opens and Alex enters followed by Roger, both ROARING DRUNK. Alex turns on the lights.

ALEX

Told ya I could do it.

He laughs as Roger collapses into one of Alex's chairs. He sits right on Alex's bathrobe. Alex heads for the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX

What'll it be?

ROGER

I'll have a grasshopper.

He busts up with laughter.

ROGER

No! No...a pink lady!

More laughter. Alex makes his way into the living room and hands Roger a drink. He drops to the couch with his. Roger takes a drink.

ROGER

Arrggg! There's ice in here!

Wild laughter from Roger. Alex merely smiles. Roger sees this and leans closer to Alex.

ROGER

I sense tension here...I know...I'm a professional. What'sa matter?

Alex lays back on the couch and stares at the ceiling.

ALEX

It's getting to me.

ROGER

It's suppose to. That's why it costs so much.

ALEX

Not the booze. The school. The bullshit.

ROGER

Oh...the bullshit.

They both drink and reflect on this. Alex leans forward quickly.

ALEX

I know! Let's take off. Let's be...let's be...cowboys!

ROGER

Yeah! Cowboys! No! I'm afraid of horses.

ALEX

(laughs)

You fuckin' faggot.

They settle back and drink. Alex rubs his head.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

It's like...it's like a dead marriage, ya know? You can't stay and you can't go. I'm just tired of the whole thing...seeing kids like that Pilikian....

ROGER

Whoo horsey. Is that what this is all about? Forget it! If we, if the school took the time to teach every single goddamn kid, we'd have a million students...a zillion. That's sick.

(looks at Alex)

We do good. Lot's a kids learn. We ain't the bad guys. We do good.

ALEX

I wanna quit!

Roger leans closer to Alex, their faces almost touching.

ROGER

Now you listen to me, Alex. You have been a teacher for fourteen years...

ALEX

Fifteen.

ROGER

That's what I said. You could have been anything you wanted to be but you wanted to come back here and teach, right?

Alex nods.

ROGER

You're a fuckin' great teacher!

ALEX

Was. I was a fuckin' great teacher.

ROGER

No, no, no, listen to me...Roger here...without us...there's nothing. Nothing. We are the last stand, okay? You and me...the SCHOOL. We must hold the line 'cause we're the only thing left, the last stand of civilization. If we fail...

(shrugs)

...anarchy.

He falls back in his chair and then jumps forward immediately.

(CONTINUED)

Or worse!

ROGER (cont'd)

Worse?

ALEX

A baby boom.

ROGER
(nods)

A baby boom?

ALEX

What'dya think those monsters would
be doing if they weren't in school?
Fucking! Fucking like fucking
rabbits! We have got to stop that!

You mean I'm a contraceptive?

ALEX

And one of the best!

ROGER
(nods)

He falls back into the chair, exhausted. Alex laughs and then
gets up and heads for the bedroom.

I'm going to bed. You wanna stay
over?

ALEX

Naw...I can drive.

ROGER

Fasten your seatbelt.

ALEX

He goes into the bedroom.

Absolutely.

ROGER

He reaches down and picks up the sleeves of Alex's bathrobe and
ties them around his waist. He passes out. And we,

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JFK HIGH - MORNING

A DRIVER'S EDUCATION CAR is pulling into the driveway of the school. The driver is obviously a beginner as the car is SHUDDERING AND SHAKING badly. Suddenly, from nowhere, a SUPED UP CHARGER races past the car, HORN BLARING and ENGINE ROARING. THE DRIVER'S ED CAR veers off the drive, jumps the curb and SLAMS into the brick wall of the school.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE - MORNING

The same FEMALE TEACHER is on the phone. CARL ROSENFELD stands next to the teachers at the poker table. There is no game this morning. His right hand is heavily BANDAGED.

ROSENFELD

Look at this! I'm just trying to
do my job and they put that damn
kid right back in school today!
I'm lucky I don't have rabies!

HERBERT, his usual smile in place, is seated at the poker table. One of the TEACHER/PLAYERS from yesterday's game sits next to him, reading a COMPUTER MANUAL.

TEACHER/PLAYER

Any kid with a quarter knows more
about these things than I do and I'm
suppose to be teaching it! Guy
that wrote this manual must be
crazy!

Herbert's SMILE WIDENS and he nods.

HERBERT

Ahhhhh.

Alex slowly enters the lounge. He wears a LOUD HAWAIIAN SHIRT and SUN GLASSES. He is terribly hung over. He starts to make his way to the coffee machine. Rosenfeld sticks his bandaged hand in Alex's face.

ROSENFELD

Alex, you seen this yet?

Alex doesn't look. He just wants coffee.

ALEX

Looks great, Carl. Been meaning to
get one myself.

He reaches the coffee machine and pours a cup. He leans against the table as he grasps the cup as if it were his life's blood.

GRACE (VO)

Mr. Jarrell!

Alex winces and spills some coffee on his shirt. Grace Wentzel

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

walks across the room and stands in front of Alex. She holds a pile of papers up to his face.

GRACE
Mr. Jarrell, I'd like a word with you.

ALEX
(in pain)
Make it a quiet one, huh Gracie?
I've had a hard day.

GRACE
It's only eight thirty in the morning!

Alex stares at her over the top of his sunglasses.

ALEX
All right, what is it?

Grace points to the papers.

GRACE
You cannot put Eddie Pilikian, a track three student, into your third period social studies class, a track two class. He is not at the same level as the other kids.

ALEX
(sips his coffee)
Sure I can, Gracie. I got tenure.

GRACE
It's not school policy. If you'd read the curriculum circulars you'd know that.

Alex smiles.

GRACE
But then you don't read curriculum circulars, do you, Mr. Jarrell?

Alex smiles and shakes his head "no".

GRACE
Well, at least have the decency to fill out the proper paper work!

She thrusts the papers against Alex's chest and then spins away. Alex moves quickly to catch the papers and then GROANS from the pain to his head.

ANGLE ON:

The door flies open and a teacher sticks her head in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TEACHER

Lawyers!

ALEX

Shit!

Alex bolts for the door as the other teachers GROAN and gather their stuff and head for the door. Herbert sits alone at the poker table, a smile on his face.

INT. HALL

Alex makes his way down the crowded hall, the papers clutched to his chest with one hand and his coffee in the other. He heads for his classroom.

LISA (VO)

Mr. Jarrell!

Alex jumps and spills his coffee on his shirt again.

ALEX

Aw, shit.

ALEX'S POV

Lisa Hammond stands further down the hall. She looks even better that she did yesterday. She smiles warmly at Alex and waves.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Alex stares at her with his mouth open. It's clear he wasn't prepared for such beauty. He starts to smile and then remembers he's trying to hide from her. He quickly looks around the hall and spots the BOY'S BATHROOM. He ducks between passing students as he heads for it.

ALEX

Excuse me, coming through, excuse me.

Using his back, Alex pushes open the door to the bathroom and takes one last look at Lisa before disappearing inside.

LISA makes her way to the bathroom door. She stops and looks around, dissappointed. She stands there for a minute and then nods.

LISA

Okay.

She nods to the kids as she nonchalantly backs into the bathroom.

INT. BOY'S BATHROOM

Lisa backs into the room and then turns around.

A BOY comes out of one of the stalls, buckling his pants. He spots Lisa and rushes back into the stall. (cont'd)

CONTINUED:

BOY
Jesus Christ lady!

Alex is at the urinals, relieving himself. He looks over his shoulder and sees Lisa. He immediately shifts his back to her.

ALEX
Goddamn!

Lisa sees Alex and moves towards him.

LISA
Mr. Jarrell...

Alex tries to hide himself.

ALEX
Lisa! Are you nuts? This is the
boy's bathroom!

LISA
(looks around)
Yeah. I always wondered what one
looked like.
(looks at Alex's crotch)
No big deal.

As they talk, several boys run out of the bathroom and one enters and sees Lisa.

BOY #2
Oh, excuse me.

He turns and leaves. Lisa smiles and walks to the other side of Alex. He quickly shifts to hide himself.

ALEX
Will you get outta here!

LISA
But I wanted to talk to you.

She moves around Alex and again he shifts his back to her.

ALEX
Call me on the phone! This is a
bathroom for Chrissake!

Lisa looks at Alex trying to hide himself and shakes her head.

LISA
Oh come on, Mr. Jarrell. I've got
two brothers for crying out loud.

ALEX
Well I don't! Do you mind?

She looks at Alex and shakes her head again. She hands him what
looks like a paper towel. (cont'd)

CONTINUED:

LISA
Here. Dry your hands.

Alex takes the towel and Lisa smiles and leaves. He watches her go, a look of amazement on his face. He finishes and starts to wipe his hands on the towel and then notices that it isn't a paper towel at all. IT'S A SUBPOENA.

ALEX
Fuck.

INT. HALL

Lisa is leaning against the wall next to the bathroom door. She has an amused look and is very pleased with herself. She smiles to the kids that pass by.

The door flies open and Alex charges into the hall, the subpoena clutched in his hand. He looks around and then sees Lisa. She smiles.

LISA
Hi.

ALEX
That was cute. Real cute.

Lisa smiles and shrugs. Alex looks at the kids who are watching them. He takes Lisa's arm and guides her towards his room.

LISA
It really is good to see you, Mr. Jarrell.

ALEX
Yeah, well considering how much you've seen, call me Alex.

They enter his room.

INT. ALEX'S ROOM

Alex sits on his desk, the subpoena still held tightly in his fist. Lisa smiles at him and then begins to wander around the room.

LISA
God, the room looks so small. I guess everything looks bigger when you're a kid.

Alex doesn't answer.

LISA
You're mad, aren't you.

Alex looks at her and sighs. He puts the subpoena on the desk.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

You really take your job seriously,
don't you?

LISA

I take it seriously when a boy goes
all the way through a school
system, gets passing grades and a
diploma...and can't even fill out a
job application. Don't you?

ALEX

(shrugs)

Depends on the kid.

LISA

I'm taking your deposition in 18
days. Are you ready?

ALEX

No.

Lisa looks at him and then starts to walk again. When she looks
up at him, she's smiling.

LISA

You know, I had a terrible crush on
you.

ALEX

(shrugs)

Who didn't?

Lisa laughs and moves closer.

LISA

Listen, I really am sorry about
what I did. Let me make it up to
you. Let me buy you dinner.

ALEX

Dinner?

LISA

Yeah, what'dya say? Talk over old
times and all that.

Alex thinks for a minute and finally smiles.

ALEX

All right. Where?

LISA

How about my place, seven thirty?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX

Your bathroom have a lock?

Lisa laughs and hands Alex a card.

LISA

Two.

ALEX

Okay.

Students start to enter Alex's room. Lisa smiles at him and starts to leave.

LISA

Great. See you then. Love the shirt.

She smiles and leaves. Alex looks at his shirt and then the card and smiles.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

DIANE WARRICK walks down the deserted hallway. A SECURITY GUARD steps in front of her and she shows him her hall pass and he allows her to continue on into:

INT. ANOTHER HALL

Diane walks down the hall, passing the gym, and stops at the COACHES' OFFICE. She knocks on the door. It opens to reveal RAY TROY, the boy's GYM TEACHER.

DIANE

(smiles)

You wanted to see me, Mr. Troy?

Troy smiles and nods. He steps aside as Diane enters the office and then he closes the door.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Actually, it's not a conference room at all but merely a spare room made available for Lisa to take depositions. All sorts of junk is piled into the room, books, desks, podiums, etc. There is barely enough room for the table set up in the middle.

LISA sits at one end of the table, her papers spread in front of her. JOSEPH LEVI sits at the other end. A COURT REPORTER sits next to the table with her STENOGRAPH MACHINE.

ANGLE ON:

PRINCIPAL HOLT. He talks in hushed tones to Levi as Lisa

(CONTINUED)

readies her papers.

LISA

Present here are Lisa Hammond,
counsel for the plaintiff, Joseph
Levi, counsel for the defendant,
and Eugene Holt, Principal of JFK
High.

(pause)

Have you ever given a deposition
before, Mr. Holt?

HOLT

No.

LISA

Well, it's very simple. I'm just
going to ask you some questions and
you're under oath...so I'd like you
to answer them as fully as you can.

HOLT

Okay.

LISA

Good. Did you have a student here
at JFK named John Calvin?

HOLT

I don't know.

Lisa looks up at Holt.

LISA

You don't know?

HOLT

Miss Hammond; there are thirty five
hundred students here at Kennedy
every year. I don't know all of
them.

LISA

Wouldn't your records show
enrollment?

HOLT

Yes.

LISA

Okay...where are your records?

HOLT

I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lisa drops her pencil.

INT. HALL JFK - DAY

THE BELL RINGS and the students pour into the hall. DANNY REECE leaves his classroom and is immediately jumped by TWO GANG MEMBERS. The kids start SHOUTING as a SECURITY GUARD moves in to stop the beating.

Eddie comes out of his room and sees the fight. He charges into the group and grabs Danny around the waist and pulls him out.

EDDIE

(to guard)

No problem, he just slipped, no problem.

Because of the guard, the combatants begin to separate. Eddie pulls Danny to his locker. Danny sniffs and holds his nose as Eddie opens his locker. It is filled with RADIOS, TAPES, TAPE DECKS, SPEAKERS, etc. Eddie keeps the door shut halfway to hide his cache.

DANNY

Fuckin' Papner. I didn't do shit to him.

(rubs his nose)

Eddie, I gotta get me a piece.

Eddie looks at Danny, tiredly. He heard this before.

EDDIE

A piece of what.

DANNY

Very funny. I want something on my side the next time I see that asshole.

EDDIE

Forget it, Danny. I don't do that. And just let me handle Papner, okay?

PAPNER, one of the boys who jumped Danny, stands across the hall staring at Eddie and Danny. Eddie turns to him and smiles.

EDDIE

Hey, Paps, my man.

Papner walks to him.

PAPNER

What you want, Pelican.

EDDIE

Come here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They move off and talk in hushed tones. Danny watches them, scared. Eddie nods and goes to his locker. He looks around the hall and then pulls out a CAR STEREO. He covers it with his body and hands it to Papner.

PAPNER

Okay, we're square, Pilican.

EDDIE

Great, Paps. And don't forget. I still got a warranty on that.

Papner looks hard at Danny and then leaves. Danny lets out a sigh and Eddie loses his smile. He SHIVERS INVOLUNTARILY. Papner scares the shit out of him. He slams his locker shut.

DANNY

Thanks.

EDDIE

Forget it. I'm taking off. You wanna come?

DANNY

Sure. Old Rosenfeld'll be happy if I cut his class. Who you got?

EDDIE

Some jerk named Jarrell.

They start walking down the hall.

DANNY

Yeah? He ain't too bad.

Eddie looks at Danny, who shrugs. This is obviously a rare statement from Danny.

EDDIE

Well, I'd rather split.

THE BELL RINGS and the students head for their next class. Eddie walks down the hall and nonchalantly sticks his hands in his pockets and whistles. Danny sees this and does the same. He wants to be as much like Eddie as he can. They reach the end of the hall and stop.

EDDIE'S POV

A SECURITY GUARD stands at the end of the hall.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Eddie and Danny spin around and head in the other direction.

DANNY

Now what'll we do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Trust me.

They round the corner and enter:

INT. ANOTHER HALL

Eddie and Danny enter the hall and then Eddie ducks into a doorway and pulls Danny with him. They wait as the hall clears. Eddie sticks his head out and then comes out followed by Danny. He stops at a FIRE ALARM. Eddie looks around and then PULLS THE ALARM. IT COMES OFF IN HIS HAND. NO BELL. Eddie stares at it.

EDDIE

Do you believe this?

He looks at Danny and then puts the alarm back in place and pounds on it.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Lisa isn't doing much better with Holt. She rests her head on her hand as she tries again.

LISA

If John Calvin was a student at JFK, would his name appear on these records.

HOLT

Yes. It should.

LISA

Good. Now, who is in charge of the records?

HOLT

I don't know.

Lisa drops her head. Levi leans close to Holt.

LEVI

(whispering)

Nice touch.

HOLT

(whispering)

What touch? I really don't know.

THE FIRE ALARM BELL GOES OFF. Lisa jumps.

HOLT

That's the fire alarm.

LISA

(to herself)

Thank God.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They all get up and leave the room.

INT. HALLWAY

Eddie and Danny are doing a very fast walk down the hall followed by the classroom doors opening and students charging out. There is no order to this mass exodus, it's a cross between a big party and a mass panic. The students are SHOUTING, SCREAMING, LAUGHING and doing everything but what should be done during a fire drill. It is TOTAL CHAOS.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE TROY'S OFFICE

Students are pushing past the office door on their way outside.

THE DOOR opens a crack and Diane sticks her head out to look. She waits until the flow of students decreases and then she leaves the office, tucking in her blouse. She heads for the exit. We stay at the door and finally Troy comes out and he too heads for the exit.

EXT. JFK PARKING LOT - DAY

Eddie and Danny reach the lot before anyone else and head straight for the cars and hide between two of them. The rest of the student body empties out onto the parking lot. Eddie looks around.

EDDIE'S POV

The DRIVER'S ED CAR is parked in the lot, the right front fender smashed.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Eddie smiles and grabs Danny. They run for the car and get in.

INT. CAR

Eddie pulls out a ring of KEYS. He goes through several before he finds one that fits the ignition. The car fires up.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Eddie drives the car right out of the parking lot as the students continue to empty out from the building.

INT. CAR

Danny is beside himself as Eddie drives.

DANNY

I love it! This is fuckin' great!

He sticks his head out the window.

DANNY

YEEHAWWW!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie laughs.

EXT. PARKING LOT

The students are loosely assembled in the lot. Several continue on past the cars to the fence and climb it. Security guards chase after them. Other teachers try to keep some kind of order. We can hear the SIRENS OF THE FIRE ENGINES in the b.g.

ANGLE ON:

Alex leans against one of the cars, a bored expression on his face. One boy tries to sneak by him and Alex casually reaches out and pulls him back, sending him back to the lines. He settles back on the car and stares at the school.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The driver's ed car is parked by the side of the road.

INT. CAR

Eddie and Danny are slouched down in the front seat. Danny has his feet on the dash. He stares out the window. Eddie runs his hand along the steering wheel.

DANNY

So what do we do now?

Eddie thinks for a minute and then turns to Danny and smiles.

EXT. CAR

Eddie jumps out of the car and goes to the trunk. Using his keys, he opens the trunk and takes out a crow bar. He uses the bar to pry off the DRIVER'S ED SIGN from the side of the car and the roof. Danny just watches.

DANNY

What're ya doing?

Eddie finishes with his task and dumps everything into the trunk. He goes back to the driver's side.

EDDIE

Just get in.

They do and Eddie starts the car and guns it into a U-TURN and heads back towards the school.

INT. CAR

Danny watches Eddie as he drives.

DANNY

Where we going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie just smiles. Danny looks out the front window.

DANNY'S POV

They are heading back to JFK.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Danny turns to Eddie quickly.

DANNY
What the hell you doing?

EXT. JFK

Eddie turns the car into the driveway and heads for the parking lot, which by now has emptied of students.

INT. CAR

Danny dives for the floorboards.

DANNY
Are you fuckin' nuts?! Get outta here!

Eddie smiles. He puts his elbow out the window and acts as if this is just another Sunday drive. He waves to the security guard at the entrance to the parking lot and continues on.

DANNY
Come on, Eddie! This ain't funny!

EXT. PARKING LOT

The car heads through the parking lot and goes to the rear of the high school.

EXT. REAR OF JFK

There are several garage doors here. This is JFK'S AUTO SHOP CLASS. Eddie pulls the car into one of the stalls.

INT. AUTO SHOP CLASS

There are three other cars in the shop and a few kids are working on them. MR. BRINKMAN, the teacher is on the SCHOOL PHONE.

MR. BRINKMAN (into phone)
...look, I'm just tellin' ya that
half my class didn't even come back
from that fire drill. What'dya
mean it wasn't a drill?

Eddie parks the car in one of the stalls. He gets out and walks to the front. Danny sticks his head above the dash and then

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DUCKS AGAIN as Brinkman approaches.

BRINKMAN
What's this, Pilikian?

Eddie rests his hand on the hood proudly.

EDDIE
This is my project, Mr. Brinkman.
What'dya think...a little paint...a
little glue...

BRINKMAN
Let's have a look.

Eddie opens the hood and Brinkman looks at the engine.

BRINKMAN
(shakes his head)
What a piece of junk.

INT. CAFETERIA - LATE AFTERNOON

School is over and the monthly teacher's meeting is in progress. As we move around the room we see DITTO sleeping, ROSENFELD showing off his hand, ROWE holding onto to her briefcase protectively, MALLOY talking to a group of teachers...we can hear "three minutes" mentioned several times, HERBERT smiling, and the others either reading, smoking, eating or sleeping. In short they act the same way the students did during the drug lecture. Roger talks in the b.g.

ALEX sits at a table with Linda Grant and a few other teachers. He's bored and reading a paper as he half listens to Roger.

ROGER stands at the front of the teachers. Seated next to him is Holt, Levi and Burke.

ROGER
...which brings us to the subject
of homework...let's hold it down
people...

The room doesn't quiet down.

ROGER (cont'd)
It has come to the attention of the
office that some teachers here are
not giving the assigned amount of
homework to their students...

DEBORAH ROWE jumps to her feet.

ROWE
Mr. McMahon, I don't know about the
others here, but I'm paid

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROWE (cont'd)
to work from seven thirty to two
thirty and I don't think it's fair
to expect me to take home two
hundred papers to correct on my own
time!

MALE VOICE

Here! Here!

This statement is greeted by CHEERS AND BOOS. Rowe sits.

ROGER
(tired)
Thank you, Miss Rowe. We'll
certainly take that under
consideration.

Roger picks up a stack of papers and hands it to a teacher who
begins to pass them out.

ROGER
We have a memo here...

The group GROANS. Roger looks up and continues on in a louder
voice.

ROGER (cont'd)
...a memo concerning the disappear-
ance of one of our school's driver
education cars.

The teachers LAUGH.

ROGER (cont'd)
...some of you may find this
amusing but I assure that it is
anything but. In case you don't
know we are experiencing an image
problem here at JFK.

The MEMOS have reached Alex's table and he pulls out his RED PEN
and begins to grade it as Roger talks. He finishes and shows it
to Linda Grant.

ALEX
I give it a C.

She laughs.

Roger continues.

ROGER
When you add this to the court case
we are now involved in, it adds up
to some serious public relations
problems. I want your full
cooperation in finding this

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER (cont'd)
car and finding it as quickly as possible. There may even be some consideration to the person or persons who locate this car in the way of reduced lunch room duty.

This is met with CHEERS and APPLAUSE.

ROGER
The next point to cover is the annual state tests that are coming up at the end of next month. It would be beneficial to all if these test scores were to improve dramatically.

Linda looks at Alex.

LINDA
How do we do that?

Alex holds up his RED PEN.

ALEX
How else?

ROGER (VO)
Did you have something you wanted to say to us, Mr. Jarrell?

Alex looks up at Roger as everyone turns to look at him. He is slightly embarrassed.

ALEX
Ah, no...sorry.

Roger nods and goes back to his notes.

ROGER
Thank you. Now as I mentioned before, there is the matter of the lawsuit. Dr. Burke will talk about that further...but I just want to emphasize that this has put JFK under a microscope. They're watching us, people. So let's keep a lid on the students...it's only for three weeks. We can't let the students get in the way of the image of the school. Let's all keep that in mind.
(pause)
At this time, I would like to introduce to you our new superintendent, Dr. David Burke.

Burke gets up and shakes Roger's hand and gives him a wink. He turns to the teachers and turns on the SMILE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BURKE

Thank you, Roger. I'd like to take this opportunity to have a little informal chat here and to get acquainted and introduce myself to all of you. I like to know all my teachers and feel that there is an unbreakable link of communication between all of us. And in order for that link to be unbreakable, I feel that there must be a reciprocating trust...a comradery... what I like to call...teamwork.

(pauses for effect)

That is the single most important thing which will see us through... teamwork. Because I'll be honest with you, this lawsuit is an attack on the very foundation of the American Public School System! Now, I don't have to list our problems here, we all know there're too many, but at least we're here! Think what would happen if we weren't! We must, and I can't say this strong enough, we must protect ourselves at all costs!

Burke pauses and looks around the silent room, waiting for his words to take effect.

BURKE

Our attorney, Mr. Levi is here and together with Principal Holt and Mr. McMahon, he and I will be scheduling meetings with those teachers involved to go over what you will be talking about in your depositions.

Burke looks around the room and smiles.

BURKE

You know, I like to think of John F. Kennedy High School as...well, as Cape Kennedy. A place where teamwork...and team players...work together as a well oiled machine to launch the future generations of Americans into the free world.

(pause)

And that's what it's all about.
Thank you very much.

Burke takes his seat as Roger stands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

Thank you, Dr. Burke. Okay,
there's just a few more things...

MALLOY jumps to his feet.

MALLOY

Sorry, Mr. McMahon. Union rules.
Meeting's over after forty five
minutes.

ROGER

We're almost through here.

MALLOY

(shakes his head)
No can do.

ROGER

(sighs)
All right. If there's nothing
else...

Before he can say anything further, the teachers are up and out of
the room. Roger shakes his head and we,

CUT TO:

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It is a small but very nicely furnished apartment. Alex stands in the living room, looking at a wall full of pictures. He has changed from his Hawaiian shirt to a better one. Lisa enters the room with two glasses of wine. She hands one to Alex.

ALEX

Oh, thanks.

She smiles and goes to the couch and sits, tucking her legs under herself. She takes a sip and smiles at Alex.

LISA

Checking out my Rogue's gallery,
huh.

Alex turns and smiles.

LISA

When I moved in my mother was here
bright and early the next morning,
hanging up pictures and spreading
out doilies. She didn't want me to
be lonely. Though I don't know
what doilies have to do with being
lonely.

ALEX

Does it work?

LISA

(shrugs and smiles)
Sometimes.

Alex nods and looks at the pictures again. He points to one.

ALEX

Is this your graduation picture?

LISA

Oh, God, don't look at that.

ALEX

Hey, I was there, remember?

Lisa smiles and takes another sip of wine. Alex goes to the couch and sits next to her.

LISA

I cried for two solid days after
that. I couldn't believe there
really was life after high school.

ALEX

Well, you must have gotten over it
because you sure aren't the 17 year
old girl I expected to see.

(CONTINUED)

LISA

(smiles)

Well, it only lasted two days.
Then came college and then law
school and finally, after seven
years of dedicated studying, I'm
right back in high school.

ALEX

Welcome to higher education.

LISA

(laughs)

Well, it sure isn't the way I
remember it.

ALEX

Really? How do you remember it?

LISA

Well...I mean...it was a little
rough then...but nothing like now.
In the two days I've been there
I've seen a stabbing, teachers
fighting, students biting
teachers...that may have happened
but I sure don't remember it. What
I remember is the friendships...the
other kids.

(pause)

...I remember your class. The
sense of purpose we all felt there.
It just seems so different now.

ALEX

It's not so different.

LISA

But nobody cares anymore!

ALEX

You mean like you and the lawsuit.

Lisa stops and looks at Alex.

LISA

Yes.

ALEX

Yeah.

(pause)

Look, Lisa, the only reason that
anybody's doing something now...is
money. If that kid's parents

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX (cont'd)
were really concerned about his
education, why didn't they say
something when he was in school?
(pause)
Because they didn't care. Now they
care because they can get some
money out of it. And once they do,
things'll go right back to being
screwed up because that's the way
it is. I counseled a kid yesterday
named Eddie Pilikian. His parents
don't give a damn, why should the
school? They'll just push him
through the system and that's that.
(pause)
That's reality.

Lisa looks at Alex, surprised.

LISA
I don't believe that, Alex. And I
don't believe that you do either.

Alex looks at her and then sighs.

ALEX
Look, it's not really right for an
attorney to be talking to some-
one she's going to be deposing in
two weeks, is it?

LISA
No.
(pause)
But I didn't ask you here as an
attorney.

ALEX
Well then why did you?

Lisa looks at Alex for a long time.

LISA
(softly)
I ran out of doilies.

Alex looks surprised and they stare at each other, neither willing
to speak. It looks as if they might even kiss, but both are
afraid to move. Finally, Lisa looks around, slightly embarrassed.

LISA
I'd better check on dinner.

She gets up and heads for the kitchen. Alex watches her go and
then looks at his wine glass.

CUT TO:

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE - DAY

The room is again filled with SMOKE and NOISE and the SAME FEMALE TEACHER IS ON THE PHONE. Linda and Malloy are at the poker table playing a hand of GIN. Herbert sits watching them, smiling. Roger stands by the coffee machine, listening to Ditto and Rosenfeld.

Alex enters the lounge. He seems troubled, last night still on his mind. He goes to the coffee machine.

DITTO

...I'm just saying that some teacher's loyalties may be questionable.

ROSENFELD

You mean me, don't' you? Just say it. You mean me. I'm doing my job and some kid is trying to drive me crazy and nobody will do anything about it! That makes me disloyal? Is that what you're saying?!

ROGER

Calm down, Carl.

Alex gets his coffee and walks to the poker table. Linda looks up.

LINDA

Good luck with that Pilikian kid, Alex. He couldn't read a primer let alone the books in my class. I sure didn't know what to do with him.

HERBERT

(smiling)

How about teaching him to read better?.

The players become silent as they stare at Herbert. Alex starts to smile.

LINDA

(pissed)

Mr. Vanzant, it's not my job to teach reading. I'm a social studies teacher!

HERBERT

But you are a teacher.

Linda throws in her cards.

LINDA

Let's play poker!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex takes his seat as Rosenfeld and Ditto walk to the table followed by Roger.

ROGER

Come on, Carl, be reasonable. What are we going to do with the kid? We can't expel him because the courts won't let us violate the poor child's rights...juvenile hall would just send him back...and no body wants us to let someone like him loose on society.

ROSENFELD

(points to Ditto)

Well then put him in his class!

DITTO

Fine with me. I'll handle him.

ALEX

You'd bore him to death.

DITTO

What's that suppose to mean?

Alex turns and looks at Ditto as all the teachers in the room become quiet.

ALEX

What do you think it means, Ditto? Your class is boring, your students don't learn anything and if it weren't for tenure you'd be selling vacuum cleaners. Have I left anything out?

Alex turns back to the table as Ditto explodes.

DITTO

I don't have to take that from you! I have received three consecutive teaching awards for having the most orderly class!

Alex won't turn around so Ditto marches around the poker table to face him.

DITTO (cont'd)

What'dya think of that Mister?!

Alex looks at the other players and then up at Ditto.

ALEX

Gee, Ditto. Your shit don't stink.

(CONTINUED)

Ditto stares at Alex. He has no answer. Linda Grant clears her throat and the others begin to talk again. Alex begins to shuffle the cards as Roger comes up behind him.

ROGER

How was your date with Miss Hammond
last night?

The players become silent. They all stare at Alex, Ditto triumphantly. Alex looks at them, one at a time. Then he turns his head and looks at Roger.

Roger rocks back on his heels and raises his eyebrows. He turns and leaves the lounge. Alex turns back to the players. They're still staring.

ALEX

We going to play or what?

INT. HALL

It is between classes and the hall is crowded with students. Ditto heads for his class. DANNY REECE is pushing a desk down the hall in the opposite direction. Ditto reaches his classroom and enters.

INT. DITTO'S CLASS

The students enter Ditto's class as he GLARES at them, angrier than ever. Not a word is spoken as the routine begins with the front row getting their papers and passing them on. Ditto settles back and reads his papers.

INT. ROSENFELD'S CLASS

The class is unusually quiet. Danny Reece sits in his seat, smiling. Rosenfeld enters the room and is surprised at the silence. He looks around the room.

WIDER ANGLE:

shows that his desk is GONE.

Rosenfeld stares at the empty space and then begins to boil. He spins to Danny.

ROSENFELD

Where the hell's my desk, Reece!?

The class erupts into shouting and laughter.

INT. ALEX'S CLASS

Alex sits on his desk and looks at the class. Finally, he sets down his book and turns to the class.

ALEX

Let's talk about the responsibility
the school has to it's community.

(CONTINUED)

BOY #1

Aren't we going to go over our
homework questions?

ALEX

(nods)

We'll get to them. Let's talk
about this first. Does the school
have a responsibility?

VOICE

Babysitter!

Some laugh.

ALEX

Babysitting...what else?

The door opens and Eddie enters the room. He smiles to the class
and goes to Alex and hands him a note.

ALEX

You were supposed to be here
yesterday, Eddie.

EDDIE

Mrs. Wentzel said I ain't suppose
to be in this class.

GARY

Me neither!

More laughter. Alex looks at Gary.

ALEX

No one knows where you're supposed
to be.

(to Eddie)

Let me worry about that. Have a
seat.

Eddie shrugs and sits next to Diane. He slouches down in his
chair. Alex gets up and walks around the room.

ALEX

So, what other responsibilities
does the school have?

INT. HERBERT'S CLASS

The class stares at Herbert as he sits at the desk and smiles.
Finally he speaks.

HERBERT

Where did you leave off?

VOICE

Pickett's charge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Herbert nods. He picks up his book and walks around the room. The kids watch him closely. He stops at the window, opens it and THROWS HIS BOOK OUT. A SHOUT comes from the class. Herbert smiles. He walks back to the front of the class and opens his closet. With his back to the class, he takes off his coat and puts on a LONG BACK COAT. He puts something on his face and then a STOVE-PIPE HAT.

Herbert turns back to the class. Herbert is ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

The class looks at each other, confused.

Herbert, or Abe, walks to the podium and looks at the class, solemnly. He pulls out an old, tattered envelope and glances at it.

HERBERT/ABE

Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal...

The class stares at him.

INT. DITTO'S CLASS

The room is silent as we move around and see the students working on their papers. We stop when we reach Ditto. He's FAST ASLEEP, holding onto his paper.

INT. ALEX'S CLASS

Alex is moving around the room, excited in his discussion.

ALEX

...all right. Forget about the community. Let's talk about you. What does the school do for you?

STUDENT

Nothing!

ALEX

Nothing?

BOY #2

It gives you a diploma so you can get a job.

ALEX

So it does do something.

SARAH

School's just a place for teachers to make money.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX
(makes a face)
Yeah, sure and I just bought an
island yesterday.

Some laughter.

ALEX (cont'd)
Come on, now...doesn't it round out
your knowledge?

BOY #2
No.

ALEX
Why?

GARY
They teach you all this junk like
who was Hiawatha. I don't care who
he was. They never teach you what
you want to know.

ALEX
Hiawatha was a girl, Gary.

Laughter.

GARY
See what I mean? Who cares?

DIANE
I think we know what's best for us
more than the teachers do.

Followed by a few "yeahs".

BOY #1
I think the school does a good
job. It makes us better people if
we learn all this. It's for our
own good.

Eddie makes the sound of a LOUD FART. The class laughs. Alex
walks to Eddie.

ALEX
Well, Mr. Pilikian. I take it that
means you either disagree or you
had a very large breakfast.

The class laughs. Eddie slouches down some more. Alex won't let
up. He stands next to Eddie, waiting.

ALEX
Well?

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE
Come on, this place is a joke.

ALEX
A joke?

EDDIE
Yeah...ain't it being sued by some
kid cause you didn't teach him
nothing?

The class reacts to this as Eddie smiles. He's feeling more
confident now.

EDDIE
What are you going to say when they
ask you about that?

Alex looks at Eddie and nods. He walks around the room.

ALEX
Fair enough. Mr. Pilikian has just
given you your next assignment.

The class GROANS as Eddie slides back down in his seat, his
bravado gone.

ALEX
Tell me what's wrong with this
school. Tell me what I should say.

DIANE
We got to write another paper?

ALEX
No. You don't have to write
another paper. Do it however you
want. You can do a paper, do a
painting, take pictures...anything
to communicate your ideas about
what's wrong with this school.

EDDIE
Hold it.

ALEX
What?

EDDIE
How do we know if we do this it
ain't just going to get us in
trouble.

ALEX
Okay. Guaranteed. You won't get
into trouble.

(CONTINUED)

59A.

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
No getting us for what we say...

ALEX
No reprisals.

EDDIE
(smiles)
Yeah. No reprisals.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE AV ROOM - DAY

(NOTE: The following sequence takes place over a three day period.)

We see the closed door of the AUDIO VISUAL ROOM. Students pass by the door on their way to class. The door opens a crack and Eddie looks out. He opens the door further and then exits the room. He has a 35mm CAMERA in his hand. He closes the door and uses his ring of keys to lock it. He turns and looks around the hall and smiles and melts into the crowd.

INT. HALL - DAY

Eddie walks down the hall with his new camera. He stops at one classroom and focuses into the room.

EDDIE'S POV

DITTO is sound asleep at his desk. We hear the CAMERA CLICK and the FRAME FREEZES ON DITTO.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - DAY

Eddie walks down the crowded hall. He raises the camera and focuses.

EDDIE'S POV

HERBERT, dressed as BEN FRANKLIN and carrying a KITE, smiles into the camera. CLICK AND FREEZE FRAME ON HERBERT.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Eddie spins and focuses again.

EDDIE'S POV

Two SECURITY GUARDS are searching a boy, his arms high in the air as they pat him down. He sees Eddie and smiles broadly. CLICK and FREEZE FRAME ON KID.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Eddie sticks his head into the office and focuses.

EDDIE'S POV

ROGER watches as TWO COPS and a SECURITY GUARD try to separate two GANG KIDS. One gets loose and tries to kick the other, hitting the SECURITY GUARD in the BALLS. He doubles over in pain. CLICK and FREEZE FRAME ON GUARD.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - DAY

Eddie focuses again.

EDDIE'S POV

The NARC, who has been posing as a student, stands smiling into the camera. Danny Reece stands next to him, smiling. Without the NARC knowing it, Danny holds up a CARDBOARD SIGN in front of the Narc, that reads, "NARC". CLICK AND FREEZE FRAME ON THE NARC.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Eddie stands next to the GIRL'S BATHROOM. He sticks the camera into the bathroom and we hear...CLICK.

QUICK CUT:

INT. ALEX'S ROOM - DAY

We see the girl's bathroom. Diane Warrick stands in front of the mirror with a group of girls, all laughing and smoking cigarettes. We hear LAUGHTER.

WIDER ANGLE:

As we pull back we see that we are watching a SLIDE SHOW... Eddie's assignment. Eddie smiles and punches up the next slide.

It's a shot of a class and THREE STUDENTS in particular WHO ARE SLEEPING. More laughter.

Next slide is of the CAGES which lock off the halls. A SECURITY GUARD stands in front of them.

Next slide is of the BOY'S BATHROOM. Three of the stalls are closed with signs on the doors reading, "OUT OF ORDER".

The last slide is of ALEX in the teacher's lounge. He is sucking on a cigarette, his face screwed up.

THE CLASS really breaks up at this slide. Eddie smiles to all and accepts their congratulations.

Alex turns on the lights and looks at Eddie. Eddie smiles.

EDDIE

No reprisals...right?

Now it's Alex's turn to just SMILE.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

It is the next day. Eddie sits in the busy office, waiting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's not too happy.

ANGLE ON:

A MAN, wearing a suit, enters the office and heads for Grace's desk.

MAN

Mrs. Wentzel?

GRACE

(looks up)

Yes?

MAN

Dan Hall, Milton Insurance. I'm here about the accident involving the driver's ed car.

GRACE

Oh...we seem to have misplaced it.

MAN

What...

Eddie smiles. Alex enters the office and sees Eddie. Eddie loses his smile and stares straight at Alex. Alex turns and heads for Roger.

ALEX

What's up?

Roger holds up the camera Eddie stole and a copy of the SCHOOL NEWSPAPER.

ROGER

This.

Alex looks at the paper.

ALEX

Hey, not too bad.

ROGER

Not too bad? The kid rips off a camera and takes these pictures and all you can say is not too bad?

Alex looks at Roger.

ROGER

The morning paper is going to run these tomorrow. I've been on the phone all morning with Dr. Burke. You wanna hear how mad he is?

(motions to Eddie)

He claims you okayed this. Did you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex looks at Eddie. Eddie stares right back. Roger waits for his answer. There is a long PAUSE as Alex looks at them, making up his mind if he's going to get involved. Eddie refuses to look away. Finally, Alex straightens.

ALEX

Yes.

Eddie shows surprise. Roger shakes his head.

ROGER

Where the hell are your brains?
You know how much embarrassment
this is going to cause us?

ALEX

Come on, Roger. It's not like the
kid was chewing gum or anything.

Roger stares at Alex.

ALEX

Look, this is the first time I've
gotten to this kid. Maybe I can
even get him to give a shit about
himself and to me that's a hell of
a lot more important than something
as silly as this!

Roger moves closer to Alex and talks in a soft, angry tone.

ROGER

That's not your job, Alex, so
don't pull some Mr. Chips crap
with me, okay? Your job is to get
them through the system and keep
them out of trouble and that's it!

ALEX

Well, then maybe I should reexamine
my job.

ROGER

Maybe you should. I don't know
what's happening to you, Alex. You
got a personal problem, you work it
out at home, not here.

(pause)

This goes into your permanent
record.

ALEX

Does that mean I have to stay after
school?

They glare at each other. Finally Roger looks away and makes a
note and then looks at Eddie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

You can go.

He turns away from Alex. Eddie leaves the office as Alex looks at Roger. Finally, he turns and leaves the office.

INT. HALL

Eddie is waiting as Alex comes out. They look at each other.

ALEX

Forget to tell me about the paper?

Eddie shrugs.

ALEX

Okay, Pilikian, but you cut my
class one more time and I'll let
them have your butt...deal?

Eddie looks at Alex and then looks down at the floor and smiles.
He looks back up.

EDDIE

Deal.

He turns and walks down the hall. Alex watches him go.

CUT TO:

INT. HAMMOND'S BAR - NIGHT

This is a real neighborhood bar. Most of the customers are known by name and are regulars. Business suits and jeans mix well here. There is a pool table in a side room and the wood grain walls are filled with pictures. Trophies from softball teams line the shelves behind the bar along with more pictures...pictures of teams, customers and of LISA, HER BROTHERS AND PARENTS.

The bar itself is packed with a healthy crowd. RALPH AND FRANCIS HAMMOND are working the bar, pouring a steady stream of drinks.

Alex and Lisa enter the bar. They take off their coats as they make their way through the crowd to the bar. Several people say hello to Lisa. She is well known here. They finally reach the crowded bar. Her parents see them.

RALPH

(to two customers)

Hey, my daughter's seats! Move!

They do and Alex and Lisa sit. They almost have to yell to be heard over the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ralph grabs Alex's hand and pumps it.

RALPH
Mr. Jarrell! How have you been?

ALEX
(smiles)
Fine, Mr. Hammond.

Lisa's mother breaks in between them.

FRANCIS
Mr. Jarrell...so good to see you
again.

Alex smiles and looks at Lisa, a bit embarrassed. She finds this amusing.

RALPH
So how come you haven't been here
in so long? We haven't seen you
since Lisa was in high school.

ALEX
Well...ah...

LISA
Come on, Pop, give the guy a break.

FRANCIS
Maybe he'd like a drink before you
cross examine him?

RALPH
All I did was ask a question.

LISA
What'll ya have? I'm a great
bartender.

ALEX
Anything with an umbrella in it.

RALPH
Lawyers don't make drinks.
(hands her a tray of drinks)
Lawyers serve drinks.

FRANCIS
Ralph!

RALPH
What? What'd I do?

LISA
Never mind. Somethings never
change.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She takes the tray and leans close to Alex.

LISA
I'll be right back.

Francis looks sternly at her husband and then moves down the bar to serve some customers.

RALPH
What?

He smiles and looks at Alex.

RALPH
Women.

Alex smiles and takes a drink.

RALPH
Look at her...my daughter the lawyer.

RALPH'S POV

Lisa is serving drinks and having fun with the customers.

REVERSE ANGLE:

RALPH
We owe a lot to you, Mr. Jarrell.

ALEX
I don't know...

He looks around, very uncomfortable, and then pulls out a cigarette and lights it.

RALPH
No, I mean it. Maybe I'm embarrassing you but this needs to be said. You inspired Lisa, you let her see what's good in herself more than her mother and I ever could...and for that we owe you a lot. Drinks are on the house!

Alex looks at him and smiles.

RALPH
So why haven't you been here in so long?

Alex laughs.

ANGLE ON:

TWO COUPLES enter the bar. Lisa passes by and they all say hello. Lisa points to the bar and then serves some more drinks. The two couples head for the bar and reach Alex.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

One holds his hand out to Alex.

SCHROADER

Bob Schroader.

(motions to other man)

Phil and I work with Lisa.

ALEX

Alex Jarrell.

Phil orders some drinks for the group as Schroader settles in next to Alex.

SCHROADER

Alex Jarrell...you mean the high school teacher from JFK?

ALEX

(takes a drink)

Yeah.

SCHROADER

(smiles to all)

Uh-oh. I think we've stumbled into something we weren't supposed to know here.

ALEX

I'm just a friend of the family.

SCHROADER

(amused)

Sure you are.

SCHROADER'S DATE

I always thought high school teachers were shorter.

SCHROADER

So what do you think of the case, Alex?

ALEX

What...?

SCHROADER

I think what's really on trial here is the American Public School System and whether or not it can exist in today's society. Could be a great article for the law journal.

SCHROADER'S DATE

(to other date)

He teaches high school. Can you believe it?

CONTINUED:

Lisa talks to some customers and then she looks up and sees Alex with Schroader. She excuses herself from the others and tries to make her way through the crowd to Alex.

Schroader leans closer to Alex.

SCHROADER

(smug)

So Alex...tell me...what do you guys do during the summer? I mean, do you collect unemployment or what?

(to others)

I know I'd like to have a job where I only had to work nine months a year.

The others laugh. Alex doesn't.

ALEX

Well, you could always go get pregnant.

The others stop laughing. They look embarrassed.

SCHROADER

Yeah...well...

Lisa makes her way into the group.

LISA

How's everything going here?

Alex take a heavy draw on his cigarette and blows out the smoke.

ALEX

Great. Couldn't be better.

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lisa enters followed by Alex. It's clear they're been talking about this all the way home.

LISA

I'm sorry, Alex. They just don't understand about teaching.

ALEX

(spins to her)

And you do? Let me tell you something about teaching, Lisa. You barely get a chance to teach. You've got to be a cop and a priest and a goddamn social worker! Your time is spent dealing with problems that parents won't deal with. You got to talk to health officials and police officers...

(CONTINUED)

ALEX (cont'd)
(points to her)
...and lawyers!

Alex moves around the room, furious.

ALEX (cont'd)
...you've got to buy your own books
because the ones they give you are
twenty years out of date. The
whole place is falling down and
nobody does anything about it. All
they can do is blame the teacher.
(pause)
And now...here you come with your
lawsuit. As if that'll do
anything.

He turns and stares at the wall, running his hand through his
hair. Lisa stares at the floor.

LISA
When I got this assignment, I
couldn't wait to see you again. I
knew that Alex Jarrell would be the
first to testify...to stand up and
fight the system.

Alex turns around.

ALEX
Jesus Christ, Lisa, I am the
fucking system! We all are.
(pause)
Everybody wants to change it. The
government, the parents, the
community...they've all got the
great ideas but nobody wants to pay
the price!
(pause)
I can't change that.

Lisa stares at Alex in disbelief.

LISA
You have changed.

ALEX
(sighs)
Yeah...and what did I used to be?

LISA
A teacher.

Alex looks at her.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

What the hell do you want from me?
You expect me to start banging my
head against the wall again?
Nobody cares, Lisa! I'm not going
to be the one who sticks his neck
out again. That's what you're
asking and I won't do it!

Lisa gets up.

LISA

Well, you don't have much of a
choice, Alex, because I'm going to
ask the questions and you're going
to have to give me the answers.
You can't hide from it anymore.

ALEX

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

LISA

Don't lecture me, Alex. I'm not
one of your students anymore. I
can see for myself. I've been
there, Alex, you can't go on
denying the problems...I've seen
it!

ALEX

You haven't seen shit.

He stops and looks at her.

ALEX

(softer)

You don't see anything, Lisa. You
go in there with all your
preconceived ideas of how it should
be...with all your shields...

(moves closer)

Until you can see things the way
they really are, without all your
defenses...until you can walk down
those halls naked...don't tell me
what to do.

They stand looking at each other. Finally Alex looks away.

ALEX

I'd better go.

He heads for the door.

LISA

Alex.

(CONTINUED)

He stops but doesn't turn around. Lisa can't say anymore. His shoulders slump as he SIGHS.

ALEX

Yeah.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL, JFK - DAY

The hall is crowded with kids heading for their next class. Eddie is at his locker. Diane Warrick walks to Eddie.

DIANE

Eddie?

EDDIE

(looks and smiles)

Yeah, Diane...what's up?

Diane looks around and moves closer.

DIANE

Eddie, I need some help.

EDDIE

Yeah, sure. What'dya need?

DIANE

I need to talk to someone.

EDDIE

About what?

DIANE

I'm pregnant.

Eddie looks at her. The disappointment shows on his face as he stuffs his books into his locker.

EDDIE

So, that's no big problem.

DIANE

The father's a teacher.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie's head snaps around.

DIANE
(shrugs)

I gotta talk to somebody...

INT. ALEX'S ROOM

Alex is sitting back in his chair, looking at the ceiling. Eddie leans against the wall next to the door. Diane is seated at a desk in front of Alex. Alex leans forward and faces Diane.

ALEX
Which teacher's the father?

Diane looks down.

ALEX
Never mind...I don't want to know.
(pause)
Does he know?

DIANE
No.

ALEX
Don't you think he should?

Diane doesn't answer. She looks around the room, avoiding Alex.

ALEX
Come on, Diane. Talk to me.

DIANE
I'm afraid to tell him.

ALEX
Why? Diane, he's in more trouble
than you are.

Diane continues to just look around the room, avoiding him.

ALEX
Diane?
(pause)
Diane.

DIANE
I'm afraid he'll want to marry me!
Okay?

Alex stares at her. Eddie looks down at the floor. Diane begins to cry.

DIANE
I thought I could handle it.

(CONTINUED)

DIANE (cont'd)
I mean, it was no big deal...just
going out with a teacher...a lot of
girls do it. I thought I could
handle it...but it got serious. I
really didn't think it would go
this far...

Alex gets up and goes to the desk next to her. He sits close.

ALEX
Do your parents know?

Diane looks up, panicking.

DIANE
You can't tell them, Mr. Jarrell!
Please!
(looks at Eddie)
Eddie said I could trust you! You
can't tell them!

Alex looks at Eddie who stares right back, challenging him. Alex
looks back at Diane.

ALEX
They should be told.

DIANE
No, Mr. Jarrell. They'd kill me!
My father would throw me out! My
whole life would be over! Please!

Alex gets up and goes back to his desk.

ALEX
What do you want to do, Diane?

DIANE
(looks down and wipes
her tears)
Get an abortion.

Alex starts to look through his books, buying time. Eddie stares
at him. Finally he looks at Diane.

ALEX
Are you sure?

DIANE
(softly)
There's nothing else I can do.

Alex sighs. Diane looks up.

DIANE
Would you take me, Mr. Jarrell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex looks at her.

ALEX
What?

DIANE
Please, Mr. Jarrell? I don't want
to go alone...please?

ALEX
I can't...

DIANE
Please?

EDDIE
I'll take you.

Alex and Diane both look at Eddie. He stares at Alex. Alex
SIGHS.

ALEX
I'll take you.

INT. FREE CLINIC - DAY

Alex and Eddie sit in the deserted waiting room. They are very
uncomfortable. They look at each other and then quickly look away.
Alex picks up a magazine while Eddie looks around the room.
Finally, a NURSE enters the room.

NURSE
Mr. Warrick?

ALEX
Ah, no, Jarrell.

She looks at Eddie.

EDDIE
Smith.

Alex gives Eddie a look and Eddie shrugs.

NURSE
Well, who's with Diane Warrick?

ALEX
We are.

NURSE
Both of you?

Alex nods. She gives them a raised eyebrow and motions around the
corner to another NURSE who escorts Diane into the room. Alex and
Eddie each take an arm.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

You okay?

Diane nods. Alex and Eddie help Diane from the room. The NURSE watches them go and shakes her head.

EXT. FREE CLINIC

It is overcast and raining. Alex and Eddie help Diane to Alex's car, an old beat up VOLVO. They get in and Alex starts the car and pulls out of the lot.

INT. VOLVO

The rain beats down on the windows as the wipers try to fight it. Diane stares out the side window. Alex looks over. Eddie watches from the backseat.

ALEX

You sure you're okay?

Diane looks at him and nods.

DIANE

I'm okay. Can I have a cigarette?

ALEX

Diane, I don't think...

DIANE

Mr. Jarrell...I just had an abortion. I think I'm old enough to smoke.

Alex looks at her and nods. He hands her his pack. She takes one and then hands the pack to Eddie. Eddie takes one, thinks for a minute and then takes several more. He hands the pack to Alex who gives him a look.

Diane opens her WING and blows the smoke out. She stares out the window. A TEAR rolls down her cheek. Alex sees this.

ALEX

You've got to forget it...

DIANE

(sad laugh)

You know what really gets to me?

(shakes her head, more tears)

What gets to me is that it really doesn't bother me.

(pause)

It doesn't bother me.

She turns back to the window and cries.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL, JFK - DAY

Rosenfeld, carrying his briefcase, walks down the deserted hallway past the office. We can see INTO THE OFFICE where some COPS are trying to question some GANG KIDS, accompanied by much SHOUTING. Rosenfeld continues down the hall to the teacher's lounge.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE

Rosenfeld enters the lounge. Deborah Rowe pushes past him to get out of the lounge, her briefcase held tightly. Rosenfeld holds the door for her as she leaves.

The room is again filled with SMOKE and NOISE and the SAME FEMALE TEACHER is on the phone. Malloy is up and talking to any teacher who will listen. Linda and Ditto are playing poker. Herbert is sitting in Rosenfeld's seat and another teacher is in Alex's.

MALLOY

...they don't think we're serious
about the three minutes here.
I'm trying to talk to them but they
won't take it seriously...

Rosenfeld passes Malloy and walks to the table.

LINDA

I'll raise a nickel.
(to Herbert)
Well, I still feel that if I can
reach one or two kids...it makes it
all worth while.

Malloy has returned to look at his cards and he nods.

HERBERT

But Miss Grant...there are a
hundred and ten teachers here. If
we all reach two kids that makes
two hundred and twenty kids. What
happens to the other three thousand
two hundred and eighty?

Linda stares at him. Herbert smiles and lays down his cards.

HERBERT

Gin!

The players GROAN and throw in their cards.

Carl turns and goes to the coffee machine. Alex walks up and sits down next to Carl, smoking a cigarette and watching the game.

ROSENFELD

If you weren't seen talking to me
they'd probably let you play.

ALEX

Yeah? I figured they'd let you
play if you weren't talking to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX (cont'd)
Besides...it's only a game.

ROSENFELD
It's more than that, Alex, and you know it. They don't trust us. The whole school's been poisoned. I don't know why they pick on me... I don't want to make any trouble...I just want Danny Reece out of my class.

Alex looks up at Rosenfeld. Rosenfeld begins to look through his briefcase.

ROSENFELD
We've got that meeting with Levi this afternoon.

ALEX
Yeah.

Rosenfeld stops looking in his briefcase and looks at Alex.

ROSENFELD
What do we tell them, Alex? My deposition's tomorrow and I don't know what to say.
(pause)
What do we say?

ALEX
I don't know, Carl.

Rosenfeld looks at Alex and then nervously goes back to his briefcase.

ROSENFELD
Shit!
(more searching)
I left my grade book in my car.
(checks his watch)
I'll be back.

He turns and leaves the lounge. Alex watches him and then looks back at the poker table.

INT. HALL

We follow Rosenfeld as he passes the office and the COPS who are dragging the GANG MEMBERS out of the school.

CUT TO:

EXT. JFK

Rosenfeld walks to the teacher's parking lot, digging in his pockets for his keys. He stops at an empty space. He looks at it. Then he spins around and looks at the lot. His CAR IS GONE.

ROSENFELD

Oh dear God, they stole my car!

INT. AUTO SHOP CLASS - DAY

Eddie is busy working on the DRIVER'S ED CAR. A car horn HONKS.

EDDIE'S POV - EXT. AUTO SHOP

Danny Reece pulls up in a WHITE 1972 TOYOTA COROLLA. He gets out of the car and walks to Eddie, smiling.

REVERSE ANGLE: - INT. AUTO SHOP

Danny enters, still smiling.

DANNY

What'dya think? A little paint, a little glue...

EDDIE

Where'd you get the car?

DANNY

(smiles)

It's Rosenfeld's.

Eddie stares at Danny. He looks around the shop, sees that no one is looking, and then LUNGES at Danny and grabs the front of his shirt and pushes him against the wall. Danny gets over the shock and grabs Eddie's shirt, but it's only for effect, Eddie has him.

EDDIE

Are you fucking crazy?

DANNY

What's your problem?

EDDIE

You, ya stupid asshole! You don't rip a teacher's car! You wanna go back to juvi? Huh?

DANNY

Get the hell off me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

You can't do this! You're gonna get caught. Now get rid of it!

DANNY

No way! I took it, it's mine!

EDDIE

Get rid of it!

DANNY

Oh, I get it. Only the great Pilikian can steal a car. Anybody else does it, they're stupid.

EDDIE

Rosenfeld's going to have cops all over the place. Now take it back!

Danny swings his arms and gets free from Eddie.

DANNY

Fuck you! You're so worried about it...you take it back!

He runs out of the shop. Eddie stares at the car and then punches the air in anger.

CUT TO:

INT. DITTO'S CLASS

The class is silent as usual as we move around the room. They work on their papers or sleep or look out the window but no one talks.

ANGLE ON:

Ditto is sound asleep at his desk. He GRUNTS and makes a CHOKING SOUND. His head moves forward and then SAGS BACK.

CLOSE SHOT:

Ditto's hand relaxes and he drops his paper. DITTO IS DEAD.

THE BELLS RINGS. The class gets up and leaves the room. The next class comes in and takes their seats. The front row gets up and gets their papers and passes them on. No one says a word, no one notices Ditto. They all believe him to be asleep.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S ROOM

The class is in progress. Alex is holding a book.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STUDENT

Why do we have to read this book?

ALEX

Because I said to. Come on, it's a good book. I just re-read it myself last summer.

STUDENT

(shocked)

You read in the summer?

CUT TO:

INT. HERBERT'S ROOM

Herbert stands in the middle of the room, DRESSED AS GEORGE WASHINGTON, complete with powdered wig and everything.

The class is no longer stunned or confused by Herbert; they are gathered around him, asking questions and acting out history. One group has surrounded Herbert with their desks, in the shape of a ROW BOAT.

HERBERT

What's the name of this river?

VOICE

Potomac!

OTHERS

Delaware!

Herbert nods at the second answer. He pulls a SILVER DOLLAR from his coat pocket and tosses it across the room. It strikes the far wall.

HERBERT

Row!

The group begins to row and move their desks as Herbert stands regally in their midst.

CUT TO:

INT. DITTO'S CLASS

THE BELL RINGS and the class gets up and leaves the room. Another takes their place and begins the routine and still no one takes notice of Ditto.

CUT TO:

INT. ROSENFELD'S CLASS

The class is working on some problems. Rosenfeld walks to his closet and opens the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON CLOSET:

It is completely empty of all of Rosenfeld's things.

Rosenfeld spins back to the innocent class. He's had all he can take.

ROSENFELD

Out! Everybody out!

The students stare at him, not really knowing what to do. Rosenfeld begins to chase them out of the room.

ROSENFELD

I said out!

The room empties and Rosenfeld leans against his desk, trying to regain his composure. One student sticks her head back into the room.

GIRL

Do we get hall passes?

ROSENFELD

OUT!!

She runs out. Rosenfeld sits in his chair and stares.

CUT TO:

INT. DITTO'S CLASS

THE BELL RINGS. We MOVE with the kids as they get up and head for the door. They reach DITTO and we STAY WITH HIM. The new class enters the room as we see Ditto's face...calm...peaceful...and dead.

CUT TO:

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE - AFTERNOON

For once the room is not filled with teachers and smoke. There is a meeting going on at the poker table. Seated there are Levi, Roger, Burke and Holt. Alex is slouched down on one of the couches, smoking a cigarette. Rosenfeld is pacing near them. Levi is speaking in a quiet monotone.

LEVI

...what they're going to have to try and prove is that this John Calvin was knowingly promoted when in fact, he should have been failed. As two of his teachers, you will be asked questions pertaining to this and your

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEVI (cont'd)
testimony will have a great impact.
Mr. Rosenfeld will have his
deposition tomorrow and yours Mr.
Jarrell, will be in four days.

Levi consults his notes. Alex blows a smoke ring. Rosenfeld continues to pace.

ROGER
You want to give it a rest, Carl?

Rosenfeld looks at Roger and stops.

LEVI
Now, I feel confident that we have
effectively blocked their access to
the school records. What I'd like
to know is if either of you have
any personal records that would
pertain to this.

ALEX
Don't you want to know if it's
true?

They all look at Alex. Carl begins to pace.

LEVI
I beg your pardon?

ALEX
I said, don't you want to know if
it's true. I mean, isn't that the
best place to start?

LEVI
Not necessarily.

ROGER
Come on, Alex, stick to the
discussion.

ALEX
(sits up)
I am.

Burke shoots an accusing look at Roger.

BURKE
I don't think the question here is
whether or not we're guilty.

LEVI
Mr. Jarrell, innocence is
irrelevant...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX

You mean we're guilty?

HOLT

Let's not say that, okay? Even if
you're kidding. Let's just agree
not to say that!

ALEX

You mean guilt isn't irrelevant?

HOLT

(points to Alex)

I asked you not to say that!

Grace enters the room and hands some papers to Roger. He signs
them as Levi says:

LEVI

Mr. Jarrell, all we're trying to
do here is to try and help you
better prepare your answers. We're
not conducting some great search
for the truth.

BURKE

(to Alex)

Teamwork, Alan...that's what this
is all about.

Roger finishes with the papers and looks up as Grace leaves.

ROGER

Let's stick to the discussion.

(looks at Carl)

Carl, quit pacing.

Rosenfeld stops and stares at Roger.

ROSENFELD

I'll pace if I want to, dammit!

The others look at him. Carl paces.

ROSENFELD

Christ, this place is unbelievable!

(looks at them)

I want my car back!

BURKE

(to Roger)

What's he talking about?

ROGER

Carl...Carl...Calm down, Carl.

Roger stands and starts for Rosenfeld. Rosenfeld backs up.

(CONTINUED)

ROSENFELD

Calm down? Calm down?

(holds out hand)

That's what you said when I got
bit! That's what you said when my
desk was stolen. I gotta big flash
for ya, Roger, it didn't work then
and it won't work now!

LEVI

I don't understand this...

ROSENFELD

And you guys are beautiful.
Sitting here telling us how to
lie...

Holt jumps up.

HOLT

Don't say that!

ROSENFELD

Come on, that's what you guys are
telling us to do here isn't it...
lie!

BURKE

Mr. Rosenfeld...we can't have this
breakdown of teamwork!

All of them are on their feet now, except for Alex who watches it
all from the couch...amazed.

Grace comes back into the room. No one pays any attention to her
as they all are moving around the room, shouting.

ROSENFELD

Teamwork my ass!

ROGER

Carl...Carl...

ROSENFELD

You can take your teamwork and...
I'll tell ya what...I've got a lot
to say at that deposition tomorrow.
I've got a lot to say!

HOLT

Don't say that!

GRACE

Mr. McMahon!

LEVI

I fail to understand any of this...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BURKE
Get ahold of yourself...

ROSENFELD
...a lot to say...

GRACE
Mr. McMahon!

ROGER
Carl...Carl...

GRACE
MR. McMAHON!!

ROGER
WHAT?!

The room falls silent. Alex looks from one to the other. He looks as if he's enjoying this.

ROGER
I'm sorry, Grace. What is it?

GRACE
Something's wrong with Mr. Stiles.

ROGER
Who?

GRACE
Ditto!

There is a pause and then Roger leaves the room followed by Alex and the others.

INT. HALL JFK

The hall is crowded with students and teachers trying to look into Ditto's classroom.

FROM ONE END OF THE HALL, TWO AMBULANCE ATTENDANTS fight their way through the crowd.

ATTENDANT #1
Let us through, come on, let's go.

FROM THE OPPOSITE END OF THE HALL Roger and Alex and the others make their way through the crowd.

A SECURITY GUARD helps clear the way for the attendants. Herbert, still dressed as GEORGE WASHINGTON, clears the final path for them. The attendants look at Herbert and then enter the room.

ATTENDANT #2
What the hell is this place?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roger and Alex reach the door to Ditto's room and look in.

THEIR POV - INT. DITTO'S ROOM

Ditto sits slumped down in his chair. The SCHOOL NURSE sits in front of him in one of the desks. She crosses her legs as she lights a cigarette, her portable ashtray is on the desk in front of her.

The attendants go to Ditto and one feels for a pulse.

ATTENDANT #1

This guy's dead.

NURSE

Really...how can you tell.

She takes a drag from her smoke.

REVERSE ANGLE - INT. HALL

Roger and Alex are stunned at hearing this. Roger turns to Alex.

ROGER

Dead?

ALEX

(stunned)

He can't be dead...he's got tenure.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL - AFTERNOON

School is over but the hall is still crowded as students and teachers are gathered around, talking about Ditto. Alex stands in front of the office with some other teachers, talking to a COP.

ALEX

I don't know...I just got here.

DITTO'S BODY is wheeled past them to the door. They all stop and look at it. LISA walks behind the stretcher. She stops and looks at Alex. They stare at each other.

EDDIE

Hey, Mr. Jarrell.

The moment is broken and Lisa looks at the ground and then continues on out of the building. Alex watches her and then turns to see Eddie approaching him.

EDDIE

Mr. Jarrell.

ALEX

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie hesitates as he looks around.

EDDIE
You, ah, got a minute?

ALEX
Yeah. What'dya want?

EDDIE
Ah, not here...okay?

Alex looks at Eddie, trying to figure this out.

ALEX
Okay.

Eddie turns and heads down the hall. Alex follows.

CUT TO:

INT. AUTO SHOP CLASS - AFTERNOON

Eddie enters the shop followed by Alex. He goes to the DRIVER'S ED CAR. Alex leans against the one next to it and looks at Eddie.

ALEX
So?

Eddie reaches into the backseat of the car and pulls out the DRIVER'S ED SIGN. He sets it on the roof. Alex gets off the other car when he sees this.

ALEX
You've got to be kidding me. You
know how many people are looking
for this?
(looks at Eddie)
You took it?

EDDIE
I never said that. I'm just
showing you something.

ALEX
Why?

Eddie shrugs and sits on the car.

EDDIE
I figure this makes us even.

ALEX
What?

EDDIE
You done something for me, now I'm
doing something for you. We're
even.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
That's important to you.

EDDIE
I don't owe people nothing.

Alex nods and looks at the floor. Eddie gets up and heads for the door.

ALEX
Hey, Eddie.

Eddie turns.

ALEX
How about keeping the car and
taking the reading class.

EDDIE
Hey, we are even, man.

Alex walks to Eddie.

ALEX
Come on, Eddie, knock off the dumb
talk crap, okay? You want to talk
stupid in class, fine, if that's
your act, but we both know you're
not stupid so give me a break.

Eddie stares at Alex.

ALEX
The education is yours, Eddie.
Don't be cheated out of it! Take
the damn class...learn something
and then get the hell out and find
a good job, do something with
yourself. You're getting a chance
here, Eddie, take it! It sure
beats the hell outta stealing cars.
(pause)
Take the class.

Eddie looks at Alex for a long moment.

EDDIE
Who're you doing this for, me or
you?

ALEX
Does it matter?

Eddie continues to stare at Alex. Finally he nods his head.

EDDIE
All right. I'll take the class.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns and leaves the room. Alex smiles and then he too leaves the room, passing a WHITE TOYOTA which has been completely stripped.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alex is sitting on the couch drinking a beer and smoking. He stares off into nothing. He stirs and looks at the phone. He picks it up and dials. It rings.

LISA (over phone)

Hello?

Alex doesn't speak.

LISA (over phone)

Hello? Who is this...hello?

Slowly Alex hangs up the phone. He takes another drink and stares at the wall.

INT. HALL, JFK - DAY

Roger, Rosenfeld and Levi walk down the empty hall towards the conference room and Rosenfeld's deposition. Rosenfeld is upset but tries to remain calm.

ROGER

You okay, Carl?

ROSENFELD

Fine, fine. Don't worry about me.

LEVI

Now, Mr. Rosenfeld, just follow my lead today and everything...

ROSENFELD

I know, I know. You've gone over it a million times! Don't worry. I'm okay. I'll do the right thing. I will.

ROGER

Okay, Carl.

He pats him on the back and nods to Levi and then turns and walks down the hall. Levi looks at Rosenfeld and smiles.

LEVI

It'll be a breeze, don't worry.

ROSENFELD

I'm fine.

They enter the conference room.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S CLASS - DAY

Alex walks through the rows of his class as he prepares them for a test. He nonchalantly picks up cheatsheets from the students as he goes.

ALEX

Don't forget your name at the top
right hand corner...

He picks up a book from one girl's desk and turns it upside down and several CHEATSHEETS fall out. The class laughs.

ALEX (con't)

...if you get stuck on one question
go on...

He stops at one boy and motions for him to hold out his hands. He does and Alex pulls a slip from his sleeve. More laughter.

ALEX

...you will have forty five minutes
to complete the test.

He stops at Gary Hahn's desk and holds out his hand. Gary gives up and hands Alex his cheatsheet. Alex snaps his fingers and Gary hands him another. Again he snaps his fingers and Gary hands him yet another. One more snap and Gary sighs and hands him his last.

ALEX

You may now start.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Lisa sits at the table taking Rosenfeld's deposition. Levi sits next to Rosenfeld and the STENOGRAPHER is busy recording it all. Rosenfeld is still nervous and jumpy.

LISA

...was John Calvin a student of
yours?

ROSENFELD

Absolutely.

LISA

Did John Calvin pass the required
course in your class?

Levi leans forward in his seat and clears his throat.

LEVI

I don't think Mr. Rosenfeld can
answer that question the way it's
been put. It's very vague.

Rosenfeld looks at Levi.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA

Okay. Did John Calvin receive a passing grade in your class?

ROSENFELD

Yes.

LISA

Did he deserve it?

LEVI

Once again, I think that Mr...

ROSENFELD

Oh shut the hell up!

Levi jumps and looks at Rosenfeld.

ROSENFELD

John Calvin didn't deserve any grade in my class because he rarely if ever bothered to show up! I had nothing to base my grade on!

LISA

Then why did you pass him?

ROSENFELD

Because it's policy!

LEVI

(to himself)

Oh shit.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE

The room is again crowded and filled with smoke. THE SAME FEMALE TEACHER in on the phone. Malloy sits at the poker table with the others and we can hear "three minutes" and "teamwork" mentioned several times.

Alex enters the room and Malloy becomes silent as the players avoid him. Alex gets a cup of coffee.

ROSENFELD bursts into the room. He stops and looks around. He's very excited and nervous. He goes to the coffee machine and starts to pour a cup of coffee but stops. He's too jumpy to do it. He turns and goes to one of the couches and sits alone. He taps his fingers.

ROSENFELD

Well, I did it.

The room becomes quiet. Alex moves closer to him.

ALEX

Did what, Carl?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROSENFELD

(nods)

I told them...I told them
everything.

Rosenfeld looks around the room. No one says anything. Malloy
gets up and leaves the room. Rosenfeld smiles.

ROSENFELD

Well, hey, what could I do, right?
They backed me into a corner.

(stronger)

They should have gotten rid of
Danny Reece. I told them to do it,
I begged them...

(laughs)

They wouldn't listen...

(looks at Alex)

I had to do it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He smiles to the room. THE FEMALE TEACHER hangs up the phone in the middle of a sentence to listen. A few other teachers leave the room. The rest stare at Rosenfeld with contempt. Alex looks at them and then at Rosenfeld.

ROSENFELD

I did the right thing.

(nods)

I know I did the right thing.

He nods and then Carl breaks down and cries, hiding his face in his hands. Alex puts his hand on Rosenfeld's shoulder as the others stare at both of them.

ANGLE ON:

One of the OFFICE SECRETARIES comes into the room.

SECRETARY

Mr. Jarrell? Mr. McMahon would like to see you in his office.

Alex nods to her. He holds onto Carl and looks at the others. They stare back as if he has a disease.

ALEX

(to Carl)

You okay?

Carl nods his head and waves Alex off to the office, still crying. Alex squeezes his arm and then leaves the lounge under the watchful eyes of the others.

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE

Eddie is sitting in one of the chairs. He's very angry and embarrassed. He refuses to look at his MOTHER who is sitting in the other chair. She chain smokes while she waits. Roger sits behind his desk.

ROGER

I'm sure we can clear this right up.

Alex opens the door and enters. He looks at Eddie but Eddie looks away.

MRS. PILIKIAN

I demand to know why you are flunking my son!

ALEX

What?

Eddie squirms in his seat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. PILIKIAN
How can you flunk him when he's
already passed the class?

ALEX
(puzzled)
I'm not flunking your son.

ROGER
Alex, the problem here seems to be
Eddie's repeating the reading
class...

ANGLE ON:

The door flies open and MR. PILIKIAN barges into the office.
Grace stands helplessly behind him. She shrugs to Roger. Mr.
Pilikian is wearing his work clothes and is pissed off.

MR. PILIKIAN
Who's Jarrell?

ALEX
I am.

Mrs. Pilikian jumps to her feet. Roger too, stands. Eddie is the
only one seated and he looks away.

MRS. PILIKIAN
(to Alex)
He's not supposed to be here! You
know that!
(to ex-husband)
I told you I could handle this!

MR. PILIKIAN
He's my son too!

ALEX
What's going on here?

MR. PILIKIAN
Trying to flunk my boy, bub?

ALEX
(exasperated)
What?!

MRS. PILIKIAN
Mr. McMahon says he doesn't have to
take that reading class again.
(to ex)
You're not supposed to be here!
(to others)
He's not supposed to be here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
He needs that class!

ROGER
Alex, he already passed the class.

MR. PILIKIAN
I asked you a question, bub.

As the adults yell at each other in cross conversations, Eddie watches and gets more and more upset.

ROGER
Look, Alex, you can't expect Eddie to do as well as your track two students. Eddie's track three...

MRS. PILIKIAN
The judge told you to stay away. I've got a court order telling you to stay away!

MR. PILIKIAN
Shuttup!

EDDIE
Why don't all of ya shuttup for a minute!

Mr. Pilikian strikes out quickly and BACKHANDS Eddie across the face. The others in the room are stunned.

MR. PILIKIAN
Don't you talk to me like that.

Eddie glares at his father, not touching his face, not acknowledging the blow.

EDDIE
Fuck off!

He spins out of his seat and runs out the door.

MRS. PILIKIAN
Eddie!

She runs after him. Roger moves quickly around the desk and plants himself between Alex and Mr. Pilikian. Alex finally gets over the shock and moves towards the door, but Roger keeps him back with his body.

MR. PILIKIAN
He's my kid, Jarrell. I'll handle him.

ALEX
You've done a great job so far, bub.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They move towards each other but Roger holds them apart.

ROGER
Come on, this won't solve anything,
come on...

Mr. Pilikian backs off and looks at Alex.

MR. PILIKIAN
You try to screw around with my kid
again and I'll be back...
understand?

Alex glares at him. Mr. Pilikian turns and leaves the office.
Roger lets out a sigh of relief and goes back behind his desk and
straightens his papers. Alex looks at the door.

ALEX
Now what do we do?!

ROGER
(shrugs)
You heard them. Pass him.

ALEX
He can't read!

ROGER
He can read enough.

ALEX
Enough? What the hell does that
mean?!

Roger throws his papers down on the desk.

ROGER
Goddamn it, Alex, what do you want
me to do? You heard them! Do it!
I'm not wasting what little time or
money we've got on one kid! Jesus
Christ...for every kid like him
there's fifty...a hundred kids who
learn here and learn well. It's
not our job to worry about him.
Our job is to get as many students
through the system as we can with
what we've got! That's reality and
you know it!

He turns and heads for the door.

ALEX
You can't see it, can you?

Roger stops and sighs.

ROGER
See what...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX

This is the exact same thing we're being sued about.

Roger spins back to Alex.

ROGER

Don't talk to me about being sued, Alex. I don't want to hear it.

ALEX

This is the same reason that Lisa Hammond is down the hall taking depositions! We're not teaching these kids!

Roger stops and stares at Alex.

ROGER

I can't hear you, Alex.

ALEX

It's the same thing!

ROGER

I can't hear you!

ALEX

We're doing it again!

ROGER

I CAN'T HEAR YOU!!

They look at each other. Finally Alex turns and leaves the office. Roger watches him go. He composes himself and then he too leaves the office.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

Roger enters from his office. Levi stands by Grace's desk, talking into the phone.

LEVI (into phone)

Dr. Burke, please.

Roger goes to him.

ROGER

What's the matter?

Levi covers the phone.

LEVI

Rosenfeld fucked us. He told everything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

What? How could you let that happen?

LEVI

There was nothing I could do.

ROGER

Jesus Christ, we can't even control Rosenfeld!

LEVI

This puts it on your boy, Roger. If Jarrell confirms this in his deposition... we're sunk.

Roger turns and looks at his office where he and Alex argued.

LEVI (into phone)

David?

Roger looks back at Levi and grabs the phone from him.

ROGER (into phone)

David, Roger McMahon.
(long pause, looks at Levi,
then looks away)
We've got to dump Jarrell.

CUT TO:

INT. HAMMOND'S BAR - NIGHT

There aren't very many customers as it's a week night. RALPH is working behind the bar. Alex enters and walks to the bar. Ralph looks at him. From his look it is clear that he knows what has happened between Alex and his daughter. Alex sits on a bar stool.

RALPH

Evening, Mr. Jarrell. Beer?

ALEX

Yeah, sure.

Ralph pours it and sets it in front of Alex. Then he straightens up and looks over Alex's shoulder. Alex notices this and turns.

ALEX'S POV

Lisa stands at the doorway to the Pool Room.

REVERSE ANGLE:

RALPH

Why don't you take a table, Mr. Jarrell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex turns and gives Ralph a short smile.

ALEX

Thanks.

As Ralph watches, Alex gets up and walks towards Lisa. She doesn't move as he approaches. They look at each other.

ALEX

Hi.

LISA

(nervous)

Hi.

Alex motions to a table and Lisa looks at it and then nods. They sit.

LISA

You okay?

ALEX

Yeah...sure.

Lisa looks down, this is very uncomfortable for her.

LISA

I tried to call you tonight.

ALEX

Been out.

LISA

I heard about Eddie Pilikian.

Alex smiles sardonically.

ALEX

Good news travels fast.

LISA

Is he okay?

ALEX

He split. Ran away from home.

LISA

I'm sorry.

(pause)

I'm also sorry for what I said the other night...I just believe so hard, you know?

ALEX

Don't be sorry.

(leans back)

You want to know the truth?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX (cont'd)

The truth is that I woke up one morning and realized I'd been on auto pilot for the last five years. And what's worse... I was just too damn tired to do anything about it.

(pause)

Now we're all running scared trying to cover up what we did or didn't do...spending all our time trying to protect our own ass. And kids are still being pushed through.

(looks at her)

Maybe if I really believed you could fight them...maybe I would. But it's too imbedded...it's like cement. One person is just going to be one person...nothing more.

LISA

What are you going to do?

ALEX

Well...I can't go on like this anymore.

LISA

You can't walk away, Alex. Without you...what'll happen to the kids? You can't quit. You're too good a teacher.

ALEX

I don't know if I am a teacher anymore.

(smiles)

That's one thing you've done. You've made us face it. Now I just have to figure it out myself.

They look at each other. Lisa takes Alex's hand.

LISA

Stay with me tonight...

Alex squeezes her hand and smiles.

ALEX

This I have to do on my own.

He gets up still holding her hand.

LISA

(softly)

You're a good guy, Alex Jarrell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
(smiles)
One of the saints.

They look at each other. He leans down and they kiss, long and tender. Then he turns and leaves the bar.

CUT TO:

INT. ALEX'S CLASS - DAY

The class is silent. Alex is sitting back in his chair, looking out the window. Diane looks at Eddie's empty desk and then at Alex.

DIANE
Mr. Jarrell?

Alex looks at her.

DIANE
Aren't we going to do nothing?

Alex shakes his head, "no".

The kids look at each other. Alex looks back out the window. The energy that we had seen before is gone.

INT. DEBORAH ROWE'S CLASS

Miss Rowe is winding up her class. She gathers her books as she talks.

MISS ROWE
...double spaced, four pages. And
let's watch our spelling errors.

She moves closer to the door as she talks.

MISS ROWE
And don't forget the quiz on
Friday.

THE BELL RINGS.

MISS ROWE
Class dismissed!

She runs out of the room before any of her students.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

The office is its usual madhouse. Roger is in one corner of the office, well away from the others. He paces in front of some chairs, furious. The object of his fury sits in front of him...Ray Troy, the gym teacher. Mr. Macho's head is hung and he has been crying. Roger stops and stares at him.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

(angry whisper)

How the hell could you be so stupid, Troy? Huh? Tell me how you could be so goddamn stupid!

(starts pacing)

As if we haven't got enough problems. We are in the middle of a lawsuit, buddy!

Troy looks up at Roger, his eyes red.

ROGER

(angry whisper)

Three girls, Troy. Three of our students...why didn't you go to some other school and get their girls pregnant?! You know what this is going to do to the school? Do you know how this is going to look?

(pause)

Teamwork, Troy, does not mean going out and starting your own team!

ANGLE ON:

SEVEN COPS enter the office. With them is the NARC who has been posing as a student. The CAPTAIN hands Grace a SEARCH WARRANT. She looks at it.

GRACE

Mr. McMahon.

Roger spins around.

ROGER

What!

Grace holds out the paper. Roger grabs it and reads it.

ROGER

What?

CAPTAIN

That's a search warrant to search school lockers numbers fifty through four hundred inclusive.

ROGER

You gotta be kidding me.

He looks up and see the NARC. He sighs.

ROGER

When?

CAPTAIN

Right now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roger looks at the Captain, a defeated look on his face. He looks at the NARC and does a slow burn.

ROGER
Your cop was flunking, ya know!

CUT TO:

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE

The room is agains crowded and filled with smoke. Alex sits on one of the couches, smoking. He doesn't look too well.

ANGLE ON:

MISS ROWE enters the room and gets a cup of coffee. She passes MALLOY as he talks to a group of teachers.

MALLOY
...and I want everyone there.
We're going to have to decide what
to do if we don't get the three
minutes. If we walk, I'm going to
want volunteers for food detail...

Rowe gets her coffee and heads for one of the couches. She opens her briefcase.

INSERT BRIEFCASE

The HOLSTER for her GUN is still in the case but the GUN IS GONE.

ROWE frantically searches through her case. The gun is gone.

ROWE
Oh God!

Herbert stands next to her.

HERBERT
Anything wrong?

ROWE
What? No! No, nothing's wrong.

She slams her case shut and rushes out of the room.

THE BELL RINGS. The teachers begin to move to the door for their next class. Alex is slow in getting up. Linda Grant enters the room.

LINDA
There's cops out there searching
lockers again.

There is a collective GROAN from the teachers. Alex gets up and heads out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. HALL

The hall is crowded with students changing classes. Alex makes his way through the throng to his classroom.

ANGLE ON:

The COPS are searching the lockers across the hall from Alex's room. Roger is with them and SECURITY GUARDS are helping to keep the students away from their lockers. The students are very angry at this and are yelling insults to the cops in the b.g.

THE CAPTAIN opens a locker and they find nothing. They move to the next with the same result.

SECURITY GUARD

Let's go! Get to class...move
outta the hallway.

VOICE

Fuck you!

There is a loud CHEER at this statement.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

Danny Reece comes out of one of the classrooms. He looks very nervous. He sees the cops and inches his way through the crowd to the far end of the hall.

THE COPS open another locker and find nothing. The kids LAUGH as the SECURITY GUARDS continue to try and clear the hall.

GUARD

Let's move it!

Danny moves behind the crowd, watching the cops all the time. He reaches his locker.

THE COPS open another locker.

CLOSE SHOT LOCKER

It's filled with DOPE of all kinds.

There is a hush from the kids as the cops beam. The Captain turns to Roger.

CAPTAIN

Who's locker is this?

Roger looks at the number and checks the list he has with him. He runs his finger down the list and stops. He looks at the NARC.

ROGER

It's his.

The hallway ERUPTS WITH LAUGHTER AND CHEERING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Danny, believing he is hidden by the kids, bends down and works the lock to his locker. His back is to the cops.

CAPTAIN

(to NARC)

You want to explain this?

The NARC looks shattered. He holds up his hands.

NARC

I don't know.

ONE COP is looking around the hall.

COP'S POV

he sees Danny opening his locker.

REVERSE ANGLE:

The COP HITS the CAPTAIN.

COP

Hey! You!

There is too much NOISE in the hall for him to be heard. He starts pushing his way through the crowd.

COP

Hey! Get away from that locker!

Alex sees the cop and looks in the direction the cop is heading. He sees Danny and tries to move to intercept the cop.

The other cops have seen Danny and start to move towards him. The noise starts to die down.

COP

HOLD IT!!

CAPTAIN

Get away from that locker!

The kids now know something is going on and turn to Danny.

DANNY

reaches into his locker and pulls out DEBORAH ROWE'S GUN. He tries to stick it in his waistband as he turns.

THE COP

stops dead in his tracks, he sees the gun.

COP

GUN!!

The hall fills with SCREAMS as other kids see the gun in Danny's

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

hand. The COP pulls his gun as do the others. The KIDS try to run and hit the floor, leaving a clear view of Danny.

Alex tries to fight his way to Danny.

COP
DROP THE GUN!! DROP IT!!

Danny, confused, continues to turn around, the gun held in his right hand.

CAPTAIN
DROP IT!!

Danny is still confused and he looks down at the gun and starts to raise it while looking at it.

Alex sees that he can't make it to Danny.

ALEX
NO!!!

The COPS OPEN FIRE. The KIDS SCREAM.

Danny is hit immediately and drops the gun as he crumples and collapses back into his locker.

THE HALL is mostly silent; we hear some WHIMPERING and CRYING. The COPS, cautiously move to Danny, their guns trained on him.

Roger gets up from the floor, staring in disbelief.

Alex looks at Danny, the shock showing on his face.

Danny, lays in his locker, dead.

CUT TO:

INT. ALBERT SLOAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

This is an office. Beautifully furnished with plush carpeting and a huge antique desk. ALBERT SLOAN, a senior partner in Lisa's law firm and GEORGE HILLERMAN, another partner, are standing next to Sloan's bar, pouring glasses of champagne.

ANGLE ON:

Lisa enters the office.

LISA
You wanted to see me, Mr. Sloan?

SLOAN
Yes, Lisa. I believe you know George Hillerman?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They nod to each other.

SLOAN (cont'd)

I'm glad you were still in the office.

LISA

I'm taking Alex Jarrell's deposition the day after tomorrow and I want to be fully prepared. I think his is going to be very important to our case.

SLOAN

Well, you can stop worrying about that, now.

Lisa looks puzzled as Sloan hands her a glass of champagne.

LISA

What do you mean?

HILLERMAN

Congratulations, Lisa...to your first victory. I don't know what you did at that school, but it certainly worked!

Lisa looks at Sloan and he nods and smiles.

SLOAN

It's true. We've been able to reach a settlement with JFK. Of course, we can't say anything until the paper work is finished next week...but we didn't want to wait to congratulate you.

LISA

What settlement?

SLOAN

The school district has agreed to pay the Calvins thirty thousand dollars with a non-admission of guilt. With, of course, the proviso that neither side discuss the terms of the settlement.

Lisa stares at him. She looks down at her glass and then slowly sets it down on the bar. The anger builds in her.

LISA

Why wasn't I told about this?

Hillerman looks at Sloan and clears his throat. He smiles as he attempts to keep it light.

(CONTINUED)

HILLERMAN

Well, Lisa, this is the firm's case, not just yours. I don't think we need to go into details right now but suffice it to say that we're all very happy with the outcome.

LISA

I can't accept this.

HILLERMAN

I beg your pardon?

LISA

I cannot accept this settlement. It's wrong! What's at stake here is much more important than thirty thousand dollars!

Hillerman starts to say something but Sloan cuts him off.

SLOAN

Exactly what is it you're trying to say, Lisa?

LISA

I'm saying that we have an issue here that needs to be changed. It's crying out to be changed! Isn't that why we all became lawyers in the first place? To make a difference? We have the opportunity here...right now...to do what's right. How can you sell that?

SLOAN

The only thing that is "right"; Miss Hammond, is what the client wants. That's our job. It's the way it works and you know that!

LISA

Not this time! There's too much at stake to do this one by the numbers. We're not talking about out maneuvering the opposition on a business deal. We don't win because we get them to come up with thirty thousand dollars! We're talking about the future! Children are going to have to go to that school and others just like it and too many of them aren't going to learn! We lose if we settle this case because we'll be

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA (cont'd)
helping to turn out a whole
generation of illiterates! And you
can't buy them off with thirty
thousand dollars!

Sloan looks at Lisa and then sets his glass down. He pulls out
his handkerchief and dries his hands as he talks.

SLOAN
Emotion is a dangerous thing, Miss
Hammond, especially when you allow
it to cloud your judgement. You've
become much too involved with this
Alex Jarrell and for a lawyer, that
can be costly.

Lisa stares at him. This has caught her by surprise. She regains
her composure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA

Giving up the chance to do
something costs more.

SLOAN

I don't have to remind you of your
duties as a lawyer, Miss Hammond.
If you discuss this case with
anyone or in anyway jeopardize this
settlement...you'll be facing
disciplinary action from the bar.
(pause)

Next time maybe you can pursue
it...it'll come up again...it
always does. But you can't very
well get on your white horse if
you're disbarred...can you, Miss
Hammond? The choice is yours.

Sloan turns and goes back to his desk.

SLOAN (cont'd)

As for that school you're so
worried about...I think you're
overreacting to the whole situation.
John F. Kennedy High is a good sane
school.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY, JFK - DAY

We are in front of Roger, who is followed by a SECURITY GUARD and
two ATTENDANTS wearing WHITE COATS, as they march down the empty
hall to HERBERT'S CLASSROOM. Roger has some papers grasped firmly
in his hand and he looks very angry. They stop at Herbert's
room.

INT. HERBERT'S CLASS

This time Herbert is dressed as GENERAL GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER,
complete with blond locks, mustache and gouthee and a CAVALRY
UNIFORM. The students have formed a circle around him with their
desks. He spins from one to another as they fire questions at
him...totally wrapped up in the class.

STUDENT

But why did you divide your force?

HERBERT/CUSTER

Why, to prevent escape! That the
Indians would escape was my
greatest fear!

Roger and the others enter the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Herbert and the class see them. Roger looks at the papers in his hand.

ROGER
Is your name Herbert Geiser?

HERBERT
Yes.

Roger shakes his head.

ROGER
You mean you're not Stewart
Vanzant?

HERBERT
Certainly not.

THE BELL RINGS. The class doesn't move, they talk among themselves trying to figure out what's going on.

ROGER
You're an out-patient at Riverdale
Mental Hospital?

HERBERT
(nods)
At times.

Roger sighs and looks at the attendants.

ROGER
Get him outta here.

The attendants move in and take Herbert's arms.

ATTENDANT #1
Come on, let's go buddy.

They start out of the classroom. The kids jump up and follow.

INT. HALL

The hall is filled with students going to their next class. They all stop when they see Herbert and the attendants.

Alex comes out of his room and notices the silence. He turns and sees Herbert.

THE ATTENDANTS begin to pull Herbert down the hall. Herbert stops and shakes his arms free.

HERBERT
Don't you know who I am?

ATTENDANT #2
Yeah, sure. You're General Custer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERBERT

I am a teacher! And you will treat
me as such!

The attendants look at each other sheepishly. Herbert nods and straightens his coat. With his head held high, he walks down the hall.

In the b.g. we begin to hear the strains of "GARRYOWEN" the Fighting Song of the Seventh Cavalry.

Alex stands next to his room. He starts to smile.

Herbert, with great dignity, walks down the hall followed by the attendants. He nods to the students as he goes.

Rosenfeld stands at his door. Herbert stops when he reaches him and shakes his hand. He continues on. He stops in front of Alex and takes his hand.

HERBERT

Mr. Jarrell.

ALEX

Mr. Vanzant.

Herbert looks around the hall and leans closer.

HERBERT

Geiser.

ALEX

(smiles)

Mr. Geiser.

Herbert backs up and gives Alex a perfect military salute. Alex looks at Herbert and then straightens and returns it.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

Herbert executes a smart right-face and starts down the hall. The attendants follow after him as Herbert walks past the office and out the front door and into the sunlight.

ALEX smiles. He looks around the hall and then goes back into his room.

INT. ALEX'S ROOM

Alex walks into the empty room and goes to his desk.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie, unseen by Alex, is sitting on one of the desks in the back of the room. Alex finally looks up and sees him. They stare at each other for a minute.

ALEX

Where you been?

EDDIE

(shrugs)

Around.

Another awkward silence.

ALEX

You okay?

Eddie shrugs again. He looks around the room. Alex sits on the front of his desk.

ALEX

So, you coming back?

EDDIE

Not to this place...no way.

ALEX

Then what're ya doing here, Eddie?

Eddie doesn't answer. He gets up and walks around the room.

EDDIE

I heard about Danny.

Alex looks at the floor.

EDDIE

Why'd they kill him? He wasn't going to use the gun...he just wanted to show it around.

ALEX

Nobody knew that, Eddie.

EDDIE

Well, I did! I knew it!

Alex looks at Eddie. Eddie starts to cry and turns his back to Alex. Alex gets up and moves closer.

ALEX

It's not your fault.

EDDIE

I should have been here!

(quieter)

He was my friend.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

I know, Eddie, but he's dead.

Eddie quickly looks up at Alex.

ALEX (cont'd)

I'm sorry about it, but he's dead and you're not. You've still got the chance, Eddie, one he didn't have...don't lose it now. Don't end up like Danny. There's still time.

EDDIE

Time for what.

Alex pauses and looks at Eddie.

ALEX

We both have a lot to do, Eddie. I'm going to do my part. Do yours. Come back.

Eddie wipes his face and moves away from Alex, towards the door. He stands there silently.

ALEX

So, you gonna stay, you gonna go?

Eddie looks at Alex.

EDDIE

I don't know.

He backs out of the room and leaves. Alex watches the doorway and then slowly sits in his chair, the reality of his decision sinking in.

ALEX

Yeah.

CUT TO:

EXT. JFK - MORNING

A SERIES OF ANGLES:

show the students waiting to get into the school. The FRONT DOOR OPENS and the kids pour into the school.

INT. HALL, JFK

SECURITY GUARDS begin to search several students as they enter the building. TERRY DAVIS, a young substitute teacher, enters the hall and makes her way through the throng of kids to the MAIN OFFICE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX JARRELL

enters the hall, checking his watch. We have never seen him dressed as he is now. He wears a neat suit, a freshly pressed shirt and his tie is perfectly knotted. He nods to several students as he makes his way to his room. The kids stare at him.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

The office is once again a madhouse, phones ringing, people talking, etc. Roger stands in the middle of it, dealing with problems and checking his watch.

TERRY DAVIS enters the office and goes to Grace's desk. Grace looks up from the phone.

GRACE

(to Roger)

No answer at Jarrell's.

Roger nods and turns to another problem, again checking his watch. Grace looks up at Terry.

GRACE

Yes?

TERRY

I'm Terry Davis...I'm here to substitute a history class.

GRACE

Got any I.D.?

TERRY

What?

GRACE

You know, I.D. Driver's license, credit cards...union card...

Terry looks at Grace, puzzled.

INT. HALL

The hall is packed with students. Alex makes his way down the hall. The kids still stare at him in his new outfit. Linda Grant passes Alex and then stops and turns back.

LINDA

Alex?

INT. MAIN OFFICE

The office is still crazy. Larry Malloy enters the office and heads for Roger.

MALLOY

Everybody here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roger checks his watch.

ROGER
Not yet, have a seat.

Malloy does.

INT. ALEX'S CLASS

The class is talking as usual. Alex hasn't arrived yet. Once again Gary Hahn is acting out a story as Diane and Sarah talk. It is the same as the first time we saw this class except for the quiet radiator. EDDIE'S DESK IS EMPTY.

Alex enters the room.

THE CLASS stares at him. Diane WHISTLES. Others pick it up. Alex acts very casual as he slowly strolls to his desk, letting the effect draw out. He sets his papers on the desk and looks around the room.

ALEX'S POV

Eddie's empty desk.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Alex loses his smile as he sees the desk. Diane sees this and looks at the desk and then Alex. She tries to change the subject.

DIANE
Hey, Mr. Jarrell. You getting married?

The class laughs. Alex looks up and slowly smiles.

ALEX
Miss Warrick, one does not require a special occasion to show a little style, a little class in one's personal appearance.
(straightens his tie)
Besides, today's my deposition.

GARY
Yeah, and she's good looking!

This is followed by HOOTS and LAUGHTER.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

DAVID BURKE, followed by TWO MEN and one WOMAN, enters the office. Malloy gets up and he and Roger go to Burke. Burke nods to Roger and Roger turns to the group.

ROGER
Well, I think it'd be less hectic if we do this in the cafeteria.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER (cont'd)

(to Grace)

Grace, will you buzz Principal Holt
and ask him to join us?

Grace nods and picks up the phone. The others head for the door.
Roger, Burke and Malloy stay behind.

BURKE

Okay, Malloy. You've got your
deal. Will the union stand in our
way?

MALLOY

(shakes his head "no")
He's all yours.

Malloy heads for the door. Burke watches him go.

BURKE

I don't like making deals but I
sure as hell don't want anybody
around to hurt us next time.

Roger nods. They start for the door.

BURKE

What about the gym teacher?

ROGER

He's cooperating. We're sending
him to another school.

BURKE

Good.

They leave the office.

INT. HALL

As soon as Roger and the others have left the office area, TWO
COPS enter the office.

INT. OFFICE

THE COPS walk to Grace's desk. Grace is busy with the problems of
the office with Roger gone. She looks up.

GRACE

What is it?

COP #1

We've got a juvenile warrant for one
of your students.

GRACE

Lee...handle this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEE, one of the other secretaries, turns to the cops. She has the phone balanced on her shoulder and is busy going through two stacks of papers. She's harried and not too happy to have something else to contend with.

LEE (into phone)
Just a minute.
(to cops)
Student's name?
(into phone)
Just a minute!

The cop looks at the warrant.

COP #1
Daniel Reece.

Lee almost drops the phone as she looks up Danny's schedule. She pulls it out of the file.

LEE (into phone)
I said just a minute, please...
(to cop)
He should be in auto shop class.
Around the back of the building.

COP #1
Thanks.

They turn and leave the office.

INT. HALL

The hall is now filled with students going to their next class. Alex makes his way to the teacher's lounge.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE

Alex enters the room. Once again it is filled with teachers and though we recognize some, most of them are new. Alex gets a cup of coffee and then walks to the empty poker table.

THE TABLE is empty. No one sits in the chairs that used to hold Ditto, Herbert, Linda Grant, Malloy, Rosenfeld and Alex.

Alex sits down at the table and picks up a deck of cards. He begins to deal a hand to the empty seats. He stops when he notices something on the seat next to him. He picks it up. It's Herbert's STOVE PIPE HAT. Alex smiles.

ANGLE ON:

Grace enters the room.

GRACE
Mr. Jarrell...you're wanted in the cafeteria.

Alex looks at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX
What for, Gracie?

Grace turns and leaves.

GRACE
(over her shoulder)
I'm sure I don't know.

Alex smiles and sets down Herbert's hat. He gets up and leaves the lounge.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

Grace enters and goes to her desk.

ANGLE ON:

LISA enters the office. We have never seen her dressed this way. Instead of the expensive suits, etc, Lisa is wearing jeans and a pullover shirt. She looks disheveled, her hair slightly messed. She is obviously upset, yet in this state she also looks very sexy. She goes to Grace.

LISA
Where can I find Alex Jarrell?

GRACE
Did you look in his room?

LISA
Yeah...he's not there.

GRACE
Then your guess is as good as mine.

Lisa turns and leaves the office.

INT. CAFETERIA

Alex enters the cafeteria. He stops and looks at the room.

ALEX'S POV

the seats and tables are empty. Moving further we see that Roger, Burke, Holt, Malloy and the other three are seated behind a large table. A chair sits facing them. Burke stands up.

BURKE
Mr. Jarrell...would you join us
please.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Alex looks at Burke, puzzled. Warily, he makes his way to the table. Burke motions to the chair.

ALEX
What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

BURKE

Please be seated, Mr. Jarrell.

Alex is still puzzled as he sits. He waits. Burke sits and shuffles through his papers and then clears his throat.

BURKE

Mr. Jarrell, how happy are you here at John F. Kennedy?

ALEX

What?

BURKE

I think we can speak frankly here, Mr. Jarrell. We all know that you're not happy here. In fact, it's obvious that you're very unhappy here.

Alex is very puzzled. He looks from Burke to Roger. Roger looks at Alex.

ALEX

What're you getting at?

BURKE

We feel, that is myself and the board members present here along with Mr. Malloy and Principals Holt and McMahon, that it would be best all around if you were to tender your resignation.

Alex is stunned. He stares at all of them. It takes him a minute to recover.

ALEX

You want me to resign?

BURKE

(nods)

We feel that would be best all around.

ALEX

Why?

BURKE

Mr. Jarrell, nobody wants to go through the pain of firing you.

Alex stares at him.

INT. AUTO SHOP CLASS

COP #1 is talking to Brinkman, the teacher, while COP #2 is looking at ROSENFELD'S torn car. He compares the license to his clipboard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON:

Gary Hahn is at the other end of the room, working on a car. A student comes up to him.

STUDENT
Hey, I just heard they're going to
fire Jarrell.

GARY
What? Where'd ya here that?

STUDENT
The office. Old Lady Wentzel was
talking about it.

Gary looks at the kid.

ANOTHER ANGLE:

Brinkman looks at the warrant and then at the cop. He can't believe what he's hearing.

BRINKMAN
You want Danny Reece?

COP #1
Yeah...where is he?

BRINKMAN
You gotta be kidding me!
(pause)
You guys shot him two days ago, you
moron!

COP #1 does a slow burn as he is joined by his partner.

COP #2
Hey, this Toyota's stolen.

Cop #1 hears this and then smiles at Brinkman.

COP #1
You wanna explain that, Brinkman?

Brinkman stares at them with his mouth open.

ANGLE ON GARY

who uses the commotion to slip out of the room.

INT. CAFETERIA

Burke continues to talk to Alex.

(CONTINUED)

BURKE

It's clear to us that you don't want to work here as part of the team anymore. And I'm sorry but I feel that I have no other choice but to let you go.

ALEX

(getting angry)

You can't fire me, I've got tenure!

Burke looks at Roger and then shuffles through his papers. He pulls out one page.

BURKE

Mr. Jarrell...do you know a student named Diane Warrick?

Alex stares at Burke.

BURKE

Isn't it true that you took Diane Warrick, a sixteen year old student, to a free clinic to have an abortion? An abortion that was performed without parental consent?

Alex looks at Roger. Roger stares back impassively.

ALEX

Roger?

BURKE

I'm waiting for your answer, Mr. Jarrell.

ALEX

Come on, Roger... talk to me.

Roger stares.

BURKE

Do you think this is proper conduct for a teacher?

ALEX

What?

No one answers Alex. They all stare. Alex begins to fidget.

ALEX

Well...it was a hell of a lot better conduct than the teacher who got her pregnant!

BURKE

And what was his name, Mr. Jarrell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex stares at them, shocked. Soon the shocked expression turns to a SMILE.

ALEX
You son of a bitch.

Burke sighs and sets his papers down.

ALEX (cont'd)
(smiling)
I just figured out what this is all about.

He gets up and walks to the table.

ALEX (cont'd)
This isn't about a sixteen year old girl who got pregnant, is it? Hell no, that would be the last thing that this'd be about because she's not on our team! She's a student. Students are the opposition, right? They're the ones we have to beat, aren't they?

The people avoid Alex's eyes as he moves up and down the table.

ALEX (cont'd)
It's us versus them, right?

No one answers.

ALEX
Well, come on guys, admit it. We're all on the same team here, aren't we? That's what this is all about. We're all afraid that old Alex isn't on our team anymore. We're afraid of what he's going to say at his deposition today. I know I sure was.

Still no one says anything. Alex continues to move along the table. He stops in front of Roger.

ALEX
Well, hell guys. I'll tell ya what I'm going to say. Wouldn't you like to hear that, Rog, old buddy? Huh?

Roger looks at Alex.

ROGER
Forget it, Alex. There's not going to be a deposition. It's over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Alex loses his smile. He looks at Roger.

BURKE

Your resignation, Mr. Jarrell...

Alex backs up and looks at them.

ALEX

You think this'll stop me?

BURKE

A disgruntled former employee who was fired for misconduct of a sexual nature...who'd listen to you, Mr. Jarrell.

Alex looks at Roger.

ROGER

Take the deal, Alex. Sign the paper. Go home and tomorrow go out and get another job. Do it, Alex, or I swear to God I'll hang your butt out to dry. You'll never get another teaching job as long as you live. I promise you that.

The room is silent. Alex looks at the others but no one will meet his gaze. Only Roger stares at him. Alex moves closer to the table.

ALEX

Larry?

Malloy won't look at him.

ALEX

Is three minutes all we have left to fight for, Larry?
(pause, then nods)
I hope it's worth it.

Alex turns and walks out of the cafeteria.

INT. HALL

Alex marches down the hall, his fury obvious. He reaches his classroom.

INT. ALEX'S ROOM

Alex enters his room, slamming the door behind him. He goes to his desk and starts to empty it of all his belongings. He slams everything he touches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON:

The door opens and Lisa enters the room.

LISA

Alex?

She sees his stuff. Her mood turns to concern.

LISA

What're you doing?

ALEX

What's it look like I'm doing? I'm packing. I quit.

LISA

Alex, you can't!

ALEX

Oh yes I can.

LISA

Why?

Alex stops and looks at her.

ALEX

I took a sixteen year old girl to get an abortion. If I don't resign they'll nail my ass to the wall.

LISA

They're bluffing, Alex. They won't risk the publicity!

Alex looks at her.

LISA (cont'd)

You were right all along, Alex. The case was about money. They settled. Did you hear me? They settled. That's why I came here today...because I had to tell you no matter what. The school probably would have won but they were more afraid of the trial than of losing. That's the point, Alex, there's no way they're going to let you take them to court on this. They're too scared of what it'll do to the school's reputation!

Alex sets his stuff down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEX

And what if you're wrong, Lisa.

LISA

What if I am? Fight them! Bring everything out in the open. Together we can fight them, Alex. You made a difference, don't stop now! Please!

ANGLE ON:

The door opens and GARY HAHN enters the room. He looks at Alex and then takes his seat. DIANE WARRICK comes in and she too takes her seat.

ALEX stares at them.

MORE STUDENTS enter the room and silently take their seats. Soon all the seats are full but they still come...some of whom we've never seen before. They line the walls of the classroom looking at Alex...waiting.

ALEX stares at them, tears building in his eyes.

EDDIE PILIKIAN enters the room. All eyes turn to him. He walks to his desk and the boy sitting in it gets up and Eddie sits. He looks at Alex.

EDDIE

So, you gonna stay...you gonna go.

Alex looks at Eddie. He's about to break. Lisa looks at the kids and then Alex.

LISA

Come on, Alex...look around you... you've made a difference! These kids are here because of you!

Alex turns to her.

ALEX

Lisa...you don't see...

(looks at room)

This isn't real. They're here today but tomorrow it'll just be the system again...same as always.

LISA

Then fight it!

(pause)

Jesus, Alex, this is reality! You say I don't see, you don't see. This isn't one person anymore, Alex, it's a whole room full of people and there's a hell of a lot more where they came from. That's

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LISA (cont'd)
reality! You're the one who
doesn't see. You're afraid to look
because you're still looking for
excuses!

(pause)
These kids need you and you need
them but you won't see it because
you're the one who's afraid to see
things the way they really are,
without all your shields...you're
the one who's afraid to walk down
the hall naked...

(pause)
But I'm not!

There is a sudden REACTION from the class as Lisa turns and pushes
open the door. Alex goes after her, slamming the door shut
after him. The kids bolt for the door to look out the window.

INT. HALL

Lisa backs away from Alex.

LISA
Come on, Alex...

She backs further away and pulls her shirt over her head,
revealing her naked breasts.

ALEX
You're crazy!

ANGLE ON:

A SECURITY GUARD enters the hall carrying a walkie-talkie. He
sees Lisa and quickly stops. He fumbles with his walkie-talkie
and speaks into it.

GUARD
Jesus Christ! Get up here! You're
not going to believe this!

He moves down the hall towards her.

Eddie and the others are pushing against the door to see through
the window. We can see kids at the other doors in the hall.

LISA

continues to avoid Alex as she kicks off her shoes and undoes her
jeans.

LISA
Come on, Alex! Let's see you walk
down the hall naked!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She jumps out of her jeans and throws them at Alex as he tries to grab her.

ALEX

Lisa!

THE CLASSROOM DOOR FLIES OPEN as Eddie and the others strain to see Lisa. They tumble into the hall.

Lisa pulls off her panties and throws them down the hall. She smiles seductively at Alex and does a sexy walk down the hall, STARK NAKED.

The kids in the hall are dumbfounded. The boys recover first.

GARY

Oh God, thank you.

THE SECURITY GUARD has reached Lisa and is trying to stop her as he stares at her body.

GUARD

Lady...goddammit..I don't want to have to call the cops...lady...

Alex is stunned. He looks at Lisa and the others in the hall.

GUARD

I'm warning ya, lady...

Lisa continues to walk down the hall.

GUARD

Okay...you got it, lady!

He raises his walkie-talkie.

EDDIE sees this and dodges behind the crowd of kids. Unseen by anyone else, Eddie pulls the FIRE ALARM. THE BELL RINGS immediately this time.

GUARD

(into walkie-talkie)

Hall C...This is hall C...come in...

There is too much NOISE to be heard as the BELL RINGS and the CLASSROOM DOORS FLY OPEN. The students charge into the hall. Everyone sees Lisa and they begin to SHOUT AND WHISTLE. The hall is filled with NOISE.

The commotion brings Alex to his senses and he turns to Lisa. He runs after her and grabs her arm. He pulls open the door to the GIRL'S BATHROOM and yanks Lisa in with him. The door closes and then opens again as several girls run out of the bathroom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE SECURITY GUARD is still trying to yell into his walkie-talkie but can't be heard over the NOISE AND CONFUSION of the hall.

INT. GIRL'S BATHROOM

Alex takes off his coat and wraps it around Lisa. She leans against the door, allowing him to cover her as she LAUGHS and CRIES at the same time. THE FIRE BELL CONTINUES TO RING.

ALEX

What the hell did you do that for?

LISA

Alex...don't you understand? I love you! I love Alex Jarrell...the teacher...because that's what you are, Alex...a teacher.

(pause)

Don't let them destroy that.

Alex looks at her. She continues to cry and he hugs her. He holds her tightly. Finally he releases her and looks at her.

ALEX

Come on.

They leave the restroom.

INT. HALL

The hall is packed with kids and teachers as the BELL RINGS. Diane and the others are being forced down the hall by a SECURITY GUARD. Eddie has managed to elude him. He looks at Alex as he enters the hall with Lisa.

EDDIE

So...you gonna stay, you gonna go..

Alex and Eddie look at each other as the chaos continues on around them. Finally Alex smiles.

ALEX

Take Lisa outta here, okay?

EDDIE

(shrugs)

I can handle that.

He takes Lisa's hand and they melt into the crowd. Alex watches them and then begins to make his way through the crowd. This fire alarm is even more chaotic than the one before. It takes Alex several attempts before he can get to the office.

INT. MAIN OFFICE

Most of the secretaries are gone. Grace is on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

GRACE (into phone)
How would I know if it's a false
alarm again?

Alex rushes into the back offices and then comes back to Grace.

GRACE (into phone)
Don't you put me on hold!

ALEX
Where's Roger?

GRACE
I don't know!
(into phone)
Hello, yes...I already told you
that!

Alex leaves the office.

INT. HALL

The halls are much less crowded now. Alex looks into the teacher's lounge and sees nothing. He looks around the hall. Finally he heads for the exit.

EXT. JFK

The kids and teachers have filed onto the parking lot. Once again, several kids try to make a run for their cars.

ROGER stands by the side of the building with Burke and the others. Carl Rosenfeld stands next to them holding a piece of paper in his hand and crying.

ALEX walks out of the building. He sees Roger and heads for him. Rosenfeld holds the paper out to Alex.

ROSENFELD
They're making me resign, Alex.

Alex looks at the paper and then takes it. He rips it apart.

BURKE
What the hell are you doing,
Jarrell? He signed that!

Rosenfeld looks at Alex and then Burke. His EYES WIDEN.

ROSENFELD'S POV

A POLICE TOW TRUCK is towing Rosenfeld's car from the auto shop class.

REVERSE ANGLE:

Rosenfeld stares at the truck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROSENFELD

That's my car...
(starts to move)
Hey! That's my car!

He runs to the truck, WAVING and SHOUTING. The truck doesn't stop so Rosenfeld jumps on the front of it and waves to the driver. The kids around this LAUGH AND CHEER.

Lisa, now dressed, and Eddie have joined the group with Roger. Behind them we can see Diane, Gary and the others...waiting and listening. Alex looks at Roger.

ALEX

I'm not going to resign, Roger.

BURKE

You're finished, Jarrell!

ALEX

Hell, I haven't even started yet.
And you try to fire me and I'll be
the one suing you.

ROGER

What's that going to solve, Alex.

ALEX

I don't know, Roger. Let's try it
and find out.

(pause)

Jesus...the damn school wasn't
built for us...it wasn't built for
the unions and the lawyers and the
social workers and the board and
all your other teams. It was built
for the kids. Somewhere we forgot
that. We're here for them, they're
not here for us. That's what this
is all about...the kids.

He looks at Eddie and the rest.

ALEX (cont'd)

I think they're worth it.

In the b.g. we hear the SIRENS from the FIRE TRUCKS as they near the school. Roger looks at Alex and shakes his head.

ROGER

Alex, half of them aren't even
going to come back after the alarm.

ALEX

But half will. I'll stay.

A SECURITY GUARD runs up to Roger as he turns to Burke.

(CONTINUED)

GUARD

False alarm again, Mr. McMahon.

ROGER

(nods and sighs)

Ring the bell.

The guard says something into his walkie-talkie and then the SCHOOL BELL RINGS, signalling the end of the alarm. Everyone looks at Alex.

BURKE

You're crazy, Jarrell. You know that.

Alex smiles and holds out his arms.

ALEX

What can I say? I'm a teacher.

He looks at Lisa who is smiling.

ALEX

(to her)

I'm a teacher.

He smiles and turns and walks towards the building. Roger and Burke watch him go.

EDDIE

pushes his way through Roger and Burke and follows Alex. Diane follows as does Gary Hahn and soon Burke and Roger have to move to get out of the way of the kids who are following Alex back to the building.

ANGLE ON:

Rosenfeld stands next to the truck as the COP gives him a receipt for his car. He looks at the receipt and then at Alex and the kids going back into the building. He looks at the receipt again. Finally he shrugs and drops it.

ROSENFELD

Aw, what the hell.

He joins the line following Alex.

BURKE

looks at Roger.

BURKE

Now what do we do?

Roger turns and looks at Burke. He looks at Alex. Finally he turns back to Burke and shakes his head. He turns and heads for the line leaving Burke to rub his arms to stay warm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE catches up with Alex as they near the front door. Alex looks at him.

ALEX
Forget to tell me about the fire
alarm?

EDDIE
(shakes his head)
Teachers.....

Alex laughs and Eddie smiles.

WIDER ANGLE:

Alex and Eddie enter JFK High School and we see the long line of students and teachers that follows.

FADE OUT

THE END