

"THE TOY"

By  
Carol Sobiesky

RASTAR  
Colgems Square  
Burbank, CA 91505  
843-6000

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. HELICOPTER SHOT - MOVING IN ON BATES, LOUISIANA - DAY

The edge of the sun at the horizon. The city glistens in the midst of the lush farmland and the brown meandering Mississippi.

The SOUND OF TWO PEOPLE MAKING LOVE, OVER.

2 HIGH ANGLE SHOT - MOVING IN ON SLUMS

The squalor of black Bates. Trash. Lowriders. Graffiti. Vacant lots. Boarded-up buildings. Sleazy bars. The broken beer bottles in that street alone pick up the light of dawn. Other than that, sleeping cats and deep shadows.

The people making love are getting it together. QUICKENING BREATHING. An urgency.

3 COME IN ON WINDOW

in the three-room, clapboard house with a For Sale sign in front. The paint is peeling, some windows broken, the curtains limp, the whole house sags to the north, but it's no worse than all the other houses in the area.

The BREATHING is PUNCTUATED with LITTLE GASPS OF PLEASURE.

4 INT. HOUSE

The interior walls have been removed, except for the bathroom it is one large space, oddly livable and nice, amid poverty. The furniture is Goodwill reject. Fair Housing picket sign. Law books. A jockstrap. Monet's water lilies tacked to the stained wallpaper. An old typewriter. Stacks of yellow paper, full of typing and legal pads full of handwriting. Bowl of dried Chinese vegetables, different gauge pasta and dried flowers. A sink corroded through, with a wrench for a faucet and a bucket to catch the leaks. An Air Force exercise chart. A flourishing philodendron.

The BREATHING is FASTER. WHIMPERS and SIGHS and FANFARE.

5 ON BED

They fall apart, happy. JACK is a thin man with a beard. ANGELA is an NYU law school graduate and a vivid beauty.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

ANGELA

How do you feel?

JACK

Saved.

She laughs, snuggles closer.

ANGELA

Your beard is manifestation of a death wish, Jack, did you know that?

JACK

Sheeit.

ANGELA

Bates considers beards a brand of communism.

JACK

Why do you carry on like it was a ten, if it wasn't ten?

ANGELA

Bates owns the town. It's asking for failure.

Up on his elbow, irritated.

JACK

Now wait a second. I don't have to suck up to that anybody. I've got a publisher.

She caresses his beard, deaf.

ANGELA

Shave it off. Take some menial job. You haven't worked in so long you've forgotten how.

JACK

Writing a book isn't working?

ANGELA

It would be healthy.

He looks at her owlshly.

JACK

I'm unhealthy?

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

ANGELA

There's a direct correlation  
between unemployment and sexual  
malfunctioning.

JACK

Was it a nine?

ANGELA

We used up the publishers' advance  
six months ago.

JACK

Eight?

ANGELA

We've got to come up with two grand  
by the end of the month or we lose  
the house, Jack.

Jack remembers suddenly -- goes rigid -- grabs his watch.

JACK

Oh, Jesus. I'm having breakfast  
with the Bank in twenty minutes.

Leaps out of bed, stops mid air:

JACK

(continuing)

Seven?

ANGELA

(grins, grudgingly)

And a half.

He leaps back on top of her.

JACK

You are so full of bullshit,  
woman...

6 VERY TIGHT

He looks at her, vibrant with admiration, stunned at his  
good luck.

JACK

Let's get married.

She hugs him, abruptly as soft as she was fierce.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

ANGELA

What're you gonna tell the Bank?

JACK

(stroking her hair,  
comforting her)

Couple of jokes. It'll be all  
right. Bankers have a sense of  
humor too.

(looks into her eyes)

If I get an extension of credit,  
can we get married?

Long look.

ANGELA

Yep.

He hoots with triumph, sweeps her into his arms.

7 EXT. JACK'S STREET

Wide, bleak and untended, full of dust and broken promises.  
Beat-up pickups. Old cars on blocks in front yards.  
Though it is still early, there are people leaning on porch  
rails, on cars, hanging out, going nowhere. Jack eases his  
old ten speed out of the house. CREDITS.

8 JACK

swings up onto his bike and starts down the street, avoiding  
the potholes and glass and stray dogs. The kids and  
neighbors wave greetings. He waves back, settling a green  
backpack on his shoulders, riding on, without hands.  
Whistling.

9 DOWNTOWN

Mostly boarded up empty store fronts. Many businesses with  
"Bates" in the title. The newspaper building, the Dixie  
Daily (A Division of Bates Enterprises), is still in  
operation, on the main square. The square itself sports a  
larger than life statue of Bates in stone. Jack breezes  
by on his bike, whistling, tosses the statue the finger.

## 10 STORE

Jack rides through the shadows of early morning still long from the old fashioned three-story midtown Bates Department Store.

## 11 BATES ENTERPRISES BUILDING

The tallest, newest, most imposing building in town. In front of which is a free standing sign with "Employment Opportunities" listed under the Bates motto: "Welfare Corrupts." Jack breezes by on his bike.

## 12 EXT. LA NOISETTE ROSE

Jack rides his bike up a gangplank, hops off. La Noisette Rose is a restaurant on a paddle wheeler, on the Mississippi. Open 24 Hours. Chicken Fried Steak our Specialty! CREDITS END.

## 13 INT. LA NOISETTE ROSE

An air of superiority. Views of refineries and muddy river out the windows. Pink tableclothes, waiters in pink jackets. A small bowl of pink walnuts on each table.

Most of the customers are middle-aged, florid-faced men in business suits breakfasting with young blondes in form fitting jeans, satin blouses with tooled cowboy boots and the Farah Fawcett hairdos.

Jack Brown is finishing breakfast with a sour looking BANKER in a three-piece pin striped suit. There is an awkward silence. Jack sets down his coffee cup with a clatter.

JACK

Sorry.

(smiles ingratiatingly)

Know why Dolly Parton's feet are so small?

BANKER

I've heard it.

Jack clears his throat, regroups.

JACK

Heard about the Polish mosquito?

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

BANKER

Jack, if you don't get a job --

JACK

(to passing waiter)

Check please.

WAITER

Right away, Mussier.

BANKER

Are you listening?

JACK

Ever seen a walnut cracked by a judo chop?

BANKER

This is important. This is bottom line --

JACK

(taking a walnut,  
shoving his  
sleeves up)

This is spectacular.

BANKER

(tight rage)

Jack, you need a paying job by the end of the week. Or we'll repossess everything you own, starting with your goddamn typewriter.

CHOP. The pitcher of cream jumps off the table into the Banker's lap. He stands, white liquid spread over his pants front.

JACK

It's just half and half. It'll wash out --

He grabs his napkin, wipes the man's front making it worse.

BANKER

This is a new suit.

JACK

I'll pay for the cleaning.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

BANKER

With what?

JACK

Just send the bill to the house.

The Waiter comes with the check on a little tray. Jack slips his credit card into the tray. The Waiter starts away. The Banker tackles him, snatches the credit card back.

BANKER

You can't use this.

JACK

The bank won't cash my check.

BANKER

Of course not. You're overdrawn.

JACK

(sotto voce)

They don't know that here.

BANKER

But the bank will have to honor this.

JACK

Exactly.

BANKER

But I just told you. We aren't extending your credit unless you get a job.

(digs for his wallet)

I'll pay. Here. How much is it?

The Banker takes the bill off the tray, red-faced with anger. The Waiter sticks a toothpick in his teeth and eyeballs the ceiling. Jack takes the bill back.

JACK

I can't allow you to do that. I invited you. You're my guest. I --

The Banker grabs it back, Jack grabs it back, knocks over the whole table.

14 EXT. BATES BUILDING - LATER AM

Jack is on his bike, circling the Employment Opportunities sign. Stewing, pondering and circling.



## 15 ON SIGN

Petroleum Engineer, Computer Programmer, Accountant, etc.  
And at the very bottom: Cleaning Woman (Part time).

## 16 EXT. BATES BUILDING ENTRANCE

Elegant people coming and going through the polished bronze  
and glass revolving doors.

Jack swings off his bike, begins to lock it to the Loading  
Zone standard in front of the front door. Next to a  
parked Chrysler limousine.

FANCY BATES, a very chic, very voluptuous creature of  
about twenty-five, sweeps out of the building, wearing  
a full length mink coat, heads for the limo. Behind  
her, wringing his hands is GEFFRAN, a balding, blue-suited,  
nervous man. Behind him, BARKLEY, the chauffeur.

Jack grins, moves his bike out of her way, opens the door  
of the car for her. She smiles at him regally.

FANCY

Why, I do thank you so very much.

JACK

My pleasure, foxy lady.

Barkley shuts the door with care.

## 17 ON GEFFRAN AND JACK

Geffran mops his forehead, glancing sideways at Jack and  
his lascivious grin.

GEFFRAN

Not for you, pal.

JACK

It's a free country.

GEFFRAN

That's Fancy Bates.

JACK

His daughter?

GEFFRAN

Wife. Numero three.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

JACK

No shit. Think she's ready for  
the black experience?

Geffran winces. Laughing, Jack swings in the door.

18 INT. OUTER OFFICE

Poster for the Bates Credit Union, sign up sheets for baseball teams. This is the employment office for Bates Enterprises. A couple of ancient black women are waiting. A couple of computer programmers. One engineer. The tweedy SECRETARY, Wellsley, looks disapprovingly at Jack who is sitting with the women, his bookbag between his knees.

He smiles back at her. The Secretary looks at her list.

SECRETARY

Miss Jackie Brown.

Jack gets up, smiles at the Secretary, heads for the door.

SECRETARY

(continuing)

Wait. Not you. We need a part-time woman.

JACK

(lispng)

I can be a part-time woman.

Wiggles into the office before she can stop him.

19 INT. VICE PRESIDENT OF PERSONNEL'S OFFICE

SIDNEY MOREHOUSE, the soul of propriety, is looking over the resume and clippings and articles in Jack's bookbag.

MOREHOUSE

You're what I would call over qualified, Mr. Brown. What we want is a woman for three hours a night to clean around the window displays. You're a journalist.

JACK

The Dixie Daily doesn't hire blacks.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

MOREHOUSE

Is this a protest or something?

JACK

No, sir. I need the job.

Morehouse shakes his head, begins to put the articles back in the bag.

MOREHOUSE

I'm sorry.

JACK

I can do anything a woman can do. Almost.

MOREHOUSE

No. The answer's no. No now, no tomorrow. No next week. No next year.

JACK

What I like about this outfit is its open mindedness.

MOREHOUSE

I know what Mr. Bates wants. To be crude, Aunt Jemima. You look nothing like Aunt Jemima. You look like trouble. What Mr. Bates does not want is trouble.

Clippings and awards back in the bookbag. Hands it back to Jack, smiles.

MOREHOUSE

(continuing)

Thank you for coming in. Miss Wellsley will give you a parking validation.

JACK

My girl friend's trouble, Mr. Morehouse, not me.

MOREHOUSE

Your girl friend? What're you talking about?

JACK

She's the local legal staff of the Southern Poverty Law Center.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

JACK (CONT'D)

(smiles)

She's very litigious.

Morehouse sinks perceptibly into his chair, opens a cupboard, drinks an antacid.

MOREHOUSE

Is that meant to be amusing?

JACK

It's meant as a threat.

MOREHOUSE

On what grounds could she possibly sue?

JACK

It's illegal to hire a woman if a more competent man is available for the job.

MOREHOUSE

More competent in whose opinion?

JACK

(yells)

I'm not more competent than those deadbeat broads? Shall we have a carry a bucket of water up the escalator race? With all of them together?

Morehouse wipes his forehead with a large handkerchief.

MOREHOUSE

It's a terrible job, Mr. Brown, if truth be told, you wouldn't like it, you have to come in at noon on Tuesdays and Fridays to serve staff luncheons --

JACK

I worked my way through college waiting tables.

MOREHOUSE

As well as report at six p.m, every night of the week for three hours. The compensation is below --

JACK

I'll take it.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (3)

MOREHOUSE  
That bad out there?

JACK  
Worse.

Morehouse plays his last card.

MOREHOUSE  
How attached are you to that beard?

JACK  
Am I gonna vacuum with my beard?  
Come on, man, that shit went out with the sixties.

Morehouse smiles, relieved, triumphant.

MOREHOUSE  
We're all part of Mr. Bates' family here. In his family none of us wears beards.

20 ON JACK

Reacting, digging in internally.

21 INT. KITCHEN

A clean-shaven Jack slides in the door. The kitchen is bustling with preparations for an elaborate luncheon for forty people. There are a dozen Aunt Jemima types in black uniforms, trimmed with white, the traditional white aprons and lace trimmed caps. RUBY DEE, an immense capable black, turns with salad tongs and a scowl to Jack.

RUBY DEE  
Whoever you want, she's busy.  
Come on back about three.

JACK  
I'm looking for Ruby Dee.

RUBY DEE  
That's me. What about?

JACK  
I'm the new cleaning lady.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

RUBY DEE

Christ Almighty, Morehouse flipped  
his lid.

JACK

He took pity on me, Mama, don't  
knock the dude.

RUBY DEE

(grins)

Well, you sure gonna look weird  
in the uniform.

22 INT. CORPORATE DINING ROOM

A long table set for a formal meal, complete with extra  
wine glasses, salad plates, butter plates, cold soup  
already at each of the forty places.

There are forty executives, mostly men, in three piece  
Brooks Brothers suits and ties and conservative haircuts.

The head accountant, Mr. Geffran, comes in from the hallway.

GEFFRAN

(announcing)

Mr. Bates is on his way.

As a body, the executives move toward the table, talking  
in modulated, civilized tones. The waitresses come in,  
with serving dishes. Morehouse comes in.

MOREHOUSE

He's on the phone to London, five  
minutes.

As a body they move away from the table. Ruby Dee comes  
in from the kitchen.

RUBY DEE

He's off the phone. Sit, kids.

Like a wave to the tables.

23 TIGHT

as Geffran and Morehouse sit together.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

GEFFRAN

Anything interesting going on in  
personnel?

MOREHOUSE

Not really. In accounting?

GEFFRAN

Our move in Soybeans woke up the  
Justice Department. Cornering  
the market.

(wipes his hands  
on his napkin)

What's Bates supposed to do with  
his money? Whatever he buys he  
corners the market --

Spotting Jack, Morehouse chokes on his soup. Geffran slaps  
him on the back.

24 POV

Midway in the line of waitresses carrying serving dishes,  
Jack, in the waitress uniform: the black dress, the white  
apron, the trimmed cap. He is carrying a silver dish  
full of bread, wrapped in a linen napkin. A crystal bowl  
of butter balls on ice.

25 FULL SHOT

As the women circulate, serving butter, salad, pouring ice  
water, wine, etc., no one but Morehouse notices Jack.  
After all, he's black and wearing a uniform. Morehouse  
glances frantically around the table.

26 TWO

as Jack leans over Morehouse's left shoulder, unwrapping  
the bread.

JACK

Bread, Mr. Morehouse?

MOREHOUSE

Get out of here, hurry, go, get  
some pants on, Mr. Brown, before  
Mr. Bates comes in.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

JACK

Butter?

Morehouse loosens his tie, mops his forehead with his napkin. Jack grins, circles the head of the table, pulling the head chair back, cutting in between to pass the bread to the other side of the table.

27 NEW ANGLE

BATES comes in. Bates is Southern tradition, a good old boy with a wide stance, a ready smile and lethal eyes. He wears Brooks Brothers exclusively. Even his underwear is Brooks Brothers. Talk trails off. Everyone smiles toward the end of the table. The waitresses move toward his end, ready to serve him.

BATES

Good. Good. Time is money.

Ruby Dee comes out of the kitchen before he gets to his chair.

RUBY DEE

Mr. Bates. Phone.

BATES

No calls.

RUBY DEE

It's your son.

BATES

(smiles, heads  
for kitchen)

Oh.

(to others)

Excuse me.

28 WITH BATES

picks up the hall extension in the kitchen.

BATES

Eric? How was the flight? I'm real glad you're here, son, we're going to have a real good week together.

(smiles)

Anything you want. Absolutely.



29 INT. DINING ROOM

Bates strides over to the head chair, sits, pulls the table to him.

30 ANGLES ON CORPORATE OFFICERS

as the table slides past them, maybe three feet. They look at it, then at each other, then at Bates, then try to sort it out without objecting.

31 ON BATES

Impervious to the chaos he's created, he begins to eat.

32 ON WAITRESSES

lined up behind him, serving him, one after another.

33 ON JACK

trying to sort out the plates. Passing them back and forth, collecting the ones on his arm that no one claims. And the glasses. And the forks. And the ashtrays.

JACK

Here. I think this one's yours.  
It isn't? Sir, did you have a  
blueberry muffin? Whose blueberry  
muffin is this? What kind of  
salad dressing did you have?  
Here. Isn't that yours? I think  
so. Well just take it, nobody's  
got any diseases. How about this  
one for you? Does this look like  
your fork?

Working his way down the table, collecting more and more plates that people won't claim, can't find the correct person for, until O'BRIEN at the end, who is eating in his lap.

JACK

Like the soup?

O'BRIEN

Very much.

JACK

Want a card table?

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

O'BRIEN

If it wouldn't be too much trouble.

JACK

Not at all.

O'BRIEN

Thank you, Miss.

Jack heads for the kitchen door. Bates points at him, smiles.

BATES

You.

Jack looks behind himself, no one. Then approaches Bates.

JACK

Me?

BATES

Who are you?

JACK

Your new cleaning woman, Mr. Bates.

Bates nods.

BATES

Name?

JACK

Brown. Jack Brown.

BATES

The women I employ, Mr. Brown, are required to wear hose or shave their legs. Do you have three dollars for a pair of hose?

JACK

Not on me, but --

BATES

Then shave.

JACK

My legs?

BATES

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

Now?

BATES

(smiles)

Right now.

34 INT. MEN'S ROOM

Still in his waitress uniform, one foot propped on the sink, Jack is trying to lather up the hair on his leg with the soap from the dispenser. Muttering. Then wincing as he pulls the disposable razor through the mess.

Other men using the facilities look at him strangely, then give him wide berth.

Morehouse comes in.

MOREHOUSE

Brown? Good God. What're you doing?

JACK

Shaving.

MOREHOUSE

Your beard, man, all I meant was your beard.

JACK

(rinsing the razor)

In the Bates family, we all shave our legs. Didn't you know? He told me himself.

Smiles, exits. Morehouse looks after him a moment. Then picks up the razor, props his foot on the sink, slides up his pants.

The door opens, Jack is there.

JACK

Schmuck!

Vanishes, laughing.

35 INT. KLANWATCH OFFICES - DAY

In one of the boarded up office buildings, a store front remains open.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

There are two black intellectuals, one man and one woman, each behind desks, on telephones. At the very back, Angela at her desk which is piled with papers, also on the phone. There are bookshelves full of lawbooks behind her. Around the walls posters celebrating the Klanwatch's activities.

Jack is sitting in the chair across from Angela, his feet up on the desk, pissed.

ANGELA

(into phone, shrill)

Seventy dollars? It's not possible! What're you lining them with, spun gold?

(listens, gathers herself in hand)

Of course do them, you goddamn thief. I need brakes. And by five.

(pleading)

Five thirty. Yeah, okay.

Hangs up, takes a breath to steady herself, grins at Jack.

ANGELA

(continuing)

I like your chin.

JACK

(pulling up his pant leg)

Wait'll you see my calves.

She comes around her desk, plops into his lap, laughing.

ANGELA

You got a job. That's what's important. That's what's terrific.

JACK

It doesn't embarrass you to be living with a cleaning woman?

ANGELA

I think it's hysterical.

JACK

I think I'm gonna quit.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

ANGELA

We need money, Jack. I don't care if you pump gas or push a broom or teach school, but do something, something with a paycheck.

JACK

I'm a journalist, goddammit, the only thing I'm comfortable doing is writing!

ANGELA

You don't wanna get married?

He stares at her. Grins. They kiss.

36 EXT. BATES DEPARTMENT STORE - NIGHT

The Chrysler limousine arrives. A small boy emerges. Starts for the front door. Sees the crowd by the window, walks over. He is wearing a military school uniform. ERIC BATES, nine-years-old, thin, self-assured and arrogant.

37 INT. STORE WINDOW - NIGHT

Jack is running the vacuum cleaner around the lingerie exhibit, four mannequins in bras and teddies and bikinis in a bathroom set. By accident, he knocks against a mannequin with the vacuum cleaner hose. She topples over, crashing into the others, they fall like a house of cards, one smashing her hand on the vanity table.

38 EXT. WINDOW - NIGHT

A fascinated crowd.

39 INT. WINDOW

Jack has set two mannequins upright but in lifting #3 he knocks them over again. Looks, pained, at the mess around him, spots the broken hand. Picks it up. In doing so the vacuum cleaner cord becomes entangled, he ends on his ass.

40 EXT. WINDOW

Some laugh. Some applaud. Some pull their children away. Barkely and Eric have gone.

41 INT. GROUND FLOOR - STORE

The chrome and glass displays of expensive things are cold and forbidding in the darkness of the cold store. Eric comes in, followed by a phalanx of blue-suited managers.

42 MOVING SHOT - GEFFRAN AND TOY MANAGER (O'BRIEN)

follow, muttering to each other.

GEFFRAN

Why do I have to stay for this?  
I'm accounting. Is he going to  
exceed his credit limit?

O'BRIEN

It's always the toy department.  
I wish he'd grow up. I wish he'd  
get interested in stereos.

43 NEW ANGLE

Eric stops. The men pile up behind him. The boy watches as Jack, unaware of his audience, tries to unscrew another mannequin's hand, with no success.

JACK

Give me a hand you tight-assed  
broad.

44 ERIC

smiles. The Managers are in a quandary as to what to do.

45 JACK

gives up, picks up the broken hand, leaves her.

46 ERIC

suppresses a laugh, follows.

## 47 LONG SHOT

as Jack moves through the store encumbered with the broken hand trying to find a loose hand. The child and his retinue move along behind him, always out of sight, always watching.

## 48 TOY DEPARTMENT

Jack finds himself in the display of life-sized stuffed figures of superheros from the movies. He knocks Batman over by accident. Picks him up.

JACK

Sorry, Bat.

Pats him on the shoulder. The Batman collapses again. Jack tucks the mannequins hand into his back pocket, sets up the Batman again.

JACK

(continuing)

On your feet, klutz.

Bat collapses again. Jack lets out a sigh -- props him against Wonder Woman -- they nearly tip over -- he drags Superman into a sort of tri-pod arrangement.

JACK

(continuing; to  
Wonder Woman)

Live it up, darling.

## 49 ERIC

in the shadows turns to the blue-suited men behind him.

ERIC

That.

The toy department manager comes forward, adjusting his tie, smiling.

O'BRIEN

The Batman?

ERIC

No.

(points)

Him.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

O'BRIEN  
Superman?

ERIC  
The black man.

50 JACK  
whirls around in astonishment.

51 MANAGERS  
Alarm and consternation.

52 FEATURE ERIC  
O'Brien, the toy manager, is about to cry.

O'BRIEN  
The black man.

ERIC  
Yes.

O'BRIEN  
He's not a toy.

ERIC  
I don't care.

O'BRIEN  
He's one of our cleaning people,  
Eric.

ERIC  
I want him.

O'BRIEN  
He's not for sale.

ERIC  
Why not?

O'BRIEN  
Because he's... a person.

ERIC  
Daddy said anything I wanted.  
Anything in the store.

(CONTINUED)



52 CONTINUED:

O'BRIEN  
You can't buy a human being, Eric.

ERIC  
Why not?

O'BRIEN  
Because you can't!

The boy fixes him with a look. O'Brien finally crumbles.

53 FEATURE JACK

who watches as O'Brien adjusts his tie, hikes up his pants, swallows and with tangible reluctance walks the distance to Jack, hand extended, jovial smile in place.

O'BRIEN  
Tim O'Brien. Toys.

JACK  
(shakes the hand)  
Jack Brown. Windows.

O'BRIEN  
The, uh, boy over there?

JACK  
Yes?

O'BRIEN  
He's uh, the son of our, uh --

JACK  
Boss.

O'BRIEN  
Right!

JACK  
I can see a resemblance.

O'BRIEN  
He, uh, would like to take you home with him.

JACK  
What?

O'BRIEN  
Just for a week.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

Jack looks at him sideways, then at the boy, then at the manager.

JACK  
Is he sick?

O'BRIEN  
No.

JACK  
Nuts?

O'BRIEN  
No.

JACK  
Then what are we talking about?

O'BRIEN  
He's used to, uh, getting his own way.

JACK  
Are you serious?

O'BRIEN  
Very.

JACK  
You want me to go with him?

O'BRIEN  
If you wouldn't mind.

JACK  
Well, I would.

O'BRIEN  
I don't want him throwing a tantrum in my department, please, Mr. Brown.

JACK  
I don't give a damn where he throws his tantrum. The answer's no.

O'Brien grabs him as he heads away, offers him a fifty dollar bill. Jack glares at him.

JACK  
(continuing)  
I'm not for sale, man.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

O'Brien palms him another fifty.

JACK  
(continuing)

I mean it. We sorted that out  
in the Civil War.

O'Brien thumbs out four more fifties, slowly, then tucks  
them into Jack's pocket.

54 FEATURING ERIC

as O'Brien propels Jack over to the child.

O'BRIEN  
The gentleman will be delighted,  
Eric. His name is Jack Brown.  
Jack, this is Master Bates.

Jack does a take, no one else seems to have heard. He  
extends his hand. Eric ignores it.

ERIC  
I'll call him nigger.

JACK  
And I'll call you prick.

Stunned silence. Then the child smiles.

ERIC  
Wrap him up.

JACK  
What?!

Eric's eyes flick dangerously toward the toy manager. He  
loosens his tie, sighs, takes Jack aside again.

55 TWO

Jack is boiling. O'Brien soothing.

O'BRIEN  
We'll make you very comfortable.  
Foam. A chair. A roomy box --

JACK  
Goddammit!

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

O'BRIEN  
 (tucks another \$50  
 into Jack's pocket)  
 Mr. Brown, my house is mortgaged,  
 twice, my wife's parents live  
 with us. Her father is on  
 dialysis, and even with Medicare,  
 lemme tell you, it's a helluva  
 struggle. One word from the boy  
 and I'll lose my job.

Jack glares at the child a moment.

JACK  
 He needs a good whipping.

O'BRIEN  
 (another \$50 into  
 Jack's pocket)  
 I really don't care what you do  
 to him once you get there.

Jack looks at him.

56 EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

as a large elegant Bates Department Store van sweeps under  
 the flowing cottonwoods along the drive up to the two-  
 story house.

57 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The boy is sitting at the end of a long formal table,  
 eating alone, except for a hatchet-faced MADEMOISELLE at  
 his side, doing needlepoint. He's eating his peas one by  
 one. He has not touched his liver. Or his sweet potatoes.  
 He is leaning on his elbow, profoundly bored.

MADMOISELLE  
 (in French)  
 Elbows off the table.  
 (nothing; in French)  
 Sit up, Eric.  
 (nothing; in French)  
 Our stomachs will digest our food  
 better if we eat some vegetable,  
 some meat and some starch, in  
 that order. Not all the  
 vegetable at one time --

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

ERIC

I hate liver.

MADEMOISELLE

(in French)

I understand nothing but French.

ERIC

I hate French.

With a drink in his hand, Bates comes in as Mademoiselle is about to blow her stack. She settles quickly. Bates sits next to Eric, whiskey at hand. Eric plays with the peas on his plate.

BATES

So, how are you?

ERIC

Okay.

BATES

How's school?

ERIC

Okay.

BATES

Who are your friends?

ERIC

Dunno.

BATES

What classes do you enjoy?

ERIC

Dunno.

BATES

How're your grades?

ERIC

Okay.

BATES

Don't they teach you to look a man in the eye when you talk to him?

ERIC

Yup.

BATES

Then why don't you?

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC  
Because you're not my Commander  
in Chief.

Barkley puts his head in the door.

BARKLEY  
Excuse me. Eric, your present  
has arrived.

Eric leaps to his feet, knocking over his chair, running  
toward the door. Mademoiselle springs to her feet,  
outraged.

MADemoISELLE  
(in French)  
Not until you eat your liver!

BATES  
(overlapping)  
Eric!

Eric ignores them both, flies out of the room. Bates  
sighs, downs his drink.

58 INT. PLAYROOM

The boy bursts in the door. It is a magnificent room,  
large and full of toys, a fort built of huge blocks of  
styrofoam, covered in bright-covered cloth and velcro, an  
electric train systems, a space shuttle device that hangs  
in the air, a Superman hang glider suspended from the  
ceiling, an air hockey game, slot machines, pinball  
machines, computers, typewriters. And in the middle of  
this, a wooden packing crate, dwarfed by the size and  
opulence of the room.

Eric walks over to the box, touches it, a smile of triumph  
on his face.

Mademoiselle appears in the doorway.

MADemoISELLE  
(in French)  
Eric. Come and finish your  
dinner. Right now.

ERIC  
Get me a hammer.

MADemoISELLE  
(in French)  
First you will finish --

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

ERIC

No.

MADEMOISELLE

(in French)

I'll tell your father.

ERIC

Get me a hammer!

MADEMOISELLE

(in French)

If you don't come finish your  
dinner right now you won't open  
that till tomorrow.

JACK'S VOICE

Are you crazy!

Mademoiselle jumps a foot. Bates appears in the doorway.

BATES

Eric --

ERIC

She won't help me open my present.  
She won't get me a hammer.

MADEMOISELLE

He hasn't touched his liver.

JACK'S VOICE

Help!

Bates blinks, approaches.

BATES

What's this?

Eric avoids his father's eyes.

ERIC

You said I could have anything  
in the store.

JACK'S VOICE

Would someone let me out of here!

Silence. Eric finally meets his father's eyes. Silence.

BATES

(to Mademoiselle)

Get a hammer.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (2)

She swallows her anger and rushes out. Bates touches the box.

BATES

(louder)

Can you hear me in there?

JACK'S VOICE

Yes, sir.

BATES

Who are you?

JACK

The new part-time cleaning lady, sir. At the store. Jack Brown.

BATES

How did this happen?

JACK'S VOICE

I was doing my job, minding my business. Your son came along and asked them to wrap me up. Which they did.

Bates paces, avoiding the boy's eyes, then whirls on him furious.

BATES

I hope you have an explanation of this.

ERIC

You said anything in the store. He was in the store.

JACK'S VOICE

Sir --

BATES

She's just coming with the hammer.

Mademoiselle returns with the hammer, hands it to Bates.

ERIC

(taking the hammer)

I get to open it. It's my present.

He pries the nails out, folds the top back with a SCREECHING OF NAILS. Jack stands stiffly, excelsior dripping from his hair, styrofoam clinging to his clothes.

(CONTINUED)



58 CONTINUED: (3)

He impales the boy with a look, puts his hands on the edges of the box and jumps out, angry, with himself mostly.

JACK

What the hell, for another couple of bucks I'd probably do it naked.

Heads for door.

BATES

Sir --

JACK

Naked, sir.

BATES

I mean come here a minute.

JACK

Forget it.

Continues toward the door. Eric lobs a FIRECRACKER. It EXPLODES in front of Jack, who falls flat on his face. The boy, to his side, laughing.

ERIC

We can have lots of fun, you and me.

BATES

I'll pay you on an hourly basis.

JACK

I'd forgotten. The one thing I hate worse than white people is rich white people.

Heads for the door again.

59 INT. HALL

as Jack strides down the hall, Bates beside him.

BATES

What sort of full-time position would you be interested in, Mr. Brown?

JACK

'Slave' too crass.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

BATES

I'm serious.

Jack stops in the hall, faces the whale of a man.

JACK

I am, too. I'm a newspaperman, Mr. Bates. I been without a job in this town for a year because you own the paper and you don't hire blacks. Unless they do windows. And wait tables. And kiss ass.

(beat, grins)

I just tried it. I don't like it.

Heads down the hall again. Bates beside him.

BATES

I only have him for a week, every year.

JACK

Get a better lawyer. You shouldn't have to have him that much.

BATES

I love him, Mr. Brown.

JACK

I don't care!

BATES

He wants you to stay.

JACK

He doesn't. He wants to see if you can make me stay. It's a power play. Manipulative little bastard.

BATES

If you were less hysterical, Mr. Brown, you might suggest that I pay you for the week, what I pay my reporters. A thousand dollars.

JACK

(stunned)

For babysitting?

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

Bates smiles, lethal. Jack looks down the hall at the kid, in exactly the same position as his father. Then back at the man.

JACK

(continuing; stunned)

Is it inherited or contagious?

BATES

(smiles)

Come down to my office.

60 INT. BATES OFFICE

Freestanding models of the Bates stores with a profit/loss chart attached to each. Posters charting the demographics of the area: buying power per capita per county, driving habits, gas prices, advertising dollars, etc. On the wall facing Bates' desk, a blowup of the region with golden TV towers indicating each of his cable networks and golden threads connecting them to the central and tallest tower in Bates. On the wall behind the desk, life-sized portrait of Fancy as the Naked Raja, but with a string Bikini-bottom in the shape of a heart over the critical area. Bates has his confederate flag standing discreetly in front of the boobs.

Bates sinks into his leather chair, waves at Jack to take the chair across from him.

One look at Fancy, peeking out from behind the flag, Jack averts his eyes and slides over to the chair, trying not to look at the painting, and at the same time, look at Bates. An impossibility.

Bates watches him squirm a moment, then opens a box of cigars, passes them over.

BATES

I believe Eric sees more of me in this one week than he sees of his mother all year.

JACK

This isn't by choice?

BATES

This is why I'm willing to pay you a thousand dollars to visit with us here. This is why I want him to have whatever he wants. This will all be his someday.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

Jack clears his throat, takes a cigar, keeping his eyes on the floor.

JACK

Let's start at fifteen hundred, work up from there.

BATES

You're not a newspaper man, you're a crook.

JACK

I'd take five hundred and a job on the paper.

BATES

There isn't a job on the paper.

JACK

Two thousand.

BATES

You're irritating me.

Jack smiles, flicks the ash of his cigar in a Stuben hand.

BATES

(continuing)

That's not an ashtray.

JACK

And what we're talking about's not a job. It's an insult.

Bates dumps the ashes in the wastebasket, shoves over an ashtray.

BATES

Two thousand. For which you will wipe his ass if he wants you to.

Jack smiles.

JACK

Three.

BATES

Two five.

JACK

Two seven.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (2)

BATES  
Two five's my top!

JACK  
Three.

BATES  
You play poker?

JACK  
Only for money.

BATES  
I wonder if Eric knows what a  
bastard he's getting.

Jack looks him square in the eye.

JACK  
You only have him for a week.  
You spend three grand on a piece  
of jewelry for her --  
(waves at the painting)  
-- and never think twice about  
it. But you won't spend it on  
your son? Nice guy.

Bates is around the desk, Jack's shirt in his fist.

BATES  
(through clenched  
teeth)  
Don't mess with me.

JACK  
Two thousand five hundred'd be  
fine. Generous. Wonderful...

Bates drops him, heads back to his desk. Jack adjusts  
his jacket, eases out the door.

61 EXT. JACK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Angela is sitting on the stoop with the rest of the block.  
There's beer and ribs and laughter and music. It's not  
a party, it's just night. Angela has the phone pulled out  
onto the porch.

ANGELA  
You at the store?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(beat)

Hank Bates' house? The Hank  
Bates' house?

(beat)

Doing what?

(beat)

Jack, are you stoned, goddammit --

(silence)

A toy? Hank Bates' toy?

62 INT. ERIC'S PLAYROOM

Jack is in the phone booth which is a six-foot tall Mickey Mouse. The person using the phone sits on Mickey's knees, talks into his ear.

JACK

(into phone)

Mr. Bates plays with his wife,  
I'm his son's toy.

Eric emerges from the closet, pushing a Ferrari, carrying two helmets.

JACK

(continuing; to Eric)

How old are you?

ERIC

Nine.

JACK

(into phone)

He's nine.

(sighs)

Ange, Angela. Ask me how much  
I'm being paid.

(beat)

Of course I'm getting paid. You  
think I'd do this for fun?

(beat)

Two thousand five hundred.

(beat)

Of course, dollars. What'd you  
think, yen?

(beat)

Yeah. For one week.

## 63 TIGHT ON ANGELA

She hangs up, stunned. Then leaps in the air, arms straight up as if it were a touchdown, yelling; with great love.

ANGELA

He did it! The crazy idiot did it!

## 64 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DRESSING ROOM AREA

Fancy Bates, the blonde bombshell, is on a huge exercise machine which has the capacity to turn the body upside down, around, vibrate, massage, simultaneously. And is doing so.

Bates comes in from the hall. Fancy is whirling and vibrating.

BATES

Fancy.

Wait'll I'm done!

FANCY

*whirling - he's  
always doing this*

BATES

I want to talk to you.

He watches a while, then turns off the machine. It slows.

FANCY

You get me this groovy machine,  
then you won't let me use it.  
You're jealous of it.

She slithers out of the machine, slips into the shower, flicks the skimpy leotard over the door.

FANCY

(continuing)

Is it about the party?  
Everything's arranged. It's  
going to be beautiful.

BATES

It's about Eric.

Bates tries to peek over the top of the shower door, cannot quite, brings over a stool to stand on, it breaks under his weight, etc., during:

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

(FANCY)

Oh, God, I forgot it was his  
~~week. What do I have to do with~~  
~~him? Take him to Six Flags?~~  
 Is he still throwing tantrums?

BATES

He bought a black man.

(FANCY)

He what?

BATES

Bought a black man.

(FANCY)

I wasn't aware that we sold them.

BATES

I didn't want you to be alarmed  
 if you saw him around the house.

(FANCY)

There's a real live black man in  
 this house?

BATES

Just for a week.

(FANCY)

But why?

BATES

To play with, he says. To  
 irritate us, I think.

(FANCY)

Jesus.

BATES

If we refuse to be irritated,  
 take it calmly, it'll be less  
 amusing to him. He'll be more  
 likely to exchange it for  
 Intellelevision or something.

Fancy emerges, wrapped in a towel, stares at him a moment,  
 in the wreckage of her dressing room.

(FANCY)

Heaven forbid you just told him  
 no.



65 INT. HALL

The red, child-sized FERRARI SQUEALS out of the playroom, into the hall. Jack, knees to his chin, helmet perched on his head, hanging on for dear life, is in the passenger seat. Eric, goggles and helmet in place, is driving like a pro.

JACK

I have a heart problem.

ERIC

We're not going very fast. It just seems like we are because we're close to the ground.

SKIDS around a corner, hitting a potted palm broadside. It shatters as if hit by a bomb.

66 ON JACK

looking back, alarmed. His head whips forward.

67 WITH CAR

flying along the hall, SCREECHING to a halt from time to time.

ERIC

(pushes open door)

My father's library.

Driving, narrowly missing a statue, stopping.

ERIC

(continuing)

Their bedroom.

Driving, SCREECHING halt, door.

ERIC

(continuing)

My playroom.

Driving, SCREECHING to a halt, shoves open the door.

ERIC

(continuing)

My room.

Driving, stopping, kicking open the door.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

ERIC  
(continuing)  
Mademoiselle's.

They knock over a statue, speeding around a corner on two wheels.

68 ANGLE ON FRONT STAIRS

As the boy and the man in the car fly around the corner at the top of the carpeted stairs, cut too quickly, the car rolls down the carpeted stairs, Jack screaming, Eric laughing, colliding at the bottom with Barkley who is wheeling a table with a covered dinner for one on it, across the front hall. Food, silverware, glasses fly in every direction.

69 ON BARKLEY

stunned.

70 TWO SHOT

Jack eases himself out of the car, checking himself for damage. Eric is already on his feet, pulling the car over.

ERIC  
I didn't figure your weight in  
the turn, that's all.

JACK  
Jesus, Jesus, squeeze us with  
your hands of love.

Eric hands him a cop's cap and a ticket pad.

ERIC  
It wasn't my fault, Officer. He --  
(pointing at Barkley)  
-- went through the yellow.

Barkley, who is picking up food, glass, crockery and silverware, stands, waits.

ERIC  
Give him a ticket.

JACK  
Me?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

ERIC

Write it up.

Reluctantly, Jack puts the cap on, turns to Barkley, who brings out his wallet and papers.

BARKLEY

I'm sorry. Here's my license.

JACK

Hands over your head, up against the wall, spread 'em.

Jack frisks him.

BARKLEY

That was your dinner.

JACK

Never mind.

ERIC

You're not allowed to talk to each other!

JACK

He's clean, sir, no blades, no rods, no knuckles, no dope, no bottles.

(tears out ticket,

hands it to Barkley)

Best I can do is a warning. But, Pops, this is a serious warning. The streets of Bates are unsafe enough without boneheads like you running yellow lights with dinner tables and expired driver's licenses.

BARKLEY

Yes, sir, thank you, sir, I am sorry, sir.

ERIC

(laughs, applauds)

Good! Come on. There's more to see.

Jack, puffed up like a cop, kicks the tires of the Ferrari and scowls at the boy.

JACK

Just a minute...

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC

What are you doing? We --

JACK

Are you aware, sir, that your muffler is not modified correctly for street use, that your license plates are two years out of date, that your rear wheels are out of balance, that your car needs a wash, that to drive with an exposed rollbar is a misdemeanor, and that nobody with any class drives with brown goggles!

ERIC

(not amused)

Get in.

JACK

Get out.

A moment, then Eric decides to play. He gets out, pissed.

ERIC

I'll have them put you back on the beat. You don't mess with me, I'm Eric Bates.

JACK

You're under arrest.

ERIC

I'm Eric Bates! My father'll --

JACK

I'm not arresting Megabucks, Shorty, I'm arresting you!

ERIC

My father'll --

Jack collars him, looks at a closed door, then at Barkley.

BARKLEY

The coat closet.

Jack jerks it open, throws the kid in, amid sheepskin and mink and suede and camel's hair. Slams it shut and leans back against it. SCREAMS. POUNDING. Barkley steps over the broken glass and broccoli, takes Jack's hand and shakes it.

## 71 ANGLE ON STAIRS

as Bates, wearing his dinner jacket, carrying a bottle of wine, comes up from the wine cellar.

BATES

What's going on here?

He pulls the closet door open. The boy stumbles out, red-faced and furious and breathing hard.

ERIC

He... ! He...

Bates holds him by the shoulder, concerned.

BATES

Calm down. Get ahold of yourself.  
What happened?

JACK

Sir, it was my fault, I --

ERIC

We were just playing, Daddy.

In the silence, Eric smiles, takes Jack's hand, leads him toward the car again.

## 72 INT. PLAYROOM

Eric is playing with the air hockey puck, the game turned off. Jack is at the window, watching the company arrive for a large party downstairs.

JACK

Why did you cover for me?

ERIC

I want you to stay.

JACK

Why?

Eric shrugs, studying the puck.

JACK

It doesn't matter that I don't want to stay?

ERIC

Daddy's paying you

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

JACK  
That wasn't the question.

ERIC  
If you're paid enough you'll stay.

JACK  
I have five friends, two turtles  
and an old lady.

ERIC  
Your old lady won't mind.

JACK  
The turtles will.

ERIC  
Play me a game.

JACK  
I'll mind.

ERIC  
If you win, you can go home.

Jack looks over.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
With pay.

JACK  
For the week?

ERIC  
Sure.

JACK  
Megabucks won't go for that.

ERIC  
Sure he will.

JACK  
Two thousand five hundred dollars  
for --  
(watch)  
-- two hours?

ERIC  
He won't mind.

JACK  
You don't know him very well, do  
you.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC  
(stamping his foot)  
I can deal with Daddy!

Jack stares at him a long moment, then gets up, saunters over to the other end of the air hockey table.

JACK  
I used to be pretty good.

ERIC  
I'm pretty good.

Jack turns the game on. They WHANG it back and forth a minute.

ERIC  
Every point I get you stay another year.

Jack, reacting to that, misses a block. One point.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
That's one year.

Big smile. In the b.g. the staff is bringing in a daybed, a floor lamp, pillows, sheets, blankets. Pajamas, toilet supplies, anything for an excuse to come in and look at the man the boy bought. Mademoiselle comes over to them.

MADEMOISELLE  
I've brought you pajamas, soap, a towel, a washcloth, slippers, a razor, shaving cream, toothbrush, toothpaste, if you'll leave your clothes in the hamper, we'll have them washed by morning.

Jack whirls on the staff.

JACK  
Is this the guided tour? How many more are there?

MADEMOISELLE  
Twenty, altogether.

JACK  
Then you're coming in shifts?

ERIC  
Your serve.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (3)

JACK  
(to staff)  
Get out! I'll make the bed.  
Just leave the stuff and get out!

They do so, in confusion. Jack, with anger in his eyes, brings his focus to the game.

73 ON GAME

The boy ZAPS another goal. Their eyes meet. Eric's laughing.

ERIC  
Two years.  
Fast and furious play. Jack scores.

74 ON COUNTER

Jack slams over a bead.

75 ON GAME

The puck flies around, slams another point for Jack.

76 ON ERIC

who sets his mouth in a grim line.

ERIC  
You are good.

77 GAME

faster, extended, the puck flashing and ricocheting. Finally careens into the boy's goal. Eric walks away, to the slot machine nearby.

78 FULL

Jack slams the counters over.

JACK  
Get your butt back to the table,  
knucklehead.

(CONTINUED)



78 CONTINUED:

ERIC

Nope.

JACK

The game isn't over.

ERIC

I'm not playing.

JACK

'Cause I'm about to whip you?  
'Cause you can't stand to lose?

ERIC

I just don't feel like playing  
anymore, that's all.

Eric pushes a button, pulls a handle, gets a cup full of change. Plays on, seemingly indifferent. Jack walks over, leans on the machine.

JACK

What if I told Megabucks?

ERIC

He doesn't care.

JACK

That you're a quitter? I don't  
believe it.

ERIC

He doesn't care what I am. As  
long as I stay out of his way.

The pathos of that, true or not, reverberates in the silence. Mademoiselle bustles in the door, full of self-importance.

MADEMOISELLE

Eric. It's bathtime.

ERIC

I'm busy.

MADEMOISELLE

Come on now, the water's ready.  
Chop, chop.

ERIC

No.

MADEMOISELLE

Eric.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC  
(playing)  
Not without my toy.

MADEMOISELLE  
That's a good boy. With your  
boat? Or your rubber ducky?

ERIC  
Jack.

Silence.

MADEMOISELLE  
Eric. I'm going to tell your  
father.

JACK  
Does everybody say that?

ERIC  
Yeah.

Jack smiles, takes the boy's hand, heads for the door.

JACK  
Bor-ing!

ERIC  
(laughs)  
Yeah.

They walk right by Mademoiselle, out of the playroom.  
She follows, at a loss.

79 INT. BATHROOM

A sunken tub full of bubbles. Jack comes in, Eric in  
tow, Mademoiselle behind them.

MADEMOISELLE  
Not together! Not in the same  
water. Eric! You're too big to  
bathe with another person!

Jack steps into the tub, shoes on, fully clothed.  
Eric laughs, then climbs to the other end.

MADEMOISELLE  
(continuing)  
Eric! I forbid you!  
(yelling)  
M. Bates! Vite! Vite! M. Bates!!

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

JACK

We all know he's downstairs with his guests.

(unbuttoning his shirt, grins at Eric)

Does she do backs?

Mademoiselle vanishes, slamming the door.

80 TIGHT TWO

Eric smiles.

ERIC

I like you.

Jack leans forward, pulls the boy's feet out from under him, dunking him. The boy comes up, spluttering and furious, slaps his hands flat on the surface, covering Jack in bubbles. Laughing, they fight, water and bubbles flying.

81 INT. HALL

Soaking wet, carefully, Jack SQUISHES down the hall, trying not to get everything wet, regretting this day. Fancy, decked out for the party in something that holds up her breasts like they were religious offerings, comes out of her room, looks him up and down carefully.

FANCY

Don't tell me. Let me guess. You're the new second floor sprinkler system. I told them I wanted black pipes.

JACK

Jack Brown, Mrs. Bates. I'm sorry I'm getting the carpet wet. We ran out of dry towels.

She looks him up and down, a little smile on her face.

FANCY

So. You're the toy. I wouldn't think this sort of thing would tickle a black man.

Jack, looks her up and down, smiles.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

JACK  
 Amazing, isn't it, what a person'll  
 do for money.

She lets out an amazed whistle.

FANCY  
 God Almighty, I'd sure turn you  
 in on Intellevision.

She readjusts her left boob, lifting it a littler  
 higher on it's platform in her dress, brushes by him  
 as if he weren't here.

82 ON JACK

watching her go, his smile fading, the full extent of  
 his humiliation clear.

83 INT. PLAYROOM

As he comes in, a pan of heavy cream, balanced on the  
 door, tips over him.

84 INT. FOYER

As Fancy comes down the stairs, the dinner guests are  
 coming in. Black tie. Long dresses. The men are the  
 local movers and shakers, not the blue bloods, they  
 are by and large in their fifties, their wives, by and  
 large are much younger and flashier.

Fancy, seeing HONEY RUSSELL, bounces down the stairs  
 and embraces her.

FANCY  
 Well you're looking better  
 sugarpie, how're you feeling.

The girls head for the living room, away from the  
 crowd at the front door.

85 TIGHT ON TWO

HUGH RUSSELL, the local DA leans close to Bates.

RUSSELL  
 The word I get, Hank, is that  
 they're going to indict you.  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

RUSSELL (CONT'D)  
 (smiles, looks  
 around)  
 Where's the limey with the bourbon?

86 TIGHT ON BATES

reacts then smiles. Supercool.

BATES  
 (calls)  
 Barkley!

87 INT. PLAYROOM - LATER

Jack is lying on the daybed, scowling at the ceiling, dressed in bright red Spiderman pajamas. Scowling at one oversized toy after another, hanging from the ceiling, piled up against the wall, oppressive. The pinball machines, air hockey, trains, slot machines, phone booth, word processors. He gets to his feet, wanders among it all, hands behind his back, pacing.

JACK  
 No, Mommy I do not want  
 Intellevision, I want a nigger,  
 Sally Ann Thompson has a nigger  
 and she says hers plays basketball.  
 I want one that says Ho Ho Ho, Fat  
 Albert. Mommy, please? Everybody  
 in my class has a nigger, please,  
 Mommy, I want one too.

88 INCLUDE ERIC

who slips in from the closet, to hear better.  
 Unnoticed.

JACK  
 (as Hank Bates)  
 It is a great idea, perhaps one of  
 the great marketing ideas of our  
 time, Morehouse, there is a raise  
 in this for you without a doubt.  
 We'll sell it like a Barbi doll.  
 First the basic nigger. Then the  
 outfits. Football outfits.  
 Cotton-picking outfits. Rock  
 star outfits. Shooting up outfits.  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

JACK (CONT'D)

Then we'll sell ve-hicles. Pink Cadillacs. Cassettes. Books. Learn nigger in nine easy lessons. Maybe a Ku Klux Klan disposable nigger. Morehouse, I have not been this interested in life in many years. Trust me on this one. It'll be better for you, if I hold the patents in my name. Klanwatch might fry your ass, they won't mess with me. We'll saturate the South, can you imagine how this'll go in Jackson, Mississippi? Right after Thanksgiving. Then into the stores nationwide, a week before Christmas. That's how I sold the hula hoop.

Eric knocks against a toy monkey that turns over, clapping. Jack looks over, startled.

ERIC

You're funny.

JACK

You find that funny? Somehow I knew you would.

And he walks out.

89 INT. HALL

The man and the boy in red pajamas walk down the hall, the boy mimicking the angry stride of the man. The man yanks open a door. It's the linen closet. SLAMS it shut, walks on, Eric yanks open the linen closet, SLAMS it shut, strides on.

90 WITH JACK

Pulls open the next door with considerably less authority.

91 INT. MADEMOISELLE'S ROOM

Mademoiselle is watching TV with her little poodle in her lap. She looks over in irritation.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

JACK  
I want my clothes back.

MADEMOISELLE  
They're still wet.

JACK  
I want them now!

MADEMOISELLE  
They're in the dryer.

JACK  
I want them back!

MADEMOISELLE  
Tante Pis.

Eye to eye. Jack turns, abruptly, to Eric at his elbow.

ERIC  
(translating)  
Tough Shit.

92 INT. FRONT STAIRS

In the red Spiderman pajamas, Jack tiptoes down the stairs. The kid appears on the top of the stairs.

ERIC  
Jack?

Jack gives him the finger, continuing down the stairs.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
Where you going?

JACK  
Home.

ERIC  
Why?

Jack stops, looks back at the boy.

JACK  
Are you that dumb?

Heads for the door.

93 ANGLE

Fancy comes out of the dining room, heads across the front hall. Stops and smiles at Jack.

FANCY

Well, aren't we full of surprises.

JACK

I was looking for the laundry room, Mrs. Bates.

FANCY

(smiles, then)

Right this way, Mr. Brown.

94 INT. DINING ROOM

The dining room is full of elegant people in black tie and long dresses.

Fancy pushes Jack into the room. Stunned silence. Bates to his feet, furious, strides to them, during:

FANCY

I just wanted y'all to see what Hank bought his boy today. It doesn't even need batteries. Isn't that sweet? I'm hoping it'll start a trend. Do something about the awful unemployment situation. Now would any of y'all like one of 'em for your children? I believe we take orders --

Bates takes Fancy by one arm, Jack by the other, the astonished talk rising behind them.

95 INT. FOYER - NIGHT

The three emerge from the dining room.

FANCY

Christ Almighty, Hank, you're such a pompous ass. Can't you take a joke?

BATES

I didn't find it remotely amusing.  
(to Jack)  
Did you?

(CONTINUED)



95 CONTINUED:

JACK

Maybe remotely. If you weren't you or me.

FANCY

You're marking my arm, sugar.

He lets go, his anger as undiminished as his smile.

BATES

I thought three times a week with the pink shrink in New Orleans was enough.

FANCY

It is. I'm sorry. I was just bragging on you. You used to like for me to brag on you. How'm I supposed to know when you're having your period?

He grabs her arm again, in a rage.

BATES

I think you need some quiet time in the hospital.

FANCY

Let loose of me.

ERIC

Let loose of my nigger.

Bates looks up, takes a deep breath, smiles.

BATES

We don't use that word in this house, Eric. Black or colored person. Not nigger.

ERIC

Let loose of my colored person.

Moment, then Bates takes Fancy by the arm and propels her into the dining room, slamming the door behind them.

Jack looks at the little boy at the top of the stairs, arms around his legs, waiting.

JACK

So long, white person.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC  
Come back upstairs, Jack.

JACK  
No way.

ERIC  
You can't leave.

JACK  
I can. I walk out that door.  
Simple

ERIC  
In your pajamas?

JACK  
The frog's got my clothes.

ERIC  
You won't get paid.

JACK  
You think the only thing that  
matters is the money?

ERIC  
You said it was, a while back.

JACK  
I was wrong.

Heads for door.

ERIC  
Was I bad.

Jack looks back up him. Almost feels sorry for him,  
smiles.

JACK  
Bad? What you are gives new  
meaning to the word.

Winks, steps onto a foyer chair, holds a match under  
the sprinkler head.

96 ON ERIC

starts to giggle.

97 INT. DINING ROOM

The sprinkler system goes off. Over everyone.  
SCREAMING. Chaos.

98 ON BATES

Continues to eat, furious, controlled.

99 INT. JACK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

as Jack comes in, wincing with every step, straight to the sink, runs some water, sits on the drainboard, eases both feet in, trying not to scream with the pain. Angela, working at her desk, watches this, rubs her eyes, shakes her head, puts on her glasses, peers at him again.

ANGELA

What are you wearing?

JACK

My feet are bloody stumps.

Angela crosses to him, laughing.

ANGELA

And for all these years I thought  
Spiderman swung through the air  
on ropes of spit.

(arms around him)

My God, they are bloody stumps.

JACKS

My wallet's in my pants pocket  
which is in the dryer in Mr. Bates'  
house which is halfway to Alaska.  
My bike's at the store. I tried  
hitchhiking. But there was some  
reluctance to pick me up.

She pours a bottle of antiseptic into the water. He screams. They wrap their arms around each other, tight.

100 INT. PLAYROOM - NIGHT

The boy is playing the Space Invaders machine. It makes alot of noise and takes alot of concentration. Bates, in his soaking wet dinner clothes, opens the door. The boy continues playing the game. Bates takes a deep breath, willing himself patient, suppressing the irritation, pasting on the smile. He shoves his hands in his pockets, walks to the game machine as if he had all the time in the world.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

ERIC

I want to go back to school.

BATES

Before the end of spring vacation?

ERIC

Tonight.

BATES

But this is my week.

ERIC

I knew you wouldn't let me.

Waves of anger within Bates, finally, icy:

BATES

Why? What's happened? Did you want to come down and see what a mess you made?

ERIC

I didn't do it.

BATES

Then Jack Brown did. For you.

Eric whirls on him, red faced with anger.

ERIC

It's always my fault! Well it wasn't my fault. It was Fancy's! She didn't have to take him into the dining room and make everybody laugh at him! Now he's gone and he won't come back no matter how much you pay him and I don't want to stay here if he's not here 'cause I don't have anyone to play with.

To a point of hysteria. Bates grabs him and holds him half to restrain him half to comfort him. Eric fights like the very devil, kicking and punching and finally wrenching free. He stands panting, backing away from his father.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED: (2)

BATES

I don't like to see these tantrums,  
Eric.

Eric stomps his feet and shrieks.

ERIC

I want him back!

Bates blows out a breath of exasperation, crosses to the Mickey Mouse telephone. Eric turns it off like he turned it on.

ERIC

(continuing)

Two to one you can't.

Bates smiles.

BATES

Ten to one I can.

The boy smiles. Bates dials Mickey's ear.

101 INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - LATER

They are in each other's arms, quiet.

ANGELA

I think you did the right thing.

JACK

I shaved off my beard for nothing.

ANGELA

It'll grow back.

He leans over her, covers her mouth with his. Long kiss.

ANGELA

(continuing)

We can move.

JACK

You love your job.

ANGELA

I love you more.

Deep kiss. DOORBELL. Their eyes open.

JACK

They've come for the pajamas.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

DOORBELL.

ANGELA

(yells)

We'll send them in the morning!

DOORBELL. Jack gets up with great reluctance. Pulls on a pair of jeans.

JACK

Maybe they're bringing back my clothes. I kind of like that jacket. Only thing I owned came from the Bates Department Store.

102 INT/EXT FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Jack opens the door. Morehouse is there, looking much the worse for the wear. The limo is parked at the curb. Barkley is leaning on a fender, lighting his pipe. Jack looks at Morehouse, then starts to close the door. Morehouse puts a hand on it, bracing it open.

MOREHOUSE

Please --

JACK

The boy needs a shrink, Mr. Morehouse, not me.

MOREHOUSE

I agree with you. Nonetheless --

JACK

Mr. Morehouse, go home, the answer's no. No, now. No. tomorrow. No, regardless of the compensation.

With shaking hands Morehouse draws an envelope out of his pocket, hands it to Jack.

MOREHOUSE

I take sleeping pills, Mr. Brown, I had just dropped off. I feel like bloody hell. He said if I wasn't willing to do what he wanted when he wanted, I could look for another job. So, once again, I am doing what he wants, when he wants, regretting it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

MOREHOUSE (CONT'D)

(beat)

The bright side of the coin is I  
believe I have a terminal ulcer.

(smiles)

I admire your moral fiber, Mr.  
Brown.

He heads for the street. Jack looks at the check in  
the envelope.

JACK

Jesus. This is for the week?  
Or for the rest of my life?

MOREHOUSE

He only has the boy for a week.

JACK

Do you make this much in a month,  
Mr. Morehouse?

MOREHOUSE

No, sir.

JACK

And you're a vice president?

MOREHOUSE

Yes, sir.

JACK

Holy Toledo.

Opens the door wider. Morehouse comes back up onto the  
porch.

JACK

(continuing)  
What moral fiber?

103 INT. PLAYROOM

The boy is sitting in the window, arms around his legs,  
Bates behind him, both watching the driveway.

104 POV

The Chrysler moves stately around the trees, toward  
the house. Jack's old bike is in the trunk.

105 INT. PLAYROOM

The boy turns to the father and hugs him.

106 EXT. BACK DOOR AT CHRYSLER - WITH JACK

who lifts his bike out of the back of the car. Wheels it toward the house, past Barkley, past Morehouse.

BARKLEY

Welcome back, Mr. Brown.

MOREHOUSE

Have a pleasant stay, Mr. Brown.

JACK

Up yours, gentlemen.

107 INT. UPSTAIRS HALL

Jack heads for the playroom.

108 INT. PLAYROOM - NIGHT

As Jack enters, a large pan of tapioca balancing on the door, falls on him, drenching him. Welcome back.

109 INT. HALLWAY - MOVING - DAY

with Barkley as he pushes the breakfast table down the hall. Eric comes out of his room.

BARKLEY

Good morning, Eric.

ERIC

Is that for Jack?

BARKLEY

Yes sir.

Eric stops him, lifts the tablecloth, climbs onto the bracing between the legs, pulls the tablecloth down again.

ERIC'S VOICE

(cheerfully)

Okay.

Barkley sighs, pushes the table on.

(CONTINUED)



109 CONTINUED:

ERIC'S VOICE

And if you tell, I'll pull the  
hairs out of your ears.

Barkley knocks on the playroom door.

BARKLEY

Breakfast, Mr. Brown.

110 INT. PLAYROOM

Jack opens the door.

JACK

(grins)

Let's hope this goes better than  
dinner.

He starts to pull the table into the room. Barkley, who wants to warn him without alerting the kid, comes after the table as if he's attached to it. Jack looks at him, oddly.

JACK

I can get it.

BARKLEY

Near the window, Mr. Brown?

JACK

Anywhere. It doesn't matter.  
Where's the little monster?

Eric's hand, unseen by Jack, slips out from under the tablecloth, to yank one of the hairs on Barkley's leg. Barkley moves away.

BARKLEY

Shall I call him for you, sir?

JACK

Good God, no. Let me eat in  
peace.

Brings a chair up to the table, during:

JACK

Doesn't anybody see what an  
arrogant little bastard he's  
turning into?

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

BARKLEY

I wouldn't hazard a guess, sir.

JACK

(pouring coffee)

I think it's pathetic. They don't know what to do and they don't care.

(cream)

What do they leave the kid in military school all year for? Where's the mother? Bermuda?

With his eyebrows, Barkley is trying to indicate that he should shut up, that the kid is under the table.

JACK

Are you all right, Barkley?

BARKLEY

Yes sir. If you'll excuse me sir.

Barkley exits; it's the best way to get Jack to shut up.

111 TIGHT

Jack rubs his hands together in anticipation, takes off the food covers. It is a magnificent feast. Eggs and sausage, pancakes and bacon, sweet rolls, toast, jam, hot cereal, strawberries, orange juice, milk, coffee --

Pleased, he shakes out his napkin, pulls up to the table, takes a sip of coffee.

The tablecloth creeps away two inches. He blinks. Must be imagining things. He pours cream on his strawberries. Has to follow the bowl as it moves further away...

He gets up, circles the table, looking. Nothing. Brings his chair around to the other side. Moves his silverware, coffee, glasses, etc. Finally sits, shakes out his napkin, lifts his spoon to dig into the strawberries. They move away, the other way.

Jack lays down his spoon, picks it up, to see if this is the key. Nothing.

Picks up his fork, lays it down. Nothing. Breathes out a sigh of relief, begins to eat.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

And the tablecloth begins to move again. And this time it doesn't stop. Water glass, butter balls, sweet rolls, bowl of jam, the eggs, pancakes, syrup, sausage, milk, orange juice, one by one crash onto the floor, like lemmings, over the cliff.

112. WIDER ANGLE

As the last plate bites the dust, Jack yanks the tablecloth off, yanks the laughing little boy out from under it and drags him laughing over to the daybed, throws him on it face down, holds him down with one hand, whips off his belt with the other, before he can lay leather on him, though, the boy wiggles away and fells him with a karate chop.

113 JACK

scrambles to his feet, hopping on one foot, nursing his other shin.

114 ERIC

takes the stance, breathing hard, still laughing, leaps at him.

115 FULL

Jack catches him mid-air, holds him off his feet a moment, shakes him hard.

JACK

Now listen to me, goddammit, if  
I'm gonna stay here --

And gets a foot in the stomach.

116 JACK

crashes to the floor like a tree, breath gone.

117 ERIC

stands over the prone and gasping Jack, wanting to laugh, feeling for the first time, an edge of sorry.

Jack? ERIC

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

Nothing. He touches his hand. Nothing.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
Are you dead?

JACK  
(with difficulty)  
I hope so.

118 FULL

Eric takes him by the feet and drags him over to the daybed.  
Moment.

ERIC  
You're faking it.

Nothing.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
C'mon.

Nothing.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
Talk to me.

Nothing.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
Open your eyes.

Nothing.

ERIC  
(continuing)  
Jack?

Eric gets a bowl of ice from the refrigerator, dumps it on him. Jack jumps three feet into the air, screaming, falls into shelf of toys which crash down on top of him. Eric falls over, laughing.

119 INT. PLAYROOM - ON ELECTRIC TRAIN - LATER

as it beetles around the most elaborate track known to man, complete with sandstorms, tornadoes, rain, snow, and finally an avalanche which derails it.

120 ON ERIC

at a computer console at the edge of the track, programming the disasters and the reactions to the disasters.

121 FULL

The ambulances and fire engines and helicopters and Red Cross trucks converge on the accident. Jack, bandaged, comes in from the hall.

JACK

(to someone in  
the hall)

Thanks, pal.

Crosses to the boy. Watches a moment, then paces around the room, finally sits in the boy sized chair, in front of a word programmer. Looks at it a long moment. Then at the boy.

JACK

(continuing)

Four more days, Eric.

ERIC

Come watch this.

JACK

What're we gonna do?

ERIC

When?

JACK

For the next four days.

ERIC

Play.

JACK

I'm not crazy about your games.

ERIC

Then you say.

JACK

Let's put out a newspaper.

ERIC

Naw.

Eric puts the track back together, the train back on the track, etc.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

JACK

I'll be the editor, you be the reporter. I'll call you Scoop. Reporters are traditionally called Scoop.

ERIC

(distaste)

Scoop?

JACK

You can take pictures. You got a Hasselblad you've never even taken out of the box. Telephoto lens, everything.

ERIC

Naw.

(pushes buttons, train moves again)

Come watch this.

JACK

You might even learn something, heaven forbid, something useful.

ERIC

Boring.

JACK

Boring?! This room isn't boring? All this junk isn't boring? All these people kissing your ass isn't boring?

Eric looks at him, blinks, surprised. Turns off his train.

ERIC

Wanna go fishing?

Dismay.

JACK

You mean for fish?

122 EXT. STREAM

Idyllic. Eric climbs up out of a gully, outfitted by Abercrombie and Fitch for a fishing trip, carrying two fancy poles, a fishing bag, a picnic basket, a bait box, everything.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

Jack appears behind him, scared, looking over his shoulder, bumping into trees (excuse me), nervous as a trapped cat.

ERIC

(looks back at him)

Do you have a problem?

JACK

Why are those crickets so loud?

What's going on? They know something we don't know?

ERIC

They're not crickets. They're locusts.

JACK

Oh my God. Locusts?! They darken the sun. They eat everything in their paths. We better go home.

ERIC

There's not that many. Come on.

JACK

Wouldn't you rather go to a movie? Or a ball game. Or a stock car race? There might be snakes in all this grass.

(sneeze)

I'm allergic to snakes.

(looks around)

Enough. Right. Home.

(looks into the

bracken all

around him)

Oh, shit --

Eric has disappeared.

JACK

(continuing; panicked)

Eric!

Leaps after him, on tiptoe to avoid the snakes, flapping his arms to ward off the locusts.

123 WITH ERIC

who ambushes him, leaping, screaming out of a tree onto his shoulders. Scaring the shit out of Jack.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

JACK

I'm having palpitations. I hope  
you took a CPR course.

(sneeze)

I'm not going to survive this.

124 EXT. FISHING BOAT

Eric is cocked against a tree, his line in a deep cool pond, bordered with willows. He is watching, laughing, as Jack tries to cast, gets the line tangled in the trees above, jerks it, shakes the tree, reels the line in and out and gets it more and more tangled.

ERIC

You're hopeless.

Jack turns on him, angry, then abandons both the fishing pole and his pride, sits beside the boy, opens the picnic basket, leaps to his feet to see what he's sitting on, nothing, sits down again, exhausted, takes out a beer.

JACK

Why are Dolly Parton's feet so  
small?

ERIC

Why?

JACK

Nothing grows in the shade.

Eric giggles, bites into his sandwich, stands his middle finger in the dirt, two adjacent fingers cocked.

ERIC

What's this?

JACK

I give up.

ERIC

Dolly Parton hiding behind a tree.

Giggles.

JACK

Y'hear about the Polish mosquito?

ERIC

Bit Dolly Parton on the elbow.

(CONTINUED)



124 CONTINUED:

They giggle, helplessly together.

JACK

We could write an anthology of  
Dolly Parton jokes.

ERIC

How do you make an elephant fly?

JACK

We could expand it to include  
elephant jokes.

ERIC

First you buy ten yards of zipper.

JACK

(laughing)  
Why don't elephants drink martinis?

ERIC

(laughing)  
Have you ever tried to get an olive  
out of your nose?

Howls of laughter.

JACK

I bet between us we know every bad  
joke in the world.

(a strike)

Jesus, Jesus squeeze us with Your  
hands of love!

Eric grabs the pole, it is a small fish, but he plays it  
beautifully, professionally, reeling it in. Jack plastered  
against the tree, telling him what to do. Eric gets the  
fish on land, slips the hook out, tosses the fish back.  
Jack erupts.

JACK

(continuing)  
You threw him back! Why'd you  
throw him back?!

ERIC

I hate cleaning them.

JACK

He was enormous. That was the  
biggest fish outside of the Gulf  
of Mexico.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

124 CONTINUED: (2)

JACK (CONT'D)

That was a trophy fish. And you  
threw him back? After I went to  
all that trouble? How could you?

GEFFRAN'S VOICE

(a drunken bellow)

Shut up!

Jack leaps behind the nearest tree. Eric heads toward  
the voice to investigate.

125 FEATURE GEFFRAN

at the next wide place in the stream, some distance through  
the brush and woods, Geffran too is fishing. And drinking.  
Mostly drinking. And muttering to himself.

Eric appears, then Jack.

ERIC

(surprised)

It's Daddy's accountant, Mr. Geffran.  
What're you doing here, Mr. Geffran?

GEFFRAN

Daddy's ex-accountant. Y'all  
scared the fish away with your  
hollering.

JACK

Ex? You quit?

GEFFRAN

Quit? In this economy? That a  
joke?

ERIC

We're writing a book of jokes.

GEFFRAN

(bleary)

Well, here's a good joke. I been  
fired because I got sweaty hands.

Beat.

GEFFRAN

(continuing)

Laugh. That's the joke.

Beat.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

GEFFRAN

(continuing)

It's absurd. It's ridiculous.  
Why aren't you laughing?

JACK

Sweaty hands?

GEFFRAN

If you'd been responsible for  
keeping Hank Bates out of Federal  
Prison, for keeping the SEC, the  
Justice Department, the Federal  
Trade Commission and the IRS off  
his tail, wouldn't you have sweaty  
hands?

ERIC

Daddy fired you?

GEFFRAN

Give the boy a blue ribbon.

ERIC

Why?

GEFFRAN

(a roar of pain  
and outrage)

Because I got sweaty hands!

Long silence. This is the first time Eric has seen anything  
like this. He is very unsure about what his reaction is or  
should be.

ERIC

(tentative)

It's easy enough for an accountant  
to get another job. Isn't it?

GEFFRAN

In this town? In this county?

(smiles)

That's another joke.

JACK

(gently)

Move while you still can afford to.  
Take it from someone who didn't.

GEFFRAN

Can't. I got a new house.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED: (2)

## GEFFRAN (CONT'D)

Four daughters in braces. A wife  
in therapy. A new Camaro. I can't  
even afford to get drunk on whiskey.

Silence. Locusts. It is an everyday defeat, a minor moment  
of sadness, but this is a first for Eric. He edges over  
closer to Jack and takes his hand.

Jack looks down at him, astonished.

126 EXT. BREAKS AND BRACKEN - SUNSET

Eric and Jack, carrying their gear, head up through the rough  
country toward the house on the hill above. Jack panting  
like a furnace, giving wide berth to bushes over an inch  
tall.

ERIC

We could get even. We could tell.

JACK

Who? God? Hey God, life's unfair.  
Hey Eric, tough titty.

ERIC

In our newspaper.

JACK

We're not writing a newspaper.

ERIC

We could write an expose.

JACK

We're writing a book of jokes,  
Eric.

ERIC

We could interview Fancy and Barkley  
and Mr. Morehouse and everybody.

JACK

About?

ERIC

Daddy.

JACK

They wouldn't tell us diddly squat.  
They're working for him.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

ERIC  
You could make them.

JACK  
Me?

ERIC  
If you were any good.

127 ON JACK

resenting that, he sneezes.

JACK  
Then we'd better integrate the  
dining room, Shrimp.

128 ERIC

turns, looks at him, grins.

129 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The clink of silver on silver as Barkley serves. Bates, Fancy, Mademoiselle, Eric and Jack. Eric shakes his head to the vegetables. Barkley heads for the kitchen.

MADEMOISELLE  
(rapidly, in French,  
to Eric)  
If you don't eat your vegetables,  
you'll get hardening of the arteries  
before you get to Junior High School.

Eric sitting across the table, lifts a butterball on the tip of his knife and flips it through the floral centerpiece at her. It splats on her forehead.

BATES  
(a roar)  
Eric!

JACK  
Hey, ease off --

BATES  
(furious)  
I will not.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED:

JACK  
He's just a kid --

BATES  
He knows better --

JACK  
That broad's on his back all day,  
every day, if she'd --

Mademoiselle rises, stiff and wounded.

MADMOISELLE  
May I be excused, Madame?

FANCY  
Sure thing, sweetie. Want a tray  
in your room?

MADMOISELLE  
No. It's all right. I couldn't  
eat a thing.

Exits.

BATES  
(to Jack)  
I don't want you to encourage this  
sort of behavior in the boy. I  
want --

ERIC  
He's mine. Not yours. What you  
want doesn't matter.

BATES  
It's my check in his pocket!

JACK  
(smiles, placating)  
Tomorrow we're starting a paper,  
Mr. Bates.

BATES  
Now that's better.

JACK  
He's going to learn how to  
interview. Then how to write an  
interview into an article. We'll  
use his word processor. Take some  
pictures.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JACK (CONT'D)

Use his Xerox. Seems a shame to have all that equipment in there and not use it.

Bates smiles.

BATES

Splendid. Wonderful.

ERIC

(mutters to Jack)

Ass kisser.

BATES

What?

JACK

Maybe you and Mrs. Bates could tell us how you met.

(smiles, civilized)

We could sort of use you as a practice run.

Bates and Fancy look at each other.

BATES

No. Practice on somebody else.

ERIC

Daddy --

JACK

(to Fancy)

Off the record, of course.

(to Bates)

For the boy. It's a learning experience.

FANCY

It's not like everybody doesn't know already.

BATES

Around here, but the boy --

FANCY

(to Bates)

Are you ashamed of me?

BATES

Fancy --

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: (3)

*around little finger*

FANCY

(to Jack)

It's just the sweetest story. I love it. It's exactly like Cinderella.

BATES

(to Jack)

Off the record. Give me your word.

JACK

Sure. Absolutely. Just for fun.

BATES

(gives up with a smile)

Go on, sugar.

Jack looks at Eric. Eric turns on a mini recorder in his lap underneath his napkin.

FANCY

Well, Hank was on his way home from Colorado. From visiting Numero Two. She's in a looney bin in Colorado Springs.

BATES

What I was doing in Colorado is irrelevant...

FANCY

It's where I might be shortly. I think it's real relevant.

BATES

I don't believe you know how to tell a story.

(to Eric)

She was a little bit of a thing, scrawny and scared and wobbling around on platform sandals.

(smiles at Fancy)

The newest and youngest and worst waitress in this bar outside of Amarillo, near the cement plant.

(softer)

Sleazy sort of rayon uniforms, didn't hardly cover the crotch. Little metal things on the tits --

FANCY

Propellers.

(CONTINUED)



129 CONTINUED: (4)

BATES

Is that what they were?

FANCY

You didn't know that? The place was called the Fly By Nite. The motif was airplanes. All this time you didn't know that?

BATES

(laughing)

Those goddamn hats. What were they supposed to be?

(to Jack)

They had these kind of white things mashed on their heads --

FANCY

They were clouds.

BATES

They looked like white cow turds.

FANCY

You're the one doesn't know how to tell a story.

He laughs, settles back, watches Fancy.

FANCY

(continuing)

Hank come through the door like the Arc Angel Gabriel and lifted me out of all that misery and gave me new hair and new boobs and a mink coat and a pink Chrysler and a charge card at Neiman's and I swear if you don't believe in prayer and miracles, you just gotta look at me, I'm living proof.

Bates basks in it.

ERIC

What'd your boobs look like before?

FANCY

None of your business.

BATES

Common.

## 130 INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

The light shades are tilted so the light will spill onto the painting of Fancy as the Naked Raja. Jack is bent over the boy who has the Hasselblad on a strap around his neck, complete with flash.

JACK

This goes here. This should be on this button when you're taking flash. Twist this when you focus.

Stands aside. The boy lifts the camera.

JACK

(continuing)

And focus on her face. Or you'll fog up the lens.

Eric giggles, continues to focus.

ERIC

Move that flag.

Jack rounds the desk, moves the Confederate flag. Fancy's boobs are truly munificent, excessive works of art.

Eric lowers the camera to see if what he's seeing is correct. He and Jack exchange an astonished grin. Eric takes the picture. Jack replaces the flag.

JACK

Better take a PG version, Eric.  
We'll never sell that to television.

ERIC

(winding the camera,  
heading for the door)

Bor-ing.

## 131 INT. PLAYROOM - MORNING

Jack, finishing breakfast, turns to the door to Eric's room.

JACK

(yells)

Eric! Get your ass in here!  
Back to the typewriter! We only  
have three more days!

Eric in his Spiderman pajamas, comes in. A bowl of cream of wheat balanced on the door, drenches him. Jack falls off his chair, laughing.

132 EXT. MANSION - DAY

Jack and Eric are riding down the driveway on Jack's old bike, the boy on the bar, Jack wearing a snap-brimmed hat with a pencil stuck in the band, like Front Page. The boy twists around, takes the hat, puts it on his own head.

ERIC

I want to be the editor. I want to call you Scoop, Scoop.

Jack takes the hat back.

JACK

I'm the one knows the newspaper business. Scoop.

Eric takes the hat back.

ERIC

Quit calling me Scoop.

Jack takes the hat back.

JACK

Because your daddy owns a paper doesn't mean you know how to write one. Scoop.

Eric takes the hat back.

ERIC

I hate typing. I'm just taking pictures. I'm Flash. You're Scoop.

JACK

You're a pain in the ass.

Laughing, they disappear around the bend.

133 INT. SMALL HOUSE

Numerous black children. Ruby Dee is at the kitchen table, stuffing envelopes with coupon books from a box, sealing them with a sponge, putting them on an outgoing box. Jack is sitting on the other side of the table with his tape recorder, Eric is standing by his chair, camera around his neck.

RUBY DEE

He said are you responsible for the lunch room. I said sure yes, what do you think, you know that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

RUBY DEE (CONT'D)

He said you let that black man serve. I said Mr. Bates, Mr. Morehouse hired him, I didn't hire him, my job is to use the people he hires, not to question his choices. And he said you're fired. I been Head of Food Service for the Bates Department Store for nineteen years. Two more months my pension woulda taken care of the kids.

JACK

And you didn't say anything?

RUBY DEE

Like what?

JACK

Like wait a second, what are you doing to my life!

Ruby Dee laughs, rich and resonant.

ERIC

Can I take your picture?

RUBY DEE

(grins, touches  
her hair)

Well sure, precious.

134 PHOTO

Ruby Dee, surrounded by her flock of children, grinning, pleased.

135 EXT. DRIVEWAY

The bike is leaning on the Chrysler. The recorder on the roof. Barkley is polishing the chrome, avoiding everybody's eyes. Eric is snapping pictures.

BARKLEY

You're sure this is all right with Mr. Bates?

JACK

Whatever the kid wants is all right with Bates. You know that.

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

ERIC

It's all right.

Polishing.

BARKLEY

Well. I was in the employ of Lord Cavendish, a man as enamored of billiards as Mr. Bates.

(beat)

They met in a queue outside the Old Vic.

(beat)

My Lord won a herd of cattle in '78 from Mr. Bates. One hundred registered Herefords. Mr. Bates sent them over on a 747.

(sighs)

In '79, Mr. Bates won me.

JACK

You? Cavendish bet you?

BARKLEY

Mr. Bates insisted. My Lord wanted to bet the castle. Mr. Bates said he didn't want a eight-hunner-year old pile of rocks, is the way I believe he put it. What he wanted was a butler.

Polishing.

ERIC

Maybe Cavendish'll get better at pool.

BARKLEY

(smiles)

Please God.

136 EXT. PARK

They are walking side by side, eating Eskimo pies.

ERIC

If my father's rotten does it mean I'm gonna be rotten too?

JACK

Probably.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

ERIC

What if I don't wanna be?

Jack bumps against him. Eric's ice cream slides off his stick, down his sleeve, down his shirt, down his pants, onto his shoe. They watch it happen, then look at each other. Jack laughs.

JACK

You're hopeless. Adjust yourself to that.

ERIC

(laughing)

I don't mind. You're hopeless too.

Laughing, Jack takes his hand.

ERIC

(continuing)

What's Angela like?

JACK

Angela? Is this part of the same conversation? Were we talking about your father?

ERIC

(laughing)

Tell me, Jack.

JACK

She's like the Statue of Liberty. Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses. Loves causes. Loves to boil with righteous indignation. She's what your father would call a pinko.

ERIC

Do you mate a lot?

Beat.

JACK

'Mate?' Animals 'mate,' Eric.

ERIC

Well, screw.

JACK

None of your goddamn business.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC

What's it like?

JACK

Jesus, doesn't anyone talk to you?  
Ask your dad.

ERIC

What do you do with your thing?

JACK

Screwing's like dying. When the  
time comes, you'll know what to do.

During which, Jack hoists him onto his shoulders, hands him up his ice cream, walks on, an elbow cocked over the sticky sneaker. Eric lets the ice cream slide off the cone, into Jack's hair. Nearly falls off his shoulders, laughing.

137 INT. PLAYROOM - DAY

Jack is leaning over the boy's shoulder at the desk, Eric is arranging the photos and the "articles" of newsprint. Jack is rearranging them.

ERIC

What'll we call it?

JACK

Truth, Justice and the American  
Way.

ERIC

And get sued by Superman.

JACK

Smart-ass. What do you want to  
call it?

ERIC

How about --  
(dramatic pause)  
-- Balls.

JACK

Advertising by Fredericks of  
Hollywood?

Eric takes a photo Jack moves, moves it back to where he had it.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED:

ERIC

Stop moving that. It belongs here. It balances this and this, dumbo.

JACK

You're right.

ERIC

Jack, the morning crew comes in at midnight.

JACK

What morning crew?

ERIC

At The Dixie Daily.

JACK

Yeah? So what?

ERIC

You are dense.

JACK

I'm colored.

ERIC

We need a press, don't we? It's the only press in town, isn't it?

Jack looks at the boy slowly.

JACK

We're going to run this off on the press at The Dixie Daily?

Eric rolls his eyes heavenward.

ERIC

You were going to Xerox it?

JACK

Yeah.

ERIC

We could call it Half-Assed.

JACK

You don't think it'll irk your father?

(CONTINUED)



137 CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC

It's going to irk my father anyway.

JACK

(shaking his head)

Negative. Zip. Terrible terrible idea.

ERIC

We could call it Chickenshit.

Beat. Jack looks at his watch.

JACK

Cover your tracks with the frog.  
Tell her we're camping out on the  
river or something.

He begins putting the layout in a portfolio. Eric races out of the room.

138 EXT. NEWSPAPER BUILDING - NIGHT

Edging along the shadows, Jack and Eric (who is carrying the big portfolio) creep around the corner, to a side door.

139 TIGHT ON DOOR

as Jack, with an elaborate jimmying tool, begins to work gingerly on the lock. Eric watches him a moment.

ERIC

Were you ever a thief?

JACK

(jumps a foot)  
Shhhh.

ERIC

Were you?

JACK

Of course. It's part of the black cultural imperative. Don't you know anything?

Laughing, Eric hands him the portfolio.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

ERIC

Hold this.

Then Eric pulls out a key, unlocks the upper lock, then the lower one.

ERIC

(continuing)

If you open the lower one first eight million alarms go off. All Diebolt locks are like that.

They go in.

140 INT. HALLWAYS - NIGHT

as they walk softly down the silent dark halls, Jack carrying the portfolio, following the kid.

JACK

It is uncool to be smarter than the people who are trying to teach you something, Junior. They resent it. They turn on you when you least expect it --

141 INT. PRESS ROOM

A maze of machinery. The man and the boy slip in the door.

JACK

Where are the lights?

ERIC

The alarms go off if you turn them on after hours.

JACK

You're doing it again.

Eric pulls two flashlights out of his pocket, hands one to Jack, heads for the correct press.

JACK

(continuing)

Were you ever a thief?

142 AT PRESS

Jack is setting the type, putting in the photos, setting the headlines. Eric redoes it all, changing it all, learning.

ERIC

We really could put out a paper  
Scoop.

Jack smiles and pushes the button for one copy.

ERIC

(continuing)

I mean it.

JACK

We really are putting out a paper  
Scoop.

ERIC

I mean every week. You and me.  
Not just about Daddy. About  
everything else that's wrong with  
this city. We could charge a dime.  
People'd buy it because it was  
cheap. And we could change them.  
And I wouldn't have to go back to  
school.

As the first copy, the test copy, comes out of the press, Jack takes it. CAMERA COMES AROUND TO SEE, for the first time, the second page. Photos of Geffran, Ruby Dee, Barkley, articles under each. Turns it over. A banner photo of Fancy as The Naked Raja. And the headline: "The Toy."

143 ERIC

pushes in 1000, starts the presses, turns to Jack.

144 JACK

grins. Holds his hands out. They slap each other's hands. Bump hips, elbows, shoulders, laughing.

145 EXT. NEWSPAPER BUILDING

One black and white is parked by the building. Another pulls up behind it. The ramrod-straight, dark-haired, mustached COP, older than the others, is lighting a cigarette as the others come over...

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED:

COP

We have ascertained that people are within said structure. How many and how heavily armed is as yet undetermined --

146 INT. PRESS ROOM

Jack and Eric take stacks of papers over to the folding machine. Set it going.

147 NEW ANGLE

as the cops emerge from every direction. Guns drawn.

COP

Don't move or we shoot!

Eric turns, irritated mostly, heads for the Cop.

ERIC

Don't you know who I am --

Jack grabs him, claps a hand over his mouth, holds him still. Holds his other hand in the air in surrender.

148 INT. POLICE BOOKING OFFICE

Jack is sitting in the booking chair. The activity of the office is normal for 10 PM. Drunks and hookers and vagrants. The cops are mostly white, the apprehended mostly black. Eric is on Jack's knee. Ignored. They are muttering to each other.

JACK

If we call your father, he'll ask them where they picked us up, clown.

ERIC

What about Barkley?

JACK

He works for your dad.

ERIC

He hates Dad.

JACK

Hate doesn't count. Paychee's count. Haven't you learned anything?

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

ERIC

Then Angela?

JACK

It'll take her a couple of days.  
Plus she'd want some explanation.

ERIC

I could throw a tantrum.

JACK

This is a grown-up problem, Eric.  
We have to deal with it in a  
grown-up way.

149 INT. PRESS ROOM

The presses are silent. The folded papers spilled onto  
the floor.

150 INT. POLICE BOOKING OFFICE

Pandemonium. Eric is throwing a tantrum, yelling bloody  
murder, pretending it's a war, leaping desk to desk  
shooting everyone with a fire extinguisher.

Jack is pulling file cabinets over, blocking aisles and  
passages.

151 ERIC

lobs a string of firecrackers.

152 FULL

The firecrackers go off in the midst of the cops.

The cops, thinking it's gun fire, dive for the protection  
of overturned desks and chairs, return the fire.

Between the battle lines, on the floor, Jack and Eric  
scuttle out, like Marines in the trenches.

153 EXT. BATES DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Eric and Jack are giving out papers at the employees'  
entrance.

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED:

Eric yawns broadly, then catches himself, glances worriedly at Jack who hasn't seen him, hands a paper to an employee.

ERIC

It's free, take it.

154 ON JACK

as he hands it to the toy manager, who looks at the boy, Jack, then opens the paper. Closes it quickly, turning pale, slips a ten into Jack's hand, quickly, nervously.

O'BRIEN

Forget I know you.

Returns the paper. Vanishes into the building.

155 EXT. NEWSPAPER BUILDING

Eric and Jack are distributing the paper to people going in.

156 EXT. TV STATION

Jack is distributing the paper. Eric is asleep against the building. They are nearly out of papers.

157 INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE AREA

Everybody's reading the paper, leaning on desks, in huddles, getting no work done, astonished.

158 INT. HALLWAY

Morehouse, sweating, easing his tie, wiping his hands on his handkerchief, is pacing up and down outside of the executive elevator. The light indicates that it is coming up from the parking lot. Morehouse nearly expires. The doors open. Bates lumbers out.

159 MOVING SHOT

Morehouse strides along about half a step behind Bates.

MOREHOUSE

'Morning, Mr. Bates.

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

BATES

'Morning.

MOREHOUSE

Sir, this morning --

Bates rounds the corner.

160 INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE AREA

Bates stops, blinks. Chaos as people try to hide the papers, get to their desk, appear to be working.

BATES

(to Morehouse)

Take their names.

He strides through to his office, leaving havoc behind him.

161 INT. BATES' OFFICE

As Bates moves to his chair. Morehouse uncurls the paper from under his arm.

MOREHOUSE

This was distributed at the employee entrance by your son and Mr. Brown. You better take a look at it.

Bates glances at it. Stops. Looks through it, scowling. Photos, stories, lots of exclamation marks. Bates grows harder and meaner and madder by the moment.

BATES

Eric is responsible for this?

MOREHOUSE

And Jack Brown.

BATES

I want them in my office as soon as possible.

Morehouse hurries out of there.

162 EXT. LAKE BATES

Jack and Eric are each in a bumper boat, each full throttle, heading straight for each other.

163 ERIC

The boy is bent over his steering wheel, elbows cocked, a look of maniacal glee on his face.

164 JACK

at the last minute, shuts his eyes, covers his head with his arms and screams.

165 COLLISION

Water, boats and flying bodies fill the screen.

166 FULL

Eric's boat, miraculously, is still upright, though half full of water. He pulls Jack out of the lake, laughing.

ERIC

Come to Houston with me, Jack.  
We'd have such fun.

167 ON JACK

as he collapses into the boat, spluttering, his eyes on something over the boy's shoulder.

168 POV

Over the crest of the hill behind the house, the Chrysler doing ninety.

JACK

Eric. The shit has hit the fan.

169 INT. BATES' OFFICE

Bates is reading the paper. KNOCK. He raises his eyes to the door. Morehouse opens the door. Jack and Eric come in.

MOREHOUSE

Would you have me stay or go, sir?

BATES

How many of these did you pass out?

(CONTINUED)



169 CONTINUED:

ERIC

A thousand.

BATES

(to Morehouse)

I want every one accounted for.  
And shredded. Send Carter. I  
want you back here.

MOREHOUSE

Yes, sir.

He hurries toward the door.

ERIC

We're going to make twice as many  
tomorrow and sell them and pay you  
back and --

BATES

You are not.

ERIC

We are.

BATES

Mr. Brown, I assume you know the  
penalties for libel?

ERIC

There's nothing in there everybody  
doesn't know.

BATES

If I say it's a lie, it's a lie.

Morehouse comes in, panting.

ERIC

But it's the truth.

BATES

(angry)

Truth has nothing to do with  
reality, Eric. What you have to  
deal with is reality. In reality  
every one of these people, with a  
little persuasion will say whatever  
I tell them to say.

(smiles, icy)

I'm reality.

(beat)

Morehouse, take off your pants.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED: (2)

MOREHOUSE

Sir?

BATES

Take off your pants. Right now.  
Right this minute.

MOREHOUSE

Right here?

BATES

If you value your job.

This is hard for Morehouse. He squirms. He reviews his options. He starts to object. And, eventually, he drops his pants, stands uncomfortable and humiliated. Bates lets him stand there a long time.

BATES

(continuing; to Eric)  
That's reality.  
(to Morehouse,  
disgusted)  
Get dressed.

Morehouse pulls on his pants.

MOREHOUSE

You asked me, sir.

BATES

(to Eric)  
People will do anything for me.  
When you grow up, they'll do  
anything for you.

He looks a long moment at the front of the paper then directly to Brown.

BATES

(continuing)  
If you worked for my paper you  
couldn't write this. You'd have  
to see things my way. You'd have  
to take off your pants when I told  
you to.

Silence.

BATES

(continuing)  
You want to do that?

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED: (3)

Silence.

BATES  
(continuing)  
You want to kiss ass?

Silence.

BATES  
(continuing; to  
Eric)  
I want you to want to stop this.  
I want you to see the value in  
stopping this.  
(smiles)  
I'll give your black friend a  
real job on a real paper, writing  
news, on The Dixie Daily.

Eric looks at Jack who meets his eyes. Long moment.

JACK  
No. I don't like kissing ass.  
No, thank you.

ERIC  
Wait. It's what you wanted. It's  
what you're good at.

JACK  
Kissing ass?

ERIC  
Writing for a paper.  
(to Bates)  
We'll stop, Daddy.

Jack looks at the boy astonished.

BATES  
Now you're learning something.  
(stand, shakes  
Jack's hand)  
Welcome again to the Bates family.  
You want to start tomorrow?

ERIC  
He's mine till tomorrow.

JACK  
I think this means I'm fired as  
your toy.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED: (4)

ERIC

You're having a party tomorrow.  
There won't be anybody to play  
with. He can start at the paper  
Monday.

Bates smiles at Jack.

BATES

The power behind the throne.

170 EXT. BATES ENTERPRISES BUILDING - DAY

Jack and Eric turn out of the front doors. Eric is walking with his hands in his pockets, like Jack usually does. Jack leaps high into the air with a yell, then apologizes to the startled passersby, and walks on with the boy.

JACK

It's called snatching triumph from  
the jaws of disaster.

Eric walks on. Jack bouncing alongside like a rubber ball.

JACK

(continuing)

You did a really good thing in  
there, you know?

Eric walks on, hands shoved in his pockets. Jack leaps into the air again, slamming his fist against a bus standard, like a basketball player.

JACK

(continuing)

You know what it feels like to  
have a job? A real job? It feels  
grrrrreat!

Eric unlocks the bike, swings his leg over, pedalling slowly, along the sidewalk, Jack on foot alongside.

JACK

(continuing)

Angela's gonna shit watermelons.

ERIC

Gross.

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED:

Unheard.

JACK

Let's celebrate. Where can we get a double chocolate chocolate chip Haagen Daz milkshake and beer under the same roof?

ERIC

No, thanks.

JACK

You can have the beer.

ERIC

Not funny.

JACK

Eric?

ERIC

What're we celebrating?

JACK

Hey --

ERIC

Monday morning my father's gonna tell you to take off your pants in front of the world and you're gonna do it.

(beat)

He treats people like turds, Jack, didn't you read our paper, didn't you hear what those people said, didn't you want to kick Mr. Morehouse in the nuts?

(anger in his voice, liquid eyes)

Headline... Jack Brown sold out today to Hank Bates. As expected.

JACK

You're the one who said we'd stop! I said no!

ERIC

You didn't mean it. You can't wait to start work Monday.

Jack grabs him. Nearly an accident. They are on a street corner.

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

You want me to starve? Can I pay for groceries with high-handed principles? It's fine for you, growing up, to believe in truth and justice and the American way, but once you're grown up you play grown-up games.

ERIC

You could've come to Houston with me.

JACK

(angry)

As your shoeshine boy?

ERIC

As my friend!

The old VW bus with the Klanwatch logo on the side lurches around the corner to park in the red. Angela leaps out.

ANGELA

Jack!

Embrace.

JACK

Angel. Meet Eric Bates. My friend Eric Bates.

Angela grabs Eric by the arm, shakes him.

ANGELA

You're the one? What gives you the idea that you can buy people! You spoiled little --

Jack pulls her off.

JACK

Cool it, he --

ANGELA

Someone needs to give him a paddling, people have rights and dignity and if you --

JACK

Ease off.

(CONTINUED)

170 CONTINUED: (3)

She looks at him, finally hearing, dumbfounded.

ANGELA

Ease off?!

JACK

It's okay.

ANGELA

It's okay what he's done to you?

JACK

He got me a job, Ange, writing news for the Dixie Daily. Starting Monday,

Angela looks from one to the other.

JACK

(continuing)

Nobody's happy. Except me.

ANGELA

We're picketing his house tomorrow.

ERIC

You're what?

ANGELA

(to Jack)

His Daddy's having a fundraiser for the Klan's Youth Camps.

Silence.

ANGELA

(continuing; grins,  
kisses Jack)

I'll bring you a sign.

She hops back in her bus.

171 EXT. THE BIKE - MOVING SHOT

as Jack, with the kid on the bar, pedals through downtown Bates. Eric steers, Jack pedals, his hands in his pockets.

ERIC

What's the Klan?

(CONTINUED)

171 CONTINUED:

JACK

A new TV series. The family's named Klutz. The oldest boy's name is Klu. The father dies. Klu is left with the Klan: five handsome, square-jawed, narrow-hipped brothers, two bosomy liquid-eyed sisters who sing country-western. It's like the Dukes of Hazzard. They drive around the South in a truck picking up trash. Avenging vacuum cleaners.

ERIC

They hate blacks.

JACK

And Jews and Catholics and Quakers and Communists and punk rockers. They hate almost everybody.

ERIC

They kill blacks.

JACK

Why did you ask if you already knew?

ERIC

Are you gonna picket?

JACK

I usually do.

ERIC

But you won't tomorrow, right? 'Cause if you do, Daddy'll fire you and nothing is more important than your goddamn job. Right?

172 TIGHT ON JACK

stung, furious, silenced.

173 INT. PLAYROOM - NIGHT

Jack is stretched out on the daybed, hands behind his head, glaring at the ceiling. Eric is back on the slot machine.

(CONTINUED)



173 CONTINUED:

JACK

I never claimed to be Martin Luther King.

Machine.

JACK

(continuing)

I'm not a world-class nigger.

The machine hits the jackpot. Money spews into the cup, then onto the floor. Eric just looks at it awhile, then shoves his hands into his pockets, walks over to the daybed, sits on the floor, leaning back against the daybed, playing the Rubic's Cube.

ERIC

When I was little I had this friend. We'd play at school and after school and weekends and he'd beat up people for me. And he'd spit at girls and let the air out of teacher's tires and flood the rest rooms.

JACK

Somebody worthy of you.

ERIC

I told Mama about him and she sent me to a shrink. He said I was too old to have imaginary friends.

Jack takes the Rubic's Cube, adjusts it, hands it back.

JACK

Shrinks piss on the world.

ERIC

Grownups piss on the world.

JACK

Now wait a minute. You got my phone number. You can call me when you come back next year. I'm not imaginary, Eric.

ERIC

Yeah, you are. The Jack Brown I knew was a world-class nigger.

Silence. The betrayal, the disappointment, the pain of it clear. Jack moves his hand over and lays it on the boy's head. A mute apology.

174 INT. FANCY'S ROOM - DAY

Bates is pacing, snorting, furious, dressed in his elegant best. Fancy is in her minimums at the makeup table, doing a number on her face. The newspaper is on the edge of the table under her chiffon negligee.

FANCY

Do you like this new metallic eyeshadow, sugar, or does it look like Hookercity?

BATES

I'm losing my son.

FANCY

What?

BATES

Jack Brown's taking my son away from me.

FANCY

Big deal.

BATES

Fancy.

FANCY

Well fire him, darling, if he bothers you.

BATES

I gave him a job on the paper.

She sighs, prettily, uses the powder puff.

FANCY

Men are so mysterious.

BATES

It's the best way to bring him to heel. To shut him up.

Fancy blinks her big eyes at him.

FANCY

Hank, your prostate.

Bates mops his forehead with her negligee, notices the paper, wads it up, hurls it into the basket.

175 EXT. GARDENS - DAY

The back gardens of the house are terraced down the slope to the river.

(CONTINUED)

175 CONTINUED:

Many different levels, each decorated with bunting. At the bottom, the Juilliard String Quartet is playing under a tent, with a dance floor. On another level a table full of information on the Klan's Youth Corps. Sign-ups and pledges.

The Cadillacs and Mercedeses are simply parked in the pasture next to the gardens. The women hike up their chiffon, walk through the cockleburs and goat heads.

The garden itself shimmers with elegance. Two hundred people Neisman's dressed. Liveried waiters. Buffet tables that are works of art. Everything in red, white and blue.

The String Quartet breaks off abruptly, mid-Mozart. They swing into DIXIE.

176 ON FRENCH DOORS

at the top of the gardens, leading out of the house. The GOVERNOR comes out. He shakes hands with Bates. He is yet another good old boy with a ready smile, a beer belly and lethal slitty eyes. His WIFE, like Fancy, is very young, very decorative, very plastic.

BATES

Governor. I'm real glad you could make it.

GOVERNOR

What charity you raising money for today, Hank?

BATES

You remember Fancy?

She wiggles up to him, thoroughly distracting him.

GOVERNOR

(kisses her)

Sure do. I knew Fancy before you knew Fancy, Hank.

BATES

Now wait a second.

GOVERNOR

(laughing)

When she was a little bitty thing in Amarillo. I loved the propellers on her bosoms.

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED:

BATES

You knew they were propellers, then?  
I'll be damned!

GOVERNOR

(laughs, pulls his  
wife forward)

Now, Hank, I believe you've  
known Charlene just about forever.

Bates kisses her.

BATES

Still on penicillin, sugar?

CHARLENE

For the peace of mind it brings  
me, darlin'.

GOVERNOR

Was it the City of Hope?

Bates pulls an innocuous little man into the group, waves  
at the photographers.

BATES

Take a picture with the Governor,  
Sam.

The Governor puts his arm around the man, smiles, flash.  
Bates pulls the man away. Moves close to the Governor.

BATES

(continuing)

You know who that was, Governor?

GOVERNOR

Looked familiar. A friend of  
yours?

BATES

Grand wizard of the Klu Klux Klan.

The Governor's face turns ashen.

GOVERNOR

This party is for him?

BATES

(smiling)

Only way I could get him here.  
And get a picture of him with you.

(CONTINUED)

176 CONTINUED: (2)

The Governor stares at Bates.

GOVERNOR

What do you want?

BATES

(smiling)

I'm in a little difficulty with  
the Justice Department.

177 AT BAR

Barkley serves two drinks on a silver tray to a silver-haired gentleman.

BARKLEY

Bourbon and branch water, sir.

A ROAR OF ENGINES splits the air. The silver-haired man jumps a foot. Barkley catches the drinks mid-air, replaces them in the silver tray.

178 FULL

Eric, dressed as the Roadrunner, riding the motorcycle, pursued by Jack dressed as Wily Coyote, driving the red Ferrari, his knees to his chin, hunched over the wheel. They streak through the party. The chiffoned ladies and the three-piece suited men are far too well bred to be astonished. They return to their bourbon and branch as if nothing is happening.

179 ON BATES

turning inward and lethal in his anger.

180 ON GOVERNOR

as Jack in the Ferrari zooms by. The Governor spills his drink jumping out of the way.

181 ON JACK

who grins back at him, the toothy asinine smile of Coyote.

## 182 ON FANCY

with a group of ladies at the pledge table as Eric, on the motorcycle, leaps over, misses, smashes onto the table, the brochures and checks and moneybox fly everywhere.

ERIC

Beep, beep!

Blasts off again.

FANCY

Eric, dammit!

## 183 NEW ANGLE

as the Ferrari plows through the mess, scattering the women as well as finishing off the fundraising.

## 184 ON JACK AND ERIC

grin at each other. Eric rears back on his motorcycle as Bates approaches, steaming.

ERIC

Beep, beep!

## 185 FULL

They dodge around Bates, first Eric, then Jack, despite his yelling at them.

## 186 VARIOUS ANGLES

as Jack chases Eric around the food tables, between the increasingly disturbed guests, jumping down terraces, bouncing down steps, across the dance floor, in and out of the String Quartet.

## 187 BATES

about to explode.

## 188 FROM BATES' SHOULDER

In the pasture, between the Mercedeses, the old VW bus pulls up. Blacks with picket signs disgorge.

189 ON BATES

reacts, then collars Morehouse.

BATES

Dance.

190 MOREHOUSE

looks around, frazzled. Takes the first young honey he can reach, starts to dance.

191 AT DANCE FLOOR

Bates strides across, in a rage.

BATES

Play.

They do so, in rhythm to Morehouse and the honey.

192 AT BAR

Bates barely pauses. Barkley hands him a drink.

BATES

Call the cops, Barkley.

193 WITH BATES

followed by Barkley. They nearly are upon Eric and Jack when they ZOOM off again. Bates turns on his heel and follows. As does Barkley.

BARKLEY

They're on their way, sir, did you want them to take all the blacks, sir?

BATES

Of course.

BARKLEY

Including Mister Brown, sir? I told them just the blacks with signs, sir, on the theory that it would be less obtrusive.

BATES

Right. You're quite right, Barkley.

## 194 ON PICKETERS

Angela is organizing, encouraging, sweet and powerful.

ANGELA

Be sure they see your signs.  
We're not going to get rowdy.  
Jimmy, don't flip anyone a boner.

He flips her one. They all laugh, move toward the gate.

ANGELA

(continuing)

We're not here to kill anyone,  
just to embarrass, to disrupt, to  
focus attention --

## 195 PARKING

Jack brings the Ferrari to a skidding halt. Angela comes over to him.

ANGELA

Jesus, you look silly.

JACK

So do you.

She laughs.

ANGELA

Get your ass out of that, Jack!  
Grab a sign.

The MOTORBIKE ROARS through the cars, Eric skids to a halt, lifts the laser gun, ZAPS him. Jack flies out of the Ferrari, does a terrific death scene as the picket team watches, in patent disbelief.

ERIC

(yells)

Angela! Hi!

In his death rattle, Jack draws a hidden pistol and FIRES at the boy. Eric looks around. Jack FIRES AGAIN. Then blows down the barrel of the gun. Eric does a magnificently overacted death scene. Finally he too is quivering and silent.

JACK

(to Eric)

You're overacting, Squirrel.

(CONTINUED)



195 CONTINUED:

ANGELA

Jack will you stop this  
foolishness!

Bates is coming. Eric and Jack remount their vehicles.

ANGELA

(continuing)

I won't be there when you get home.

Eric zooms away.

196 JACK

He looks at the boy, turns to Angela, grins his Coyote grin, REVS THE ENGINE, knees at his chin.

JACK

Yeah, you will.

And takes off after the boy.

197 MOVING SHOT

Eric on the motorbike, beep-beeping on a slalom course through the buffet tables. Then over the edge, down onto the next level.

198 JACK

with his Coyote grin, pursuing, clipping one table after another, knocking each one over, like dominoes. Then working the next level.

199 FULL SHOT

The party is a shambles. SIRENS split the air. The police surround the protestors in the parking lot.

200 ON ERIC

leaning forward, gathering speed, grinning.

ERIC

Beep, beep!

201 FULL

Eric blasts off a ramped jump, intending to land in the lake, undershooting it, landing instead on the tent over the String Quartet, which collapses into the lake.

202 TIGHT

The String Quartet scramble out of there.

203 BARKLEY

feels his pulse.

204 FANCY

stunned.

FANCY

I believe I am ready for the black experience.

205 GUESTS

head for their cars, for the house, to get out, civilized but quickly.

206 ON BATES

leaves a crowd of people, storms toward the garage, the ground shaking beneath his feet.

207 JACK

leaps into the sinking mess in the river. Cables and canvas and mangled motorcycle, underneath which is the child.

ANGELA'S VOICE

(yells)

Jack, dammit!

208 ON ANGELA

as she is escorted into the police van, handcuffed, looking back at Jack, betrayed.

209 ON JACK

pulls the kid out of the mess of canvas and guy wires and motorcycle. Scoops him into his arms, sloshes toward the shore, carrying the boy.

210 TIGHT

Eric opens his eyes, manages a grin.

JACK

Beep, beep.

ERIC

Super genius wiley coyote.

Hugs him, tight.

211 ON GARAGE

Hank Bates, his smile lethal behind the wheel, roars out of the garage in Fancy's pink Chrysler convertible, top down.

212 FULL SHOT

The wrecked gardens. The last of the guests, leaving. Jack carrying the boy up from the lake. The pink Chrysler hurtles off the top level of the terrace, Bates bent over the wheel, grinning, bearing down on them.

213 JACK AND ERIC

stunned.

JACK

Holy Toledo.

Eric leaps out of Jack's arms, runs for the Ferrari.

214 AT FERRARI

Eric jumps in at the controls.

ERIC

HURRY!

Jack lifts his hands in surrender toward the oncoming Bates.

(CONTINUED)

214 CONTINUED:

JACK  
Better Red than dead.

Eric grabs the wet Coyote tail and yanks. Jack falls into the passenger seat, Eric guns it.

The Ferrari spins out of there, leaving deep tracks in the turf, scorching the bushes with its exhaust.

215 VARIOUS ANGLES, THE GARDEN

as the Chrysler pursues the Ferrari, outmaneuvering it, gaining on it. Bates hunched over the wheel, grinning.

216 TIGHT ON JACK

He turns, alarmed.

JACK  
STEP ON IT, ERIC!

217 POV

Bates is breathing down their tailpipe.

218 FULL

At the last possible second, where the obvious way is to the right, Eric turns left, yanking the Ferrari in a steep skid, then blasting out of the garden, disappearing around the corner of the house.

219 ON BATES

who cannot react in time, ends up stalling under a lush fuchsia bush. Swatting the lovely flowers out of his face as he starts the car up again, backs it out, shoves it again in gear.

220 EXT. BREAKS

As Eric and Jack bounce over one particularly bad hump, Jack flies out of the car entirely, hanging onto the roll bar with one hand. Eric never slows down. Jack pulls himself back into the car more out of the fear of what will happen to him if he lets go, than bravery.

## 221 NEW ANGLE

The Chrysler flies over the ridge in front of them, bearing down on them. At the last possible second, Eric skids, stripping the paint off both cars, scaring the shit out of Jack.

JACK

What're you trying to do, kill the kid?!

BATES

You! I'm trying to kill you!

## 222 TIGHT ON JACK

sinks into his seat.

JACK

Oh.

## 223 NEW ANGLE

The Ferrari disappears into the woods near the fishing pond. Moment, then the Chrysler follows.

## 224 ANGLE AT POND

They hide the Ferrari, more or less, under some brush, duck behind a tree. The sound of the Chrysler approaching.

## 225 JACK

is about to sneeze. Eric covers his mouth, his nose, punches him in the stomach. Jack sneezes anyway.

## 226 ON BATES

hearing the sneeze, he jerks the steering wheel in that direction. It comes off in his hand.

## 227 FULL SHOT

The Chrysler without a steering wheel, hits a stump and takes to the air, end over end, then landing, Bates first, in the pond. The splash displaces most of the water.

228 WITH JACK AND ERIC

who run to the edge as man and car disappear under the surface. Bubbles.

JACK  
How deep is it?

ERIC  
(grins)  
Plenty.

Jack looks outraged at the boy, then dives in. Badly. The Coyote costume splaying out behind him, the tail the last to go under.

229 ON ERIC

astonished.

230 ON POND

as Jack hauls Bates out of the pond, Bates is covered with mud and virtually unconscious. Jack is gasping for breath.

231 EDGE

Jack dumps the whale of a man on dry land. Bates is coughing, and gasping. Jack wrings out his tail. Eric is stiff with anger.

ERIC  
Why'd you do that?

Jack looks at Bates, then at Eric.

JACK  
(laughs)  
I don't know.

Jack throws him back. Bates comes to the surface, sputtering and furious.

232 INT. PLAYROOM - NIGHT

Jack is packing. Eric is nowhere to be seen. The door BURSTS open, Bates is there, a bottle in one hand, a glass in the other, drunk.

(CONTINUE.)

232 CONTINUED:

BATES

Why the hell do you call it the NAACP if you don't want to be called 'colored people'? If you wanna be called 'black' why don't you call it the NAAB?

(stumbles toward  
Jack, through a  
jungle of toys)

That wouldn't be right either.  
You're not black. You're the  
color of dried manure.

He chortles, lifts his chin, looks at Jack blearily, challengingly. Jack continues to pack.

JACK

Or old whiskey.

Bates blinks. He leans on a rocking horse to consider that. It rocks away from him. He falls -- not spilling a drop from either his glass or the bottle. He struggles up, glares at the horse, decides to get on, cannot without hands. Falls over the other side. Jack picks him up.

JACK

(continuing)

Want me to call Barkley, Mr. Bates?  
You want to go back to your room?

BATES

Your women spend a fortune on straightening their hair. Our women a fortune on frizzes. Yours bleach their skin. Ours tan theirs. I wanna be young, you don't want to be called 'Boy.' I spend a mint buying that kid everything his heart desires and he turns on me.

(leans against Jack,  
wipes his eyes on  
Jack's shirt, then  
blows his nose)

Nothing makes sense, Jack.

Jack wipes his shirt off on Bates.

JACK

So let's share a joint.

Bates pulls himself shakily together.

(CONTINUED)

232 CONTINUED: (2)

BATES

An apartment? With you? Good  
God, why?

Jack laughs steers him to the daybed where Bates collapses,  
knocking the suitcase to the floor.

BATES

(continuing)

Sorry.

JACK

No sweat.

He begins to repack. Bates pours two glasses, hands Jack  
one.

BATES

Drink with me.

Jack smiles, lifts his glass.

JACK

To the mysteries of life. I  
can't stand you. And I'd give  
my left ball to be you.

Bates smiles, drinks.

BATES

You got the love of my son. I'd  
give my left ball for that.

JACK

(shrugs)

Keep him here. Spend some time  
with him. Make time to spend  
with him.

BATES

You read that paper. He thinks  
I'm some kind of a monster.

JACK

Well aren't you?

Bates drinks.

BATES

I hired Ruby Dee back. I hadn't  
realized.

(CONTINUED)



232 CONTINUED: (3)

JACK

Bullshit.

BATES

I did. And Geffran.

Jack looks at him, amazed, pours the man another drink.

JACK

You got the balls to give a party for the goddamn Klu Klux Klan so as to get leverage with the Governor and you're scared of your own son? Come on, Mr. Bates, get your act together.

BATES

It's together. I just forgot where I left it.

Jack rolls his eyes at the ceiling, returns to packing. Bates shakes with amusement, pours two more drinks, splashing a good deal into the suitcase.

BATES

(continuing)

You know, you're all right. For a colored boy.

JACK

You're all right yourself. For a honkey bastard.

Laughing, they raise their glasses to each other.

BATES

By the way. You're fired.

JACK

No shit. And Dolly Parton sleeps on her back.

233 EXT. BATES MANSION - NIGHT

Jack, on his bike, comes around the corner, suitcase strapped on the back, heading down the driveway.

234 INT. PLAYROOM - NIGHT

The boy is sitting in the darkness, in the windowseat, watching him go.

## 235 JACK'S SHOULDER

Jack sees the boy in the window, waves. The boy waves back.

## 236 EXT. SLUM STREET - NIGHT

Jack pedals around the corner into the racket of street life, MUSIC and YELLING and BOTTLES BREAKING.

## 237 EXT./INT. HOUSE

Jack pulls the bike with the suitcase on it, onto the porch.

## 238 INT. JACK'S HOUSE

Jack wheels his bike in. And stops. Angela is finishing her packing. The place is denuded. What she has not been able to pack she has stuffed in a garbage pail in the middle of the room. Rolling up the Monet, she glares at Jack.

ANGELA

Bates' toy. I wouldn't've believed it if I hadn't've seen it.

JACK

The boy needed a friend, Angela.

ANGELA

And it didn't matter that I needed you? Racially, politically and personally. I needed you.

JACK

Not like he did.

ANGELA

It was the most negative kind of a statement you could make, Jack, you completely destroyed my credibility in the black leadership around here. But you don't care. You were having fun, you --

JACK

(interrupting)

Symington said the trouble with the clowns running this country was that they spent so much time listening to the roll of drums, they couldn't hear the cry of a child.

(CONTINUED)

238 CONTINUED:

ANGELA

He didn't mean a child like that,  
dumbass! A rich, arrogant, spoiled,  
vicious --

JACK

He's still a child, Angie.

ANGELA

Then why are you here? If you're  
joined at the hip.

JACK

I got fired.

She stares at him, stunned.

ANGELA

And you still don't get it? He's  
the enemy, Jack.

She lifts her bags, heads for the door.

JACK

Angela. I love you.

She continues toward the door.

ANGELA

Happy trails, Uncle Tom.

And exits.

239 TIGHT ON JACK

&amp;

240 sinks against the wall, defeated, fighting it.

241 EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

The Chrysler Limousine slides under the sign... Bates  
International Airport... ahead.

242 INT. CHRYSLER

Eric, his face swollen from crying, wearing his military  
school uniform, is scrunched in the corner of the back  
seat. Bates, smiling, is sitting calmly beside him.

BATES

Eric, I want you to understand  
something.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

242 CONTINUED:

BATES (CONT'D)

Every oil well I drill, every  
cable system I buy, every store  
I open, is for you.

(smiles)

You personally will control South  
Central Louisiana when you grow up.

ERIC

Big deal.

BATES

It is a big deal.

ERIC

Jack says life's about people, not  
about power.

BATES

I'm not interested in what Jack  
says.

ERIC

Jack says it's about being together  
and being friends.

BATES

Did you hear what I said, Eric?

ERIC

Jack says you don't have any friends.  
Jack says you know two kinds of  
people. Ones that owe you and  
ones you owe.

BATES

I don't want to lose my temper.

ERIC

Jack says all you love is playing  
pool and making deals and politics  
and whiskey.

BATES

Is that a crime?

Eric glares out the window, eyes swimming.

ERIC

Well. You have a kid.

SILENCE.

(CONTINUED)

242 CONTINUED: (2)

BATES

What about Africa this summer.  
There's no need for you to go to  
camp again. We could go to Africa.  
Just the two of us. Photographing  
animals. You're good at photography.

Silence.

ERIC

I hate you.

Silence.

243 EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

The limo parks near a Lear with the steps down. The  
PILOT comes over. Barkley opens the trunk, takes out  
the boy's small suitcase.

244 NEW ANGLE

as the Pilot shakes hands with Bates.

PILOT

Mr. Bates. The storm seems to be  
moving Southwest. We'll pass well  
to the east without a problem.

(grins at Eric)

Well, sport, ready for school?

245 ERIC

turns on his heel and runs.

246 FULL

The boy sprints toward the main terminal, cutting across  
runways. The three men look after him in confusion, then  
start after him, on foot, get halfway across the tarmak  
before they realize they'll never catch him, turn and run  
back to the car and the plane.

247 MOVING SHOT - ERIC

running and running and running. His breath coming  
harder, tossing a lock behind him, then turning on the  
speed, running toward the main terminal.



248 MOVING SHOT - LIMO

as it skids around in a circle, then screams out of the private airfield.

249 EXT. AIRPORT

The limo dodges and darts in and out of the clogged traffic. Way ahead, the boy gets in the back of a cab and slams the door. The cab pulls into the traffic.

250 INT. LIMO

in snarled traffic. Bates opens an elegant, small leather phone book from his vest pocket. Picks up the phone. Dials.

BATES

Mr. Brown. Hank Bates, here. The boy, uh, Eric has run away. I suppose he's coming to you. I would appreciate it if you would keep him there for me. I'll be there in a minute.

251 EXT. SLUM STREET

The cab pulls up. Jack, bareheaded, is pacing back and forth in front of the building, angry. The boy gets out.

ERIC

Can you pay him? I don't have any money.

Jack leans into the cab, pays, then turns to the boy in a fury.

JACK

'Run away'? What's this shit about 'running away'?

ERIC

I want to stay with you.

Jack looks at him in dismay. Around the corner wheels the limo.

252 NEW ANGLE

As the limo pulls to a stop, Barkley gets out, opens the back door. Bates steps out.

(CONTINUED)

252 CONTINUED:

BATES

Eric --

ERIC

No!

Jack pulls the boy out from where he is hiding behind him. He drags him, kicking and screaming to the car, during:

JACK

He's your father, you gotta live with that, you gotta deal with that, you gotta quit hiding behind me!

Opens the car door, throws him in.

JACK

(continuing)

I'm sick of the Bateses, father and son. Sick of you. You're nothing but trouble. I don't want to see either one of you ever again!

(to Bates)

Understand?

(to Eric)

Understand?!

Bates shakes his hand.

BATES

Thank you.

253 INT. LIMO - MOVING SHOT

as it drives slowly through the slum streets, full of litter and blacks in doorways.

BATES

You see.

(beat)

You just thought he was your friend.

(beat)

I'm the one who's really your friend.

The limo rolls to a stop at a stop sign. Eric grabs the handle of the door, yanks it open, jumps out.



254 ERIC

is nearly hit as a lowrider skids around the corner. Eric dodges it, onto the sidewalk, tumbling around people, vaulting over garbage cans, crashing through, sprinting through.

255 FULL

As Eric barrels down the street toward Jack, Bates steps out of the car.

JACK  
(yells, meaning it)

No!

Eric skids to a stop.

256 TIGHT ON ERIC

his face streaked with tears and anger and confusion. He looks back to his father.

257 BATES

stops in his tracks, a half a block away.

BATES  
I love you!

258 FULL

The boy looks back and forth, one to the other, then finally screams at his father.

ERIC  
Is it true? That I'll have the stores and the oil and the TV stations and everything?

BATES  
It's true.

ERIC  
And more power than the Ayatollah?

BATES  
Nearly.

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED:

ERIC

Enough so's I can make anyone  
around here do anything I want?

BATES

Absolutely.

ERIC

Then. Drop. Your. Pants. Daddy.

High noon city. Bates profoundly embarrassed, but refusing to look the liar in front of his kid, unbuckles his pants and drops them. He wears boxer shorts, printed with the Lacoste alligator.

259 ERIC

smiles in triumph, turns on his heels and walks toward Jack.

260 FULL

As the kid approaches, Jack unsnaps his jeans and drops them around his ankles.

The boy stops, angry, looks back at his father, who lifts his shoulders. Then at his black friend, who lifts his.

261 TIGHT ON ERIC

who unbuckles his uniform belt, drops his pants.

262 ON CROWD

murmuring, bewildered, confused, amused, applauds.

263 ANGLE IN STREET

The three of them, arms around each other's waists, head for the limo, taking mincing little steps, their pants around their ankles, laughing.

264 ON BARKLEY

who covers his eyes.

265 FULL

As the three mince toward the limo, the crowd, one by one, begins to drop its pants. PULL BACK.

THE END