

PLEASANTVILLE

Gary Ross

FADE IN:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM. DAY.

A college counselor stands at the Podium lecturing the high school seniors about their future.

COLLEGE COUNSELOR

of ...For those of you going on to college next year, the chance finding a good job will actually decrease by the time you graduate. The available number of entry level jobs will drop thirty-one percent over the next four years. Median income for those jobs will go down as well...

There is some rustling in the audience.

COLLEGE COUNSELOR

grades Obviously, my friends, it's a competitive world and good are your only ticket through. In fact, by the year Two Thousand...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL. HEALTH CLASS.

A different teacher lectures a different class of students.

HEALTH TEACHER

style
in

...The chance of contracting HIV from a non-monogamous life-
will climb to one in one hundred and fifty. The odds of dying
an auto accident are only one in twenty-five hundred.
(beat)
Now this marks a drastic increase...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL. SCIENCE CLASS.

Same angle. Different teacher.

SCIENCE TEACHER

...From just four years ago when ozone depletion was at
ten percent of its current level. By the time you are
twenty years old, average global temperature will have
risen two and a half degrees, causing such catastrophic
consequences as typhoons, floods, widespread drought and
famine.

REVERSE ANGLE. STUDENTS.

They stare back in stunned silence. One of them, DAVID WAGNER,
sits in the front row with a pencil in his mouth. Nobody moves...

SCIENCE TEACHER

(chipper "classroom" tone)

Okay. Who can tell me what famine is?

CUT TO:

1958

Birds are chirping. The sun is shining. All the hedges are neatly
pruned and the lawns are perfectly manicured. A sweet stillness
hangs over the SUBURBAN STREET, which is bathed in beautiful BLACK
AND WHITE.

MAN'S VOICE (OS)

Honey, I'm home.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME.

GEORGE PARKER enters the front door and hangs his hat on the
coatrack. He sets his briefcase down and moves into the foyer with
a huge smile on his face. It's a frozen smile that doesn't seem to
be affected by too much in particular--like a tour guide at
Disneyland.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hello darling.

WIDER.

MRS. GEORGE PARKER (BETTY) enters, untying the back of her apron. She is a vision of '50s beauty with a trim figure and concrete hair. Betty crosses to her husband and hands him a fresh martini. She kisses him on the cheek.

BETTY

How was your day?

GEORGE

Oh, swell. You know, Mr. Connel said that if things keep going the way they are, I might be seeing that promotion sooner than I thought.

BETTY

Oh darling that's wonderful!
(an adoring gaze)
I always knew you could do it.

INT. WAGNER LIVING ROOM. NIGHT. 1996 -- (LIVING COLOR)

DAVID WAGNER sits on his couch watching this entire action on a sleek new Sony T.V. He stares riveted at the set with a big smile on his face. David wears black shoes, black pants, black T-shirt and a black baseball cap, not a nerd exactly... He reaches next to him into a huge bag of Doritos, never taking his eyes off the show.

GEORGE (OS)

(on T.V.)

Hey, Pumpkin! What's that smell?
(sniffing)
Is that your meat loaf?

DAVID

(by rote)

"It might be..."

BETTY (OS)

(shy smile)

It might be.

He leans over and kisses her--again on the cheek.

GEORGE (OS)

Oh Pumpkin! You sure know the way to this man's heart.

There is a loud and inappropriate LAUGH TRACK. David smiles wider and is just about to reach for more corn chips, when his real MOTHER'S VOICE rings out from the other room.

DAVID'S MOM (OS)

...Bullshit Barry, that wasn't the deal.

INT. KITCHEN.

David's mom paces the room with the phone in her hand. Between the plastic surgery and the make-up it's hard to fix her age.

DAVID'S MOM

No--you have custody the first weekend of every month and this is the first weekend...

(pause)

I don't care if yesterday was the thirtieth, this is still the first weekend.

INT. LIVING ROOM.

Her words drift in from the kitchen while David stares at the show.

DAVID'S MOM (OS)

No I can't bail you out, I'm supposed to go out of town.

(beat)

La Costa.

(pause)

Barry, if I want to get a mud bath with my new boyfriend, that's really my business, isn't it?

He reaches out and TURNS UP THE SOUND. PLEASANTVILLE plays at an unnaturally high volume.

GEORGE

(on T.V.)

Hey. Where are those kids?

DAVID

(reciting--a little louder)

"Right behind you father."

BUD AND MARY SUE TOGETHER

(on T.V.)

Right behind you father.

RESUME T.V. (BLACK AND WHITE)

The Parkers' son and daughter (BUD AND MARY SUE) enter the foyer together. Mary Sue wears her hair in a pony tail. Bud has on a Letterman's sweater.

MARY SUE

Mother...Father...Bud has a little surprise for you.

BETTY

What's that Bud?

Bud hesitates for a moment, then holds up a shiny "blue" ribbon.

BUD

First prize at the science fair. There were lots of swell projects--guess mine was just the 'swellest'.

BETTY

Darling that's wonderful. Except there's no such word as 'swellest'.

BUD

Well gee whizz, Mom. It wasn't the "English" fair. There is another jarring LAUGH TRACK.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

He smiles right along with it. David stares transfixed at the set despite the continuing conversation in the other room.

DAVID'S MOM (OS)

Well sure they can stay by themselves. Barry, they're seventeen years old, but that's not the point. You're supposed to see them.

(beat)

Well fine -- You'll see them some other time.

(pause)

No, I'm not gonna cancel my trip just so you won't look like a jerk.

DAVID

(quietly)

What's a mother to do?

BETTY (OS)

(on T.V.)

Oh--what's a mother to do?

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

He grabs another handful of Doritos staring at the T.V....

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL. (SERIES OF SHOTS) DAY.

A cacophony of modern life. Beepers and nose rings--blue hair and tattoos. Dissonant boom boxes compete with one another. The hormones are running crazy.

EXT. SCHOOL COURTYARD.

It is a large open area, alive at lunchtime. Groups of kids hang out together, divided by their various cliques. The music pounds in the background.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

He stands at one end of the courtyard beside a chain link fence. Beads of sweat form on David's forehead as he speaks to someone in front of him.

DAVID

Hi. I mean...
(pause)
...Hi.

REVERSE ANGLE.

A very pretty blonde girl smiles back at him. It's a warm, welcoming smile.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

DAVID

Look. You probably don't think I should be asking you this. I mean--not knowing you well and all...

REVERSE ANGLE. GIRL.

She smiles wider at him, inviting him to continue.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

DAVID

(pause)
I mean I know you--everybody 'knows' you...I just don't know you...technically.

REVERSE ANGLE. GIRL.

She nods at him... There's a SCHOOL BELL. The crowd begins to thin out.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

DAVID

Well-- I was just wondering--'cause I see you all the time in Algebra and I heard you humming that Van Halen song and I really like that song too...

(pause)

Anyhow, I don't know what you're doing this weekend but my Mom's leaving town and she said I could use her car so...

REVERSE ANGLE. GIRL.

She positively beams. The girl flicks her blonde hair and stares back at him adoringly.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

Instead of smiling back, David just stares, then looks at the ground.

WIDE ANGLE. SCHOOL YARD.

For the first time WE SEE THAT SHE WASN'T TALKING TO HIM. David stands a good hundred yards across the school yard, rehearsing this speech while the young woman stands face to face with a much cooler boy. He has a cell phone and a very hip haircut.

ANGLE. DAVID.

David watches as the girl throws her arm around the boy's waist and heads out of the playground...

CUT TO:

EXT. "LUNCHEON COURT" DAY.

David and his friends are all gathered around the plastic picnic tables and vending machines that form the luncheon court. The chess club meets at one end and there are some teachers at the other. All the cool kids are on the other side of the fence but David and his friends eat lunch at the same table every day.

HOWARD

Okay, whose window did Bud break when he was playing with his father's golf clubs?

DAVID

Easy. Mr. Jenkins. What job did Mr. Jenkins have?
Howard looks at him, puzzled.

DAVID (CONT.)

Salesman. What did Bud and Mary Sue name the cat they found in the gutter?

HOWARD

Scout?

DAVID

Marmalade.

They all nod--and murmur with admiration.

DAVID

Okay--here's one: Why did their parents come home early from their weekend at the lake?

Everybody thinks. Nobody knows.

DAVID

'Cause Bud didn't answer the phone and they were worried about him.

It's quiet for a beat.

HOWARD

You're unbelievable. You'll win this thing for sure. When is it on?

DAVID

Marathon starts at 6:30. Contest's tomorrow at noon.

HOWARD

(weighing it)

A thousand dollars...And it's on all night?

DAVID

Of course it is Howard. That's why they call it a Marathon.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE

David's sister, Jennifer, hangs out with her friends in the parking lot. All the girls are dressed in the exact same uniform: Blue jeans, beeper on the belt, white V-neck T-shirt, car keys in their hand. (Even the girls WITHOUT a car hold car keys in their hand).

Jennifer is by far the prettiest and, thus, is the leader of the group. They all look toward the Luncheon Court where David and his friends are hanging out.

KIMMY

Omigod, it's so mor-tifying. I can't believe you're
like--
related to him.

JENNIFER

Only on my parent's side.

KIMMY

I know, but you're like...twins and stuff.

(beat)

You must be from like, the cool side of the uterus.

A group of VERY HIP boys strut through the parking lot. They bop
up and down with the self-confidence of all cool sixteen year
olds. The girls freeze when they see them.

KIMMY

Omigod, omigod--here they come.

CHRISTIN

Don't do anything. Just don't like--do anything...

JENNIFER

(coolly)

Hi Mark.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

He pauses then looks over at her. Jennifer slides sinuously off
the fender of the car, flicking her hair like a young racehorse.
She has a perfect 16 year old body and the whole parking lot knows
it. Mark heads over to her, followed by his lackeys.

MARK

(to Jennifer)

Hey.

JENNIFER

(right back)

Hey.

Beat...

MARK'S LACKEYS

(to Jennifer's lackeys)

Hey.

JENNIFER'S LACKEYS

(back to them)

Hey.

MARK

Saw you at the mall yesterday.

JENNIFER

Yeah...Saw you too.

Everyone nods for a moment or two. No one says anything.

JENNIFER

So you watching Pearl Jam on MTV tonight?

MARK

Yeah.

(beat)

You?

JENNIFER

Yeah.

Jennifer pauses, weighing the next statement.

JENNIFER (CONT.)

My mom'll be out of town.

Kimmy and Christin positively GASP while Mark's Lackeys mumble and glance around. The import of the thing isn't lost on anybody. Mark bobs up and down a little faster.

MARK

So uh...Maybe we could uh...

JENNIFER

(smiling)

Cool.

MARK

(nodding faster)

Cool.

VARIOUS LACKEYS

Cool.

Everybody bobs and shuffles for a beat, when Mark nods, summoning his flock.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAGNER NEIGHBORHOOD DUSK

It is a southwestern version of "Leave it to Beaver." The uniformity of Suburbia has been washed in earth tones. There is a red tile roof gracing every home. All the houses have the same anemic palm tree. It's an urban planner's version of hell. A Westec Security car rolls through the shot.

INT. JENNIFER'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

It is just as sleek and impersonal as before. Maybe more so at night. Jennifer crosses through the bedroom with the cordless phone attached to her ear.

JENNIFER

...I know, I know -- He's just like so FINE... I'm still like; "Omigod."

(pause)

It was amazing, Daph...I'm like: "Well my Mom'll be out of town." And he's like "Well then, maybe we could--you know..." And I'm like "Yeah, sure." And he's like "Well, cool."

(beat)

I know, he's just so smart.

(pause...)

I don't know. Maybe that black thing I just got.

(pause...)

It is not slutty Daph, it's cute.

(pause...)

Well, "hello?" He's not coming over here to study...

(beat)

I know. Well I'm jealous of you too sometimes.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

It is studious and academic--not joyless, but not colorful either. David stands at his bedroom window, staring outside with a cordless phone in his hand.

DAVID

...He's not homeless Howard, they just don't say where he lives.

(pause...)

Well it's a silly question.

(pause)

Because nobody's homeless in Pleasantville.

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV.

His mother loads the final Louis Vuitton bag into her Mercedes.

DAVID (CONT)

...because that's just not what it's like.

EXT. DRIVEWAY

She fires up the car and pulls out of FRAME. David watches from the upstairs window.

DAVID

Listen Howard--it's almost six-thirty. I gotta go.

INT. WAGNER LIVING ROOM.

The huge black TV sits like a monolith in the middle of the room. All at once David comes bounding down the stairs making a B-line for the couch. Jennifer enters just as quickly from the other direction, fiddling with her clothes.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

They hit the coffee table and reach for the remote control at exactly the same moment. Both of them freeze then look up at each other in shock.

JENNIFER

What are you doing?

DAVID

What are you doing?

Neither one moves. They clutch the remote together.

JENNIFER

David, cut it out. Mark Davis is gonna like be here in five minutes.

DAVID

Well great. The Pleasantville Marathon starts at six thirty.

JENNIFER

Omigod, I don't be-leeeeeeve this! He's gonna like beeeee here!

DAVID

Well great. You can watch it upstairs.

JENNIFER

Upstairs! Up-staiiiirs! There isn't any STEREO!

Jennifer gets panicked and yanks at the remote. David yanks back and before they know it, the remote goes flying out of their

hands, CRASHING onto the hardwood floor. It smashes into a million tiny pieces.

DAVID
(breathless)

Oh my God...
(sinking to his knees/scooping up the remains)
Oh my God...

JENNIFER

David, stop stressing, you can like--turn it on normally...

DAVID

No you can't, Jen! It's a new TV. It doesn't work without a remote.

David cradles the pieces like a fallen comrade, when the DOORBELL RINGS behind him.

JENNIFER

Oh my God! He's here!

Jennifer sweeps some of the pieces frantically under the sofa and tries to adjust her outfit on the way to the door. David just stares in shock at the shattered plastic. Jennifer reaches the front door and wets her lips. She fluffs her hair quickly, sticks out her chest then swings it open.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. FRONT DOOR.

Jennifer steps forward with her sexiest smile, but it isn't Mark Davis on the other side. TV REPAIRMAN STANDS ACROSS THE THRESHOLD IN A BROWN JUMPSUIT. Jennifer looks at him puzzled. He steps forward, flashing her a chipper grin, toolbox in hand.

TV REPAIRMAN

TV repair.

JENNIFER

...TV repair?

TV REPAIRMAN

Yeah. TV busted?

JENNIFER

Yeah...

TV REPAIRMAN

(smiling wider)

Well here I am.

REVERSE ANGLE. JENNIFER'S POV.

She glances out the front door toward a weird VAN parked at the curb. It says "TV REPAIR" on the side but looks like something from a medicine show. The antenna on top resembles a weather vane and the mural beneath it depicts a happy family from the 1950s, gathered around their TV set. Everyone wears a smile, including the dog. The hand-painted motto reads "TV Repair--WE'LL FIX YOU FOR GOOD."

INT. LIVING ROOM.

David looks back at TV Repairman who smiles at him, then crosses to the living room stepping nimbly around the ottoman. He heads toward the TV.

TV REPAIRMAN
(seeing the smashed remote)

Holy cow. Look at that. Had a little disaster didn't ya fella.

DAVID

Yeah...Sort of...

TV REPAIRMAN
(setting down the toolbox)

We'll get you fixed up in no time.

He pops the top of the tool box while Jennifer and David just stare. It's a strange looking box with the same happy family painted on the side. TV Repairman pulls out another remote.

TV REPAIRMAN

I know how I'd feel if mine went out. Almost like losing a friend.

DAVID
(tentatively)

You know, we didn't call any TV repair.

TV REPAIRMAN

Well that makes it a lucky day for both of us, hunh?

Jennifer shuts the door and crosses down toward the living room.

JENNIFER

You think you could do this like soon? It's almost six thirty.

TV REPAIRMAN
What's the rush?

DAVID
(cutting her off)

The Pleasantville Marathon starts at six thirty.

At that moment there is a huge FORK OF LIGHTNING and a booming CLAP OF THUNDER. It literally rattles the walls of the house as TV Repairman turns toward David.

TV REPAIRMAN
Pleasantville?

David recoils slightly. TV Repairman flashes him a smile.

TV REPAIRMAN (CONT)
Gosh, I loved that show. Watched it for years.

JENNIFER
That's not the reason. I've got a date at six thirty.

TV REPAIRMAN
(ignoring her/leaning closer to David)
Hey--who did Muffin take to the masquerade ball when her date came down with the measles?

DAVID
...Her father.

TV REPAIRMAN
Right. And how did she dress him?

DAVID
...Like Prince Charming.

TV REPAIRMAN
(studying David/nodding)
Nice...Nice...

JENNIFER
Um--hello? I've got like a social emergency here.

TV REPAIRMAN
(ignoring her)

Remember the one where Bud lost his cousin when he was
s'posed to be watching him?

DAVID

Yeah...

TV REPAIRMAN

What department store did they go to?

DAVID

McIntire's.

TV REPAIRMAN

McGinty's.

DAVID

No. McIntire's. Remember:

(sings)

"For the very best in men's attire, Head right down to
McIntire's."

TV REPAIRMAN
(stunned)

That's right.

He stares at David, speechless, for a moment, then smiles fondly
and reaches beside him for his tool kit.

TV REPAIRMAN

Say--why don't you take this remote instead. It's got a
little more "Ooomph" in it.

DAVID

Ooomph?

TV REPAIRMAN

Sure. Big beautiful set like this--you want something
that'll put you right in the show.

JENNIFER
(quickly)

We'll take it.

He flashes them a big smile and holds out a weird looking

contraption that seems more primitive than space age. It's a strange combination of an early transistor radio and Flash Gordon ray gun. TV Repairman extends it with pride, while Jennifer and David stare at him warily...

DAVID

Thanks...

TV REPAIRMAN

Well, I better get going. Your show's almost on, and...
(smiling at Jennifer)
It's almost time for your date.

There is a SECOND CLAP OF THUNDER even louder than the first. He smiles at them, then starts across the living room, pausing at the front door to look back. There is a weird smile on his face.

TV REPAIRMAN

Take care now.

David and Jennifer look at one another while the front door shuts with a THUD. It's quiet for a second or two before there is another CLAP OF THUNDER. David cocks his head.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

He glances down at the strange contraption sitting on the coffee table. It looks a little scary. Slowly, very slowly, he reaches down and touches it. Nothing seems to happen so he picks it up.

CLOSER.

David points the remote toward the TV set with an apprehensive look on his face. He winces a little, then pushes one of the buttons.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

The TV set turns on. Psychic Friends Network appears.

SHOT. DAVID.

DAVID

Hunh.

It all seems normal as he pushes another button. This time the channel changes.

DAVID
(relaxing)

Great.

He continues to press the button, flipping through the channels.
Jennifer sees that everything is fine and reaches for the remote.

JENNIFER

Lemme see that.

DAVID

No way.

He continues to flip through the channels, coming to rest on the Pleasantville Marathon. BUD'S VOICE fills the room.

BUD (OS)

(on TV)

Gee whizz, Mary Sue--why can't I borrow your transistor radio?

MARY SUE (OS)

(on TV)

I promised Betty Jane she could use it over the weekend.

FULL SHOT. TV SET. "PLEASANTVILLE" (BLACK AND WHITE)

Bud and Mary Sue clutch either end of a small transistor radio. They seem to be in the EXACT SAME POSITION as David and Jennifer, who are struggling over the remote control.

ANGLE. DAVID AND JENNIFER.

She tugs the remote while David yanks in the other direction.

JENNIFER

Do you mind. This is like the most important moment of my whole life.

DAVID

Forget it Jen, I've waited a year for this.

JENNIFER

(yanking at it)

God, David. Just give it to me!

DAVID

(yanking it back)

Forget it!

They wrestle with the remote, inadvertently POINTING IT AT THE TV. At that moment, a weird thing happens:

SPECIAL EFFECT

A huge white light emanates from the set, like its own atomic blast wave. The entire room is filled with a BLINDING AURA for a second or two, before it actually gets sucked into the TV.

WIDE ANGLE. LIVING ROOM

It is suddenly empty--illuminated only by the soft glow of the picture tube. David and Jennifer are nowhere in sight.

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. (PLEASANTVILLE) DAY.

David and Jennifer are standing in the middle of the 1950's living room, dressed in Bud and Mary Sue's clothing. They still clutch the remote control in the exact same position that was occupied by their fictional counterparts. David and Jennifer glance at one another, then look horrified around the room. THE WORLD HAS TURNED TO BLACK AND WHITE...

DAVID
(a whisper)

Oh my God.

JENNIFER

What happened?

DAVID

I'm not sure.

WIDER

George Parker (Bud and Mary Sue's father) enters from the landing whistling a happy tune. He's dressed in a gray suit with a gray shirt, and a dark gray tie with little gray dots.

GEORGE
(as if to his own children)

Hi Sport, hi Muffin...Better get a move on, you're gonna be late for school.

He continues to cross through the living room whistling into the kitchen...

JENNIFER
(desperately)

What did you do?

DAVID

I don't know.

JENNIFER
(examining her black and white skin)

Uchh! Look at me! I'm like so...pasty!

He glances down at the remote control that sits lifeless in his hand. David frantically presses the buttons but nothing happens. All at once, there is a voice behind them.

VOICE (OS)

Psst! Over here.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

They whirl around to see TV REPAIRMAN'S FACE smiling at them from the TV set in the corner. It's an old '50s set with a big round picture tube. They run over to him as he smiles.

TV REPAIRMAN
(beaming)

Told you it was your lucky day. Bet you thought I was just a fan or something.

JENNIFER
What happened?

TV REPAIRMAN
A miracle.

They stare stunned at the TV set.

TV REPAIRMAN
(cont...)
...See, every time I thought I'd found someone they'd turn out to disappoint me. They'd know the early episodes, but they wouldn't know the later ones...They'd know all about Muffin but they wouldn't know about Bud...

DAVID
(to the TV set)

What the hell's going on!

TV REPAIRMAN
Shh! Can't talk like that now. You're in...
(smiles)
You know...

David glances around at his black and white surroundings. His "mother's" voice rings out from the kitchen.

BETTY (OS)

Bud. Mary Sue...Breakfast is on the table.

DAVID
We're in Pleasantville?

TV REPAIRMAN
(grinning)

Dream come true, hunh?

JENNIFER
(panicking)

This isn't funny! I happen to have a very important date
in like five minutes!

TV REPAIRMAN

Well, you don't have to worry about that anymore.

FULL SHOT. TELEVISION SET.

All at once the scene on the TV changes and TV Repairman's picture gives way to a WIDE ANGLE SHOT OF THE WAGNER HOUSE. DUSK. Mark Davis is standing at the front door, BANGING on the brass knocker. He checks his watch, shifts restlessly for a moment or two, then turns and heads down the flagstone walk never looking back.

MARK DAVIS
(under his breath)

...Bitch.

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM (BLACK AND WHITE AGAIN)

Jennifer flings herself at the screen, as TV Repairman appears all over again.

JENNIFER
Noooooooo!

DAVID
You--you gotta get us out of here.

TV REPAIRMAN
(recoiling slightly)
Why would I do that?

DAVID
Because we don't belong!

TV REPAIRMAN

Oh sure you do..."McIntires Department store..." "Their father dressed as Prince Charming." That was gorgeous Bud.

DAVID

My name's David.

JENNIFER
(wailing on the floor)

Oh GOD...

TV REPAIRMAN
(a little snippy)

You know--this is a pretty strange way of showing your appreciation.

DAVID

Look--we appreciate it. We really do. We just--we want to go home now.

TV REPAIRMAN
(hurt)

But you don't know how long I've been looking for someone like you.

(long face)

I'm very disappointed...

(deep breath)

In fact...I'm starting to get a little upset...

David moves toward the screen.

DAVID

Don't get upset.

TV REPAIRMAN
(snapping back)

Well wouldn't you! You look for someone for years... You pour your heart into it...This is a privilege you know.

(shakes his head)

I don't think I better talk about this right now.

DAVID

Where are you going?

TV REPAIRMAN

I don't think we should discuss this until I'm a little bit more composed.

DAVID

Wait a minute.

TV REPAIRMAN
(turning his back)

Maybe tomorrow when I'm not so emotional... Give you a day or two to think about it.

DAVID

COME BACK!!!!!!

TV Repairman shakes his head and walks out of the shot. David grabs the remote and starts rapidly pushing buttons. Nothing happens. He crosses to the TV, spinning the dial, but comes up with nothing but local programming. He returns to the empty test pattern.

DAVID
(dropping the gizmo)

Oh God.

JENNIFER

What's going to happen?

DAVID

I don't know....It's not possible...
(looking at her)
Is it possible?

BETTY (OS)

Bu-ud... Mary Sue... Your breakfast is getting cold.

DAVID

It can't be possible.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

Betty (their "mother") sticks her head into the living room wearing her black and white apron. She has a great big Pepsodent smile.

BETTY

Well, come on kids. You're not going off to school without a hot breakfast inside you...

They just stare at her.

BETTY

Forward march.

They exchange a strange little glance then slowly rise to their feet. Jennifer waits for David who forces a smile then starts toward the kitchen.

BETTY

I just love you in that sweater Mary-Sue. It's so flattering.

JENNIFER

(dazed)

Thanks.

INT. KITCHEN.

David and Jennifer walk two steps into the kitchen when they suddenly freeze--agape at the spectacle in front of them:

THEIR POV -- PARKER KITCHEN

Every breakfast food imaginable has been laid upon the table. There are hotcakes and sausages and biscuits and eggs. Pitchers of orange juice are dwarfed by the mountains of ham. The table literally sags under the weight of the food. George Parker lowers his morning paper and smiles at his children.

GEORGE

(once again)

Morning kids. Better get a move on or you're going to be late for school.

They nod and wander forward into the room. Bright sunlight streams through the kitchen window as a gentle symphony of songbirds sings outside. David and Jennifer stare stunned as their "mother" adds some waffles to the heap.

DAVID

I don't believe this.

JENNIFER

Neither do I.

GEORGE

Well, c'mon. Dig in.

Betty sets two heaping plates at their places. Neither one moves.

BETTY

(to Jennifer)

I put blueberries in them just the way you like.

JENNIFER

Actually--I'm not real... hungry.

BETTY

(big smile)

Oh nonsense young lady. You're going to start your day with a nice big breakfast.

She takes Jennifer by the shoulders and "guides" her into the chair. Jennifer looks down at a huge plate of GRAY WAFFLES.

BETTY

(oppressively chipper)

Here. Why don't you have some waffle cakes.

(beat)

And there's sausage and eggs and some good crisp bacon...

(beat)

...And a ham steak.

Betty drenches the waffles in syrup and slathers on a huge slab of butter. She glances back at David who just shrugs.

BETTY (CONT)

...And of course, a nice big bowl of oatmeal, then it's right off to school.

Jennifer hesitates then glances over at her "mother" who looks at her expectantly. Jennifer pauses then reaches down and takes a forkful of the oozing mess...

CUT TO:

FULL SHOT. PAT BOONE

He stands facing the CAMERA in an actual Kinescope from 1958. The backdrop is a painted pastoral landscape and the background singers are all white debutantes. He wears a letterman's sweater and button down shirt...

PAT BOONE

"...Tooty fruity -- oh rooty. Tooty Fruity... Oh rooty."

He CONTINUES his homogenized version of Little Richard's nasty hit, (all the nastiness gone). It becomes a slow and lilting melody...

PAT BOONE

"...Tooty fruity--oh rooty..."

(slowly...)

"...A wap bop a loo bop--a wap bam boom."

EXT. PLEASANTVILLE (ELM STREET) - DAY

The CAMERA CRANES DOWN in the middle of a beautiful tree lined street to find the Milkman nodding to the Postman; Jennifer and David are walking up the sidewalk, holding their stomachs...

JENNIFER

I'm gonna hurl, David. I swear to God.

DAVID

Just take deep breaths.

JENNIFER

All that animal fat. I feel it in my pores or something.

Jennifer clutches her stomach, but David's glance darts from side to side--totally absorbed.

JENNIFER

I still don't see why we're doing this.

DAVID

Because we're supposed to be in school right now.

JENNIFER

We're supposed to be at home David! We're supposed to be in color!

(wailing)

Oh GOD...

DAVID

Ssshhh...

A man calls out from across the street.

MR. SIMPSON

Hello Bud.

DAVID

Hello Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON

Hear your Dad got a new car.

DAVID

Oh yeah. A Buick. It's swell.

JENNIFER

You know him?

DAVID

Owns the hardware store.

JENNIFER

Okay, now you listen to me! I don't know what's going on but you'd better fix it! I had a date with Mark Davis and I even bought new UNDERWEAR!

DAVID

We just gotta play along for a little while...till that guy shows up again. Then I'll talk to him and...

JENNIFER

Play along?

DAVID

Well, yeah. I'm...Bud Parker and you're...um--Mary Sue.

JENNIFER

(ripping the barrette from her hair)

No! I'm not gonna do it! If I don't dress like this for Mom I'm sure as hell not going to do it for you!

DAVID

We don't have a choice Jen. We're stuck until he comes back.

JENNIFER

Why can't we just EXPLAIN IT?

DAVID

To who?

Jen looks around this cheery little street, and the horror starts to dawn on her. At that moment, they hear a screaming SIREN and a bright GRAY FIRE ENGINE comes racing up the block.

WIDER.

Jennifer and David step back on the curb as the firemen come flying out of the truck, grabbing the ladder on the back.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. (FOLLOWING THE FIREMEN)

They work in perfect precision. Two firemen grab the base of the ladder while a third takes the front. They go tearing across one of the lawns, in full "emergency response" anchoring the ladder into the ground and winging it up into a tree.

FIREMAN

C'mere, kitty...

He emerges a moment later with the cat who was stuck in the tree. Jennifer sinks to the curb as he carries the kitten by them, petting it gently as he goes.

JENNIFER

Oh God, we are. We're stuck in like 'Nerdville'.
(shakes her head)

I always knew you'd pay a price for this. I knew you couldn't be hopelessly geekridden for this long without suffering some like, really tragic consequences.

(voice wavering)

...But it's just not fair. I mean--I'm starting to get really--popular. Debbi Russell transferred to another school and my skin's been great since March and Mark Davis is starting to come around and...

BOY'S VOICE (OS)

Hello Mary Sue.

Jennifer turns to see a strapping blonde seventeen year old driving by in his convertible. He is extremely handsome with Jack Armstrong features and a Letterman's sweater. Despite her crisis, Jennifer's jaw drops open as he slows to a crawl. Skip Martin flashes a huge Pepsodent smile. The guy is a "dreamboat".

SKIP

What's all the commotion? Where's the cat?

JENNIFER

Um...It's...

Skip turns to see the fireman hand the kitten to its owner and climb into the truck.

SKIP

Ah, right...

(smiling at her again)

Well--guess I'll see ya later Mary Sue.

He takes off down the street with the sun glinting on his really

keen convertible. Jennifer gapes as he disappears around the corner.

JENNIFER

Who's that?

DAVID

Skip Martin. Captain of the basketball team.

JENNIFER
(still gaping)

Does he--you know--like "me?"

DAVID

As a matter of fact he does.

JENNIFER
(flicking her hair)

Hunh.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLEASANTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Streams of impeccably kept youngsters file through the double doors. All cheery and very pleasant looking. It looks like a Leni Riefenstahl movie.

ANGLE. FROM ACROSS THE STREET.

David stands beside Jennifer looking at the entrance to the school. Three girls huddle together by the front steps.

JENNIFER

Those are my friends.

DAVID

Peggy Jane, Lisa Anne and Betty Jean.

JENNIFER
(staring at them)

Can we do any better?

DAVID

I don't think so.

JENNIFER

Okay...

She flicks her hair back--cops a first day of school attitude, and heads across the street like she owns the place.

CUT TO:

INT. GEOGRAPHY CLASS. LATER

It looks like a propaganda film from the Eisenhower Administration. The boys all wear crew cuts and short sleeve button down shirts. The girls all have lacy dresses buttoned to the neck. Everyone stares straight ahead at a pulldown map where Miss Peters stands with a pointer in her hand.

MISS PETERS

Last week Class, we discussed the geography of Main Street. This week, we're going to be talking about Elm street. Can anyone tell me one of the differences between Elm Street and Main Street?

(pointing)

Tommy.

TOMMY

It's not as long?

Jennifer looks stunned as several students nod.

MISS PETERS

That's right, Tommy. It's not as long. Also, it only has houses. So the geography of Main Street is different from the geography of Elm Street.

ANGLE. JENNIFER

She glances around at several students who seem to be nodding in agreement. All at once, she thrusts her hand into the air.

MISS PETERS

Mary Sue.

JENNIFER

What's outside of Pleasantville?

The teacher looks at her with a puzzled frozen smile on her face. She looks vaguely troubled.

MISS PETERS

What?

(beat)

I don't understand....

JENNIFER

Outside of Pleasantville... What's at the end of Main Street?

The class lets out a knowing groan--as if to say "Oh. We get it now. Boy what a stupid question." Miss Peters gives a kind but condescending look.

MISS PETERS

Oh, Mary Sue. You should know the answer to that. The end of Main Street is just the beginning again.

Miss Peters gives a big grin as a series of heads nod up and down. Jennifer stares straight ahead, dumbfounded....

CUT TO:

INT. GYMNASIUM. DAY.

There are fifteen to twenty boys scattered around the Gym. Each is dressed identically in white shorts and black socks with a "PLEASANTVILLE" Jersey.

SHOT. DAVID

He stands at the free throw line with a basketball in his hand. (Not exactly an athletic image.) David lets go of a jump shot that swishes effortlessly through the net. He looks a little surprised.

DAVID

Wow.

He stares at the backboard slightly intrigued. David retrieves the ball and fires again, this time chucking it up blind. The ball sails through the hoop again, HITTING NOTHING BUT NET.

FULL SHOT. OTHER SIDE OF THE GYM

Ten to twelve of his teammates fire simultaneously at the hoop. ALL OF THE SHOTS SAIL THROUGH THE HOOP, NONE EVEN NICKING THE RIM. The boys retrieve their shots as the coach claps his hands.

COACH

That's it men. Keep it up. Big game tomorrow.

ANGLE. DAVID

He gets the ball and turns his back on the basket completely. David flings the ball wildly over his shoulder. It bounces off all the walls of the gym, then glides through the net as smoothly as the others. He stares in amazement.

SKIP (O.S.)

Bud....

WIDER.

Skip Martin (the boy in the convertible) approaches from the other side of the Gym. He is a classic All American Hero--somewhere between 4-H club member and a future astronaut.

SKIP
(a little nervous)

Hi ya Bud.

DAVID

Hi ya Skip.

He fidgets nervously for a moment looking down.

SKIP

Hi ya Bud... Can I ask you a question?

DAVID

Sure.

SKIP

Well... If I was to ask your sister.... What I mean is, if I was to go up to Mary Sue....

DAVID

Oh God! Are we in that episode?

SKIP

What?

DAVID

I don't believe it.

SKIP

What's the matter?

DAVID

You want to ask her out tonight, right? And then you want to give her your school pin....

SKIP

Yeah.... How'd you know?

DAVID
(shaking his head)

Lucky guess.

(beat)

Look, Skip... I don't think it's a real good time for that right now...

Skip's expression falls. He stands crushed in front of David.

DAVID (CONT)

What I mean is... Mary Sue's been a little "different" lately....

SKIP
(stunned)

She won't go out with me?

DAVID

I didn't say that. It's just that right now.....

SKIP
I don't know what I'd do if she wouldn't go out with me...

All at once, Skip takes the basketball he's been holding and hurls it toward the hoop. The ball does a couple of revolutions of the rim, and then amazingly pops out.

WIDE ANGLE. GYM

Play comes to a halt. ALL THE PLAYERS TURN AND STARE, DUMBSTRUCK AT THE SIGHT OF A MISSED SHOT.

SHOT. DAVID.

He turns back to Skip with a big forced smile on his face.

DAVID
I'm sure we'll work something out.

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR. LATER...

David stands off to the side with his sister, while class pours out around them.

JENNIFER

I don't know.

DAVID

One date, Jen--that's all I'm asking. If you don't go out with this guy we could throw their whole universe out of whack. Besides, I thought you liked him.

JENNIFER

It's too weird David. This place is giving me the creeps. Did you know all the books are blank?

DAVID

What?

JENNIFER

I looked in the library. They got covers with nothing inside them.

DAVID

What were you doing in a Library?

JENNIFER

I got lost.

(beat)

Oh here...look at this!

She reaches into her purse and pulls out a book of matches. Jennifer tries to light a Kleenex on fire.

DAVID

JENNIFER!

JENNIFER

Just watch. You know why those guys just get cats out of trees? 'Cause nothing burns around here, that's why! They don't need any firemen....

Sure enough the tissue has become flame retardant.

DAVID

Jen, listen....

JENNIFER (CONT)

(trembling)

I like--really need a cigarette, too.

DAVID

(putting his arm around her)

I'll get us out of here. I really will. But if we don't play along we could alter their whole existence. We may never get home.

She looks over at him, slowly.

JENNIFER

You really think anybody's gonna, like, notice if I don't have a chocolate malt with this guy.

At that moment, three of Mary Sue's "friends" come tittering around the corner. They skitter up to her like a group of wind-up toys.

PEGGY JANE
(high-pitched--rapid fire)

You won't believe what we just heard.

LISA ANNE

Skip Martin's going to ask you out.

BETTY JEAN

And that's not all....

PEGGY JANE

No, that's not all....

ALL THREE TOGETHER

He's going to give you his pin!

They explode in a torrent of TITTERS all over again. Jennifer looks over at David.

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. DUSK

A lone streetlamp glows in the foreground. Jennifer's voice plays OS.

JENNIFER

You sure I'm supposed to wear this?

INT. MARY SUE'S ROOM.

Jennifer emerges from the closet in a mohair sweater and a poodle skirt. Under the sweater she wears a 1950's "bullet bra" that turn her breasts into lethal weapons.

JENNIFER
(looking in the mirror)

I could like--kill a guy with these things.

DAVID

It's in your closet.

JENNIFER
(examining her profile)

I've worn some kinky stuff before....

DAVID

He won't notice anyway.

JENNIFER

Why not?

DAVID

They don't notice that kind of thing around here.

JENNIFER

So what's the point?

DAVID

Jen please....

JENNIFER

He-lllo? I've got like three pounds of underwire here.

DAVID

Just go with the program, hunh? I'm late for work.

EXT. SODA SHOP. DUSK.

The flashing neon ice cream cone looks good enough to drink. Underneath it, the swirling script spells "SODA SHOP." Johnny Mathis drifts out into the evening air....

CLOSER

David comes sprinting up to the screen door and pauses to get his breath. He adjusts a little soda jerk's hat, then plunges inside.

INT. SODA SHOP.

Mr. Johnson, the owner and proprietor is wiping down the counter. He is a "pleasant" looking man, in his early forties wearing a white apron and black glasses. The strains of "MISTY" get louder as Bud lets the screen door slam behind him.

MR. JOHNSON

(looking up)

Bud?

DAVID

Sorry... I had to help my folks and then I couldn't find my hat....

MR. JOHNSON

Oh.

He stops wiping for a moment, holding the towel in his hand.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

I didn't know what to do.

He stares at the rag a little troubled.

DAVID

What's wrong?

MR. JOHNSON

Well--I always wipe down the counter and then you set out the napkins and glasses and then I make the french fries....

DAVID

(confused)

Yeah....

MR. JOHNSON

But you didn't come so I kept on wiping.

He looks down at the towel clearly disturbed. David pauses for a moment then starts toward him.

DAVID

I'm sorry.

He crosses to Mr. Johnson who has polished one section of the counter right down to the wood. David takes the towel out of his hand and folds it neatly in front of him.

DAVID

(gently)

You know, if this ever happens again, you can make the fries even if I haven't put out the napkins yet.

MR. JOHNSON

I'm so glad you're here.

DAVID

I understand.

EXT. SODA SHOP. TIME LAPSE DUSK TO NIGHT. (LATER...)

The place is really hopping now. All the spots in the parking lot are filled with vintage "jalopies" and several patrons are streaming through the door. The SAME JOHNNY MATHIS SONG is still PLAYING on the juke box, and the neon ice cream soda sign blinks against the sky.

INT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT.

David is trapped behind the counter, furiously working to keep up with the load. Several clean cut teenagers pepper him with orders while he yanks at the pumps and spigots. It's clear he isn't used to this.

DAVID
(frazzled)

Peppermint shake, chocolate soda, two orders of fries and a split?

PEGGY JANE

Peppermint soda, two chocolate shakes, order of fries, and we'll split it.

David nods quickly, wiping some sweat from his brow. He scoops some ice cream into the metal blender as Mr. Johnson comes up beside him.

MR. JOHNSON

There aren't any cheeseburgers.

DAVID
(turning)
What?

MR. JOHNSON

Well, usually I put out the burger and then you finish with the lettuce...

DAVID

Listen to me!

Mr. Johnson recoils slightly.

DAVID (CONT)

Do you have the lettuce?

MR. JOHNSON

....Yeah.

DAVID

Have you cooked the burgers?

MR. JOHNSON
(quieter)

...Yes.

DAVID

Well you can just put on the lettuce, finish the burger
and pretend it was me doing it all along.

Mr. Johnson stares at him.

DAVID

Really. It's fine.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. SODA SHOP ENTRANCE.

The screen door swings open and is held there by the end of a
Letterman's sweater. A moment later, Jennifer sashays through,
parading her new Jane Russell profile. Her "girlfriends" TITTER
from the corner as Skip rushes up to a table, and pulls out a
chair. She sashays into it, brushing against him as she goes.

ANGLE. DAVID.

He stares motionless at the spectacle--concerned and apprehensive.
David holds a hot fudge sundae under the soda spigot and jerks
back on the lever blowing ice cream all over his chest.

FULL SHOT. TABLE.

Skip stares across the table at Jennifer with the wholesome
devotion of a labrador retriever.

SKIP
(haltingly)

I sure am glad you said you'd come out with me tonight
Mary Sue.

JENNIFER
(full blown "Mary Sue")

Well "gee whizz" Skip. I sure am glad you asked me.

He guffaws for a moment or two before speaking again.

SKIP

I don't know if I ever said this to you before, but, well... I think you're just about the keenest girl in the whole school...

JENNIFER

Really Skip? The keenest?

SKIP

Oh yeah.

JENNIFER

(all sarcasm)

Gosh. I hardly know what to say.

DAVID(OS)

What can I get you two?

WIDER

He stands at their table holding a little white pad of paper and a pencil. Jennifer looks up at her brother and almost bursts out laughing. He wears his soda jerk hat at a jaunty angle with large white apron tied around his neck.

SKIP

Oh, I dunno Bud. Guess I'll have my usual cheeseburger and a cherry coke.

More gooney laughs. David turns to Jennifer who puts on the same dopey countenance.

JENNIFER

Oh, I dunno Bud. Guess I'll just have a salad and an Evian Water.

He shoots her a dirty look. Jennifer just smiles at him.

JENNIFER

Cheeseburger it is.

ANGLE. FOLLOWING DAVID.

He glowers at her all the way back to the counter. David posts the order in the little carousel clip board, keeping an eye on the table the entire time....

RESUME. TABLE.

Skip gazes across the table at Jennifer with an adoring look on his face. His hands are properly folded in front of him. She's still trying to do her best "Mary Sue."

SKIP

..See the whole time we were in civics together, I really wanted to sit next to you--but you were always sitting between Peggy Jane and Lisa Anne.

There is some TITTING behind her. Jennifer doesn't respond.

SKIP

...And you always seemed so smart and everything. Like that report you did on "Our Town Hall." Gosh. I didn't know what I'd talk to you about.

JENNIFER

Well, sometimes talking's over-rated. Don't you think?

SKIP

Hunh?

(gooney laugh)

Oh, right....

He still doesn't understand. Skip GUFFAWS for a moment or two then glances down at the table top. There is a momentary break in the Music as Johnny Mathis' "MISTY" starts up all over again. It's enough to make you shoot yourself.

SKIP

So I know I haven't been steady with anybody, but I just don't want to rush it. I mean, there's kids that are even holding hands already but I figure there's plenty of time for that kind of thing later on. Don't you?

JENNIFER

Oh you bet.

(beat)

Will you excuse me for a sec?

Jennifer gets up in a daze and heads toward the bathroom.

ANGLE. DAVID.

He freezes behind the counter and watches as his sister practically stumbles through the bathroom door.

INT. BATHROOM.

Of course there aren't any toilets. Jennifer gropes her way to the

sink and leans against the counter.

JENNIFER

Jesus Christ...

She turns and sits against the sink for a moment with a dumbstruck look on her face. Jennifer shakes her head for a moment or two, when the door to the bathroom bursts open.

GIRL'S VOICES
(overlapping)

"Did he give it to you... Did he give it to you... I bet he gave it to her... Did he give it to you?"

JENNIFER
(straight ahead)

I don't think he knows how.

They TITTER away, even though they don't get it either.

LISA ANNE

I bet he's gonna take her to Lover's Lane.

PEGGY JANE

I bet he is. I bet he is.

BETTY JEAN

I bet he's even gonna hold her hand!

They TITTER some more as Jennifer shakes her head.

INT. SODA SHOP.

David's gaze is fixed on her as she returns to the table from the bathroom.

SKIP
(befuddled)

Anyhow... I really wanted to come over and sit next to you in civics but...

JENNIFER

You want to get out of here?

SKIP

...What?

JENNIFER

You wanna get out of here? You wanna leave?

SKIP
(confused)

But where would we go?

JENNIFER
(shrugging)

...Lover's Lane.

SKIP
(swallow)

Lover's Lane!

There is an audible GASP from the booth behind them. Jennifer ignores it.

JENNIFER

Yeah. Lover's Lane. You up for it?

CLOSE UP. SKIP.

He just stares at her with his mouth open... Jennifer reaches forward and grabs his hand.

FULL SHOT. SODA FOUNTAIN.

David is in the middle of making a hot fudge sundae when he glances through the window and sees Jennifer leading Skip up the sidewalk. She clutches onto his arm and nuzzles against his cheek.

DAVID

NOOOOOOOO!

He vaults over the counter making a bee-line for the door. Everyone turns and stares as he races toward the entrance...

EXT. SODA SHOP

Skip's car is just pulling onto the street when David sprints into the parking lot. He takes off after the car, sprinting down the street.

DAVID

YOU CAN'T DO THIS JENNIFER! HE DOESN'T EXIST! YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T EXIST!

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT

It is a beautiful tree-lined pond with a lush willow tree in the foreground. The moonlight glistens silver across the water. Several cars are parked in a row with their occupants HOLDING

HANDS. Skip's convertible is parked at the end.

SHOT. SKIP'S CAR.

He sits stiffly at the wheel staring straight ahead. Jennifer is draped languidly across the seat beside him, making the most of her mohair sweater. She stares at Skip in a not-so-Pleasantville-kind-of-way. He glances over at her and swallows.

SKIP

...Sure is pretty.

JENNIFER
(staring at him)

Oh yeah.... Gorgeous.

SKIP

To be honest Mary Sue. I didn't think you'd want to come here until we'd been pinned for a little while.

JENNIFER

Oh, Skip. You can "pin" me any time you want to.

She leans back a little more, draping her arm across the top of the seat. Her tits point toward the sky.

JENNIFER
(breathy)

Or maybe I should just "pin" you.

He looks over at her a little confused, then breaks into his gooney laugh.

SKIP

Oh, that's silly Mary Sue. How could you possibly pin me?

CLOSE UP. SKIP

He is still guffawing when he looks over at Jennifer and suddenly freezes. Skip's eyes widen...

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. NIGHT

David comes sprinting up to the porch, then doubles over catching his breath. He clings onto the porch swing when the door opens behind him.

GEORGE

Bud?

WIDER

His "father" come out onto the porch. David catches his breath then forces a smile.

GEORGE

Son, what's wrong?

DAVID

Have you seen Mary Sue?

GEORGE

Why no. She's still on her date with Skip.... Is something the matter?

DAVID

(still panting a little)

No, I... I was just... worried about her.

His father gives him a "knowing" look and rests a hand on his shoulder.

GEORGE

Bud, your sister's a little older now and she's naturally going to start going out with boys. But she's a fine young woman and she would never do anything for us to be concerned about.

David looks back at him and rolls his eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT

The low guttural MOANS of two coupling animals drifts out over the evening air. It is raw and primitive and desperate. The CAMERA begins to TRACK behind all the other cars--their occupants primly holding hands in a tender silhouette. It finally COMES TO REST on a convertible at the end, with a girl's leg sticking out the window.

CLOSER.

A Letterman's sweater hangs over the door. Jennifer's sweater is draped over the backseat. The car is rocking.

INT. CAR.

They are clenched in a mad embrace: all arms and hair. Skip pulls back for a moment, GASPING for air. His face is covered with lipstick and there is a crazy look in his eye. He's stuck somewhere between passion and fear as he clings desperately to the steering wheel.

SKIP
(some terror)
...I think I better go home now Mary Sue....

She holds onto his shirt as her knee rubs the dashboard.

JENNIFER
(breathless)
...Why?

SKIP
(more terror...)
I think.... I might be ill...

He glances down at his lap a little confused.

SKIP
(a whisper)
Something's happening to me.

JENNIFER
(smile)
It's s'posed to happen, Skip.

SKIP
It is?

JENNIFER
Yeah... Trust me....

He looks at her completely confused as she pulls back down, and

OUT OF FRAME....

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. NIGHT

A single light is burning in the kitchen window.

BETTY (OS)

Do you want some more cookies?

INT. KITCHEN

David is at the kitchen table with a nauseated look on his face. There are three empty bottles of milk and cookie crumbs all over the table.

DAVID
(sick)

Oh no... I'm fine.

BETTY

How 'bout some Marshmallow Rice Squares?

DAVID

I'm fine.

There is a knock behind them at the door. David springs up.

BETTY

Now who could that be.

FOLLOWING DAVID.

EXT. PORCH

He crosses into the foyer ahead of his "parents." David swings open the door revealing Mr. Johnson, standing on the porch.

DAVID

Oh. Hi.

MR. JOHNSON

Hi there. You took off so quick. I wasn't sure if you were okay.

DAVID

Oh, yeah. Sorry. I'm fine. I just... Had to get home early.

Mr. Johnson leans in closer and speaks in a CONFIDENTIAL tone of voice.

MR. JOHNSON

Bud....

DAVID

Yeah....

MR. JOHNSON

You know how when we close up, I close the register, then you lower the blinds, then I turn out the lights, then we both lock the doors.

DAVID

Yeah...

MR. JOHNSON

(proud)

Well you weren't around this time so I did the whole thing myself.

Mr. Johnson has a strange look of "manly pride" on his face. His shoulders square back. His chest puffs out a little. There is a sudden sparkle in his eye.

MR. JOHNSON

Not only that, I didn't even do it in the same order. First I lowered the blinds, then I closed the register...

(beat)

Oh, hello Betty.

INT. FOYER

REVERSE ANGLE.

Betty stares at him from the foyer.

BETTY

Hello Bill.

Neither one says anything but neither one has to. David looks on in horror as his mother locks eyes with Mr. Johnson and his new found virility.

DAVID

(quickly)

Well, look, thanks for coming by. I... I really appreciate it.

Mr. Johnson continues to stare..

INT. CAR. CLOSE UP. JENNIFER

She looks sweetly over at the driver's side of the car (OUT OF FRAME).

JENNIFER

Well gee thanks Skip. I had a really wonderful time.

ANGLE. SKIP. OTHER SIDE OF CAR

He sits behind the wheel with a totally dazed look on his face. Skip stares stunned at Jennifer, like he just got hit with a couple of thousand volts.

SKIP

...Me too.

She leans over and kisses him on the cheek... Then she bites his ear lobe, gently, and flashes him a big smile. Skip smiles back.

EXT. CAR

She climbs out and shuts the door. Jennifer nods to Mr. Johnson as she heads up the walk.

JENNIFER

(sweetly)

Hello Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh, hello Mary Sue.

She is wearing a big smile by the time she reaches the porch. David grabs her arm.

EXT. PORCH

DAVID

(urgent whisper)

What did you do to him?

JENNIFER

(innocently)

Nothing.

INT. HOUSE

She starts up the staircase. David follows her and the CAMERA follows them both.

DAVID

What do you mean "nothing?" That's not nothing.

That's....

She reaches the top of the stairs and turns to him.

JENNIFER

Relax "Bud." We had a really nice time.

(mock YAWN)

...Now I'm really tired and we gotta get up early for school in the morning so...

She flashes her brother an evil grin.

JENNIFER (CONT)

'Night.

She shuts the door softly in his face. David stares at the gray wood in front of him.

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT.

Skip pulls up at an intersection with the same dazed look in his eye. The car rumbles at the stoplight for a moment or two, before he glances over to his right.

CLOSE UP. SKIP.

The stunned look turns to one of sheer amazement:

SKIP'S POV. ROSE

There, against a gray picket fence, on a black and white street in a black and white neighborhood, a single red rose is BLOOMING.

CLOSE UP. PAPER BOY - MORNING

He reaches into his basket tossing first left, then right. The CAMERA CRANES back to reveal Main Street on a beautiful sun-drenched morning.

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. MORNING.

David sits parked in front of the TV furtively turning through the channels. He flips the dial frantically. No sign of TV Repairman. There is only a WeatherMan.

BETTY (OS)

Bud. It's 7:30 in the morning. Are you watching television?

He gives her a sheepish grin and sighs....

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL GYM. DAY

It is the same configuration as earlier. Everyone wears their Pleasantville "Lions" jerseys, white sneakers and black socks. David enters the Gym a little groggy. He hasn't had much sleep.

CLOSER

He looks up and stops. David cocks his head to the side, staring across the gym.

HIS POV. SKIP AND OTHER BOYS.

They are huddled at the far end, each holding a basketball under his arm. Skip is in the center of the group, animatedly describing something that is holding their RAPT ATTENTION.

WIDER ANGLE. INCLUDING DAVID

DAVID
(quietly)

Oh no....

Skip continues his story while they stare at him with their mouths open. The Coach blows his whistle.

COACH

Come on men. Let's go. Big game next week.

The huddle breaks up as the basketball players all wander toward the hoop. Ten shots go up at once but NOT ONE COMES EVEN CLOSE. Several clang off the rim, a couple hit the edge of the backboard. One slams into the side of the gym. Everyone stares in disbelief.

DAVID

Oh my God....

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR. DAY.

David stands face to face with his sister in mid conversation.
DAVID

You can't do this, Jennifer. I WARNED you.

JENNIFER

So what's the big deal. Oh. Okay. They're like not good at basketball anymore. Like--omigod, what a tragedy.

DAVID

You don't understand. You're messing with their
UNIVERSE.

JENNIFER

Well maybe it needs to be messed with. Did that ever
like--occur to you?

(beat)

You know, they don't want to be like this, it's just
that nobody ever helped them before.

PEGGY JANE
(walking past)

'MS' How you doin'?

JENNIFER

Kewl 'PJ' How you doin'?

PEGGY JANE
(relishing her new word)

'Kewl.'

Jennifer smiles at her friend as she goes by.

DAVID

You have no right to do this.

JENNIFER

Well if I don't who will?

DAVID

They're happy like this.

JENNIFER

David, nobody's happy in a Poodle skirt and a sweater
set.

(beat)

You like all this don't you?

He recoils slightly.

JENNIFER (CONT)

I mean, you don't think it's just like dorky or funny or
something... you really like it.

(shudders)

Oh God! I am so personally horrified to be your sister
right now.

DAVID

I just don't think we have the right to..

JENNIFER

David, let me tell you something. These people don't want to be geeks. They want to be "attractive." They've got a lot of potential, they just don't know any better.

DAVID

They don't have that kind of potential.

JENNIFER

Um--hello? You want to like take a look?

Jennifer motions behind her to a boy and girl who are locked in an intimate conversation. The girl (LISA ANNE) wears bobby socks and the boy (TOMMY) wears a letterman's sweater, but the conversation is sexually charged. They speak to one another in a close whisper--their faces inches apart.

All at once the girl gets shy and glances away. She blows a big bubble with her gum, but the BUBBLE IS BRIGHT PINK IN AN OTHERWISE

GRAY FRAME.

TOMMY

Wow. What kind of gum is that?

CLOSE. DAVID AND JENNIFER

He looks over in shock as she sucks the BRIGHTLY COLORED BUBBLE GUM back into her mouth. Jennifer flicks her hair.

JENNIFER

I gotta go. I'm meeting Skip at the flagpole.

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

It is the exact same shot as before: The CAMERA STARTS ITS LONG SLOW TRACK behind the vehicles, except this time ALL OF THEM ARE ROCKING. Various limbs and articles of clothing hang out the open windows.

MOANS of pleasure waft out over Lover's Lane as the real (and nasty) version of LITTLE RICHARD'S "TOOTY FRUITY" PLAYS OVER:

LIL' RICHARD (VO)

"...Got a gal--her name is Sue. She knows just what to do...."

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE. DAY. (MUSIC CONT...)

It is a typical '50s family practice right out of Norman Rockwell. There is a jar of tongue depressors on the counter and a jar of lollipops beside them. Lisa Anne (Mary Sue's best friend) is being examined by Dr. Henderson. Her mother sits at her side.

DR. HENDERSON

Let me see it again.

Lisa Anne opens her mouth and sticks out a BRIGHT RED TONGUE. Everything else in the frame is Black and White, but her tongue literally gleams with color.

DR. HENDERSON
(examining it)

Well.... I don't think it 's anything to worry about...Cut down on greasy foods and chocolate, that kind of thing.

(aside/to the Mother)

It'll probably just clear up on its own.

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT. (MUSIC CONT...)

It is really rocking now. More cars are lined up along the edge of the lake.

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM (MUSIC CONT...)

Tooty Fruity continues as David flips frantically through the channels looking for TV Repairman. There are only some very local programs. He shakes his head...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM (MUSIC CONT....)

The Pleasantville Lions lose a game late in the second half. The scoreboard reads 84 to 16....

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. (MUSIC CONT....)

David examines the back of the TV set.....

INT. FURNITURE STORE. (MUSIC CONT....)

A large group of customers is huddled in a circle, staring at an item on the display floor, like it is the monolith in "2001". They seem both confused and absolutely mesmerized as the CAMERA PUSHES IN TO REVEAL: a double bed.....

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. (MUSIC CONT...)

David sits on the floor with a weird look of resignation as a Brillcream commercial plays in front of him....

LIL RICHARD (OS)

"..A wop bop a loo bop--a wop bam boom!"

EXT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT. ON DAVID.

He heads toward work with his apron and his paper hat, but he's clearly disconcerted. David stops and stares at A BRIGHT GREEN CAR parked at the front door of the restaurant. He shakes his head.

INT. SODA SHOP.

The place has been transformed. What was cheery and benign a couple of days before, has gotten a little bit dangerous. The letterman sweaters have been replaced by leather jackets.

The Pat Boone and Johnny Mathis have given way to real Rock and Roll. There is a James Dean/Marlon Brando edge in the air. Somebody has played the flip side.

ANGLE DAVID

He enters the soda shop adjusting his paper hat. A young couple makes out passionately in the doorway--all tongues and hands. When they break David sees that the girl's cheeks are FLUSHED WITH RED. He stares at her for a beat as they return to normal. David shakes his head.

FOLLOWING HIM.

He crosses to the counter and grabs his pencil and little pad of paper. Various things have already GONE TO COLOR AROUND THE ROOM: The JUKE BOX.... The COKE SIGN..... THE NAUGAHIDE STOOLS.... David starts down the aisle when his sister's arm reaches out and stops him.

DAVID'S POV - BOOTH

Jennifer is sitting with her arm around Skip, eating an ice cream sundae.

JENNIFER
(evil grin)

Think we could get two cheeseburger and some cherry cokes.

She eats the bright red cherry in a taunting fashion.

DAVID
(pointed)

I'll be right with you.

He crosses behind the counter and posts the order.

DAVID

Two cheeseburgers, two cherry cokes.

There is no response. David looks in the kitchen...

HIS POV

No one is there. David looks over at the cash register where Mr. Johnson is staring into space.

MR. JOHNSON

There aren't any cheeseburgers.

DAVID

Look. I thought we talked about this. I thought we said....

MR. JOHNSON

(shrugs)

What's the point, Bud?

Mr. Johnson looks up at him with a weird kind of emptiness in his eyes. David grabs his arm, and pulls him down the counter toward the storeroom in the back.

INT. STOREROOM.

He shuts the door behind them.

DAVID

What are you talking about?

MR. JOHNSON

I'm just not sure I see the point anymore.

DAVID

You make hamburgers! That is the point!

MR. JOHNSON

No I know.... I know I do....

(he pauses, then looks up)

But it's always the same, you know? Grill the bun, flip the meat, melt the cheese.... It never changes. It never gets any better or worse....

DAVID

Just listen to me....

MR. JOHNSON

(not hearing him)

...Like the other night, when I closed up by myself.
That was different...

DAVID

Forget about that!

MR. JOHNSON

Oh... Okay... But I really liked it.

DAVID
(deep breath)

Look, you can't always like what you do. Sometimes you just do it because it's your job. And even if you don't like it, you just gotta do it anyway.

MR. JOHNSON

Why?

DAVID
(exasperated)

So they can have their hamburgers!

This sounds stupid even to David. He shakes his head.

MR. JOHNSON
(like a secret)

You know what I really like?

DAVID
(warily)

....What's that?

MR. JOHNSON

Christmas time.

David rolls his eyes. Mr. Johnson leans closer, speaking furtively.

MR. JOHNSON

See every year on Dec.3, I get to paint the Christmas decorations in the window. And every year, I get to paint a different thing...

(beat)

One year it's the North Pole. The next I do Santa's workshop. Here I'll show you.

He pulls a photo album from the back of the desk and opens it for David.

DAVID
(impressed)

Wow.... That's pretty good...

MR. JOHNSON

Thanks.

(continuing)

But this morning I was thinking about it and I realized that I looked forward to it all year. And then I thought "Gee. That seems awfully silly. That seems like an awfully long time to be waiting for just one moment," don't you think?

David looks at him speechless.

MR. JOHNSON

Well don't you?

DAVID

I think you should try not to think about this anymore.

MR. JOHNSON

Really?

DAVID

Yeah.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh. Okay. I'll try that then.

CUT TO:

INT. BARBERSHOP. DAY

The Barber Pole spins in three shades of gray. Several men are gathered around the two chairs in the front of Gus' shop. Besides being the barbershop, it is the bastion of all male life in Pleasantville.

GUS

Have they ever lost before?

GEORGE

Basketball? No they sure haven't.

GUS

Just feels "wrong", that's all.

There are several murmurs.

RALPH

Maybe that's where they get that saying, "can't win 'em all."

GUS

Yeah. That's a good point, Ralph. They do have that saying.

BOB (O.S.)

But they do win 'em all, Gus. They've always won 'em all.

REVERSE ANGLE. DOORWAY.

"Big Bob" McGee, owner of the drugstore, Chevy dealership, and supermarket stands in the doorway. He's an imposing figure with a razor-sharp crewcut.

BURT

Oh. Mr. Mayor. Here. Go ahead.

Burt climbs out of his chair as Big Bob crosses over.

BOB

Don't be silly, Burt. I couldn't possibly take your spot.

(takes Burt's spot)

What I want to know is this: if they've never lost before, and they've never tied before, isn't that "winning em all?"

BURT

Well, yeah. That'd be "winning em all," sure.
The men nod and mumur...

CUT TO:

INT. PARKER KITCHEN. DAY.

The women's bridge club has assembled in the Parker kitchen like it does every Wednesday afternoon. Four women are seated around the kitchen table with a nice bowl of bridge mix between them. Betty is sitting next to Marge Jenkins, the woman who accompanied her daughter to the doctor's office.

MARGE

(dealing the cards)

...He said it would clear up on its own if she just stayed away from fried foods and sweets....Except it's spread to her lips now too. Oh, I don't know.

MARY
(a THIRD WOMAN)

And you say it's just "red?"

MARGE

Well -- like you know... real red.

MARY

Hunh. I know what you mean. That's like this car that was in front of Bill Johnson's shop. I was going by it the other day and it looked green... real green.

Betty looks up quickly--then grabs some bridge mix.

MARGE
(lowering her voice)

Have you seen him lately? The man doesn't look like himself. I was getting my sewing machine fixed across the street and he was sitting in the window of his shop just staring. Wasn't looking at anything particular. Just staring.

MARY

That is strange.

Betty reaches out and grabs her cards. She fans them out in front of her, when her eyes go wide.

HER POV. BRIDGE HAND

They are ALL HEARTS and all BRIGHT RED. It looks like a fistful of valentines.

CLOSE UP. BETTY

She puts the cards down quickly and takes a sudden breath. Betty keeps them like that for a moment or two, before lifting them up and taking another look...

MARGE

It's your bid, Betty.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. DUSK.

The SOUND of the television plays OS while a warm light burns in the window.

INT. KITCHEN. DUSK.

Jennifer and Betty stand at the sink finishing the dishes. Betty washes while Jennifer dries and it's clear who's more used to this. Jennifer examines a chipped nail as she places a dish in the drying rack.

BETTY

Mary Sue?

JENNIFER

Yeah?

Betty hesitates. Rinses out a pot.

BETTY

Can I ask you a question?

JENNIFER

Sure.

She pauses for a long moment.

BETTY

What goes on up at Lover's Lane?

JENNIFER
(turning toward her)

What do you mean?

BETTY

Well, you hear all these things lately. You know--kids spending so much time up there...

(she looks over)

Is it holding hands? That kind of thing?

JENNIFER

Yeah....

(beat)

That--and....

She stops herself.

BETTY

What?

JENNIFER

It doesn't matter.

BETTY

No. I want to know.

JENNIFER

(glances toward the living room/lowers her voice)

Well ... Sex.

BETTY

Ah.

Betty nods from the import of the tone but not the meaning. She starts washing again; then stops.

BETTY (CONT)

What's sex?

Jennifer looks over at her stunned, but Betty just looks at her with a blank, curious expression. Jennifer hesitates.

JENNIFER

You sure you want to know this?

BETTY

Yes.

JENNIFER

Okay.

She crosses to the kitchen door and closes it. The sounds of the TV in the living room disappear. Jennifer crosses back to the kitchen counter and turns to her.

JENNIFER (CONT)

You see Mom...

(softer and with understanding)

When two people like each other very much....

Betty looks at her and nods.....

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. TIME LAPSE - DUSK TO NIGHT.

The TV keeps flickering in the window.

INT. KITCHEN. LATER.....

The CAMERA PANS across the kitchen table where there is a full quart of milk and some uneaten cookies. It finally comes to rest on Jennifer who is staring across the kitchen table with a concerned look on her face.

JENNIFER

You okay?

REVERSE ANGLE. BETTY

She nods--shaken but "fine." Betty stares long and hard at the plate of chocolate chip cookies. She's far away.

BETTY

Yes...

(softly)

It's just that....

JENNIFER

(gently)

What?

BETTY

Well...

(looking up)

...Your father would never do anything like that.

Jennifer bites her lip weighing her next sentence....

JENNIFER

Oh. Hmm....

(whisper/woman to woman)

Well, Mom...there's ways to "enjoy" yourself without Dad.

ANGLE BETTY

She looks across the table, perplexed.

CUT TO:

INT. PARKER BEDROOM NIGHT.

George crosses from the dresser to the TWO TWIN BEDS in the middle of the room. He wears long sleeve pajamas that are buttoned up to the neck. George puts his glass of warm milk on the nightstand and climbs in his own single bed. It is barely wide enough for his body and takes some maneuvering.

GEORGE

Sweetie? You coming to bed?

There is no answer.

GEORGE

Betty?

INT. BATHROOM.

She stands in her bathrobe staring down at the tub. Her dressing gown is buttoned to the neck as well.

BETTY
(calling out)

Yeah.... I'm just going to take a bath first.

CLOSER. BETTY

She swallows once as she stares down at the tub--then reaches for the spigot and turns on the water. Betty's heart beats a little faster as she HEARS the WATER THUNDERING DOWN.

CLOSER STILL....

Betty reaches up and unties the little silk ribbon at the top of her robe. She slips it off, and lets it drop to the floor, standing naked in the middle of the bathroom. Betty glances toward the mirror and then quickly glances away. She takes a deep breath and steps into the tub.

EVEN TIGHTER. ON HER FACE...

Betty slides down into the warm water, breathing in the steam, and closing her eyes for a moment. She lingers like that for a second or two, before settling a little lower in the tub. Betty opens her eyes, but they only half open. There is the slight trace of a smile.

EXTREME CLOSE UP BETTY'S FACE.

Her eyes close again as she bites her lower lip gently. The water continues to THUNDER DOWN as she arches her back. Betty's breathing seems to quicken as she opens her eyes all over again:

HER POV. BATHROOM....

ALL AT ONCE, EVERYTHING AROUND STARTS TO TURN FROM BLACK AND WHITE TO COLOR. A BIRD OUT THE WINDOW BECOMES A RED BREASTED ROBIN. THE TILE ON THE TUB TURNS OUT TO BE PURPLE. GREEN TOWEL.... PINK ROBE.... PALE BLUE UNDERWEAR DRAPED OVER A CHAIR...

CLOSE UP. BETTY'S FACE

She stares in amazement. Beads of sweat form on Betty's forehead

as the world goes to TECHNICOLOR. The THUNDERING WATER POUNDS IN THE BACKGROUND, but beneath can be heard the beginnings of a faint, low, MOAN. Her eyes dart around the room. Her breathing quickens: Faster.... Harder.... More intense.... THEN SUDDENLY....

18: Betty takes a bath

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT

The HUGE ELM TREE across the street suddenly BURSTS INTO FLAMES. Fire shoots straight up into the sky as billowing clouds of black smoke fill the air. BRIGHT ORANGE FLAMES LIGHT UP THE NIGHT.

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

David is staring at the television set when he notices a weird orange glow. He glances behind him, out the living room window...

DAVID

Oh my God!

19: Fire! Fire! Cat?

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT

David comes racing out of the front door and down the walk. A small CROWD has gathered in front of the fire. (They don't seem frightened--just sort of amazed.) The street is still BLACK AND WHITE but it is now bathed in a weird ORANGE LIGHT. The flames leap higher and higher.....

DAVID

Jesus Christ....

FOLLOWING DAVID

He takes off down the block, as fast as he can run. The crowd continues to stare as David turns the corner at Main Street...

EXT. FIRE STATION.

He races in the front of the building SCREAMING at the top of his lungs.

DAVID

FIRE! FIRE!

INT. FIRE STATION.

There is no sign of life on the ground floor. David races up the stairs toward the bunk room on the second story.

INT. BUNK ROOM

All the firemen are sitting around playing Gin Rummy when David rushes in the front door. They can hear his voice from down the hall.

DAVID
(entering)

FIRE.... FIRE....

They still don't move. All the firemen just look at him from their bunks with a perplexed expression.

DAVID
(beat)

CAT!!!

All at once they spring to their feet grabbing their helmets and their yellow slickers. They race to the landing just outside the bunk room and leap onto the pole....

EXT. MAIN STREET. NIGHT.

The FIRE ENGINE comes SCREAMING toward the house from the top of the block. David sits in the front of the truck next to the Fire Chief who drives the vehicle at break neck speed.

DAVID

Right here!

The Fire ENGINE screeches to a halt. The Fireman looks around....

FIREMAN

Where is it?

David shoots him a look then glances at the inferno. He shakes his head and leaps from the truck.

FOLLOWING DAVID

He races around to the back where the other firemen are standing just as confused. David grabs one of the hoses and begins to pull it from the truck.

DAVID

Here! Grab this nozzle.

FIREMAN

But where's the cat?

DAVID

Just grab it!

He strips out about fifteen feet of hose, then grabs the fireman and pulls him toward the curb. David hands him the hose and opens the valve sending out a huge FLUME OF WATER.

FIREMAN

Whoa!

(beat)

So that's what these do.

A huge smile breaks out across the fireman's face--like a man who has suddenly found his purpose in life. He beams from ear to ear dousing the flames, while David runs to get another hose....

BOB (VO)

(fading in.....)

"....In honor and in recognition of your heroism..."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY

David stands at a podium receiving a commendation from "Big" Bob McGee (the man from the barbershop). He holds up a large shiny medal for public display, while "David's" whole family beams in the background.

BOB

....And with great appreciation from the citizens of Pleasantville..."

WIDER

A huge crowd is gathered on the town hall steps. There are lots of balloons and bunting.

BOB (CONT)

...I am pleased to present you with this special commendation, from the 'Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce'.

He hands the medal to David as the entire town bursts into

APPLAUSE.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. LATER....

David walks away from the center of town looking down at the gold medal around his neck. He takes his sleeve and starts to rub off a smudge when a young woman comes up beside him.

GIRL'S VOICE

Hi Bud...

WIDER

She is MARGARET ANNE HENDERSON, the prettiest girl in school, and one of the most popular. Margaret wears a cheerleader's outfit that only accentuates a bombshell '50s figure. Nonetheless, she seems the image of girly innocence.

MARGARET

That was sure swell....

DAVID

Oh. Thanks, Margaret.

MARGARET

(smiling)

I baked you my oatmeal cookies.

DAVID

(vaguely remembering an episode)

Oh, no... You baked those for Whitey.

MARGARET

No. I baked them for you.

DAVID

No. You baked them for Whitey.

MARGARET

No. I baked them for you.

DAVID

No. You baked them for wh...

MARGARET

(low and guttural)

No. I baked them for you.

All at once, Margaret grabs his arm and presses herself up against him. Her breasts shove up against his chest. Her mouth is inches away from his.

DAVID

Um...thanks.

David can smell the weird combination of hot moist breath and freshly baked cookies. He stares into her eyes for a moment, unable to speak. Margaret flashes him a not-so-Pleasantville smile.

MARGARET

See ya.

She turns and heads around the corner, while David just watches her dumbstruck.

CUT TO:

20: Take Five

EXT. SODA SHOP. DAY.

David heads toward work with his apron and little paper hat. The BUDDY HOLLY music has given way to "hip" '50s JAZZ. DAVE BRUBECK drifts out of the soda shop as David pauses for a moment, and looks at the door. The same couple that was making out before are at it again. This time, when they part, however, the color doesn't fade. They remain rich and saturated. David takes a bite of his cookie and goes inside.

INT. SODA SHOP.

The place has "morphed" even more. Brubeck's "TAKE FIVE" plays in the background while several patrons talk "intensely" in their booths.

DOORWAY

David walks into the building and pauses. There are several COFFEE cups on the table. Jennifer gets up and comes over to him.

JENNIFER

Nice medal.

DAVID

(quietly)

Thanks.

JENNIFER

Look, I know things got a little out of hand...

DAVID

It's okay.

He glances at the booth beside them. All the kids are staring up at him, with a weird expression of awe.

DAVID

What's going on?

JENNIFER

(still under her breath)

Um... They like wanna ask you a question... I didn't know how to handle it. So....

DAVID

Sure.

He crosses to the booth where Skip and two others look up at him. It's like Elvis has entered the building.

DAVID

How you doin'?

VARIOUS KIDS

Swell....

DAVID

You wanted to ask me something?

They keep on staring. Several glances are exchanged back and forth like they're sharing a secret. Finally....

TOMMY

How'd you know about the fire?

DAVID

What?

TOMMY

How'd you know how to put it out and all?

David hesitates, weighing his words.

DAVID

Oh. Well--where I used to live...That's just what firemen did.

This sends a MURMUR through the shop. The boy leans forward.

TOMMY

And where's that?

DAVID
(carefully)

Um...Out-side of Pleasantville.

This sends a much LOUDER MURMUR rifling through the kids. It's like electricity. They glance excited at one another. A hush descends.

TOMMY

What's outside of Pleasantville?

DAVID

Look it doesn't matter. It's not important.

TOMMY

What's outside of Pleasantville?

David stops and looks out at the kids who are hanging on every word.

DAVID

It's really not important.

MARGARET

What's outside of Pleasantville?

REVERSE ANGLE. INCLUDING DOORWAY.

Margaret Henderson (the girl with the cookies) stands in the doorway staring at David. She hangs on his words with the same excitement as the others.

She's ten feet away but might as well be touching him.

DAVID
(slowly)

Um... Well...There are some places where the road doesn't go in a circle. There are some places where it keeps on going.

There's an excited giggle. They lean forward.

MARGARET
(an exotic concept)

Keeps going...

DAVID

Well, yeah -- it all just keeps going. Roads...rivers...

WILL
(from the back)

Like the "Mighty Mississippi."

DAVID

...What?

He moves forward extending a book. The boy is in full, rich color. The cover reads: "THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN." David opens the first page. There is printing inside, with COLOR illustrations...

WILL
(quoting)

"It was big 'n brown n' kept goin' an' goin' as far you could see."

DAVID
(turning to Jennifer)

I thought the books were blank?

WILL

They were.

He looks over at Jennifer.

JENNIFER (CONT)
(quickly)

Okay look, this like--wasn't my fault. They asked me What it was about and I like didn't remember 'cause we had it back in tenth grade. But I told them what I DID remember, and the next thing I knew the pages had filled in.

DAVID

The pages filled in?

JENNIFER

But like only up to the part about the raft, because I didn't read any farther. David flips through the book and sure enough only the first chapter has print. The pages are blank after that.

TOMMY

Do you know how it ends?

DAVID
(hesitating)

Well, yeah...I do.

MARGARET
(breathless)

So how does it end?

She has moved closer and is gazing at him from a couple of feet away. It's silent in the soda shop.

DAVID

Well--see.... they're both running away--Huck and the slave.... And... They go up the river.... But--in trying to get free..... they sort of see that they're free already....

INSERT. BOOK.

David looks immediately down to the blank pages of the book that aren't blank anymore. Rows and rows of FRESH NEW TYPE materialize in front of him. He turns to the back of the book, that is complete with a COLOR illustration.

SHOT. DAVID.

DAVID
(quietly)

Oh my God.

WILL

Wow!

PEGGY JANE

Do you know this one?

DAVID

Oh yeah... well this is great.

CUT TO:

21: Kind of Blue

EXT. PLEASANTVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

The CAMERA PANS down from the "PUBLIC LIBRARY" sign to find the front door. A long line of kids waiting to check out their books stretches onto the sidewalk.....

EXTREME WIDE SHOT. LIBRARY. FROM ACROSS THE STREET.

Several men from the barbershop lean against the wall next to the spinning barber pole. They watch the spectacle for a moment or two, as teenager after teenager exits with an armful of books.

GUS

Look at 'em, Burt. It's spreadin' all over the place.
Look at the color on her books.

BURT

(swallow)

Look at the color on her sweater.

(pause)

I mean goin' up to that lake all the time is one thing,
but now they're going to a library? I mean what's next?

BOB

Oughtta be havin' an ice cream soda. That's where they
oughtta be.

At that moment, Lisa Anne, the girl with the red tongue, walks by them with an armful of books. She wears a plaid skirt, tight angora sweater and BRIGHT RED LIPS. Her EYES SPARKLE A BRILLIANT BLUE. She smiles at the men as she passes and their eyes nearly fall out of their head. They follow her progress down the block.

BURT

(swallows, faintly)

You're right, Bob... Somebody oughtta do somethin' about
that.

(watching her ass recede)

...Soon.

Big Bob glances over and nods...

WIDER STILL

From the shadows of the Town Hall, up the block, David watches the stream of kids emerge with their books. They cradle them in their hands like a piece of newfound treasure...

CUT TO:

22: òStand up for what's right!ó

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

George sits on the edge of his Barka Lounger, across the coffee table from "Big" Bob McGee. Even sitting down the man is a looming presence. Besides owning the market, auto dealership, hardware store, and gas station, he also owns the insurance agency where George works. George sweats into his collar.

GEORGE

Want some bridge mix?

BOB

Oh, no thanks....

GEORGE

Betty's making some pineapple kabobs...

BOB

I'm fine--but thank you.

George nods as Bob takes a belt of his Martini and leans forward.

BOB (CONT)

George, you're probably wondering why I asked if I could come over today....

George shrugs--then nods--then shrugs....

BOB (CONT)

I'm sure you've noticed the same things we all have-- certain 'changes' going on in the town.

(beat)

You know what I mean by 'changes?'

GEORGE

'Changes.'

BOB
(nodding)

'Changes.'

(takes a belt of martini)
And it's not just the fire or big stuff like that. It's
little things.

(beat)
Did you hear about Bill Miller?

GEORGE
(concerned)

No. What?

BOB

Wife wants him to get one of those new beds.

GEORGE

One of those... big beds?

Bob nods.

GEORGE (CONT)

Oh my gosh. What's he gonna do?

BOB

I really don't know. It's everywhere, George. Bill
Anderson's boy just quit his job at the market.

GEORGE

What do you mean quit?

BOB

Took off his apron in the middle of an order. Said he
didn't "feel" like it anymore. There were groceries all
over the counter. Took 'em three hours to sort it all
out.

GEORGE

Sheesh.

BOB

Everyone likes you, George.

GEORGE

Oh, well....

BOB

No. They do. And it isn't just 'cause you're a great bowler... They respect you....

GEORGE
(heartfelt)

Thank you very much.

BOB

And, George, it's important for them to see someone they respect, stand up for what's right. If you love a place, you can't sit around and watch this kind of thing happen to it.

GEORGE

No. Of course not.

BOB
(big patriarchal smile)

And, George, that's why I want you to be on the Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce.

Big Bog reaches forward and extends a small square jewelry box. He pops open the lid and extends it in front of George.

INSERT. BOX.

Sitting inside is a shiny silver lapel pin in the shape of the Chamber of Commerce insignia.

SHOT. GEORGE.

GEORGE
(stunned, moved)

Oh my Gosh. I hardly know what to say.
(stares at the pin)
It looks just like yours.

BOB
(smiles)

It's exactly like mine.

George looks at him speechless.

BOB (CONT)

Why don't you start by saying "yes," and then getting me

one of those swell pineapple kabobs.

GEORGE

Oh sure... You bet.
(calling out)
Betty....

There is no answer....

GEORGE (CONT)

BETTY -- BOB WANTS TO TRY ONE OF YOUR GREAT HORS D'
OEUVRES... BETTY!

WIDER

George turns around to see David, standing on the landing,
listening to the entire conversation. Their eyes lock for a
moment...

DAVID

I'll get her.

He moves quickly to the kitchen shutting the door behind him.

23: What's a mother to do?

INT. KITCHEN.

David gets a couple of steps in and stops. He looks across the
room to see Betty standing at the kitchen sink, just staring out
the window. Her back is to him. She grips the formica kitchen
counter.

DAVID
(approaching slowly)

Are you okay?

She doesn't answer. David moves up to her and rests a hand on her
shoulder.

DAVID

Are you alright?

Betty turns around to face him. HER FACE HAS TURNED COMPLETELY TO
COLOR. THE EYES ARE GREEN. THE LIPS ARE RED. SHE HAS A NATURAL
BLUSH IN HER CHEEKS. In fact the whole thing looks like a
beautiful color portrait except for the tear stains on either side

of her face.

BETTY
(fighting tears)

What am I going to do?

David moves closer and looks at her. Her lip is quivering.

DAVID

It's okay. It's alright.

BETTY
(trembling)

I can't go out there. How can I go out there?

She looks right up at David.

BETTY (CONT)
(quieter)

Look at me...

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

He stares at her for a second. Big green eyes full of fear and confusion. David pushes a reassuring smile.

DAVID

Have you got any make up?

BETTY

In my handbag.

He crosses to the counter and grabs her purse. David sits Betty on a kitchen chair and fishes inside the handbag for her compact. He finds it along with a wadded up Kleenex.

DAVID

Okay--first we'll dry you out a little.

He dabs at the tears, while she smiles at him in gratitude. Then David opens the compact and takes out the large GRAY powder puff.

CLOSER.

It is a truly amazing sight. As David smears on the makeup, she returns gradually to BLACK AND WHITE. The skin tones disappear. The flush of her cheeks goes. David takes out a DARK GRAY lipstick, obliterating the bright red of her lips.

REVERSE ANGLE. OVER BETTY'S SHOULDER.

He works on her for a second or two, then takes a step back. All at once, David seems to wince:

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV. BETTY'S FACE.

The life is gone from her face. In an instant Betty has gone from three dimensions to two. She stands in front of him, the fictional version of herself all over again.

BETTY
(off his reaction)

What?

David shakes his head and forces a smile. He hands her the compact so she can examine herself. Betty holds it up to her face, turning her head first right, then left.

BETTY
(beat)

Does it look okay?

DAVID

Looks just like it did.

BETTY

And they won't be able to tell?

DAVID
(even quieter)

No... They won't be able to tell.

Betty takes a deep breath and fluffs her hair. She grabs the plate of Pineapple kabobs and heads for the door. Just before she goes in, she pauses, then plasters on a big wide "stewardess" smile....

BETTY

Thank you.

DAVID
(sadly)

Sure.

He watches as she opens the door, and marches in the room, extending the little tray of hors d'oeuvres in front of her...

CUT TO:

24: A book of art

INT. SODA SHOP. DAY.

Mr. Johnson is all alone in the shop, setting up the napkin dispensers. He whistles BRUBECK'S "TAKE FIVE" when the screen door slams behind him. Mr. Johnson looks up with a start.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh, hi.

DAVID
(entering)

Hi.

MR. JOHNSON

Aren't you a little early?

DAVID
(quietly)

I brought you something...From the library.

CLOSER. FOLLOWING DAVID.

He has a large book tucked under his arm that is easily three feet long. Mr. Johnson looks at him a little intrigued as David crosses to the counter.

DAVID (CONT)

It's an art book.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh my Gosh, Bud....

DAVID

Open it.

Mr. Johnson reaches out and opens the cover. After a beat, his eyes widen.

DAVID (CONT)

I just thought since you liked painting it might help to....

Mr. Johnson gasps. It's quiet, and subtle, but it's still a gasp. David looks over at him but he's lost in the pages.

HIS POV. (INSERT) ART BOOK....

Massacio's "Expulsion of Adam and Eve" leaps off the pages in vibrant, tortured color. The beauty of the garden is offset by their agony and their shame. HE TURNS THE PAGE....
Titian's "Venus of Urbano". Soft, fleshy, in a rich golden light. She is utterly real and entirely nude. The folds of her flesh almost seem to glow....

MR. JOHNSON

Who's Titian?

DAVID

I'm not sure.

Rembrandt's "Self Portrait." Dark reds, umbers, blacks and browns. He looks back at Mr. Johnson with pain and wisdom. There's a brilliant light on his hair.

MR. JOHNSON (OS)

Mmmngh....

Faintly, almost imperceptibly, the SOUND of a rich ARIA begins to UNDERSCORE THE IMAGES. It's so faint you can't be sure you even hear it at all.... like you're hearing it with your eyes. He TURNS THE PAGES faster: Breugal's "Harvesters"... Turner's "Steam Train"... Monet's "Cathedral"... Cezanne's "Oranges"... Mr. Johnson shuts the book.

WIDER. SODA SHOP

They sit like that for a beat.

MR. JOHNSON

It's beautiful, Bud...

He looks up at David, troubled.

DAVID

What's wrong?

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

I'll never be able to do that.

DAVID

Oh, well--you're just starting out. I mean, you can't do it now....

MR. JOHNSON

No, that's not it.

Mr. Johnson shuts the book gently.

MR. JOHNSON

Where am I going to see colors like that?

ANGLE. DAVID

What can he say. David looks over at Mr. Johnson who just smiles and shrugs.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

Must be awfully lucky to see colors like that.

I bet

they don't even know how lucky they are.

CLOSE UP. DAVID

He just stares for a second.

25: ÔThose are not your cookies, Bud!Ó

EXT. MAIN STREET. LONG SHOT. DAY...

Margaret walks up the center of Main Street toward the CAMERA with her books pressed against her chest. She passes the drugstore, then the hardware store... Far off in the distance, a young man comes racing out of the soda shop, pulling off his little paper hat as he goes. He comes running up behind her as fast as he can.

CLOSER.

He takes a deep breath and tries to quiet the panting.

DAVID

Hi.

MARGARET
(turning/lighting up)

Oh...Hi.

DAVID
(pause)

Look, I probably shouldn't be asking you this--not

knowing you that well and all...

Margaret stops in the street and turns to him: a moment of truth. All at once, he abandons the speech.

DAVID

...You want to go out with me tonight?

He wants to turn away but doesn't. David forces himself to look back at her. All of a sudden she beams. It's the whitest, pearliest smile in the world.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM STREET. DAY.

David comes flying around the corner in complete jubilation. He vaults over a picket fence, swings around a lamppost and leaps off the bumper of a parked car. David hi-fives into the air at no one in particular and sails over Mr. Simpson's hedge almost decking him in the process.

DAVID

Sorry....

He races across the street bobbing and weaving like an All American fullback. David bounds up his front steps two at a time flinging open the door.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. FOYER.

DAVID

"Oh when the Saints.... Go Marching in...."

He lets the door slam behind him as he takes off his apron and tosses it on the coat rack. David starts up the stairs, when he HEARS a MAN'S VOICE coming from the living room.

MAN'S VOICE (OS)

Bud...

He pauses a second and glances back.

MAN'S VOICE

David....

He peers into the living room. David goes a little grayer....
HIS POV. TELEVISION
TV Repairman is looking back at him from the middle of the TV screen. He seems to have a bit of a stubble.

TV REPAIRMAN

Hello there.

DAVID
(wary)

....Hi.

TV REPAIRMAN
(stage whisper)

Well c'mere, young fella.

INT. LIVING ROOM

David crosses slowly over to the TV set.

TV REPAIRMAN (CONT)
(big smile)

You know I've been thinkin'.... I might have been a little "hasty" the other day when you asked to come home--just took me by such surprise, ya know--ha ha...

He gives a gooney laugh. David just looks at him....

TV REPAIRMAN (CONT)

So even though I can't make any promises, well--I figured if you asked me real nice--I might just be willing to talk about it again.

DAVID
(quickly)

I can't.

TV REPAIRMAN

What?

DAVID

Talk about it. Right now, I mean. I got to... um.... The look turns suddenly dark and ominous.

TV REPAIRMAN

Bud--I thought you wanted to come home.

DAVID

Oh... I do. Yeah. It's just that I told my "dad" I'd clean out the rain gutters and Mr. Johnson wanted me to... to change the tape in the register...

TV REPAIRMAN

(getting testy)

I'll be honest with you Bud. I'm getting sorta concerned about what I'm seeing in some of these re-runs...

DAVID

Re-runs?

TV REPAIRMAN

Like when Margaret Henderson makes her cookies for Whitey.

(losing it a little)

....Those aren't your cookies Bud.

DAVID

Oh, I know they're not. But I mean--they're just "cookies" after all...

TV REPAIRMAN

Excuse me?

DAVID

Well they're not just cookies... I mean, they're great cookies...

TV REPAIRMAN

Those are Whitey's cookies, Bud. They belong to him. Then he eats them, then he asks her to go to Lover's Lane, then...

DAVID

Look, I'd love to get into all this but I'm really running late, why don't we hook up tomorrow...

TV REPAIRMAN

Bud...

DAVID

Look I can't hear you -- it's really cruddy reception. I'll talk to you later...

CLICK. He switches off the TV sending TV Repairman to electronic limbo. David stands in the middle of the living room, breathing hard....

INT. JENNIFER'S (MARY SUE'S) ROOM.

She sits on the bed staring down at the front cover of a book.
(It's an alien experience.) Jennifer is just about to open it when
she senses something and glances toward the door.

REVERSE ANGLE.

Bud is standing in the doorway just staring at her. He seems to be
out of breath.

JENNIFER

What's wrong?

DAVID

Nothing.

JENNIFER

Nothing?

He keeps breathing hard in the doorway. David holds the remote in
his hand.

DAVID

Listen....

He takes a couple of steps into the room and then suddenly stops.

DAVID

You're reading?

JENNIFER
(glancing at the book)

Yeah. Can't believe you started such a dorky fad.

She holds up the cover.

JENNIFER (CONT)

D.H. Lawrence. You ever heard of him?

DAVID
(amazed)

...Yeah.

JENNIFER

I read a couple of pages. Seemed kinda sexy.

DAVID
(still stunned)

It is.

He just stares at her for a second as his mind seems to drift....

JENNIFER

So what is it?

DAVID

Well...

(out of the blue)
Can I ask you a question?

JENNIFER

Sure.

DAVID

Remember when Dad moved out?

JENNIFER
(rolls her eyes)

Uh, yeah... slightly.

DAVID

Well... Did you want them to get back together?

JENNIFER

Sure. For a little while...

DAVID
(searching for something)

Then you stopped?

JENNIFER
(thinks)

I never stopped wanting it. I just stopped thinking about it. I figured it was never gonna happen so I just...

(shrugs)
Moved on.

DAVID

Moved on?

JENNIFER

Yeah.

David stares at the wallpaper in her room like it's a window or a mirror or something. He seems a million miles away. Jennifer shifts closer to him.

JENNIFER

Can I ask you a question?

DAVID

Sure.

JENNIFER

How come I'm still in black and white?

DAVID
(back to earth)

What?

JENNIFER

Well I've had like ten times as much sex as these girls and I'm still like this. They have one hour in the back of a car and suddenly they're in technicolor.

DAVID

Oh, I don't know. Maybe...
(thinks)
...it's not just the sex...

JENNIFER
(looking up quickly)

What?

She stares at him wide-eyed like someone who has just heard their name called. Jennifer's eyes dart around like she's calculating a math problem. After a moment or two, her expression changes: a vague look of recognition.

JENNIFER

No, maybe it's not.

She glances down at her book. It's a big book. Jennifer takes a deep breath and stares at the gray skin of her hand. After a second or two, she looks back.

David looks at her for a beat...

CUT TO:

26: At Last

EXT. MARGARET HENDERSON'S HOUSE. (MAPLE STREET) DAY.

David gets out of his "dad's" convertible, carrying a dozen "gray" roses. He takes a deep breath and heads up her front walk....

INT. CAR. DAY. LATER...

David sits behind the wheel of the borrowed car with Margaret Henderson by his side. He concentrates hard on the road, holding the wheel at "10 and 2" as he steals a glance to his right.

HIS POV. MARGARET

It's not quite evening yet, and late afternoon light makes her glow. Margaret smiles as she turns her face into the warm wind that swirls inside the convertible....

SHOT. DAVID

He studies her for a moment or two, then suddenly swerves to avoid a parked car on his right....

WIDER.

They pass a sign with a happy family on it that reads:
"NOW LEAVING PLEASANTVILLE"

INT. CAR.

Main Street turns into a winding country road as they leave the town behind and head off into the woods. They wind through the dense woodland for a moment or two before a second sign appears, much like the first:

"NOW ENTERING PLEASANTVILLE"

DIFFERENT ANGLE. THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD.

Sure enough, the town emerges in front of them again, completing the 4 dimensional circle. David looks confused.

MARGARET

Um...You gotta turn off Main Street.

DAVID

Oh...Right.

He looks over at her and smiles. Margaret turns on the radio.

EXT. CAR. DUSK.

SAM COOKE sings for them as David turns from Main Street onto a smaller unmarked lane. The car starts to rise up a small hill, with Dogwood trees blooming on either side of the road. It continues to climb up the narrow gravel lane toward the crest in the hill. David looks over at Margaret who takes a deep breath shutting her eyes. He glances down at the seat between them...

HIS POV. CAR SEAT.

THE ROSES THAT WERE GRAY HAVE SUDDENLY TURNED TO COLOR. They sit next to him on the seat: a deep, rich RED...

INT. CAR.

David looks up and out the windshield. The same thing seems to be happening around them.... Many of the Dogwoods have started to turn PINK. Not all of them, but at least fifty percent of the petals have "bloomed" in some weird false spring. The road twists and turns on its way to the top, as they finally reach a crest in the hill.

DAVID

Wow.

THEIR POV. LOVERS LANE

There, sitting in front of them, is a whole world gone Technicolor: THE LAKE IS BLUER THAN BLUE. THE WEEPING WILLOW IS GREENER THAN GREEN. THE DOGWOOD PETALS (all "turned" now) SWIRL IN THE WIND LIKE SOME STRANGE PINK SNOWSTORM. A LONG LINE OF PASTEL CARS STRETCHES OUT ALONG THE SHORE.

SAM COOKE (VO)
(over the car radios)

"Cupid, draw back your bow..."

SHOT. CAR.

Slowly, David rolls the convertible forward. Many of the kids have left their cars and sit down along the grassy bank by the edge of the water. A few of them have books open. It almost looks "Athenian."

INT. CAR.

David looks at the whole scene for a moment then suddenly cocks his head to the side.

DAVID

What's that smell?

WIDE ANGLE. LAKE.

A beautiful wild rose in mid-bloom eats up half the frame, while David and Margaret stare at the view in the distance.

EXT. MAIN STREET. DUSK

Betty is staring into the window of the FLOWER SHOP with a shopping bag on either hand. From a ways away, she looks like any other homemaker in Pleasantville. You don't even notice the gray make-up.

CLOSER. FOLLOWING BETTY.

She nods to Mrs. Filmore in the bakery and smiles at Don in the Post Office. Betty is just about to turn on Elm Street when she glances up, and suddenly stops.

HER POV. ACROSS THE STREET.

There, in the middle of the block, sits Mr. Johnson's soda shop. The whole scene is still black and white, except for the large CUBIST PAINTING THAT FILLS MR. JOHNSON'S WINDOW. It is rendered in bright PINKS, YELLOWS AND ORANGES, and looks like a Braque or a Picasso except for the unusual subject matter. Upon closer examination you see that all the spheres and cones add up to an avante garde snow scene, with a Cubist Santa hovering over the roof tops.

SHOT. BETTY

She stares at it, mesmerized for a moment, then starts to wander across the street. It's late afternoon and the business district is empty. Betty crosses in the middle of the block, staring straight ahead.

INT. SODA SHOP.

The door opens and she sticks her head inside. Most of the place is dark except for one streak of sunlight shining through the window near the back of the store. Betty glances around. The little bell JINGLES as she enters.

MR. JOHNSON (OS)

We're closed right now...

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

He sits in front of a small easel near the back, staring at a board which doubles as a canvas. Mr. Johnson glances over his shoulder and recognizes Betty in the doorway.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh, hi....

BETTY
(turning to leave)

I'm sorry....

MR. JOHNSON

No, no... Come on in.

REVERSE ANGLE.

He gets up from his stool and crosses toward the door, still holding the palette in his hand. Betty stares at the "Cubist Christmas" in the window.

BETTY

I just thought..... It's beautiful.

MR. JOHNSON

Thanks.

Their eyes lock for a second. Sort of a clutzy silence. Mr. Johnson motions toward his easel.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

I was just trying to do one of these "still lifes."

Having kind of a tough time.

He sighs and looks beside him. Next to the easel is a bowl of GRAY FRUIT. Betty moves down the counter, glancing at the painting.

BETTY

I think it looks nice.

MR. JOHNSON

Well...

(shrugs)

Here's what it's s'posed to look like.

He reaches across the counter and grabs the art book. It's open to a Cezanne that nearly burns off the page.

BETTY

Oh my....

CLOSER.

They are standing almost on top of each other gazing down at the book. Neither one of them moves. Betty almost disappears into the pictures--drawn by a strange new world.

MR. JOHNSON

Here. Look at this.

He turns to Kandinsky--a massive swirl of color. The image is nearly electric.

BETTY
(breathless)

Where'd you get this?

MR. JOHNSON

Bud brought it to me.

BETTY

My Bud?

MR. JOHNSON

Here's my favorite.

INSERT. BOOK.

He turns the page near the back to one of Picasso's "Weeping Women." The woman is rendered in pink and red and green. Her head is a large sphere, laying "peacefully" on her own shoulder.

27: From the tree of knowledge

WIDER

MR. JOHNSON

What do you think?

She doesn't answer...

MR. JOHNSON

Isn't it great how she's resting like that?

BETTY
(faintly)

She's crying.

MR. JOHNSON

No she's not.

BETTY

Yes she is.

He looks up at her.....

REVERSE ANGLE.

A single tear is running down Betty's cheek. She senses it and reaches up to wipe it quickly away, but instead of just wiping the tear, she takes off a huge swath of GRAY MAKE-UP. A long strip of PINK FLESH is revealed underneath.

ANGLE. MR. JOHNSON

He stares up at her in amazement.

ANGLE BETTY.

She senses something and glances down at her hand. Her fingertips are covered in GRAY MAKE-UP. Betty turns and bolts for the door.

WIDER.

MR. JOHNSON
(following her)

Wait...

BETTY

I've got to go....

MR. JOHNSON

It's alright.

He stops her near the door and she turns her face toward the wall. Mr. Johnson touches her shoulder.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

It's alright. Let me see.

BETTY
(shame)

No...

He reaches up and gently touches her chin. Mr. Johnson moves around to glimpse the other side of her cheek.

MR. JOHNSON

It's beautiful.

CLOSER...

She freezes like that for a moment, then slowly, haltingly, turns toward him. THE COLOR of her real flesh is revealed underneath. Betty stands there exposed.

MR. JOHNSON
(a whisper)

....It's beautiful.

She swallows, not sure what to do. Betty glances down.

MR. JOHNSON

You shouldn't cover that up.

Mr. Johnson reaches over to the little napkin dispenser on the counter and pulls one out. He leans forward and dabs at the tears beneath Betty's eyes. Then slowly, gently, he starts to wipe the makeup off her cheek.

CLOSER STILL

She recoils a bit, tensing up, then just looks at him. Mr. Johnson is gazing at her "true color" with wonder and acceptance. She hesitates for an instant, then seems to make a decision. Betty slowly turns her face to the side, exposing her flesh all the way down to the neck. Mr. Johnson continues to wipe off the make up in larger and larger strokes as the beautiful pink flesh begins to emerge....

CUT TO:

INT. JENNIFER'S (MARY SUE'S) ROOM. NIGHT.

She lies on her bed, reading the same book she was browsing earlier. Jennifer seems strangely engrossed as she flips the pages, lying on her stomach, scouring every word. After a moment or two she gets restless and shifts position, lifting the book. The cover is plainly visible: "LADY CHATTERLY'S LOVER."

CLOSER

She doesn't have enough light so Jennifer rises from the bed and crosses to "her" desk. She sits in the chair and flattens the book in front of her. Jennifer is deep into the plot and doesn't even look up as she flicks on the desk lamp. She could almost be studying algebra as she sits upright at the little desk.

DIFFERENT ANGLE

She flips the page and peers more intently. Her hair is bothering her so she pulls it back and knots it in a pony tail. It's cold by the open window and she puts on a sweater. After a little while her eyes begin to get more tired and she looks up and blinks a couple of times. Jennifer notices something across the desk.

REVERSE ANGLE.

A pair of Mary Sue's glasses are neatly folded in front of her. Jennifer reaches out, puts them on her head, glances back down at the print.

JENNIFER
(impressed)

Hunh.

She can see much clearer now. Jennifer folds her hands in front of her and doesn't even realize that she has mimicked the PHOTOGRAPH OF MARY SUE THAT SITS BESIDE HER IN A SILVER FRAME. The face is the same, but that's to be expected. So is the pony tail, the glasses, the posture and the studious look on her face. Jennifer turns the page engrossed in her novel when there is a loud TAP on the window.

She rises from the desk and pulls back the curtain. Jennifer slides open the window.

EXT. PARKER HOUSE

Skip stands on the front lawn tossing pebbles at the window.

SKIP

Mary Sue--C'mon....

JENNIFER
(leaning out the window)

What are you doing?

SKIP
(jiggling in anticipation)

It's six-thirty....

JENNIFER

So.

SKIP

We were gonna... You know...

He jiggles some more.

JENNIFER

Oh
(remembering)
...I can't.

SKIP

Why not?

She glances down at her book.

JENNIFER

I'm busy.

SKIP
(surprised)

With what?

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM.

She hesitates for a second then glances back at the desk. Her own image in the silver frame stares back at her. The hair is pulled back in a pony tail. The glasses sit on the front of her nose.

JENNIFER
(turning to Skip)

I'm studying.

She thinks about it for a moment, then suddenly smiles. Skip stands dumbfounded on the sidewalk as Jennifer reaches up and quietly closes the window...

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

David and Margaret sit on the edge of the grass, looking out across the water. Even in the moonlight, the COLORS are vivid. David still clutches the rose in his hand, taking a long hit like an Opium addict.

DAVID
(inhaling)

Mmmngh.

MARGARET

Do they have those...Where you come from?

DAVID

Yeah...I guess.
(beat)
I don't know.

MARGARET

You don't know?

Margaret laughs like that isn't even possible. She shifts on the

grass hiking her skirt up above the knee. It reveals a long tan leg beneath it. David watches as she kicks off her shoes, rubbing her feet through the long cool grass.

MARGARET

So what's it like?

DAVID

What?

MARGARET

(a whisper)

Out there.

She clings onto the words like they could transport her by themselves. David thinks for a moment.

DAVID

Oh. I don't know...It's different...

She leans forward.

MARGARET

How?

DAVID

Well it's louder...And scarier I guess...And...and a lot more dangerous...

MARGARET

Sounds fantastic. You know some kids came up here the other night to go swimming--took off all their clothes.

She giggles. David looks at her in amazement.

MARGARET

You want some berries?

DAVID

Hunh?

She unfolds a handkerchief revealing a handful of berries in REDS AND BLUES AND PURPLES.

MARGARET

I picked them myself. They grow wild up here.

DAVID

They do?

MARGARET
(looking straight up)

Oh yeah. There's a lot of stuff. Here. Look at this.
She hops up and scampers across the grassy bank, kicking her
heels
behind her. Margaret reaches a tree in the distance and
reaches
toward an upper limb, stretching out her body like a piece of
statuary. She picks a piece of fruit and scampers back toward
him,
hiking up her skirt as she goes....

MARGARET

Here.

CLOSER

Margaret sticks out her hand, offering him a BRIGHT RED APPLE.
It's brilliant and shiny and glistens in the moonlight.

ANGLE. DAVID

He hesitates just looking at it. Margaret speaks in a whisper

MARGARET

Go on. Try it.

HIS POV

She is lying on her stomach now, and behind the outstretched apple
he can see an ample view of her cleavage. Margaret is smiling at
him as the apple shines in the foreground. David reaches out and
takes it.

WIDER. DAVID AND MARGARET

For this instant, they seem alone in the garden. He looks down at
it, then glances over at Margaret. David hesitates for a split
second then takes a bite of the apple...

CUT TO:

28: Rain

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT

George heads home with his briefcase in hand whistling a happy tune. He smiles at Mr. Simpson and swings the attache case as he turns and heads up his front walk.

INT. FOYER

George opens the door and sets the briefcase by the stairs like he always does. He hangs his hat on the hatrack, his coat on the coatrack, and beams as he hollers his nightly greeting:

GEORGE

Honey--I'm home.

There is no response, just a BOOMING CLAP OF THUNDER. He looks a little perplexed but smiles as he calls out again:

GEORGE (CONT)

Honey--I'm home...

CUT TO:

INT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT.

Betty sits in a corner of the shop, next to the gray bowl of fruit. She holds her head to the side, sitting gracefully with her chin in the air. Mr. Johnson sits behind his easel, painting her portrait from a few feet away. Betty looks radiant with no trace of the makeup, the warm PINK OF HER FLESH TONES lit softly by a bare forty watt bulb...

CLOSER

She looks over at Mr. Johnson when they hear the BOOMING CLAP OF THUNDER. Each of them freezes. There is ANOTHER, LOUDER BOOM....

ANGLE. WINDOW

The "Cubist Snow scene" lights up brightly, illuminated by the sudden flash of lightning behind it. Betty leaps up from the chair and crosses to the window looking out.

BETTY
(frightened)

What is that?

MR. JOHNSON

I don't know.

Betty looks back at Mr. Johnson and suddenly sees the painting. She flinches for a second. Her eyes go wide.

REVERSE ANGLE. INCLUDING THE PAINTING

It is cubist (like the rest of his recent work) but that isn't the shocking part. Even though she sits in front of him fully clothed, Mr. Johnson has painted a beautiful, sensual nude. Betty just stares at the canvas, stunned to see herself revealed like that. The COLORS are all hot pinks and oranges and yellows--like some Fauvist celebration of summertime. There is another even LOUDER

PEEL OF THUNDER.

WIDER. BETTY AND MR. JOHNSON

She looks over at Mr. Johnson and he glances down. After a moment or two he looks back at her, but she doesn't turn to run. Betty just stares at him, then without even realizing it, moves slightly closer.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

David and Margaret are locked in a deep passionate kiss. At first they don't separate when they hear the BOOMING CLAP OF THUNDER. It is only when they hear the SECOND ONE and the RAIN starts to fall, that Margaret pulls back and looks up in the sky.

MARGARET

What is that?

ANGLE. DAVID

He is still in an amorous daze and doesn't even feel the increasing rain. It starts to pound harder and Margaret looks to him in terror.

MARGARET (CONT)

What's going on?

DAVID

Rain.

MARGARET

Real rain?

DAVID

Yeah... You don't have rain either?

She looks at him frightened. David smiles.

DAVID

Right. Of course you don't...

He puts his jacket around her and starts to lead her up the grassy slope. A dozen other couples go scurrying up the bank, looking in terror at the water falling from the sky.

MARGARET

What do we do?

DAVID
(reaching the car)

We'll just put up the top.

He goes fishing around the boot of the car, looking for the catch to release it. David leans into the back seat fishing around as the rain starts to pound harder.

MARGARET

What top?

He looks back at her. No top either. David smiles, drenched in rain and puts his arm around Margaret who is starting to shiver.

DAVID

It's fine. Come on.

ACROSS THE POND...

He leads her back to a thicket of bushes where several of the kids are clustered together. They look at one another, terrified, as they huddle for shelter beneath the ledge of an overhanging rock.

DAVID

It's alright. There's nothing to be afraid of. See?
David points his face toward the sky, letting the water pound

on

him. They look a little reassured as he closes his eyes

against

the storm...

CUT TO:

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM. NIGHT.

She stands at the window looking out at the driving rain. Jennifer still holds the D.H. Lawrence book in her hand. There is a huge flash of lightning and another clap of thunder.

JENNIFER

Cool...

She flops back down on the bed and continues to read...

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM

George wanders through the empty and darkened house completely perplexed and utterly disoriented. He looks around for his family, but all he can find are the darkened rooms and the sound of the driving storm.

GEORGE

Honey, I'm home.
(a little frightened/a little petulant)
Honey, I'm home.....

INT. KITCHEN.

He still can't find her as he crosses into the KITCHEN. The lights are dark there as well and he looks around confused.

GEORGE (CONT)
(baffled)

Where's my dinner?

He sniffs a couple of times but there are no familiar cooking smells. George crosses to the stove.

GEORGE

Where's my dinner...
(beat)
Where's my dinner...

INT. FOYER

George comes reeling out of the kitchen into the foyer. He slams his shin on the coatrack but keeps on going....

GEORGE
(insistent)

Where's my DINNER....

EXT. HOUSE.

It's really blowing now. The rain is coming down in heavy sheets, being swirled and driven by the wind. The front door opens and George wanders out onto the front porch, still dressed in his shirtsleeves.

GEORGE

Where's my DINNER!

ON GEORGE

He stumbles down the front walk in a state of complete confusion.

The rain pounds against his body and within seconds his shirt is soaked through to the skin.

GEORGE
(over the storm)

WHERE'S MY DINNER.....

EXT. ELM STREET.

He keeps stumbling through the torrent. George reels down Elm Street screaming skyward in the distance.

GEORGE

...WHERE'S MY DINNER! WHERE'S MY DINNER!

SERIES OF SHOTS. FOLLOWING GEORGE....

He turns on Main Street and goes reeling past the insurance agency where he works. George howls into the wind and he passes the hardware store, the gas station, the bakery.....

Finally he pauses outside the barbershop. It's empty as well with the spinning barber pole being buffeted by the rain. George lowers his arms and just stares into the darkened shop. His voice grows quieter: bewildered and shivering....

GEORGE
(plaintively)

Where's my dinner?

He wraps his arms around himself and shivers on the sidewalk....

29: A question of values

INT. BOWLING ALLEY. NIGHT.

The regular occupants of the barber shop spread out across three lanes. Each wears a Pleasantville bowling shirt, sponsored by one of Big Bob's businesses.

The NOISE from the crashing pins is deafening and there aren't any windows so the storm has gone unnoticed...

ANGLE. BIG BOB.

He picks up a 7-10 split and claps his hands in delight. He starts to cross back to the scorer's table when he looks up and suddenly stops.

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV

George is standing in the doorway to the bowling alley cold and shivering. His shirt is soaked through to the skin. His hair is drenched and dripping.

BOB

What happened?

He doesn't answer. George clutches his body and keeps shivering.

WIDER.

The men stop bowling and rush to George's side. He blinks a couple of times, still soaked to the bone.

BOB

Are you alright?
(looking at him)
What is it?

GEORGE
(faintly)

Rain.

BOB
(beat)

Real rain?

George nods. Bob rushes to the glass door of the bowling alley and sees the driving storm. A huge fork of lightning lights up the sky.

BOB

Oh my God....

George shivers and Bob leads him over to one of the benches and guides him into the seat...

BOB

Are you alright?

GEORGE
(still shivering)

...I came home like I always do. And I came in the front door. And I took off my coat. And I put down my briefcase and I said "Honey. I'm home."

The men all nod in recognition.

GEORGE

...Only no one was there.

A MURMUR goes through the men.

GEORGE (CONT)

So I went into the kitchen and I yelled it again.
"Honey--I'm home." But there was no one there either. No
wife. No lights. No dinner.

They all GASP.

GEORGE (CONT)

So I went to the oven you know--because I thought maybe
she had made me one of those "TV dinners..."

The men nod and lean forward. George shakes his head.

GEORGE (CONT)

But she hadn't. She was gone. And I looked and looked
and looked -- but she was gone.

A LOUDER MURMUR moves through the crowd. George lowers his head
and just shakes it from side to side. Big Bob moves up and puts a
hand on his shoulder.

BOB

(gently/the patriarch)

...It's gonna be fine George. You're with 'us' now.
George looks up at him helplessly. Bob pats him on the back
and crosses away, gathering his thoughts.

GUS

What do we do Bob?

BOB

Well--we'll be safe for now--thank goodness we're in a
bowling alley--but if George here doesn't get his
dinner, any one of us could be next. It could be you
Gus, or you Burt, or even you Ralph....

They murmur again. Bob gathers a little steam.

BOB (CONT)

(like a WWII movie)

...That's real rain out there gentlemen. This isn't some
little "virus" that's going to "clear up on it's own."
There's something happening to our town and I think we
can all see where it comes from.

He turns to one of the men in front.

BOB

Burt, why don't you show them what you showed me before.

BURT

Bob...

BOB

Go on. Show them.

Burt glances around then slowly unzips his windbreaker. He lowers the jacket to reveal a HUGE BURN mark on the back in the shape of a STEAM IRON. There are MURMURS...

BOB (CONT)

He asked her what she was doing and she said "nothing".

She was just "thinking".

There are more MURMURS.

BOB (CONT)

My friends, this isn't about George's dinner or Burt's shirt. It's a question of values. It's a question of whether we're gonna hold onto the values that have made this place great.

There are nods of agreement.

BOB (CONT)

So the time has come to make a decision. Are we in this alone, or are we in it together?

MEN

Together... together...

Bob smiles and places a reassuring hand on George's shoulder.

CUT TO:

30: Caught in the storm

CLOSE UP. A BRIGHT RED ROSE.

Drops of moisture cling to the petals as it GLEAMS BRILLIANT RED
IN THE MORNING SUN....

AERIAL SHOT. PLEASANTVILLE.

The rain is gone now. The town glistens in the sunlight complete
with a huge RAINBOW arching across the sky. Literally all the
COLORS IN THE RAINBOW shine against the black and white of the
town. It looks like a greeting card.

INT. SODA SHOP.

Betty and Mr. Johnson are asleep in the booth, lying in each
other's arms. Sunlight streams in through the window, warming Mr.
Johnson's face which has now turned to color. He opens his eyes
and looks outside...

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM.

She has passed out on her bed with her book on her chest.
Jennifer's hair is still tied in a bun and she still wears Mary
Sue's glasses, but her face has returned to its rosy pink hue. She
blinks open her eyes, feeling the sunlight, and looks out the
window.

EXT. LOVER'S LANE

Birds are chirping. David and Margaret also lie asleep in each
other's arms, beneath the shelter of the rocky overhang. Margaret
lifts up and sees the vista. She has turned to color as well...

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP. MILK BOTTLES.

They jingle happily in their metal carrier, just as they did
before. The CAMERA WIDENS out to REVEAL Elm Street in all its
idyllic glory, with one notable exception: In the foreground is
the trunk of a tree with a hastily scrawled public notice tacked
to the bark:

TOWN MEETING TONIGHT
ALL "TRUE" CITIZENS
OF PLEASANTVILLE

CUT TO:

INT. PARKER KITCHEN. DAY.

George and Betty stand face to face in their suburban kitchen. He
is black and white. She is in full color.

BETTY

I told you where I was.

GEORGE

All night?

BETTY

I got caught in the storm. You were gone all night too.

GEORGE
(the ultimate defense)

I was in a bowling alley.

Betty turns--glances out the window.

GEORGE
(sudden smile)

Look. Let's just forget about it. Let's just go to the meeting and....

BETTY

I told you, George. I'm not going.

GEORGE
(bigger smile)

Sure you are.

BETTY

No I'm not.

She turns to face him. George flinches slightly.

BETTY

Look at me George. That meeting's not for me. Look at my face.

GEORGE

It's fine. You'll put on some make up and....

BETTY

I don't want to put on some make up...

George's eyes widen. It's a watershed moment.

GEORGE
(protesting)

It goes away.... It'll go away.

BETTY

(gently)

I don't want it to go away.

He suddenly squares back his shoulders and puffs out his chest.

GEORGE
(the '50s patriarch)

Okay--now you listen to me....

(beat)

You're gonna come to this meeting and you're gonna put
on this make up, and you're gonna come home at six
o'clock every night and have dinner ready on this table.

BETTY
(softly)

No I'm not sweetie.

His expression leaves as quickly as it came. Betty moves closer to
him.

BETTY
(half whisper)

...There's a meat loaf in the fridge. You just put it in
the oven and turn this little knob up to three-fifty. If
you put the pie in forty minutes later, it'll be hot in
time for dessert.

George's eyes widen.

BETTY (CONT)

I made a couple of lunches for you and put them in brown
paper bags....

(much quieter)

I'm gonna go now.

GEORGE

Where are you gonna go?

BETTY

I'm gonna go now.

She turns and starts out the kitchen door when George calls after
her.

GEORGE

Betty, don't go out there like that! They'll see you!

(beat)

They'll SEE you!

And she closes the door behind her....

GEORGE

Betty, come back here!

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT

David and Margaret stand beneath the big Elm tree outside Margaret's house: a statue of two young lovers. The meeting across town seems a million miles away. Margaret holds a beautiful new umbrella tied with a bright red bow.

MARGARET

It's beautiful. Where'd you get it?

DAVID

It was a prop for the school play....

MARGARET

Can I open it?

DAVID

Sure.

Margaret gives him a little giggle then opens the umbrella. She puts it back on her shoulder and turns a series of pirouettes--like her own kind of rain dance. Margaret points her face up to the sky as if she is being showered by a summer storm. All at once a pair of HEADLIGHTS round the corner.

WIDER

David grabs the umbrella and closes it quickly. Margaret looks to the street as the convertible slows to a crawl and two TEENAGE BOYS, WHITEY AND PETE, pull up beside them. They are clean cut with BLACK AND WHITE faces....

WHITEY

Hello Bud.... Hello Margaret.

DAVID

(clipped)

Hello Whitey.

The two boys smile at each other for no good reason. It's scary and arrogant.

WHITEY

(loud)

Hey Bud, how come you're not at the town meeting right now?

DAVID

(curt)

No reason.

(pause/firing back)

How come you're not?

WHITEY

Oh. We're s'posed to go out and let everybody know about it. See.

He points to an ARMBAND that has some sort of Chamber of Commerce seal on it. Whitey leans out of the car and leers....

WHITEY

I thought maybe it was cause you were too busy entertaining your colored girlfriend.

Margaret literally flinches. The boys share a PEEL OF LAUGHTER AND SNORT AT EACH OTHER. David puts an arm around her and pulls her close.

DAVID

Why don't you guys just get the hell out of here.

WHITEY

Oh, okay, Bud. We'll do that.

He guns the engine as if to leave, then pauses and turns toward Margaret.

WHITEY (CONT)

You know Margaret, you can come over and bake those Oatmeal cookies for me anytime you want to.

They share another CHORTLE as Whitey guns the car and peels out with a SCREECH. Margaret's lip starts to quiver and David holds her tighter....

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN HALL - NIGHT

The Chamber of Commerce insignia hangs over the entrance to the building...

INT. TOWN HALL. NIGHT.

The chamber of commerce meeting is in full swing. Various citizens

are on their feet, screaming from the audience.

WOMAN

Burt Campbell's got a blue front door.

BURT

It's always been blue!

WOMAN

Not that blue!

CLOSE UP. GEORGE.

He sits up on the stage in an honored position right behind Bob. George wears the new silver "handshake" PIN in his lapel: it's first official flight. He sits stoically upright with the sense of sobriety that only a shiny new pin can give you.

BOB

People, people.... I think we all know what's going on here.

SHOT. BOB.

Bob lifts his hands in the air. The crowd quiets down a bit.

BOB (CONT)

Obviously certain "changes" have been happening. Up until now, things in Pleasantville have always been-- well... "Pleasant." And, recently, certain things have become... "Un-Pleasant." Now it seems to me the first thing we have to do is to separate out the things that are pleasant, from the things that are "Un-Pleasant."

There is a loud murmur and nod of agreement....

BOB

George, why don't you and Burt take the lead on this. Why don't you put together kind of an "Un-Pleasant Activities Committee...."

CUT TO:

31: A lovely shade of blue

INT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT.

Mr. Johnson has scrubbed the snow scene from the window and stares with his palette at a blank pane of glass. There is a knock at the door....

WIDER.

Mr. Johnson puts down the paints and crosses to open it. Betty is standing in the doorway clutching her purse and a "Lady Samsonite Weekender" bag. She stares up into his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAWN

First rays of sunlight peek over the roofs of buildings.

FULL SHOT. SHOP WINDOW. MORNING.

Mr. Simpson opens up the hardware store like he does every morning, only today there is a slight difference. He swings open the door, puts out the rakes and shovels, then sets a newly handwritten sign clearly in the front window:

"NO COLOREDS"

SERIES OF SHOTS. SHOP WINDOWS.

As the businesses are opened on Main Street, more and more "NO COLOREDS" signs appear in the windows: next to the donuts... by fishing poles... beside the stationery supplies... Everything else looks frighteningly the same....

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. MORNING.

Joey Anderson, the local paper boy, is finishing his morning rounds. He reaches in his bag and tosses left toward the bakery. Then he throws right toward the post office. Then he turns left toward the soda shop, does a double take and slams into a trash can....

WIDER. SODA SHOP.

Where Mr. Johnson had once painted his cubist snow scene, there is a brand new painting that isn't cubist at all. A NUDE version of Betty graces the shop window--painted in curving sensual brush strokes. Joey stops his bike and just stares in amazement. He gets up and rides away as fast as he possibly can...

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. LATER.

David is in a happy daze, wandering up Main Street and doesn't even notice the crowd gathered outside Mr. Johnson's soda shop. After a moment or two, he glances up and sees the window....

CLOSER. DAVID

His eyes go wide. The murmur of the crowd grows louder as stray derisive comments rise above the noise. David glances from the nude in window to the growing angry mob...

EXT. MAIN STREET. DAY.

David goes tearing through the business district looking for any sign of his "mother." He glances in the flower shop... toward the green grocer.... David is just about to turn on Elm street when a booming voice seems to come from the sky....

TV REPAIRMAN (OS)

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

David stops and looks to his right. There, in the window of the Philco TV store, are twenty screens of various sizes displaying the image of the TV Repairman.

TV REPAIRMAN

Get in here! NOW!

The sound reverberates like God Himself. David ducks inside the store, slamming the door behind him.

INT. STORE.

There are fifty screens. David glances around, not sure where to look.

TV REPAIRMAN

You think this is a toy? You think it's your own little goddamn coloring book...

DAVID

Look -- it just sort of happened.

TV REPAIRMAN

A deluge doesn't 'just happen'. Bolts of lightning don't 'just happen'.

DAVID

(finding courage)

I didn't do anything wrong.

TV REPAIRMAN

Oh no? Let me show you something!

SHOT. TV SCREEN.

All at once a box appears in the upper right hand corner of the screen containing the image of David and Margaret at Lover's Lane. The VIDEOTAPE rolls forward as she extends the BRIGHT RED APPLE. David hesitates, then takes it, then puts it to his mouth and takes a bite.

TV REPAIRMAN

"YOU DON'T DESERVE THIS PLACE."

The image of David biting the apple PLAYS BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS like some football instant replay....

TV REPAIRMAN (CONT)

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE IN THIS PARADISE!

WIDER.

David just stares at the repeated images of TV Repairman on the TV screens.

TV REPAIRMAN
(quickly)

Where's the remote control I gave you?

DAVID

Why?

TV REPAIRMAN

Because you're coming home. I'm gonna put this place back the way it was.

DAVID

I can't let you do that.

TV REPAIRMAN

WHAT!?

DAVID
(gathering strength)

I'm sorry.... I can't let you do that.

TV REPAIRMAN
(nuts)

JUST GIMME THE GODDAMN REMOTE!

He lunges toward the screen and slams his hand against the

"barrier."

TV REPAIRMAN (CONT)

OW!

DAVID
(backing out)

I'm gonna go now.

TV REPAIRMAN

You're not going anywhere! You're gonna get that remote
and you're gonna come home and we're gonna make
everybody HAPPY AGAIN!!!

(exits)

Don't make me get rough with you! I can get awfully
fucking rough!

EXT. TOWN SQUARE. DAY.

David bolts from the store, breathless and terrified. He glances
at the shop windows with their "NO COLOREDS" signs prominently
displayed. In the distance he hears shouting. David rounds the
corner onto Main Street and sees a crowd at the other end. He
stops and stares at them...

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

The crowd is moving toward him. A woman walks in front of a group
of young men who circle around her, taunting and harassing her. A
moment later David can make out the face: BETTY clutches her
handbag to her chest while the crowd circles her like a pack of
dogs.

CLOSER. BETTY

The ROSY HUE of her face stands out in stark relief to the black
and white faces around her. Betty holds her head high with dignity
(and fear) while the ugly epithets overlap one another:
"Oooh--let's see the rest of you... Let's see what's under that
nice blue dress.... Bet she's even pinker than her picture..."
One of the boys yanks at Betty's skirt and she quickens her pace.
Just at that moment the boy is shoved to the ground....

WIDER.

David shields his "mother" as he shoves one of the boys into the
dirt. The kid gets up but David punches him hard in the side of
the jaw and the rest of them just stare. (Violence is as new as
anything else and it seems to freeze the moment.) David steps in
front of his "mother" with both fists clenched.

DAVID
(as scared as she is)

Come on!

He plants his back foot primed for action. The crowd of black and white thugs just stares at it.

DAVID

COME ON!

ANGLE. CROWD

They look at him warily. The boy reaches up and feels the side of his mouth where a trickle of RED BLOOD is running down his chin. He looks at his finger in horror and starts backing away.

DAVID

Get out of here!

They back away further and David takes a threatening step. The boys turn and run as he turns back to face his "mother."
DIFFERENT ANGLE. BETTY. (OVER DAVID'S SHOULDER)

David moves up to her gently.

DAVID

Are you alright?

She nods, still clutching her purse to her chest. David reaches out and touches her cheek when suddenly her eyes go wide.

DAVID
(off her look)

What?

CLOSER. STILL OVER DAVID'S SHOULDER

Betty reaches into her purse and pulls out her compact. She opens it, and holds it up to David, showing him the reflected image of his own face. AT LAST HE HAS TURNED TO COLOR.

REVERSE ANGLE. DAVID

He holds the mirror staring at his own reflection. The courage which transformed him only seems to grow. They look at each other, both in color now, when David puts a gentle arm around her shoulder.

DAVID
(quietly)

Come on.

He begins to lead her up toward the corner.

CUT TO:

32: Code of conduct

FULL SHOT. SODA SHOP WINDOW. DAY.

A larger crowd of hooligans has now gathered around the nude painting of Betty in the window. The jeers and cat calls are even louder. The "closed" sign still sits in the doorway. After a beat or two, a HUGE BRICK SHATTERS THE GLASS...

WIDER

A big CHEER goes up from the crowd. Drunk on adrenaline, the fever builds and ANOTHER BRICK SMASHES THE WINDOW. In an instant, Mr. Johnson's "canvas" is totally destroyed. The CHEERING grows louder...

Almost by osmosis, the crowd rushes the building together. The door is kicked in and they stream into the place. Soon all that can be heard is the weird SOUND OF LAUGHTER AND BROKEN GLASS.

INT. SODA SHOP.

It is an orgy of destruction. Stools are hurled--tables ripped out. The cash register is turned over. Two boys kick in the front of the juke box...

EXT. MAIN ST. DAY

David and Betty round the corner to find the Soda Shop being destroyed. They stand at the far side of the intersection watching the carnage as the crowd continues to run amok. After a moment or two, there are some more HOOTS as MARGARET comes running toward them with the front of her blouse ripped open.

DAVID

Oh my God.

He takes her in his arms and Margaret starts to sob. David strokes her hair.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. (LEADING TO LOVER'S LANE). DUSK.

They all ride in George's convertible up the twisting turning road. It has turned completely PINK with the dogwood petals. David winds up the trail, in the fading light, looking for refuge. All at once, he slams on the brakes.

THEIR POV: LOVER'S LANE THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

A phalanx of BLACK AND WHITE THUGS have created a roadblock across the entrance. It is a weird incongruous image; the black and white barrier in the foreground with the lush green pond beyond. They have turned their cars sideways across the road. They hold axe-handles in their hands.

BETTY

We better go.

EXT. MAIN STREET. NIGHT

Darkness has fallen and the streetlamps have come on. Some debris is scattered around the street and distant sounds of the mob still fill the air. David rolls back into town with the headlights off.

CLOSER. CAR.

MARGARET

Where are they?

DAVID

I'm not sure.

They head down Main St. and turn the corner on Walnut. All at once, a weird ORANGE LIGHT bathes the car....

REVERSE ANGLE. THEIR POV

A BONFIRE has been lit in the middle of the street between the library and the barber shop. Twenty to thirty people are gathered around it still whooping and hollering as the bright ORANGE FLAMES shoot into the air.

ANGLE. CAR.

David pulls over by the curb, and their eyes go wide....

REVERSE ANGLE.

From closer up, it becomes clear what they're burning. Huge piles of library books have been dumped onto the sidewalk, waiting their turn on the pyre. There is a strange celebratory atmosphere as they chuck book after book on the flames, with the glee of a teenager tossing a firecracker. David sees something and bolts from the car...

DAVID

Oh my God.

ANGLE. SIDE OF THE BONFIRE.

Jennifer is locked in some strange wrestling match with Skip. He clutches a book over her head while she tugs at his wrist trying to stop him from throwing it on the fire.....

SKIP

Just let go.

JENNIFER

No!

SKIP

It's better, Mary Sue.

JENNIFER

I said, NO!

(yanking it)

...I've read like one book in my whole life and I'm not gonna let you throw it on that fire....

Jennifer wrestles with him for a couple of seconds and then suddenly kicks Skip in the groin. He doubles over in agony when Jennifer snatches the book and bolts in the other direction.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. STREET.

She sprints up the street and is just passing the barber shop when David steps out of the shadows...

DAVID

It's me.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT. SODA SHOP. OTHER SIDE OF MAIN STREET

The crowd has moved on and all that is left is the dark wreckage of the soda shop. Several stools lie out in the street and shards of brightly painted glass are scattered around the sidewalk. It is eerily quiet.

WIDER.

David, Betty, Jennifer and Margaret sit silently in the car, across the street with the lights off. He unlatches the door handle and gets out slowly. The rest of them follow him into the empty street as they move silently toward the soda shop, like some platoon on patrol.

REVERSE ANGLE.

As they get closer, more of the wreckage comes into view. Half a booth... a soda spigot.... After a moment or two Jennifer looks up

and gasps.

CLOSER

Several teenagers step out of the shadows. They have scraped faces and ripped clothing--the signs. Most are dazed and ALL OF THEM ARE IN COLOR. After a second or two, more appear: Betty Jean... Peggy Jane... Lisa Anne and her boyfriend... Will, the boy who was reading Huck Finn... Tommy...

ANGLE. DAVID

The kids turn to him as if he has some kind of answer. Of course he doesn't. The sounds of the Mob still carry through the air from somewhere off in the distance.

DAVID

Let's go inside.

INT. SODA SHOP.

The place is just sad. All the remnants of what they had are strewn around the floor. The jukebox is turned over. The stools are ripped out of the floor. Betty looks over at the corner where he painted her... The easel is smashed to bits.

ANGLE BETTY

She brings a knuckle to her lip and David puts an arm around her and draws her close. After a moment or two they HEAR a weird SCRAPING sound.

DAVID

Hello?

The SCRAPING SOUND stops. They all look to the open door and after a second or two, Mr. Johnson appears holding a broom and dustpan.

MR. JOHNSON

Just thought I'd try to tidy it up a bit.

Betty runs across and throws her arms around him. The teenagers watch as she holds him tight.

MR. JOHNSON

It's okay. Once we sweep it up it'll be alright again....

Betty stifles a sob as he strokes her hair. No one says anything while they just embrace for a moment. Finally...

DAVID

start
and
to

Well he's right. Come on. Let's turn these booths back up. "Mary Sue", why don't you help me slide this in front of the door. We'll be okay in here.

They respond to the tone of leadership. One by one the kids

to pitch in, sifting their way through the wreckage. Jennifer

David slide a barricade in front of the door as the kids try

put their shop back together.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWN HALL. (CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEETING) NIGHT.

Big Bob stands at the podium addressing a packed house. The atmosphere is odd: somewhere between a bake-off and a lynching. People sit in the aisles and in the window sills. Bob points his finger.

BOB

This is not the answer people.

The crowd quiets a bit. He leans over the lectern.

BOB

No matter how upset we may get, or how frustrated we may be, we're not gonna solve our problems out in the street. It's just the wrong way to do it. We have to have a "Code of Conduct" we can all agree to live by.

His tone grows softer--more concerned....

BOB

Now, I asked George and Burt here to sketch out some ideas--and I think they've done a terrific job.

(beat / scans the crowd)

If we all agree on these then we can take a vote and I think we'll start to move in the right direction.

ANGLE. CROWD.

They murmur and nod....

BOB

(reading from the "CODE OF CONDUCT")

"ONE: All public disruption and acts of vandalism are to cease immediately."

EXT. BONFIRE. NIGHT.

It is still ablaze with books. Bob continues to READ in VOICE OVER.

SHOT. FIRETRUCK.

The same fireman who learned to use the hose before can barely contain his excitement as he gets to open the valve and extinguish the raging bonfire...

BOB

"TWO: All citizens of Pleasantville are to treat one another in a courteous and 'pleasant' manner..."

SERIES OF SHOTS. LAMPPOSTS.

The CODE OF CONDUCT is nailed to lampposts and tree trunks in rapid succession. It is plastered on walls and in shop windows...

EXT. SODA SHOP.

Debris is still strewn around the street. A dim light emanates from inside.

INT. SODA SHOP.

It looks like a scene from the French Revolution. Ten to fifteen kids huddle behind the barricade while David reads the code of conduct out loud by flashlight.

LISA ANNE

"Courteous and Pleasant manner." That doesn't sound too bad.

David just looks at her then continues.

DAVID

(reading from THE CODE)

"THREE: The area commonly known as Lover's Lane as well as the Pleasantville Public Library shall be closed until further notice."

This sends a murmur amongst the kids.

DAVID (CONT)

"FOUR: The only permissible recorded music shall be the following: Pat Boone, Johnny Mathis, Perry Como, Jack Jones, The marches of John Phillips Souza or the Star Spangled Banner. In no event shall any music be tolerated that is not of a temperate or "pleasant" nature.

VARIOUS KIDS

(overlapping)

"Oh my gosh.... No...."

David holds up his hand.

DAVID

"FIVE: There shall be no public sale of umbrellas or preparation for inclement weather of any kind."
Various glances dart back and forth between them. David

continues.

DAVID

"SIX: No bedframe or mattress may be sold measuring more than 38 inches wide.

(pause)

"SEVEN: The only permissible paint colors shall be BLACK, WHITE or GRAY, despite the recent availability of certain alternatives."

David looks over at Mr. Johnson who just winces slightly. Betty clutches his hand.

DAVID

"EIGHT: All elementary and high school curriculums shall teach the "non-changist" view of history--emphasizing "continuity" over "alteration."

(David pauses....)

Wow.

David lowers the paper.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

It is SILENT in the soda shop. Everyone sits motionless for a moment or two, letting the decree sink in. David just stares down at the piece of paper in his hand with a weird kind of sadness. Off in the corner, however, one of the boys has been fiddling with the jukebox and hasn't paid any attention to what was being read. All of a sudden, his voice rings from the corner.

WILL

Hey. This thing still works.

He hits a button and BUDDY HOLLY's voice fills the soda shop. RAVE ON blares at almost top volume recalling a more festive time.

BUDDY HOLLY

Well all the things that you say and do
Make me want to be with you-oo-oo....

LISA ANNE

(suddenly/in a panic)

Turn that off!

The boy looks back at her.

LISA ANNE
(shrieking)

You're not allowed to do that now!

He flinches and pulls the plug from the wall. The jukebox winds down with a groan as the electricity drains out of it. David looks at the kids then suddenly speaks in a calm clear tone.

DAVID

Sure you are.

He walks across the soda shop and plugs it back in. The kids watch spellbound at this personal display of defiance.

WIDER SHOT. SODA SHOP.

Buddy Holly's voice fills the Soda Shop but it has a suddenly different meaning. All the kids listen spellbound, as if to an anthem, while the Rock and Roll lives up to its rebellious reputation.

BUDDY HOLLY

The little things that you say and do
Make we want to be with you-oo-oo...
RAVE ON! It's a crazy feeling...
RAVE ON! It's got me reelin'...

Jennifer looks over at her brother with pride. Betty puts an arm around Mr. Johnson, feeling a little stronger-- a little safer... The kids seem to relax a bit, and even if they don't feel totally reassured, at least they don't feel ashamed. Twenty "colored" faces listen as Buddy Holly tells them RAVE ON. David stands beside the jukebox like a captain at the helm of his ship....

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE. NIGHT.

The Fire Department is cleaning up the charred remains of the bonfire...

33: Civil disobedience

INT. SODA SHOP. LATER...

The kids sleep on the floor. Betty is asleep in one of the booths.

David and Margaret sleep next to the juke box with Margaret curled up against his chest. David opens his eyes.

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV

Mr. Johnson is standing in the middle of the shop, staring at the large piece of plywood where his window used to be. He just gazes at the thing as if he could look through it. There's a faraway look in his eye.

SHOT. DAVID

He rises carefully from the booth, without waking Margaret. David crosses over to Mr. Johnson and speaks in a whisper.

DAVID

It's okay. We'll get you a new one.

MR. JOHNSON

(softly)

...I don't know what I'd do if I couldn't paint anymore Bud. I just don't know what I'd do...

CLOSE UP. DAVID

He just nods. David glances down at the table next to him. He picks up one of the brightly painted shards of glass and just looks at it. It's orange and pink and yellow. David thinks for a second.

DAVID

Maybe I have an idea.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. DAWN.

The same paper boy who rode into the trash can, peddles down Main Street tossing his papers toward the curb. He throws right toward the post office, then left toward the hardware store, then right toward the bakery, then finally looks up.

CLOSER

This time the boy slams into a trash can. He tumbles off his bike and stares straight ahead in disbelief...

HIS POV. TOWN HALL.

Two men sleep at the base of the wall next to a clutter of paint cans. Above them, however, is painted A VIVID ALMOST UTOPIAN MURAL OF THE TOWN OF PLEASANTVILLE in LIVING COLOR. Instead of being drab, the place literally gleams with life. The post office turns out to be a RICH RED BRICK. The sky shines in vibrant BLUE. It is

a rendering of what the town could look like..... David and Mr. Johnson sleep soundly next to their own signatures.

ANGLE. PAPER BOY.

He turns around and rides and away as fast as he can.

CLOSE UP. DAVID AND MR. JOHNSON.

David opens his eyes. Mr. Johnson stirs a moment later. They look straight in front of them...

THEIR POV

A small crowd has gathered gawking at the brilliant colors revealed in front of them. There is a growing BUZZ in the air...

ANGLE. DAVID.

He smiles slightly as the BUZZ gets louder.

HIS POV (TIME CUT)

The crowd has grown, as has the noise. A good portion of Pleasantville stares at the massive mural plastered across the police station... All at once, Big Bob fights his way through the front of the crowd...

MEDIUM SHOT. DAVID AND MR. JOHNSON

They sit upright in front of their creation proud, difficult. The NOISE of the crowd grows even LOUDER. The bright colors glisten in the sunshine...

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. NIGHT.

A group of "colored" kids hangs out by the police station. They stare off in the distance, at the orange light glowing from David's jail cell.

INT. JAIL CELL. NIGHT.

CLOSE UP - NEWSPAPER

A large advertisement on the back page reads:

VERY FIRST
"TOMORROW! TOWN HALL 10 AM! PLEASANTVILLE'S
TRIAL EVER!"

It depicts a cheery judge holding up his gavel with a smile. David lowers the paper and looks around his new surroundings.

34: The trial

REVERSE ANGLE. JAIL CELL.

The place has never been used so there is still plastic wrapping on all the sheets and pillow cases. He can't help smiling. David hears the jingling of keys...

SHOT. POLICE CHIEF.

He approaches David's cell from the other direction and knocks gently on the bars. David turns around.

DAN

There's someone to see you Bud.

He sits upright on the bunk trying to think who it could be. After a moment, he hears the sound of the key turning in the lock.

DAVID

Oh, hi...

REVERSE ANGLE.

George enters the cell carrying his jacket and a small brown paper bag. He glances around the cell. It's a weird new experience.

GEORGE

Is this a bad time?

DAVID

No, no... It's fine. Come on in.

GEORGE

(extending the bag)

I brought you something. Thought you might be hungry.

DAVID

Thanks.

David glances inside -- pulls out a small glass jar.

DAVID (CONT)

Cocktail olives?

GEORGE

Well, everything was frozen and I didn't know how to...
His voice trails off.

DAVID

I appreciate it.

George nods and takes a deep breath. He fidgets a little.

GEORGE
(suddenly)

You know your Mom went out.

DAVID

Went out?

GEORGE

Yeah. She went out for a little while...

DAVID
(beat)

When?

GEORGE

Three days ago.

DAVID

Oh.

David just looks at him. George stares straight across the cell.

GEORGE
(big forced smile)

Boy, there's so darned many gadgets in that kitchen. I
didn't know it was so complicated. You got that timer on
the oven and it won't turn on without that timer.

(glances at David)
Did you know it didn't work without a timer?

DAVID

No I didn't.

GEORGE

I didn't either. I always told her. I always said
"Betty... My job is one thing, but your job, hey, that's
something else."

David nods. His "dad" stares right at him.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I told her that Bud. I said it to her.

David just stares.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Well if I said it to her, then why would she "go out."

DAVID
(quietly)

I don't think it has anything to do with you.

GEORGE

Well that's good.
(beat)
...Is that goOd?

DAVID

I'm not sure.

GEORGE
(sitting on the cot)

Oh, I'm not sure either. Jeez. It's all so cockeyed right now. I didn't even know it was Tuesday. Tuesdays we play bridge with the Jenkins but there was no bridge so...

He heaves an exhausted sigh and just stares straight ahead on the cot. He glances at the jar of olives.

GEORGE

Can I have one of those?

DAVID

Sure. You hungry?

George nods emphatically. He takes the olives pries off the lid.

GEORGE
(stuffing two in his mouth)

Mrs. Benson was making a meat loaf next door. I almost climbed in the kitchen window.

David smiles. George wolves down three more olives, then suddenly pauses.

GEORGE

What happened Bud? One minute everything was fine and the next...

(shakes his head)

What went wrong?

DAVID

Nothing went wrong... People change.

CLOSE UP GEORGE

He turns and looks right at David. There's a stunned expression on his face.

GEORGE

(a brand new concept)

People change?

CLOSE UP. DAVID

It hits him as well -- as if he's heard the words for the first time.

DAVID

(nods, a brand new concept)

Yeah... People change.

GEORGE

(pause...)

How?

MOVING CLOSER ON DAVID

DAVID

(slowly...)

Well... Sometimes they realize that what they thought they needed isn't what they need anymore...

(thinks...)

Sometimes they see that what they're scared of -- they don't need to be scared of anymore.

(quieter)

Sometimes they just... let go.

WIDER

George straight ahead, stunned. A couple of seconds go by.

GEORGE

Can they change back?

David looks down at his own skin. It's a bright rosy color. He

smiles...

DAVID

I don't know. I think that's harder.

WIDE

They sit quietly in the cell for a moment. Finally, George jerks himself out of it.

DAVID

You okay?

GEORGE

Yeah, yeah... Just not fair, you know. You get used to one thing and then...

DAVID

(re: himself)

No. It isn't.

Several seconds go by.

GEORGE

Well I better get going.

DAVID

Sure.

He rises from the bunk and puts on his jacket. All at once the stark image of the black and white armband fills the room. David stares at the "two shaking hands". George glances down at it as well.

GEORGE

I've got a meeting later...

DAVID

It's okay.

(beat)

Why don't you take these with you?

David extends the jar of olives to his "father" who looks down at them.

GEORGE

Thanks Bud.

DAVID

Sure.

He takes the jar then turns and leaves the cell. David watches him head down the hall, before glancing back at his window. David rises and crosses to it peering out of the bars.

EXT. TOWN HALL - NIGHT

A large "HANDSHAKE" BANNER is unfurled on Town Hall as the NOISE continues...

SERIES OF SHOTS - NIGHT (QUICK CUTS)

More BANNERS roll open... On the library and the police station...

The NOISE OF THE CROWD GROWS TO A ROAR...

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

TIME LAPSE. Dawn comes on quickly as the TOWN HALL is suddenly bathed in sunlight.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

It is DRAPED IN "HANDSHAKES". People begin to stream toward the front of the TOWN HALL as a GAVEL BANGS THREE TIMES.

BIG BOB (V.O.)

Bud Parker and William Johnson...

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY.

The place has been transformed from meeting hall to courtroom. The huge Chamber Of Commerce symbol still adorns the back wall, but instead of the podium, there is now a judge's bench. Big Bob sits several feet above the proceedings finally living up to his name. He reads from the indictment.

BIG BOB

You are charged with desecration of a public building and the intentional use of prohibited paint colors in violation of The Pleasantville Code of Conduct and "Laws of Common Decency."

REVERSE ANGLE. ROOM.

David and Mrs. Johnson sit alone at a table in the middle of the room. The "Jury" lines either side of the chamber like some weird image from the Spanish Inquisition. There is a Black and White section on the ground floor and a "colored" section above. Franz Kafka meets "Inherit the Wind."

BIG BOB (CONT)

Do you admit that on the night of May 1 you did consciously and willfully apply the following FORBIDDEN paint colors to the North Wall of the Pleasantville Police Station:

(beat)

Red, Pink, Vermilion, Puce, Chartreuse, Umber, Blue, Aqua, Ox Blood, Green, Peach, Crimson, Yellow, Olive and Magenta.

DAVID

Yes I do. Where's our lawyer?

BOB

We prefer to keep these proceedings as "pleasant" as possible. I don't think a lawyer will be necessary. There is a MURMUR and a great deal of nodding amongst the

black

and white faces. David turns and locks eyes with Betty who is seated in the front row of the balcony.

BOB (CONT)

Do you further admit that this was done surreptitiously and under the cover of darkness?

DAVID

Well--it was dark out....

BOB

Good. Do you further admit that this unnatural depiction occurred in full public view where it was accessible to, and in plain sight of, minor children?

DAVID

It was accessible to everyone.

BOB

Very well. Let the record show that the defendants have answered in the affirmative to all the charges.

He looks directly at them for the first time.

BOB (CONT)

Do you have anything to say in your defense?

SHOT. DEFENSE TABLE.

Mr. Johnson just looks at David, confused and terrified.

MR. JOHNSON

I didn't mean to hurt anybody. I just have to paint... I have to...

(pause)

Maybe I could paint something different. Maybe I could use less colors or something... Or just -- you know -- certain colors. Maybe you could pick them before hand and then they wouldn't bother anybody...

DAVID

(leaping up)

I've got something to say.

BOB

(turning)

Very well...

DAVID

You don't have a right to do this.

There is a murmur in the courtroom. David continues.

DAVID

I mean, I know you want it to stay "Pleasant" around here, but, there are so many things that are so much better: like Silly... or Sexy... or Dangerous... or Wild... or Brief... And every one of those things is in you all the time if you just have the guts to look for them.

BOB

Okay -- that's enough!

DAVID

I thought I was allowed to defend myself.

BOB

You're not allowed to lie.

DAVID

I'm not lying.

(pointing to the colored section)

See those faces back there. They're no different than you are. They just happened to see something inside them that you don't want to look at.

BOB
(pounding the gavel)

I said that's enough!

DAVID

Here! I'll show you.

He suddenly turns toward George.

DAVID (CONT)

Dad.

GEORGE
(defensive)

Yes, Bud?

DAVID

It's okay, Dad. Just listen for a sec...
(closer)

I know you miss her. I mean you told me you did. But maybe it isn't just the cooking or the cleaning that you miss. Maybe it's something else.

(even closer)

Maybe you can't even describe it. Maybe you only know it when it's gone. Maybe it's like there's a whole piece of you that's missing too...

(motioning toward Betty in the gallery)

Look at her, Dad. Doesn't she look pretty like that?

SHOT. BETTY.

She sits gracefully at the railing of the "colored" section looking down at the trial.

DAVID (CONT)

Doesn't she look just as beautiful as the first time you met her. Do you really want her back the way she was.

(pause)

Doesn't she look wonderful?

SHOT. GEORGE.

Slowly, almost imperceptibly he nods. A single tear rolls down his cheek. As it traces the side of his face it leaves a long trail of COLOR behind it.

DAVID

Now don't you wish you could tell her that?

He nods again and it all comes out. Betty smiles at him through

her tears. Even Mr. Johnson smiles as well.

BOB
(POUNING the gavel)

YOU'RE OUT OF ORDER!

DAVID

Why am I out of order?

BOB

BECAUSE I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO TURN THIS COURTROOM INTO
A CIRCUS!

DAVID

Well I don't think it's a circus. And I don't think they
do either.

David motions behind him to the black and white section. There are
now ten to fifteen "colored" faces.

BOB

THIS BEHAVIOR WILL STOP AT ONCE.

DAVID

But see that's just the point. It can't stop at once.
Because it's in you. And you can't stop something that's
inside you.

BOB
(tightly)

It's not in me.

DAVID

Oh sure it is.

BOB

No it isn't.

INT. TOWN HALL (CONT.)

He crosses to the bench looking right up at Big Bob. He leans over
the bench and gets right up in his face.

DAVID
(smug whisper)

What do you want to do to me right now?

Big Bob starts to tremble. He shakes with rage as David moves closer.

DAVID (CONT)

C'mon. Everyone's turning colors. Kids are making-out in the street. No one's getting their dinner--hell, you could have a flood any minute....Pretty soon you could have the women going off to work while the men stayed home and cooked....

BIG BOB

That's not going to happen!

DAVID

But it could happen.

BIG BOB

No it couldn't!

Big Bob looks at David and starts to tremble. It starts around the base of his neck, spreads quickly up the rest of his head. After a moment or two, Big Bob has gone completely RED IN THE FACE.

WIDER

A gasp goes through the courtroom. David looks at him and just smiles. The crowd reaction turns almost to a ROAR as Big Bob sits there confused.

ANGLE. GALLERY

Betty leans over the rail.

BETTY

Bud...

He looks up as she tosses him a compact makeup mirror. David understands immediately and smiles at her.

ANGLE. DAVID

He crosses to the bench and opens the compact. David holds it right up to Big Bob, putting him face to face with his own, ruddy reflection. Bob stares in horror at the mirror then looks down at his bright pink hands. He freezes for an instant, then bolts from the bench fleeing the courtroom.

ANGLE. DOORWAY.

As Big Bob flees, he flings open the doors to the courtroom revealing an amazing sight: the TOWN SQUARE GLISTENS IN LIVING COLOR. The huge lawn is a rich deep green. The sky is a dense

opaque blue. Dozens of spectators bolt from their seats and rush to the doorway as the crowd moves outside.

EXT. PLEASANTVILLE. (FULL COLOR!)

All the birds are really chirping. Red Brick, Yellow cars, Green hats... The barber pole in front of Gus' has finally turned to red, white and blue--he can't help smiling. David walks out into the sunlight and stares in wonder at his creation. The whole town is washed in joy.

WIDER.

Margaret comes up and throws her arms around him. They meet in a rich passionate kiss (in direct defiance of the code of conduct). Several people around them actually clap, like spectators at a wedding. Jennifer moves up next to them and looks at her brother making out.

JENNIFER

Uch... I am like gonna hurl....

David turns and looks at her. Both of them laugh. Then he glances across the street and pauses for a moment. David turns and starts down the steps of the town hall...

FOLLOWING DAVID

He moves across the street to the small row of shops on the other side. He stops and stares in the window of Philco TV store.

35: Farewell

HIS POV. NORM'S TV STORE.

There, on the screens that once held TV Repairman is a late fifties travelogue showing a world of possibilities: The Eiffel Tower, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, Hong Kong, Egypt, the blue shores of Hawaii. All of them are vividly real and all are in living color.

SHOT. DAVID

It's over now. He stands for a moment and just stares. A quiet smile spreads across his face...

EXT. TOWN SQUARE. THE NEXT DAY...

It is a lush green park now -- the birds have something to sing about. Betty sits on a park bench next to her George. They look out across the square at Main Street in the distance. There's a

breeze.

GEORGE
(quieter)

So... Are you going to stay with him?

She reaches over and takes his hand. George looks at his wife.

CLOSER

The CAMERA PANS from HIS CLOSE UP TO HERS as she takes a deep breath.

BETTY

It's not 'him' or 'you'. It isn't. I just need to think for a second. I never took a minute to stop and think... I just... I never...

MR. JOHNSON

I understand.

She looks back at him. The CAMERA PANS back but instead of George sitting on the bench beside her, it is MR. JOHNSON.

BETTY

Really?

MR. JOHNSON

Yeah.

BETTY

Thank you.

Betty leans against him. Mr. Johnson puts an arm around her and kisses her gently on the forehead...

EXT. MAIN STREET. DAY.

David and Jennifer stand together on the edge of town. She clutches a valise in her hand. He holds the remote control.

DAVID

This thing works now. We could go home.

JENNIFER

I'm not ready yet. I gotta do this for a little while.

WIDER.

They stand on the edge of town (which finally has an edge.)

A large sign says: "Springfield 12 miles" and for the first time, the end of Main Street is no longer the beginning. Jennifer is dressed in Mary Sue's clothes with a little bit of style thrown in. Rich fields of wheat spread out in the distance.

JENNIFER

Besides. You think there's like a chance I'm gonna get into college back there?

DAVID
(thinks...)

Honestly... no.

They both smile.

DAVID (CONT)

You got the admissions letter.

JENNIFER

Right here.

He pauses and looks at her.

JENNIFER (CONT)

I've done the slut thing, David. It's really kinda old.

DAVID
(smiles, nods)

I'll come back and check on you in a month.
Jennifer nods and gives him a hug. She holds on tight for a couple of seconds.

JENNIFER

You're like the coolest brother in the world.

David smiles. Never been called cool before. They suddenly hear the SOUND of a motor and look to their left. A huge Greyhound bus lumbers up the highway, pulling to a halt at the sign. The doors open beckoning her in. Jennifer smiles at her brother, then turns toward the door...

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. DAY.

In glorious color now. The CAMERA begins to push up the walkway one last time.

DAVID (O.S.)

I've got to.

MARGARET

Why?

INT. LIVING ROOM.

They stand face to face in front of the TV. David holds the remote.

DAVID
(gently)

I've got to see what it's like. I've got to try it.
(quieter)
I'll be back and see you... I promise.

MARGARET

No you won't.

DAVID

Sure I will.

MARGARET

Just don't forget me. Even if you don't come back, I just don't want you to forget about me.

DAVID

I couldn't do that.

She throws her arms and clings onto him, like a farewell at the train platform. Margaret clings onto him for several seconds, then finally lets go. She hands him a brown paper lunch bag.

MARGARET
(softly)

Here.

DAVID

What is it?

MARGARET

Well -- lots of stuff.

He starts to look in the bag...

BETTY (O.S.)

A meat loaf sandwich... And a hard boiled egg...
(softer)

...And some marshmallow rice squares.

DAVID

Oh... Hi.

WIDER

Betty is standing in the doorway with a letterman's sweater draped over her arm. She shares a glance with Margaret then crosses down to David.

BETTY

There's some fried chicken in there too. Don't go skipping dinner just cause you're not here anymore.

DAVID

...I won't.
(looks at her)
I thought you weren't gonna...

BETTY

(painful, quieter)

I had to come say goodbye.

She looks up at him and their eyes lock. Betty unfolds the sweater.

BETTY

(fighting it)

And wear this on the trip in case it gets cold.

DAVID

It's a pretty short trip.

BETTY

Still...

She drapes it around his shoulders and fusses with the collar. Betty arranges his clothes for a second or two, then finally throws her arms round his neck.

BETTY (CONT)

Oh, Bud, I'm just so proud of you.

DAVID

Thanks...

She hugs him tighter and whispers something in his ear.

DAVID (CONT)

(nods)

I know. I love you too.

She clings on tight for a second or two then lets go. Betty flicks away a tear and draws a deep breath.

BETTY

Well...

She steps back and looks at him. David glances down at the remote.

DAVID

You better stand back a little.

Betty and Margaret cross toward the corner of the room. David points the remote at the TV...

CUT TO:

EXT. MODERN HOUSING TRACT. DUSK.

All the ersatz Spanish houses stretch out toward infinity. A WESTEC security patrol cruises by them at a crawl.

INT. DAVID'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

He stands in the middle of the living room looking at his new/old surroundings. Everything is the same as it was: The black onyx coffee table, the sleek white Berber rug -- black tile in the entry and the stark white walls. David glances around the room still clutching the remote control in his hand. The only sound comes from the TV.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Well that concludes the first hour of the Pleasantville Marathon; boy was that a weird episode. Don't forget folks, we go all night long till noon tomorrow...

David smiles and reaches forward shutting off the TV. A sudden smile descends on him. He stands there, in the silence for a moment, when a strange SOUND comes from the kitchen.

FOLLOWING DAVID

He crosses toward the noise and after a moment it becomes clear: the unmistakable sound of a woman sniffing...

HIS POV. KITCHEN.

David stops in the doorway and stares. There are four Louis Vuitton bags next to the kitchen table. His mother (his real

mother) faces away from him, still in spandex jogging clothes.

DAVID

You okay?

She turns back to him. There's a tissue in her hand.

DAVID'S MOM

Oh, hi.

DAVID

I thought you went out of town.

DAVID'S MOM
(breaking again)

I came back.

She trembles slightly and stifles a cry. David crosses to the kitchen table.

DAVID

What's wrong?

She starts to cry all over again. David's Mom shakes her head trying to draw a deep breath.

DAVID'S MOM

Oh, I don't know. It's all so fucked up. I got halfway down there and then I thought, "what am I doing?" He's nine years younger than me and it doesn't make me feel younger it just makes me feel older...

He nods.

DAVID'S MOM (CONT)

So I stopped in the market to call him and there was this young couple getting out of a station wagon with two kids and a big lab and I thought, "that was me. That used to be me."

She starts to cry again.

DAVID'S MOM

You know, when your father was here I thought well this is it. It's always gonna be like this. I have the right house and the right car and the right life...

DAVID

There is no right house. There is no right car...

DAVID'S MOM

Oh, God. My face must be a mess.

She chokes back a sob and wipes away a tear. There is mascara all over her cheek.

DAVID

It looks beautiful.

DAVID'S MOM

Honey, that's very sweet of you but it doesn't look beautiful.

DAVID

Sure it does. C'mere.

He takes a tissue from the box on the kitchen table and (aware of the parallel) begins to wipe the smeared makeup from her face. She glances at her reflection in the shiny black oven.

DAVID'S MOM

Oh God. It's not supposed to be like this. I'm forty-four years old...

DAVID

It's not supposed to be anything. Hold still for a second.

He continues to clean his mother's face as she looks at him with a strange new expression.

DAVID'S MOM

(quietly)

How'd you get so smart all of a sudden?

He stops for a second and smiles to himself.

DAVID

(shrugs)

I had a good day.

EXTREME WIDE ANGLE.

They sit alone in the half lit kitchen surrounded by her suitcases. David, carefully, gently continues to wipe the smeared makeup off her face as the MUSIC builds...

CUT TO:

36: Across the universe

SERIES OF SHOTS. PLEASANTVILLE. FULL COLOR (END CREDITS)

The MUSIC CONTINUES (Frank Sinatra: Vo-La-Ray) as the town explodes to life in rich, drunk, saturated color. The most mundane pieces of daily living acquire a weird new meaning in their reds, and greens and yellows: A tire is changed... a grapefruit gets smelled... a lawn is watered... The CREDITS ROLL...