

DO ASK DO TELL: MAKE THE A-LIST

by
Bill Boushka

(fiction)

Revisions by
(Names of Subsequent Writers,
in Order of Work Performed)

Current Revisions by
(Current Writer, date)

Bill Boushka
4201 Wilson Blvd #110-688 Arlington VA 22203-1859
571-334-6107

FADE IN:

EXT. 1569 FRAT HOUSE IN ST. PAUL, MN - MORNING

A heavy early spring rain pelts a wet slushy snow on a lawn, leading up to a beige shingled two story house. A large American flag covers the front porch.

(ACT 1 - BILL'S DINNER WITH TOBEY)

INT. LIVING ROOM 1569 CLUB - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY STRICKLAND, 28, well built and solid with carefully trimmed black beard and mustache, dressed in a V-neck tee-short with barely visible chest hair, rises from the old beaten-up sofa.

TOBEY

Public speaking is easy.

SHEILA DANIELS, 27, petite, blond, stands in the back of the living room, and operates a large miniDV camcorder, mounted well on a tripod. The living room has old, cheap furniture, and a music keyboard plugged into a laptop on a small stand. Sheila then swivels over to a laptop resting on a folding chair, and keys in a few strokes. A frame for the search engine "Google" comes up, and then a picture of SYDNEY GIBBS (introduced below).

SHEILA

Looks like Syd mosies up to the bean counters.

Tobey walks over, puts his hands on her shoulders.

TOBEY

Piano playing is not easy.

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT AERIAL MINNEAPOLIS - ST PAUL - DAY

Present an aerial shot of the area from downtown Minneapolis (starting at Symphony Hall on Nicollet) to downtown St. Paul along the Mississippi River while the opening credits roll. The background music should be the opening of the Schumann Symphony #2. Visually, this portion must make the most of wide-screen high-definition format.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE AT OLD TIME PICTURES, L.A. - MOMENTS LATER

SYDNEY GIBBS, 61, a crew-cut thin white man, and MORGAN GRAVES, 60, African-American, graying and bald on top, operate faders and control panels in front of them.

SYDNEY

(softly)
He still needs a titanium implant for his gap tooth. He's no Wife of Bath for Canterbury Tales, you know.

MORGAN

Yeah, Amen, he knows his humanities, or what you call it.

SYDNEY

Well, better than me. Like my old roomie Bill, he actually got an A on his first freshman English theme. He aced the LSAT. He's like Ephram, Martin, or Clark Kent. But he insists he wants to make the A-list.

MORGAN

(voice raising)
Hey, Sheila, watch those boom shadows!

Morgan hesitates and puffs weakly on a filter cigarette, coughing with a crackle. Put puts out the cigarette on a nice clear glass ashtray.

MORGAN

I'll want to see his sports feeds soon. You know, he's close to thirty.

SYDNEY

Yeah, without makeup there's just a crack under his eyes, crows feet.

He speaks into the mike.

SYDNEY

Hey, Tobey. You slept good. I mean well.

TOBEY

(through the closed circuit high-def feed)
Oh, sure.

SYDNEY

(softly)
You know, Bill would have called him sexy legs.

Sydney picks up Morgan's cigarette, crushes it again, and plays a grainy b-w video, underneath the table, someone who looks like Young Bill staring at Young Sydney as, in shorts, he jumps down from his bunk.

MORGAN

You know, I played Bill once. For all that brain talk, he ain't that good.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM FILLED WITH CHESS GAMES - EVENING -
FLASHBACK

BILL LDZEK, 50, bald and mushy but spindly, reaches for his King and hesitates. Bill is playing a middle game with Morgan who, as Black, is attacking Bill's position without ever having castled his king. The pieces are large and ivory. The ballroom is huge with many games and ice-water jugs on the tables.

BILL

They don't follow Reinfeld in real life. You know, the ten bad moves.

MORGAN

Not when chess is man-sport. Oh, mate in five!

BILL

I resign.

Bill knocks his KING over hard, and it slides to the end of the white-clothed table.

MORGAN

Looks like lunchtime football, eh?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Morgan reaches for his cigarettes and hesitates.

MORGAN

I forgot Tobey never played our
extraterrestrial game. Huh! Huh!

CUT TO:

EXT. FENWAY PARK IN BOSTON PLAYING FIELD - AFTERNOON -
FLASHBACK

Tobey, standing in line with about ten other actors, comes up to the plate and hits a mechanically pitched baseball, batting right-handed. It hugs the third base line and bounces off the Green Monster in the corner on the second bounce. Tobey looks up at the empty stands. He moves to the other side of the plate, switch-hitting, and slices a line drive off the wall.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Sydney backs away from the mike. Morgan comes forward.

MORGAN

Bog down the fenways man!

SYDNEY

Jeepers creepers, remember that
game in 1961 when the Nats blew a
12-5 lead with two outs in the
Ninth. Ruined the whole expansion
franchise.

MORGAN

You know, Tobey is trying to make
the 1978 Yankees and Buckeye. I
passed that lead on. He has to keep
it secret.

SYDNEY

You can do that. You can go above
me, man?

MORGAN

We Army lifers know it, chain of
command, eh?

SYDNEY

Softball was the one legitimate sport that Bill had anything but contempt for that fall in the dorm.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK YARD WITH ALUMINUM-PAINTED CHAIN LINK FENCE IN FRONT OF ROSE GARDEN, WITH FOG AND MIST - MORNING - FANTASY

There are six KIDS dividing into two groups. ADOLESCENT BILL, 14 and crew cut with a bandage around his ankle, takes to the mound.

KIDS

First up!

ADOLESCENT BILL

You guys don't know home team advantage.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM OF YOUNG BILL'S HOME - DAY

The camera runs from the backyard, through the picture window into the living room where Young Bill studiously plays some Mozart on the piano. Then he starts playing a little Schumann.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. BACK YARD WITH ALUMINUM-PAINTED CHAIN LINK FENCE IN FRONT OF ROSE GARDEN, WITH FOG AND MIST - MOMENTS LATER

Adolescent Bill bats a waterlogged softball, slow-pitched by a younger kid against the wire fence on the ground, and another kid scores from first on the makeshift bases, beating a clumsy relay.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

SYDNEY

Bill told some tall tales about backyard baseball as his rite to manhood. Over the fence was out.

(MORE)

SYDNEY(cont'd)

He got to make the rules, or his dad did. The rules were rigged so that a weakling like him could win.

MORGAN

Well, let's see Bill's Cinema Lounge film.

SHEILA (O.S.)

(from Tobey's apartment)
It's not Bill's. Made this video in the frat house the night of the Tobey's My Dinner with Andre.

SYDNEY

So to get the dinner.

SHEILA

Tobey will act it for you.

MORGAN

Tobey, can you drive over to the restaurant?

TOBEY

Oh, we gave it a funeral. I'll find a place in Dinkeytown to act like Bill.

SYDNEY

Watch out for second-hand smoke.

TOBEY

Now with SAG I have to get paid for this.

MORGAN

That's OK, Tobey. We've got you covered. Keep your bags packed for a party flight. What do we call it, flying the Great Circle.

SHEILA

I'll roll Patrick's film.

CUT TO:

EXT. 1569 FRAT HOUSE IN ST. PAUL, MN - AFTERNOON - FIVE YEARS EARLIER - ESTABLISHING SHOT - FLASHBACK

The same house, with fresher paint and has no flag on the porch. The weather is warn and sunny with a green lawn with some wild clover blossoms.

INT. 1569 FRAT HOUSE IN ST. PAUL, MN - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Tobey, now clean-shaven and dressed in undershirt V-neck brief and plain boxers, shakes himself awake and rises. A calico CAT MAX jumps into his lap, kneads and tugs at his undershirt and licks his smooth chest. Tobey gently lifts the cat to the sofa, which is now less worn. Sunlight and a green lawn show through the window.

TOBEY

Good thing I woke up in time. You know, that teenager sleep thing, but I'm no longer a teenager. My self-appointed mentor Bill Ldzek has invited me to dine at Family-Friendly as a matriculation present. Whooo te doo. Before they board the place up!

COREY, 3 and mixed ancestry, drags a play train through the living room. Several buildings of toy blocks and erector-set forklifts create a small play city. The cat stalks around it, leaving everything intact.

COREY

Um putt putt!

TOBEY

I hate babysitting.

Tobey picks up the kid by the waist.

COREY

But you love me, don't you. I didn't blow up today.

TOBEY

Yes, I like you.

Tobey puts the kid down.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

MORGAN

Tobey, you just had to make the dinner, didn't you?

TOBEY

Bill would have been crushed if I had stood him up. That wouldn't be, huh, moral.

SYDNEY

We know all about it now. He worships you. You made his red letter day.

MORGAN

(whisper)
He just looks 20 or so in this video.

Morgan looks to Sheila.

MORGAN

Is there a tape of the restaurant.

SHEILA

Oh, no. The point. Tobey hasn't let Bill see him in a few years.

SYDNEY

Tobey, can you recreate it for us. I mean, pick up a mask or something. We need to know how that meeting went. You can show us.

EXT. 1569 FRAT HOUSE IN ST. PAUL, MN - CONTINUOUS

Tobey goes outside and gets into his new red Honda sedan. He drives towards Minneapolis (aerial shot.) He stops on campus and gives a list to a YOUNG MAN (Patrick, identifiable shortly) carrying some equipment in a tote bag.

CUT TO:

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT MINNEAPOLIS - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Bill, now 55, dresses himself a bit clumsily, checks his 5 o'clock shadow, and picks up a copy of his "Do Ask Do Tell" book, along with manuscripts, and stuffs them into a grocery paper bag. The apartment is cluttered with books, newspapers, magazines, and several computers, with cords across the living room carpet. (Shoot this as video 1.8 To 1)

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Tobey orders a latte, and sits alone at a table, as PATRICK GREEN, 27, tall, thin, and blond, operates a camcorder. There are two chess games at adjoining tables.

TOBEY

Yes, the last time Bill packed up he fiddled with his crutches and four-in-hand. Boy scouts know how to tie Windsors, you know. He doesn't. He looked cool.

Patrick puts the camcorder down, and opens a backpack on the floor, and takes out a mask and bald plastic scalp. He tries to put the scalp on.

PATRICK

I'll need a crew cut indeed.

TOBEY

That's what Bill used to wear. As a boy. And he's not completely bald, you know.

PATRICK

He is down below, I bet.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM AT MINNEHAHA UNIVERSITY - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Tobey, in a heavy sweater himself, adjusts Bill's tie as Bill looks a bit agitated.

TOBEY

You did look at yourself in the mirror, right? In reverse?

Patrick begins to play Bill's own DV video of his lecture.

INT. CLASSROOM AT MINNEHAHA UNIVERSITY - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Bill trips on his crutches over the video lead cable. Tobey jumps up but Bill recovers without falling. There are about twenty students taking notes in composition books.

BILL

And the cheesiest topic will be the relationship paradox. And this all started with gays in the military.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Tobey sips the latte and looks into the camera. The screen is split with Sydney.

SYDNEY

Tobey. Can you play Bill as part of the audition? You know, pick your mask.

Tobey picks up a silver comedy mask. He puts it on, then takes it off.

TOBEY

You know, Bill wasn't funny.

MORGAN

You were all of twenty-one then.

SYDNEY

He'll have to talk to himself. But he can bring the mood back.

TOBEY

And Bill was like my dad plus an extra decade. But I already got Patrick fitted for the part.

Tobey picks up a fake scalp, and some plastic skin.

TOBEY

This was for his legs. Bill's not a young man now.

SYDNEY

You know he gave up his music, his piano, don't you.

TOBEY

He didn't get to live the life he really wanted. So I will.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY PARKING LOT PAY PHONE - CONTINUOUS -
FLASHBACK

Tobey talks into the mouthpiece, and looks in control. (Only the head shot shows.)

TOBEY

Thank god. The cell phone was
deadwire.

Split screen with Sheila in 1569 living room, holding Corey.

SHEILA (O.S.)

But you really left Corey alone?
You wouldn't.

TOBEY

I just knew. You were almost there.

SHEILA

You guys from the cabal always do.
Lapp and the guys will be by to
take him home before the party.

Tobey now walks toward the restaurant and looks in Bill's direction. Bill locks on with eye contact. Tobey is in shorts, and the moderate hair on his arms and especially his legs comes into focus. Bill approaches Tobey and meets him at the entrance. Tobey's tee-shirt fits tightly. Bill takes several books out of the bag.

TOBEY

Lit-er-a-ture!

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - LATER

Bill and Tobey are quickly seated in a booth and served ice water.

BILL

Grammar was always easier for me
than literature.

TOBEY

More like math. You can figure it
out.

BILL

I still remember that soporific first afternoon in high school sophomore English, right after lunch, fourth period. We would read all those musty old good books, like SILAS MARNER. You know, "In the days..."

TOBEY

Yeah, yeah. Literature didn't put you to sleep in September.

BILL

We didn't have a.c. then. Humanities were harder.

TOBEY

Like philosophy. Bill, you sound fascinated by young men like me who major in it.

BILL

When it was academic study for midterms and bluebooks, it was boring. When I grew up, it mattered.

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

They eat and chew. Bill picks up a veal cutlet and slices it while Tobey quickly consumes his BLT.

BILL

I never paid my dues by waiting on tables. This meat isn't that good. It's tough. You know how they make veal, by keeping a cow in irons, motionless until it turns soft, mushy, feminine. It is made to feel feminine.

TOBEY

You chose to order it, Bill. You don't have to eat it. Nobody watches if you clean your plate or finish your bowls. But this is the last night for this place. Let's put it out of its misery.

Tobey, backing in his seat, flexes his arms behind his neck.

TOBEY

So, Bill, tell me that you'd really want to be a writer.

BILL

For a living? Just when I have something to say.

TOBEY

Just then.

BILL

I don't want to hang a sign. "Freelance writer." Pin a label on myself. Like a psychic.

TOBEY

Like a license.

BILL

They call it professionalism.

TOBEY

So you never suffered writer's block. It's not like us writing term papers.

BILL

Your honor's paper on Nietzsche. The Gay Science. It could fit on my site. My domain.

TOBEY

Actually Patrick, you know, the guy who answers the phone when you call, is the creative force behind the 1569 Club. I've been proofing for him.

BILL

So he can tell a real story.

TOBEY

You politely didn't ask.

BILL

But it's a corker.

TOBEY

About some investors who buy shares of people's souls. And cash in when they get reincarnated. They can even sell short.

BILL

Or short against the box. I'd love to see it. I'm trying to become a publisher, too.

TOBEY

It's good self-justification. Actually, in the book, there's a government plot to turn less conformist citizens into Grays. Gradually, with little rituals.

BILL

Good way to explain Roswell. Maybe Science Fiction Theater, Truman Bradley, you know, could it happen. Like a disembodies brain controlling the stock market.

TOBEY

But, Bill, why do you write? Really?

BILL

To make me respectable, on the dance floor.

Bill clears his throat after a crackle. He pauses, his voice stress with pitch rising.

BILL

So I don't have to interact with anybody until I choose him. Or select him. I hate being told whom to submit to.

CUT TO:

INT. NINTH STREET CENTER KITCHEN, EAST VILLAGE BASEMENT APARTMENT, NEW YORK, 25 YEARS BEFORE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

YOUNGER BILL, 35, reluctantly walks over to the sink, picks up a dish and starts scrubbing it, lazily. The sink contents look like vomit.

YOUNGER BILL

Side sink man. Good position for a feminine.

An OVERWEIGHT MAN, 40, with long hair, embraces Bill, but bill resists, and the man persists.

OVERWEIGHT MAN

Cut that lifer talk. You can really help people. That's all that matters now.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

Bill means, of course, that he wants to hang around younger men without feeling guilty or ashamed.

SYDNEY

And that still doesn't bother you.

TOBEY

Look, I'm a grown man as well as an actor.

SYDNEY

And I wasn't. Not as a freshman at William and Mary.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM ROOM BROWN HALL WILLIAM AND MARY - EVENING - FLASHBACK

YOUNG SYDNEY, 18, crew cut and blond and medium build, sits at his desk and writes his English theme in bad penmanship. There is a lot of clutter and patent medicines at Bill's end of the room. The theme heading reads "MY CLOCK RADIO."

The Romanza of the Schumann Symphony 2 plays, somewhat muffled.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Roomie, fella, how do you spell "receive"? Which way is it?

YOUNGER BILL

Am I allowed to help you. You know Honor System.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Get serious.

YOUNGER BILL

It's r-e-c-e-i-v-e. The C rule.

YOUNG SYDNEY

I gotta change the music. Boring,
slow. No wonder they won't allow a
fag classical music station in
Roanoke. I want my kind of music.

Sydney plays with the dials and gets "Beulah Land" on the
clock radio.

YOUNGER BILL

You want to see my theme? I know
you can't copy it, but you can read
it.

Bill holds up a theme notebook, in bold penmanship, with an
essay titled "A DEFINITION OF FRIENDSHIP."

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

I get it. Let's move on with this
audition.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Bill stares at Tobey for a moment, the moderately hairy
forearms, the tightly fit tee-shirt that hides his chest.
Tobey jerks his head back slightly.

BILL

Yeah, when I write the way I do, I
don't have to be accountable to
anybody. But it's a passive thing.
It isn't jealousy. It doesn't break
the 10th Commandment.

TOBEY

Thou shalt not covet. Is that it? I
don't read the Bible much. Not like
Patrick. But you have a future in
make-believe, too.

BILL

When I write, I don't take sides. I
don't just let others decide when I
can drive a car, or whom I can
date.

(MORE)

BILL(cont'd)

The Left can't let me remain a freeloader by saying that I'm a sissy and a burden on the country. I write, others can't say what I write.

Tobey now meets Bill with strong eye contact.

BILL

So, Tobey, you really want to be an actor, too.

Bill takes out a postcard that has a picture of Tobey in skivvies and tee-shirt as a model. Tobey nods his head, and leans toward Bill.

BILL

When I had that roommate, Sydney Gibbs at William and Mary, he tried both rings, comedy and tragedy.

TOBEY

Comedy is much harder.

BILL

Falstaff, maybe. But not Adam Sandler with his fatter roles. Please, no Mr. Deeds. Owen Wilson, you know, as a brashy funny fighter pilot on a moral mission, that's OK.

TOBEY

Your book is hardly comedy. You've never asked if I've actually read it.

BILL

I don't have to ask. You talk like you know it. Could pass a literature test yourself. Well, Sydney would never have worn the ring on his little finger. You're not like Sydney.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Tobey takes a ring out of his pants pocket, and puts it on. It is the comedy ring. He holds his hand up in video field and makes a fist.

SYDNEY
So Bill insulted my memory.

TOBEY
He deserves his day. You really weren't a friend for him.

SYDNEY
But he does mean to.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

TOBEY
As a freshman, I played the apothecary in Nicholas Nickleby. Now there is a model novel for your English tests. You know, the cripple played him. He was free and grew stronger until he died. But his life was much better because of Nicholas.

BILL
You're really like Nicholas, Tobey. It's easy for you. The rest of us have to pay our dues, or else.

TOBEY
Oh, but you have to fight for yourself.

BILL
I did. Thirty years later with the book. You know, there was a prodrome at William and Mary. You remember in the books, I mentioned the tribunals that I played hooky from.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DORM ROOM BROWN HALL WILLIAM AND MARY - NIGHT -
FLASHBACK

The room is dark and Bill is lying awake in the lower bunk when the door opens and Sydney storms in. He leaves the light off and climbs into the bunk.

YOUNG SYDNEY

For so much for your great future,
you fine fella. Where were you
tonight. We're gonna send out a
blanket party for you.

YOUNGER BILL

I skipped out. I didn't want to go.

YOUNG SYDNEY

I think I know why, too. And you
don't want to tell.

INT. DORM ROOM BROWN HALL WILLIAM AND MARY - DAY

Bill is putting on a bright green shirt. He buttons it but doesn't finish tucking in his shirt tails. His text books and notebooks are on his bed. He quickly opens his mouth and paints his throat with a cotton swab, dipped in a small glycerine bottle. Sydney looks.

YOUNGER BILL

You like my clothes.

YOUNG SYDNEY

When I see someone in a wardrobe
like yours, I think, there goes
that homosexual walking down the
street.

Bill picks up the books and quickly gets out of the room,
shirt tails out.

INT. DORM SHOWER - DAY - FLASHBACK

Young Bill showers behinds a translucent curtain. He doesn't hear the door opening as Sydney starts to enter the restroom. Bill is singing to himself in jest.

YOUNG BILL

Homosexual on the loose!

INT. DORM ROOM BROWN HALL WILLIAM AND MARY - NIGHT -
FLASHBACK

Bill lies in the bottom bunk, Sydney in the top. "Beulah
Land" plays softly in the background.

YOUNG BILL

I'm gonna turn it off in a minute.
Your Negro gospel music.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Just a moment. Let me finish
praying.

YOUNG BILL

You really pray. Talk to God. With

YOUNG SYDNEY

I don't think you do. And you're a
baptist.

YOUNG BILL

Yes, immersed with my mother at
twelve. I told you. But we played
choral music. Bach. Mozart. And
Brahms, whom you hate. Now what
happened to you at summer camp?

YOUNG SYDNEY

Not to me. Another camper. He was
fifteen years old. Younger looking
than you, even. He was two tents
away. At two in the morning, he
screamed twice. And I knew
instantly that he was ruined. They
had ruined him.

YOUNG BILL

Maybe it was a bear. I mean,
anybody could have. Okay, the camp
counselor. He must have been a real
homosexual. Not what you talk
about.

YOUNG SYDNEY

You want to jump to conclusions.

YOUNG BILL

But you already have.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Any queer would ____ the kid off.
They just can't help themselves.
They take on this super strength.
After midnight, when real men
sleep. They're vampires.

YOUNG BILL

And that's really Tarzan's quest for male ____? You talk like you really believe this. And my father thinks I'm gullible.

YOUNG SYDNEY

That's how it is. You're dangerous, Bill. I heard you say it in the showers. You admitted it. You even bragged about it. So tell the truth, Bill. You know your honor code.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

TOBEY

Some innocent urban legends never hurt anybody.

BILL

Just rumors, like what other people think. I never told him then. He couldn't get it out of me. I think I got the subject changed to the Berlin Wall or something. That kind of rubbed it in. Humanities guys like him would get drafted, and the mad scientists like me were really needed.

Tobey starts sipping his coke.

BILL

I mean you're needed. In the Army I remember a lieutenant lectured me in chow line on how officers needed humanities. Those days would come. Well, until Syd made up the old wives tale, I never knew what homosexuals really do. I could have these feelings of being sexually excited by ... and never imagine the details. Now it sounded so untidy. Unbelievable. No wonder about the Dallas Doctors Against AIDS and Paul Cameron and Gene Antonio. For me, it was just a way to feel.

(MORE)

BILL(cont'd)

It was a kind of third grade idol worship, something you tell a religion teacher in a project booklet report. Huh, we had religion teachers after school in public school in my day, and we thought that was all right.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

SYDNEY

Bill really said that, about not knowing what he was getting into. Boy he was naive. Tobey, did he level with you, how he felt about you, what turns him on?

TOBEY

I guess he wanted me to deduce that, so he wouldn't be too embarrassed. He told me how he got kicked out. He thinks it would make good experimental film.

MORGAN

But did he tell you his fantasies.

TOBEY

Not yet. But I can imagine.

CUT TO:

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM AT NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH -
AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Young Bill and a middle aged PSYCHIATRIST in a white coat sit in a tiny examining room with green glazed brick walls.

PSYCHIATRIST

So you gave us this history lesson.
So what did the hair mean to you?
You wanted to touch the hair?

YOUNG BILL

I just got sexually excited by... I don't want to say yet, it's like piano, it will come.

MORGAN (V.O.)
I think it's a passive thing for
him.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

MORGAN
Then I bet he told you the whole
story. Syd, you really want to hear
this?

SYDNEY
Let it rip!

CUT TO:

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY CAMPUS - DAY

Young Bill wanders the campus, leaving a physics recitation, walking across the sunken garden to the library. Bill enters the library and seems to start studying but fidgets. He pulls a metal-bracelet watch out of his pocket. The time says 4:30.

Morgan is shown operating a super-8 camera at the Duke of Gloucester intersection, and a man who may be FRANK (*introduced later*) walks in front of it, carrying school books, and smiles. He takes off a cap and runs his hand through a sloppy crew cut. Then Morgan projects the film for all to see.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY BROWN HALL PORCH 1961 - AFTERNOON -
FLASHBACK

(Grainy 8 mm -- show off stage) College boys are scampering on fours around Bill, like the apes in 2001. Bill reaches towards one of the boys' knees.

YOUNG BILL
Gettin' friendly?

The boys scatter like roaches.

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY DORM ROOM - NIGHT

(Grainy 8 mm -- show off stage) Young Sydney is getting out of bed, his legs dangling. Bill stares and then hides his face.

YOUNG SYDNEY
I can read all your thoughts Bill.
I know what you're afraid will
happen to you.

YOUNGER BILL
It didn't happen to you.

YOUNG SYDNEY
See, I proved my point. You can
resist starting at me. Even when
you shut your eyes.

YOUNGER BILL
Like that poor cow with tight skin.

YOUNG SYDNEY
Don't kick sand in that poor
beast's eyes.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Syd roots around for more film reels.

SYDNEY
Did you see this one?

CUT TO:

EXT. BAPTIST CHURCH IN WILLIAMSBURG - NIGHT

(8mm bw) Young Bill and Young Sydney leave a Church sanctuary filled with college students dressed in early 60s good clothes.

YOUNG BILL
But it's not wrong just to feel
excited.

YOUNG SYDNEY

But that's what Jesus said.
Adultery by thought is as much as
sin as the real thing.

YOUNG BILL

Like you can read my mind.

YOUNG SYDNEY

I can.

YOUNG BILL

And I have a great future.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

MORGAN

Tobey, go on and tell the rest of
the story.

Tobey starts to speak into the camera as Patrick takes off
his disguises.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY BROWN HALL DORM ROOM 1961 - EVENING -
FLASHBACK

Bill walks from the empty porch up to his dorm room. He finds
a handwritten note scotch-taped to the unlocked door.

INSERT:

In recent room inspections we have noticed excessive patent
medicines like Rolaid's and nose spray and throat paint.
Please report to the Dean of Men about this today.

Bill walks into his room and looks at his chest of drawers
and picks up the nose drops and Rolaid's and stuffs them into
his trouser pockets. He gently closes the door and runs
downstairs and outside. He strolls through the fog across
Richmond Road onto the main campus. The early evening drizzle
gives the scene a black-and-white look out of place for a
colonial campus. He pauses for a moment in front of the Wren
Building, walks astride and looks at the sunken garden. He
looks at a sign proclaiming the building to be the oldest in
North America. He walks up the steps of the building, now
deserted for Thanksgiving Friday. He quickly navigates to the
Dean's office on the second floor.

It is sealed by a milk-glass door that seems illuminated from the inside. The door reads:

INSERT

Carson W. Barnes

DEAN OF MEN

Bill knocks, timidly.

CARSON

Bill, come in. I'm waiting for you.

Bill opens the door and sees the Dean seated at his power desk. The only color in the room comes from the green lamp. There is one wooden chair in front of the large varnished desk. Bill sits down without an extra invitation.

YOUNG BILL

Dean Barnes, you really called me late on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

CARSON

Well, Bill, at least you didn't say Sir. Manners.

YOUNG BILL

If it's just the medicines, I can explain.

Bill wiggles his pocket, reaches for the nose drop bottle in his pocket and then stops. Dean Barnes holds up a bottle of dark red liquid that reads (in elite type) "iodine and glycerine."

CARSON

Mr. Ldzek, this is yours.

YOUNG BILL

For painting my throat. They use Metaphen here in the infirmary.

CARSON

Bill, I know you have some allergies. By the way, you do go to the Baptist church.

YOUNG BILL

Yes, sir, it's a bit southern.

CARSON

Rev. Pugh speaks well of you. We can let the campus doctor check out all this on Monday.

They look past each other, and then Carson makes eye contact.

CARSON

Bill, if I may ask, how are you getting along with the other boys in your dorm? You're in Brown. I know it's a bit cramped.

YOUNG BILL

Most of the boys are fine. Good character. Manly.

There is a quick montage of dorm scenes, the porch, the communal bathroom, the showers with Bill muttering to himself.

YOUNG BILL

To tell the truth, my roommate Sydney makes some outrageous statements. They're wrong.

Dean Barnes looks back.

CARSON

Bill, you can talk in flowers all you want to. You do write good.

YOUNG BILL

The boys say I don't 'write regular.' You know, penmanship. God, we got graded on handwriting in elementary school.

CARSON

Hardly anyone makes an A in freshman English. Once every two years. You did it as a freshman, Straight A's at midterm. A couple of B's wouldn't hurt.

YOUNG BILL

I wrote a provocative, controversial essay defining the concept of 'friendship' as my first theme. I think it upset Sydney.

CARSON

Well, Bill, I hope that's all there is to it. A couple of the boys say that you put..

YOUNG BILL

No, I never put my hand on another boy's knee.

Bill puts his hand underneath his mouth, as if nauseated.

INT. UPPERCLASS DORM ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

(Split screen grainy 8 mm) Boys, including Young Sydney, are crowded in a dorm room. Some, including Young Sydney, are in skivvies.

FAT BOY

Bill, what do you think sixty-nine means.

YOUNG BILL

That's where they do it sixty-nine times in sixty-nine minutes.

The other boys cackle and roll on the floor.

FAT BOY

Bill, what do you think of homosexuality?

YOUNG BILL

I don't approve of it.

Bill's hand flails and brushes Young Sydney's knee.

INT. DEAN OF MEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK

Bill swallows hard.

CARSON

You with me, Bill?

YOUNG BILL

My chum Michael last summer was right. I'm naive about these things. He's at VPI instead of here. Hope they don't shave him. That's another thing. I didn't go to the Tribunals. I didn't get hazed.

(MORE)

YOUNG BILL(cont'd)

So I guess that's another reason I'm a sissy. But I had never heard of all this until living away from home. Of all the untidy things homosexuals are supposed to do.

Now the Dean puts his hand over his mouth.

CARSON

So what are you getting at. You can drop all this if you want and move on.

YOUNG BILL

Okay, as a matter of definition, like for an English theme, I would say that I am a latent homosexual. Some men--Michael, my friend in my senior class last year, but not Syd--make me feel sexually excited when I am around them. They have to have certain secondary sexual characteristics. They have to have it. They can lose it.

CARSON

So it's something that happens to you. You don't control it. You can't control it.

YOUNG BILL

I'm just trying to follow the Honor System.

CARSON

So you are. Or is that a ruse?

YOUNG BILL

It makes me classify as different. Now it doesn't bother me.

CARSON

Sure.

YOUNG BILL

It never happens in the room. I turn it on and off. Look, aren't you glad that I leveled with you? The day after Thanksgiving, no less. We should all be home.

CARSON

I'm very glad that you confided in me that you think you're a homosexual. Now, are your parents home?

YOUNG BILL

No, they were here yesterday. They're in North Carolina visiting family friends.

CARSON

Bill, I did hear about the singing in the shower. When you talked to yourself, you called yourself a 'homosexual on the loose.'

Bill leans over but controls himself and sits upright.

YOUNG BILL

That was a private joke. Intra-personal.

CUT TO:

EXT. JAMESTOWN VA SETTLEMENT COLONY THANKSGIVING DAY -
AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Bill, his parents (JACK, 59 and MARGARET, 48), and JOHN JUNEAU (18, a bit soft-looking) are walking past the straw huts of the settlement. The James River is in the background. Squirrels, ferrets and otters are running around. There is still some residual brownish orange and yellow in the trees. Leaves are blowing around.

YOUNG BILL

The Schubert B-flat Sonata. Heart-rending.

JOHN

Bill, sometimes I wonder if music is really in your blood. The incredible things you say and do.

BILL'S FATHER

He learnt it. He got that from me.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DEAN OF MEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK

CARSON

Bill, come back. I will have to call them. Your parents. Long distance. It will be a big deal. Don't worry about it all weekend. It will be all right. We aren't going to ask you to leave school or anything like that. You just don't want to slide into anything like homosexuality.

YOUNG BILL

OK. It will be a surprise. Or a pop quiz.

INT. FAMILY LIVING ROOM, CHARLOTTE NC - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Bill's parents and Mr. And Mrs. Jzzet (50, 45) are chatting in the living room of a rambler suburban house with a bit of Frank Lloyd Wright kind of furniture. The black-and-white television is a Sylvania with a Halo Light and silent images of the Berlin Wall.

MR. JZZET

I sometimes think Barbara had too much television. Like Bill, she kept to herself. But she went away to college knowing much more about how dangerous this free country of ours is getting.

The rotary phone rings. Mr. Jzzet walks over to the nightstand in the hall and answers.

MR. JZZET

Hello.

TELEPHONE OPERATOR

Mr. Jzzet, this is the long distance operator in Williamsburgh, Virginia, calling for Mr. Jack Ldzek.

MR. JZZET

Sure, interesting. Jack, long distance for you.

BILL'S FATHER

Huh, honest a Pete. From Bill?

MR. JZZET

I guess. The operator had to connect us.

Bill's father (bald, trifocals) picks up the phone.

BILL'S FATHER

Bill?

TELEPHONE OPERATOR

Mr. Ldzek, I have the Dean of Men from the College of William and Mary on the phone.

CARSON

Mr. Ldzek, this is Dean Barnes. How are you this evening?

BILL'S FATHER

Look, I'm a traveling salesman. I know the techniques of talking to people. Anyway, not poorly. What's up. It's Bill, but he never gets in trouble. We were just there. He must have told you...

CARSON

No, he's fine. Look, we can take care of this. I guess you're visiting friends over the weekend, that's what Bill said. Can you drop by Monday morning on your way back?

BILL'S FATHER

Can I see Bill first?

CARSON

Sure. Make it my office in the Christopher Wren Building, Second Floor, at 9 o'clock in the morning, Tuesday November 28. Sorry to bother you long distance on a Friday night.

INT. DINER IN WILLIAMSBURG - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Bill and his parents eat. The diner looks like a 50s family establishment with coin-operated jute boxes on the table. Outside is Duke of Gloucester Street, with a movie theater and the marquee "Splendor in the Grass." BILL'S MOTHER, 48 and BILL'S FATHER, 59, sit across the table from him.

YOUNG BILL

You both taught me that I would never be punished for telling the truth. Good character guidance.

BILL'S FATHER

It's more than just that.

YOUNG BILL

The Dean of Men asked, and I told.

BILL'S MOTHER

You don't want to tell us now. I can tell. If you tell, you should tell willingly.

YOUNG BILL

You remember Michael last year. The tennis games, the ping pong, the movies.

BILL'S FATHER

I know. Your chum. You let him win, didn't you. It was tantalizing.

BILL

Nothing ever happened. That is the truth. But the issue for the Dean is what sensations I felt.

BILL'S MOTHER

You don't need to talk about this at all.

BILL

Then I would have to quibble. That violates the Honor Code.

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY BROWN HALL DORM ROOM 1961 - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Bill lies on his lower bunk and studies his English anthology book for class.

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY ROGERS HALL, CHEMISTRY LECTURE ROOM 1961 - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Bill leaves the lecture hall five minutes early as the class continues. He picks up a lab test that reads "79 C+".

EXT. WILLIAM AND MARY, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER STREET - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

A Ford Galaxie turns the corner onto Richmond Road. Bill is walking on the corner. (Show the campus from the air for a moment.) Bill opens the door and climbs in.

BILL'S FATHER

This is going to come as a blow to you, Bill, but we have to take you out of school.

YOUNG BILL

The Dean lied. He specifically promised he wouldn't ask me to leave school. He broke the Honor Code.

BILL'S FATHER

Well, he talked to the President of the College last night. He has no choice. You know, the College has to think about the other parents, not just us.

INT. DEAN OF MEN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Bill is standing with his father, and his mother is seated on a hard wood chair.

BILL

I said I never did anything.

CARSON

Bill, it's going to be easier on you to leave anyway. You have certain anxieties. You and your parents have to work this out. If a certified psychiatrist writes us that it is all right for you to come back and live in a boy's college dorm, then we will welcome you back for the Spring Semester.

YOUNG BILL

But my courses.

CARSON

You can retake them. If you study your subjects at home by yourself over Christmas, maybe you can place out of them, or take the finals. We all now you can write your themes and term papers. Dabney Stuart will pass on you.

YOUNG BILL

There's Eastern State.

CARSON

Believe me, Bill, you don't want to deal with Eastern State psychiatrists. They have no class. They would just warehouse you.

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY BROWN HALL DORM STAIRWAY 1961 - LATER -
FLASHBACK

Show a Vertigo view of the stairway. Bill and Dad are carrying down the mattress. Dad is trying to fold it. He points to a wet gray stain.

BILL'S FATHER

Now, Bill, look, look. You see how I know that you are not a homo.

Father points to the stain again as John suddenly starts up the steps.

JOHN

Bill, what's up? You're going.

YOUNG BILL

They are making me leave school. To get medical advice. That's how they put it. Mildly.

JOHN

It's a shock. You talked, didn't you?

BILL

I'll write soon and explain.

BILL'S FATHER

No you won't. You do what we say if you want to get out of this.

JOHN

Look, just send me one communique.
I look forward to it.

INT. FORD GALAXIE - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Bill sits in the back seat, as they cross the Yorktown River driving back to Arlington on a cold late fall day. Bare trees show now.

BILL'S FATHER

We'll call the Dean of Admissions at GW tomorrow. But if you ever mention homosexuality again, not a college in the country will take you.

YOUNG BILL

It's fair enough.

BILL'S MOTHER

Daddy means it. If you ever tell anybody something like this, your college days are over. And you can't make it by yourself in the real world.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE OF OLD NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Bill is filling out an employment medical history form. Attached is his "Application for Federal Employment" and the question about "sexual perversion" shows on the form. HAROLD PINCOCK, 59, short and thin, dressed in medical whites, makes eye contact as he stands in front of a government-issue metal desk.

YOUNG BILL

Dr. Pincock, why I had to see a psychiatrist is irrelevant now. I'm back in college at GW with all A's. So I really can't say.

HAROLD

Or someone won't let you tell. You can't go to work without a satisfactory medical. So go call your daddy.

Bill picks up a black rotary phone and dials it.

INT. MEDICAL OFFICE OF OLD NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS -
MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Harold Pincock fills a preprinted government form, and scribbles "Thought he was a homosexual."

HAROLD
OK, I approve of you.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Tobey pushes his food away and flexes his arms.

TOBEY
Bill, you didn't have to make
confessions at all.

BILL
I thought I did.

TOBEY
You get it, don't you. How they set
you up, waiting around all
afternoon the day after
Thanksgiving. You didn't have to go
along.

BILL
I guess now it makes a good book.

Tobey smiles.

BILL
There's something I didn't put in
it.

TOBEY
Oh, you honestly forgot!

BILL
I never even knew what homosexuals
"do" until Syd told me.

TOBEY
I woundn't have told you.

BILL

That's a real point. I even told John and he didn't know. By the time I was in the Army I had plenty of temptation, and I still didn't do anything.

INT. U.S. ARMY INDUCATION STATION - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

A lot of young men are standing around in one large hall in their skivvies. The men are typically varied in appearance and build, with a few obese or undeveloped and unfit.

Bill checks his medical history form, and answers yes to a box marked "homosexual tendencies." Then he writes a longhand explanation. He gives it to a SERGEANT.

SERGEANT

Okay, soldier, you get to talk to the psychiatrist.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

Bill insisted that he took the physical three times, until he passed it.

MORGAN (O.S.)

And I bet he's proud of that.

TOBEY

I wouldn't be.

SYDNEY

Yeah, we know, your the modern man, Tobey. Funny. Might as well finish.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM ROOM KANSAS UNIVERSITY - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

The dorm room here is larger, and the two beds are arranged in a Y for privacy. There are numerous books around the room and a small stereo, but no medicines now. BOBBY SIEVERS, 27, slightly overweight and acne-scarred, fiddles with the stereo as "Monday Monday" finishes playing.

BOBBY

You're a grown man, Bill, old enough to have your own car. I'll take you to Kansas City so we can roll some queers. Can make fifty bucks a night.

YOUNG BILL

And you were in the Peace Corps. You want to work for them. How can you?

BOBBY

Well, you let them approach you, and when they go down on you, you bang them with a lead pipe, and take their cash.

YOUNG BILL

You could kill somebody and never know it.

BOBBY

Well, then there's just one less queer in the world.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Bill pushes an 8x11 velo-bound manuscript of his book around the half-eaten food to Tobey, who hesitates and then picks it up. Then Bill shoves two other books, including one by {AUL ROSENFELS.

BILL

I want you to have these tonight. I've fixed all the post-implementation typos that I could find.

TOBEY

Sheila said she found too many of them. Like, The Bill of Rights is 160 years old. My girl friend's pretty straight out.

BILL

She read it too.

TOBEY

Yeah, you need another chance to redeem yourself as a licensed author. I'm kidding. I do like the video of your speech.

BILL

Yeah, you're in it. You look sharp announcing me.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM AT MINNEHAHA UNIVERSITY - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Tobey introduces Bill to the audience from the lectern.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Young Bill, 16, is standing in front of a high school English class. The words "Nathaniel Hawthorne" and "The Scarlet Letter" are written on the blackboard. Bill puts his hand to his mouth, as if nauseated.

INT. CLASSROOM AT KANSAS UNIVERSITY - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Bill, 22, dressed somewhat sloppily in a baggy suit, is writing mathematics definitions like THE ASSOCIATIVE LAW on a greenboard, in front of a smaller class of college students. He points to a chalk list of dates for scheduled hour examinations during the semester, and then turns around and faces the students, only slightly younger, confidently.

INT. COFFEE SHOP NEAR A MINNEAPOLIS LAKE - EVENING - FLASHBACK

Wind, rain and autumn leaves blow against the windows. Inside Bill is munching hors d'oeuvres like deviled eggs, and showing off his authored book (DO ASK DO TELL) to others. Tobey, dressed in a well-fitted blue sweater, waltzes into the room.

TOBEY

So, Bill, have you done much public speaking before?

They shake hands and make eye contact.

BILL

Uum, yes.

TOBEY

Would you relish presenting this at Minnehaha?

BILL

When. That's a good break for me.

TOBEY

Cool!

CUT BACK TO:

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

BILL

The teaching had a follow up. After my second hour exam.

TOBEY

I read about that in your book. You were a hard math teacher.

BILL

And I caught somebody cheating. And sentenced him.

MONTAGE (DURING THIS CONVERSATION)

Young Bill proctors an exam, with the bluebooks on TWO STUDENTS' adjacent desks showing the same chicken-scratching for an algebra long division problem.

Young Bill sits on his dorm bed in underwear. He actually looks at his still youthful legs for a moment. Another FRESHMAN (who was cheating in the previous clip) stands in the hallway and gesticulates, and then stares at Bill, but Bill ignores the attention.

Young Bill, dressed casually, invites two fibbies in good clothes into his dorm room.

BILL

Yes, I gave that one student an automatic F before they took the class away from me for giving out too many down slips at mid term. He pleaded, but I heard he got drafted that summer. He probably got infantry.

TOBEY
And you played snitch on that
second roommate.

BILL
That's part of the story.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DINKEYTOWN COFFEE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Tobey stares into the camera (scene can shift to soundstage
or screen can split.)

MORGAN
Um, yeah.

SYDNEY
So Bill screwed his second
roommate's career in the Peace
Corps, and I made it to the evil
empire, Hollywood.

TOBEY
Like Hollywood is the enemy. Look,
I don't think he has the pull to
get you blacklisted. Not ever. He
needs you.

MORGAN
But it was about cheating, too.
Even when I was in the military.

Patrick, sitting in the coffee bar, sets up a chess set and
pulls off his disguise, and looks handsome.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

BILL
It's ethics, isn't it. That's what
we need a townhall to debate. How
far the individual can go without
accounting for himself.

TOBEY
You know about this. D'Souza has
the buzzword. Authentication. I
wrote an exam question on that one.
(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

But you need to get out and help our candidates first. So we'll get you tailgating people for our ballot access petitioning this summer.

Tobey and Bill make eye contact.

TOBEY

Yes, that can come next. You know, the boys do the tailgating better, but the girls are better at signing people up. Especially in summer shorts.

BILL

Well, Tobey, you're the Man of Action. One of these books

INSERT

Pink cover of the paperback book "HOMOSEXUALITY: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS"

BILL

Paul Rosenfels would have labeled you an objective masculine.

Tobey nods.

TOBEY

But I enjoy life. Maybe that's why I majored in philosophy.

A WAITER comes by.

WAITER

Dessert?

TOBEY

I'm fine.

BILL

No dessert. You've got your graduation party.

TOBEY

A daily party. Every night this week at the 1569.

BILL

I want to see it some day.

TOBEY

Well, maybe.

BILL

Too bad I was on crutches when you drove me by it that night of my lecture.

TOBEY

You think I would have had you up.

BILL

I do.

Tobey backs up in his seat and his eyes drop. He stretches his arms and then withdraws.

TOBEY

You're a Cassius. Don't think too much. Be warned. Well, I've got to move my books tomorrow.

BILL

And not send them back to England.

TOBEY

No, just the campaign headquarters in North St. Paul. It's cost effective for the summer.

They get up to leave, and walk over to the cash register.

BILL

I wonder what it is really like.

TOBEY

At the 1569?

BILL

Well, I'll treat. Your graduation present. From me.

Bill taps Tobey on the shoulder, and Tobey withdraws slightly.

TOBEY

Last meal here.

BILL

We should have videotaped this for the Lagoon and Uptown.

TOBEY

You need that table reading first.
But I'll remember all this.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. AIRSPACE - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT

A budget airliner flies above the clouds with Tobey seated.
He gets up and walks around.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - MORNING

Sydney and Morgan pace behind the fader boards, as Tobey
walks in, dressed casually, with a backpack. Sydney offer his
hand and Tobey first hesitates, then crushes it.

MORGAN

So, Tobey, we see you live action.

SYDNEY

Not just in Steve Underhill.

MORGAN

So is law school still your backup?

TOBEY

Can lead to possibilities. Lawyers
start their own film companies.

SYDNEY

Especially to make black comedies.
What is Bill's other concoction
from Project Greenlight, "Baltimore
Is Missing"? Look, Bill didn't
approach William and Mary to pilot
of his mishap.

TOBEY

In today's world he would have
sued.

MORGAN

He doesn't sound like the combative
kind. He'll mention "Do Ask Do
Tell" when he time-drops Baltimore,
back to the steam engine and
Western Unions days. Low tech,
mechanics, like The Triplets of
Belleville. Nobody needs to know.

SYDNEY

But let's focus on you, Tobey. You look like a man of action even in your stills.

TOBEY

You read the book, too, Sydney. Do Ask Do Tell.

SYDNEY

Not carefully. Speed read it, like we used to do with those reading machines when I taught school.

TOBEY

But you speculated about it. You obviously have a stake in Bill's take on what happened.

SYDNEY

You can tell me.

MORGAN

You sure you can handle this, Tobey?

TOBEY

Like Bill's being gay really threatened you.

Syd rocks back and stumbles into a chair, banging into the fader board.

MORGAN

Um yeah.

INT. SYDNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Sydney opens the door to his office, which is cluttered with books and videos and is surprisingly low-tech with gadgetry. There is a large window that looks out to the Hollywood mountain, and the smoggy sunshine comes through. Tobey opens his backpack.

SYDNEY

You got that through security.

TOBEY

They trust me. Well, I didn't care that much for the pat-downs. Here.

Tobey hands him two notebooks filled with head shots. There are a lot of upscale ads, with Tobey in suits, and then a series of beach ads.

SYDNEY

The swim stuff. That was a few years ago?

TOBEY

Yeah.

SYDNEY

We'll do that again. And don't worry, I don't look at these the way Bill does. Let's let Morgan have at you some more.

TOBEY

I don't believe in buff, if you get my drift.

INT. MORGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sydney and Tobey walk into Morgan's office which is larger and has several computers, and shows a military neatness, yet there are clear glass ashtrays around. The view looks towards downtown LA.

MORGAN

So, Tobey, what do you want. You want us to get interested in this. We could have Tobey help you with that grainy tape of Bill.

SYDNEY

I think you're uncomfortable seeing him. And I think Tobey will be uncomfortable with seeing him.

Tobey's forehead frowns, and then he backs away, to let them talk about him, and goes out on a balcony.

MORGAN

But you're a director, Syd. Guys like Bill give us the words. We like to keep writers out of it. You get to change things. I'll pick up a copy of Baltimore from Greenlight. I heard about it over the grapevine.

SYDNEY

Where do you really think Bill's handmaiden's tale leads. I mean, we don't have a Brown Dwarf coming. We'd know if we did.

MORGAN

That's why we have America's fighting man. You're hardly that, Tobey. Really, we all know that Bill's story is that of a sissy.

TOBEY

So I'm supposed to spoil him now.

MORGAN

Syd, Bill had a point. How many fine young men like Tobey--OK, Tobey, we see the beard now, the chest--know what really happened. We do because we lived it. The draft, deferments, Vietnam. And Syd, you didn't even go.

SYDNEY

I was the sole surviving son. Both of my brothers got killed. So family values saved me. I got my out. A legit deferment.

Tobey, still listening through an ajar window while looking at the West Hollywood clubs below, ambles back in.

TOBEY

You lose family and you're left with friends.

MORGAN

I think Sydney had an excuse. Bill eventually served without really serving. I was an XO at Fort Jackson when he got recycled through Special Training Company. But he had the temerity to apply for a direct commission based on his Master's Thesis. He actually brought that black bound booger. I remember that board hearing.

INT. MILITARY QUONSET, FORT JACKSON, NEAR RIFLE RANGE, 1968 -
MORNING - FLASHBACK

Bill, in Army dress greens and poplin shirt, stands in front of three field grade officers seated in wooden chairs. The building is a bit decrepit with loose wooden boards on the floor, and there is a coal pile visible through the window. Rifle fire, staccato, punctuates. There is faint radio talk of peace talks in North Vietnam, but one of the officers (YOUNG MORGAN, 26, black, 1LT) turns off the radio.

YOUNG MORGAN

So, Private Ldzek, tell me at least one leadership activity in school. Like run for Student Council? Have you ever been in charge of others?

YOUNG BILL

Well, the Science Honor Society. I was initiated literally in my own basement. I organized the event. By my application for direct commission is based on technical skills.

Bill picks up a black bound, hand-type Master's thesis and quickly flips through it. He tries to show it to an officer, who shakes his head.

OFFICER NO 2

Computers are filled up. We don't need that. Private, I am a lawyer, but you see that I wear the infantry crossed sabres. We need leaders of men in combat. They become brothers, and then democrats.

INT. FORT JACKSON CHAPEL - DAY

Bill, in Army dress greens, is playing the organ (a theme from the last movement of Mahler's third) on the small tracker organ in a chapel service.

EXT. FORT JACKSON S.C. RIFLE RANGE - DAY

Bill is on the rifle range, firing at popups with a nearby coach. He keeps adjusting his ear plugs.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MORGAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

SYDNEY

Bill was an only child, too.

TOBEY

But so am I!

MORGAN

You don't act like it!

TOBEY

Morgan, you must have been one of the few African American officers around then.

MORGAN

They called us Negros. That's OK. The Army did me right. It took a long time for everybody.

TOBEY

So about what Bill thinks about gays in the military, so they can be equal?

SYDNEY

Respect him, Morgan. This guy is a dweller on two planets. Read his ap.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. NORFOLK NAVAL BASE, SUBMARINE PORT 1993 - DAY -
FLASHBACK

There is a sign, "no political buttons." Bill passes the sailor MP, in whites but with a pistol, down the Rama staircase into a submarine, and quickly sees the cramped quarters and Northhampton bunks.

CHAD, 26, a seaman in whites, shows him around quickly, all the way to the entrance to the nuclear power bay. They come back to a simple table and eat ice cream and cake. Chad sells him a navy blue hat that reads "Sunfish."

CHAD

There are no secrets here. I know everything my bunkmates are thinking.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MORGAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MORGAN

No, that's totally different. And I think you know why.

SYDNEY

Tobey, we need to get back to you. These head shots.

MORGAN

You have an immediate opportunity to play stand-in for a cyclist Lapp Fawley.

Tobey grimaces.

MORGAN

Too bad, he wants to play himself, primarily.

SYDNEY

He even joined SAG.

MORGAN

If you've got a week for a tryout in France before you start the summer job with the law firm.

TOBEY

I don't have the job first. And I need to visit my dad in England first.

SYDNEY

Go to France first. The race is on the Normandy beaches. Look, isn't your dad involved with the William the Conqueror museum there?

TOBEY

Looks like you really checked me out.

SYDNEY

Morgan did.

All three smile.

MORGAN

I'll work on this for you. The 1978 Bucky Denk Fenway Park part for you.

SYDNEY

Fits your temperament better. Look, what happened the last time you saw Bill?

Sydney puts one of Tobey's DVD's into his iMac.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAY PRIDE FESTIVAL LORING PARK - DAY - FLASHBACK

Tobey (at 21) is seated at the Libertarian Party booth in a lawn chair, hairy legs extended, his Libertarian Party tee-shirt fit tightly. A think, slightly paunched man, DANNY, 38, with apparently shaved or just withered and balding legs walks by the booth, and Bill tries to introduce him. Tobey backs up in the chair. Danny offers his hand and they shake hands. Bill's face expresses chagrin.

DANNY

Okay, Tobey, Bill and I work together. I've heard about you.

TOBEY

I'm glad. I guess Bill gives me attention.

Danny walks away, a bit embarrassed.

BILL

See, a protease paunch. He went down fast.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MORGAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

SYDNEY

You know, we also have a home movie of the William and Mary tribunals in my research vault.

(MORE)

SYDNEY(cont'd)

8 mm, black and white. Reel to reel. Just don't know if we could ever show it publicly.

TOBEY

Could never get the legal releases.

MORGAN

Um, yeah.

TOBEY

You were never quite a sportsman yourself, Syd. No football. But this is a great hookup. Careers are made this way.

SYDNEY

No, theater was enough for me. World drama. Eventually I made my portfolio, but I never became it. That's what you need, to build a coherent identity in different roles.

TOBEY

You didn't quite hear me. You know, if you didn't play football, you might get targeted by the Tribunals.

MORGAN

I get it.

Morgan lights up a cigarette and even blows rings.

SYDNEY

Bill skipped out on it. I don't remember that it happened that way. Did Bill say that?

TOBEY

I can figure it out. Ever watch Smallville? It's not a comedy.

MORGAN

Hazing at the academies. They do it that way. You have to play at the sports.

TOBEY

See, with Bill, it's just "Do Ask Do Tell." It's a paradigm.

(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

How William and Mary looked to justify the ban today, starting in the civilian world, with McCarthyism driving the values, turning things around for a nerd like him, as long as he kept to himself.

SYDNEY

You don't have to.

TOBEY

Oh, I wouldn't want to be like him.

MORGAN

But that's not the point.

TOBEY

I know. It's lucky for me to know him. Whether I like him. You certainly don't have to like him, even now.

EXT. 1569 FRAT HOUSE IN ST. PAUL, MN BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

Tobey (still lightly bearded) in shorts and tee-shirt, stands in front of an ivy covered wire-mesh fence. The back yard has a standalone garage to Tobey's right, birdbath on the left.

TOBEY

Okay, Corey, let's wind up our baby play.

Another NEIGHBORHOOD KID pitches a softball to Corey (now 10), who hits it about 120 feet, right to the fence. Tobey runs, dodges the birdbath but clipping it as he falls, and catches the ball as it is about to go over the fence. Corey stands at a makeshift home plate.

COREY

You robbed me.

TOBEY

Over the fence is out anyway. But it wasn't that way when I lived here.

(END OF ACT 1)

(ACT 2 - TOBEY)

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - DAY

Tobey is relaxing on a sofa, in a loose sports shirt and slacks. Sheila leans over him, with Tobey's cat Max (now six years older, and fatter) jumps onto Tobey and tugs at the buttons. Sheila approaches him, then turns and walks towards her desk, where a computer is downloading some music.

SHEILA

I want to find out if you've finally grown up. But first I've got to finish this program.

TOBEY

You told me you're one of the few real programmers.

SHEILA

You don't get anywhere when you're babied by the Mac.

TOBEY

So I'm here. What are you working on now?

SHEILA

I'm finishing this peer-to-peer script so we can watch your audition.

TOBEY

There isn't much.

SHEILA

You haven't looked up Bill. But you will. But we have all your corp ads.

TOBEY

No siphoning of songs now. That's stealing. You know how I am about that.

SHEILA

OK, lawyer. That's not your real life.

TOBEY

I mean it, Sheila. That's how I am.

SHEILA

Sure, like you are about hair.
We'll just use it for your movies.
But if I used it for Smallville
would you still love me.

TOBEY

You'd challenge me.

SHEILA

You're on the couch, I know you
want me to be aggressive.

Sheila approaches the couch, leans over and tugs at his
shirt, and undoes one button.

TOBEY

Not yet. That's for the tryouts.

SHEILA

I didn't give up on your humanities
either.

Tobey eases her hand away from his body.

TOBEY

No time for dirty dancing yet.
We'll do the scientific method on
your own job, though. Your real
job.

Tobey gets up and they walk to the KITCHEN which is rather
Spartan for a young woman. But then they migrate toward the
sliding glass door, that opens to a jacuzzi.

SHEILA

I'll make you another Crush. You
sound glad that you took Bill up on
his gambit.

TOBEY

If we do make a film together,
would you believe that with me in
SAG, he has to pay me \$300 for two
days. Friendship doesn't matter.
That beard took a month, you know.

SHEILA

You still look too young.

TOBEY

I've grown up as much as I want to.

SHEILA
You want to do it?

TOBEY
Don't know if Bill's good for me.

SHEILA
You'd look too young again. But you have Patrick's original to compare you to.

TOBEY
Yeah, the 1569 party and one shot from Loring Park, gay pride. But that shot shows me in the best light.

SHEILA
So you and he, it's friendship like Robert Louis Stevenson, or it's just business.

TOBEY
Bill plays it both ways. But he never really got in. He was on his crutches that night we drove by. He claims it could have been interesting. Just he.

Tobey goes outside onto the deck, and sits in the sun, in a lawn chair.

SHEILA
So you led him on. I don't think he ever cried about it. Enjoy your pop. Dissolve those teeth some more.

Sheila pours the fizzy orange drink.

SHEILA
We're three coins in the fountain. You're gonna have to be able to afford a titanium implant. If you're a real star.

She backs up, goes into the kitchen, and puts some Lean Cuisine dinners into a microwave.

SHEILA
Bill is a controversial customer for us at Chandler Cable.
(MORE)

SHEILA(cont'd)

He'll get us in trouble, as sure as
the sun rises in the East.

TOBEY

Well, good for you!

SHEILA

So you're gonna interview our law
firm. You know the job market.
Apply where you know something
special. Even if you're good.

INT. TOBEY'S PREVIOUS BEDROOM AT 1569 - EVENING

Tobey, Sheila, Sydney, and Patrick, and several other party
guests congregate with drinks in a master bedroom. Nobody
smokes. It is a warm evening even in Minnesota and Patrick is
in shorts. There is a twin-sized bed, computers, and other
typical accoutrements of a college student's room. The view
looks outside on the back yard and it is clear that this is
the upper floor of the 1569 club.

SYDNEY

So this is what Bill craved to see.

TOBEY

It's warmer up here, easier on the
bod in January. The cold drafts
stay in the cellar. Pat, can I tell
them about your novel?

SHEILA

Pat, I guess you took over Tobey's
kingdom when you grew up.

PATRICK

And I swore Tobey to secrecy.

TOBEY

Just look outside over the ball
court.

PATRICK

That's where the Maya decided what
their men were worth.

SYDNEY

And I'll bet they turned into
Grays. That's after the priests
measured them!

There is a trampling sound on the stairs, and then a sound of
falling.

(The camera shows a Vertigo show of the stairs as he slides down them.) Corey can be heard crying from below. Tobey leads and the others follow. Tobey quickly carries him upstairs.

TOBEY

You look OK, sport. And good job.

PATRICK

Boy, Corey, you are a miracle again. And you know about this...

Corey is calming down.

TOBEY

We'll show you the movie from California.

PATRICK

I thought we couldn't tattle.

SYDNEY

There's a little of it.

Patrick picks up a large camcorder and inserts a miniDV into it. Tobey holds Corey as he watches the picture. Tobey and Morgan are sitting in a restaurant.

COREY

But I didn't know Bill was a Negro?

SYDNEY

Oh he's not.

PATRICK

He's acting. We picked him because he's bald, like Bill.

COREY

You aren't bald. You're just make believe.

PATRICK

They call that acting.

Becoming somebody else. Trading places. Being flex. That's more important.

Tobey puts Corey down, and Corey quickly tugs at Patrick's hairy legs. Sydney taps Corey to distract him, then walks over to the Union Jack above the bed.

SYDNEY

The flag!

PATRICK

Yes, England beckons him.

TOBEY

You left this up, even though this is your room now.

PATRICK

Yeah, I graduated to it. I took over for you.

SHEILA

Tobey's a dual citizen, a coalition of one. But you never showed me the dinner film, Tobey. Are you going to track Bill down?

PATRICK

Make this My Dinner with Andrew right.

SHEILA

My. You can make money too off the friendship.

TOBEY

He's still out and about.

PATRICK

I think I saw him at the Metrodome, selling cokes, and beers. For MCC.

SHEILA

He's getting ready to join the proletariat.

PATRICK

There is no money in my world. So an angel can just pop in and whisk Bill out of his job if he doesn't have enough karma points.

TOBEY

Well, a dinner movie would be one big head shot.

INT. TOBEY'S TINY ROOM NOW AS A LAW STUDENT - NIGHT

Tobey is surfing on his iMac laptop. He plays with some radio buttons and it plays some classical music, Rachmaninoff. He opens his text email.

INSERT

Email from: Ldzek

Body: Don't board that plane.

TOBEY (O.C.)
(thinking)
Bill wouldn't do this. It must be a
spooof. I've already flown. But I go
again, to France.

There is a second email.

INSERT

Body: Again.

Tobey picks up his Internet cell phone and pulls up a menu. He snaps a quick flash of his computer.

INT. LAW FIRM HR CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Tobey works at a desktop computer at one end of a conference room table. There are true-false questions on the monitor.

INSERT

I am naturally curious about how things work T F

MARGIE BLACK, 40, a thin woman wearing oversized spectacles and fidgeting as if it were too warm, reads from a paper script. Tobey, dressed in a blue business suit, sits across the shiny varnished table. Law books fill one end of the room.

MARGIE
Very well, Mr. Strickland. I'm
sorry, you really want me to call
you Tobey. That's pretty friendly.
Mr. Scruggs will ask you a few
questions about your Birkman
Profile. I just have a few more yes-
no type questions. Like a law
school test.

Tobey edges toward the front of his seat and looks attentive.

MARGIE

Have you, within the past five years, worked in any of these situations? First, adult entertainment or pornography?

TOBEY

Gosh, no. All of my modeling appearances were upscale, legit, like GQ, like Ashton Kutcher all grown up.

MARGIE

He's from Iowa. Oh well, you're Minnesota, the same boat.

TOBEY

And he's grown up. Like me.

MARGIE

I see. Let's get back to the true-false.

TOBEY

Like my biology finals.

MARGIE

Ok. Smarty. Have you worked for a tobacco company.

TOBEY

No. That would be immoral.

MARGIE

Very well. How about as a telemarketer?

TOBEY

No.

MARGIE

Or any kind of soliciting, outbound.

TOBEY

Ballot access petitioning. That's getting signatures to get non-major party candidates on the ballot. That's good for, democracy.

MARGIE

He's going to ask you this. I think he said you were an actor, too, right?

TOBEY

So far, just in commercials, and short gigs.

MARGIE

Mr. Scruggs wants me to ask you what your perception is of selling.

TOBEY

Well, it's fine to bring a customer and producer together. That's what business is about.

MARGIE

What about convincing people.

TOBEY

Okay, I think I set a good example.

MARGIE

You don't have to act to do that.

TOBEY

No. You have to become a role model.

MARGIE

So you do have a sharp edge, don't you.

TOBEY

And you got me off the true-false.

MARGIE

Okay, one more. Ever tended bar.

TOBEY

Barbacking, for fun and low pay. In good old Angletterre.

MARGIE

That's not true-false.

TOBEY

I'm a dweller on two planets.

INT. LAW FIRM HR CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

HOWIE SCRUGGS, 52, freckled, overweight and red-headed with a Marine crew cut, shakes hands with Tobey, sits down, and then fumbles the projection equipment. Tobey helps him. Howie waves him off.

HOWIE

So, boy, you like it over there in bonnie old England. Angleterre, My Little Margie said. You want to scoot over there before starting work?

TOBEY

For one week, Sir. Just for one tryout.

HOWIE

Good thing. An actor won't become a journalist.

TOBEY

I don't know about that--actors have to be objective about their assumed roles, too. Not everything is soap opera.

HOWIE

Well you want to run around first.

The following is shown as Howie finishes speaking.

HOWIE

You'd better keep the trip safe!

MONTAGE

Tobey gets a pat down in public at airport security.

Tobey looks out from a window seat, still curious, at the volcanic scenery of Iceland.

Tobey's plane approaches London.

Tobey boards a BritRail train with only a small gripsack.

Tobey takes a chopper from Brighton to a channel island.

INT. STRICKLAND'S CASTLE ON ISLAND, STUDY - AFTERNOON

Tobey looks outside a bay window, at the coastline and at quaint shops below, and then across the channel all the way to Calais, France.

He then walks back into a large hall, fully furnished with small twin bed, made carefully, and various other dark furniture items, desks, and green carpets. At one end of the hall there is a small home theater with flat plasma screen.

CHRIS STRICKLAND, 49, black-haired and slightly portly, dressed in a black bathrobe, approaches. Age spots appear on his shiny shins. Chris embraces Tobey, and Tobey resists a bit.

CHRIS

So you play professional tourist again, son?

TOBEY

Dad, I paid my own way this time.

CHRIS

Not the chopper.

TOBEY

Icelandic provided a scenic route, anyway. The whole kingdom looks like a Mt. St. Helens.

CHRIS

It's Mono Lake that is the danger for you American firstties. Even Minnesota isn't far away enough to protect you.

TOBEY

Well, it's great to be here. I'll barback a day at Brighton again. Fun, low pay. But it pays my dues.

CHRIS

Tobey, Postulate-A Life isn't working out for us. I'm gonna send Frank Webber to get them interested into joining our Handyman network. Remember him?

TOBEY

Allison introduced him at a cafeteria canteen in law school.

(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

Wasn't even in the lectures or seminars.

CHRIS

I thought you could work him into mock court.

TOBEY

Didn't get that far. Did Bill mention him in his books?

CHRIS

Yup. Frankie's a changed fellow. Huh, funny the career counseling--career auditing, have you--work that he does. If you call it work. Hip preachers say that only God gets to measure people.

TOBEY

And you gay men like to strip each other barren on the dance floors. Dirty dancing.

CHRIS

You should review your own eFolio, son. You once uploaded all your swim, bike and baseball pictures. You know, son, your pitching arm could have made you a lot of money.

TOBEY

Sure, with anabolic steroids. Look, if I make it in the movies, I get to visit you. Go back to your hedge funds and derivatives while I watch this. Finance is deservedly boring.

CHRIS

No, it's not son, it's just business. Bringing people together. That's creative, too. But how many movie parts have you turned down, now?

TOBEY

Oh, maybe six. It's a numbers game, like telemarketing. If I upscale model enough, I'll get to be what I want.

MONTAGE

A shot of Tobey, in a suit, pouring red wine for a woman in a nightgown.

A shot of Tobey, in casual dress, standing on the Pacific Coast Highway 1, above Big Sur, holding up a new cell phone.

TOBEY

Dad, don't forget your injection.
You don't look that good today,
even since I last saw you.

Tobey turns on the theater, and watches a time-lapse film of his growth from adolescence, often in swimming trunks and shorts, up until he graduates from college.

He pitches a little league game in Williamsport, PA. He gets lifted by his teammates, swarming onto the field after victory.

He presides over a mock court at college. He has dinner with Bill, he swims laps at a pool in the Minnehaha natatorium. He looks at himself naked in the mirror, at his increasing chest and arm hair.

TOBEY (O.C.)

(thinking)
I think Bill wanted this. Just
touching me was enough.

The words "APPLICATION ERROR" flash on the screen in a Microsoft Windows popup. Chris staggers back in, limping on a charley horse.

CHRIS

I've got a turd weasel in my
server. Anyway, son, you know where
you've come from.

TOBEY

They even teach about viruses and
spam in law school now. Not just
piracy. Anyway, I see what I did,
not just what's on my mind.

INT. WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR MUSEUM BAYEUX FRANCE - DAY

Tobey, Chris, and MATT FROHM, 20, blond, ectomorphic and very young looking, walk in front of the Bayeux Tapestry, and then out into the public display area where 11th Century life is displayed in static dioramas.

CHRIS

See, son, the Tapestry is like a movie.

TOBEY

Or a fourt grade film strip. Days of the Secret Garden.

MATT

So, Tobey, you think this is where the draft came from.

TOBEY

Yes, after William walked in the door and bought England, if you compare him to my dad, that is, all young men, all vassals owed some kind of military service before starting out in life.

MATT

So it didn't come from Prussia after all, Bismarck. Bill wrote about the draft, a lot. You know, he never gave me a copy of his book. He showed me how to do story problems, for algebra.

TOBEY

You got good.

MATT

Well, I'm an exchange student now.

INT. - STATE FAIR TENT - DAY - FLASHBACK

YOUNG MATT, two years younger (14) and shorter, sits by Bill in a Libertarian Party booth, as Bill works some problems in pencil for him on a newsletter. Matt's arm drops around Bill's shoulders. Tobey is standing, meeting the public, and ERICH Jzzet, 18, gets up and starts collecting signatures on his clipboard again.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR MUSEUM BAYEUX - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

You were good at that, Matt. Getting signatures. Approaching people.

MATT

It helps to be a kid. Even if you don't look like one still.

Chris is fidgeting in his pockets, pulls out an oversized hotel key and then some car keys.

CHRIS

Here, Tobey. Don't lose the rent car keys like Bill did here. A lot of people let them slide out in our theater.

TOBEY

Thanks, dad. I've got four races to make.

CHRIS

You're old enough to be responsible for your Honda if somebody drives off.

TOBEY

You can use it. You've never seen Auschwitz yet. Or did you get there when it was cleaned up.

Tobey winks at Matt, who looks back.

MATT

That's brutal, Tobey.

TOBEY

Sheila said Bill was there when his Mother was recovering in a nursing home having entered the zipper club.

CHRIS

For women it doesn't matter as much.

TOBEY

If you lift yourself up and your sternum splits it does.

CUT TO:

INT. NURSING HOME ROOM - NIGHT - FANTASY

BILL'S MOTHER, now 85, struggles to sit up and get up from bed while a NURSE, 25 and female, refuses to help her.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR MUSEUM BAYEUX - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

Bill still knows he's less than a man for not going to bat for his mother.

CHRIS

Is that why you haven's seen him.

TOBEY

Check with Sheila. But we both ran around.

MONTAGE

Tobey, in shorts with college-age hairy legs, trudges around the Acropolis in Athens, leading other college students.

Bill lugs a red suitcase past the sleeping the first-class sleeping accommodations of a train car as other young adult travelers look out the windows at Krakow. The camera lifts. There are gentle low mountains on the southern horizon. Closer, there are farmers thatching hay by hand.

The camera shifts to the abandoned railroad approach to Auschwitz, and then to the brick museum buildings. The camera moves inside one building and shows scalps of human hair, and another pile of dental fillings.

Tobey rides a bus into the heart of Bilbao, Spain, and gets out in front of the metallic Guggenheim Museum, and poses, in shorts, for an ad with a Lexis sports car. Then he goes into the museum and walks through the first floor maze.

CHRIS

So she must think Bill is basically a cheat. You see, I also never called him. He would take that as being welcome to negotiate.

TOBEY

Well, money doesn't tease him like it does you or me.

(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

His chakra runs on his own notion of merit, like Patrick's. But Bill really likes the notoriety.

CHRIS

He's no heaththrob.

TOBEY

He never had the chance to enjoy being a young man. Like we did.

EXT. NORMANDY BEACHES AND A NARROW ROAD - MORNING

Matt and Tobey are poised in bicycle racing gear. LAPP FAWLEY, 28, is also in gear but stands aside. Lapp takes off his helmet for a moment, revealing his bald head, and on closer view looks a bit wan. Matt is shaved but Tobey is not.

LAPP

I guess you know by now. You mans are competing.

MATT

Pleased to meet you sir. I thought you would be another actor!

TOBEY

Matt, no. Please. You did a lot better with the petitions.

LAPP

Tobey, you're as unimpressed as Matt to meet me.

TOBEY

I didn't know that this was a documentary.

EXT. NORMANDY BEACHES AND A NARROW ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Lapp, Tobey and Mike bike vigorously uphill. Tobey, though sweating and pedaling hard, pulls ahead and gains distance.

TOBEY

Forget the wind resistance!

INT. CAROB'S PUB - BRIGHTON - EVENING

Tobey mixes a bloody Mary behind the bar. It's a typical pub with lots of greens and browns and family shields. The crowd is mixed, with a few younger men in fern-bar clothes.

LAPP

So you made it, bartender.

TOBEY

This is just for fun. Pay's a pound more than last time. Can you really deal with this?

MORGAN

He probably can't. You now know the story of why Lapp wants a full backup.

TOBEY

Well, this Tobey will take him off his peak.

LAPP

You know, the baseball part of this role in "Comeback" might work better for you. That's when I first notice that I'm getting sick. In the minors, we used to travel the southern pine barrens by bus, double and triple up or hot bunk in la-tee-dah motels. I'd start a night cough and then itch. My legs would peel, I wouldn't even have to shave them.

MORGAN

We told Tobey the story on the plane. It's tiresome.

LAPP

No blood on the sheets or things like that. When I went to the doctor they found those rubbery neck lumps. Lymphoma. Hodgkins. They mopped it up, literally, with chemotherapy and a few courses of whole body radiation. They even used a common garden plant, periwinkle -- those little white flowery buds that you see so much in Texas-- for the chemo.

TOBEY

I don't need to hear it again.

LAPP

Do you have any idea what rads do to a man?

TOBEY

I do. But it's not like AIDS. You can prevent it.

MORGAN

How? And does it really matter?

INT. LAW FIRM HR CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Howie Scruggs manipulates his laptop. Today he has glasses.

TOBEY

So I can start tomorrow.

HOWIE

Well, first, sounds like you really like it there in the UK.

TOBEY

Sure, roots. Dad.

HOWIE

Look, you gotta see me as an adversary. Your old man is a big tax guy. Boring stuff.

TOBEY

Movies are better.

HOWIE

More fulfilling. You know our spin, technology law. No off-shore stuff. All ethical. But you knew that. Your girl friend.

TOBEY

I focused on web security in law school. This is a done deal.

HOWIE

I see your great LSAT, your running mock court as an undergraduate. Pretty impressive. Helps my decision all right.

TOBEY

I thought it was a done deal. I really did.

HOWIE

Jumping to conclusions.

TOBEY

We did a patent case in our mock court project.

HOWIE

Tobey. What do you want? I've seen you around, haven't I? Commercials, ads, even the movies a little.

TOBEY

If you say so. Don't exaggerate.

HOWIE

No need to quibble. I know you worked as a model, as an actor.

TOBEY

Margie mentioned it. How did you find out?

HOWIE

Google. How do you think.

TOBEY

Teoma is better. Bill?

Howie Scruggs types on his laptop for a few seconds. He looks up, and his specs fall off. They break.

HOWIE

Shit. I don't have the patience for contacts.

TOBEY

Or dentists. I deal with that stuff well. Look I did upscale mags only. One computer commercial.

HOWIE

I'm sure you were just over 21 for those wine ads, they were a few years back. You've changed a little. Look, on your profile, your Birkman is right in the middle. It's like somebody made a movie called Color in Black and White.

TOBEY

Only a nitwit would do that.

HOWIE

For a guy as sharp as you, you test neutral, no personality bias.

(MORE)

HOWIE(cont'd)

The outplacement people would have a fit. No Asperger's, you read everything in people. What is it with you?

TOBEY

I don't give myself away for free.

HOWIE

I know, that's what makes you an actor. You really would take the sbowbiz if you could get it. I know. I read Matt Damon's Project Greenlight essay too.

TOBEY

A law degree and even I.T. experience can be a way in. It's hard to break into acting. You wind up manipulating unemployment instead of people. Not moral. Comedy is the hardest of all. You know, Mr. Scruggs, this really counts as an interview.

Howie Scruggs brings up Tobey's website, with its attractive portraits and swin shots with minimal text. Scruggs paces back and forth. Then he sits down and brings up another site, that hesitates and comes up with a "DNS error."

HOWIE

Let me try this with AOL Hometown.

He tries again, with a slightly different spelling. A political site with the words "Libertarian" all over the place comes up, and Tobey Strickland is mentioned.

HOWIE

You see, Tobey, you may be a paid intern now, but we will expect billable hours for your clients. You get paid on that. It's not 100% ethical but that's how it is.

TOBEY

Mr. Scruggs.

HOWIE

The real kahuna is to get business. In these days, anybody can find out who you are. Your girl frined coined the word, "Google hack."

TOBEY

But that can help.

Sheila waltzes into the conference room, dressed in an appropriate female business suit, Navy blue.

SHEILA

Tobey, you put your own name on your site in HTML text. I told you not to do that.

HOWIE

Well, he's all right. Like singles Google each other before going on dates. Queers really like to do that.

SHEILA

Unless they meet first on reality TV. Get with it.

TOBEY

Well, or speed dates. Looks like you think you own my right to publicity if I work for you.

HOWIE

You don't need to do shop talk with me, son. We're still in a job interview, remember. Maybe an ultimate job interview. But a done deal it ain't yet. But, Sheila, for you, honey, we'll let him off for this one.

SHEILA

You know you're hiring him, Howie. Stop the crap. It was the deal.

HOWIE

OK, I'm not afraid of a little informal nepotism. Okay, but you're going to wear a Sunday best suit every day and I'll check for garters, just like they used to at IBM. Or was that EDS?

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MORNING

With Morgan sitting and watching in the corner, Tobey sits on the white crepe-papered examining table. HARRY PINCOCK, JR.

(50, bald, tall and lean) walks in, followed by FRANK WEBBER, (42, medium build, black hair, slightly soft-looking in the love-handle area with hints of gray around the temples, dressed in a Brooks Brothers men's shop suit. Frank approaches Morgan and stands in the corner for a laboratory observation.

HARRY PINCOCK, JR.
OK, Mr. Strickland.

Tobey pulls off his T-shirt (after Harry reaches for the tail) and trousers, to his boxer shorts. There is some light scraggly hair in the center of his chest. His legs are shaggy.

FRANK
Actors have to take care of their legs. They can't smoke in real life.

Tobey stands and turns around a full circle.

TOBEY
I'd never smoke. Look, it looks like I pass inspection.

INT. LAW FIRM LARGER BOARD ROOM - DAY

Sheila, Tobey, Howie Scruggs, and several law partners (including HUBERT MYERS, 70) are seated around the table. The board room is filled with wall-to-wall law books. Sheila is showing some spreadsheets on the projections screen. This time Howie has a King James Bible in front of him, with red print in the New Testament, and he is skimming it before the meeting starts.

HOWIE
We welcome our latest summer associate to Scruggs and Myers. Officially, he starts tomorrow.

Tobey stands, as if to model.

HUBERT
He's no threat to make partner now, is he. He can't get in enough hours in one summer unless Sheila blows 'em up.

Howie cackles a bit but the rest of the room is quiet.

HOWIE

Like me, has to age 42 to make it. That's why I ordered him to dress for success. If he doesn't dress right...

Now the partners chuckle.

HOWIE

It'll take to age 43 and then it's Logan's Run here. Sheila, you don't have to worry about any of this. That's why it's better being a consultant. A W-2 consultant.

They chuckle again.

HUBERT

Driving it all down, you little devil you.

HOWIE

OK, you see, what we have, a correlated list of small businesses, especially home-based and unzoned, and the states in which they have assumed names.

HUBERT

You can check whether they pay business taxes, right. But Sheila, you have something to explain.

SHEILA

There is nothing legally wrong with my presenting you all this. It's all publicly available information.

HUBERT

If you can hunt and peck.

HOWIE

No, Google hack.

TOBEY

Sheila, you never told me this at home.

SHEILA

I can't outside of work, real work. It's a trade secret.

HOWIE

Call it a coma, but don't go to bed.

Howie puts his feet on the table, revealing bald legs.

HOWIE

Boy friends are outsiders until hired. They can still trade without acting like Martha Stewart.

SHEILA

But Tobey, you'll really be doing your elderly mentor, Bill, a favor.

TOBEY

But this is ambulance chasing. Hardly more moral than telemarketing.

HOWIE

We have clients who believe in zero tolerance in protecting their brands. They owe that to their shareholders. Mavericks like Bill who draw attention to themselves without money risked have to go legitimate. Kind of like making the baths into real health clubs. Or getting these overbuilt office buildings rented. Go legit. Sometime you have to have OPM.

HUBERT

Other people's money.

TOBEY

So we give him real publicity. You know, he says what's on his mind and gets public credits for it. Actors say what other people write for them to say, tell them to say.

SHEILA

I know, writers give them the words.

HOWIE

Here you learn everyone else's roles.

SHEILA

But not my memorizing.

INT. LAW FIRM LARGER BOARD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They eat catered roast beef and turkey roll sandwiches, neatly decorated with ribboned toothpicks. Another lawyer, ART MANDIBLE, 36, tall and bald, seats himself and refuses food.

ART

I'd have to feed myself!

HOWIE

Seriously, you guys, we got three big clients losing sleep over Partiot Act II. We will send Sheila Daniels to scrub their servers for hidden codes.

ART

She cleared?

HOWIE

She's no Marlana. She doesn't even look like one.

ART

The law has never been used this way before. But the Justice Department warns companies that they will be held responsible, accountable if they knowingly allow their customers to display WMD activation codes, even when placed their by hackers without their knowledge.

TOBEY

You mean, if they don't know, or -- I see, a customer calls them. About a mystery hack on their own site.

HOWIE

Yes, Mr. Strickland, the customer thinks he is a good citizen, a corporate citizen mind you, and tipster by calling the help desk at 2 AM EDT, for the poor programmer on the graveyard shift to have a job maybe he's just a plain snitch.

TOBEY

Or attention-getter.

ART
 Funny you should say that. You have
 a particular celebrity friend in
 mind. He told you.

TOBEY
 He thinks he's moral.

The audience claps at half speed.

TOBEY
 I do, too.

HOWIE
 But understand...

ART
 The ISP has to get rid of the
 steganography traps or face
 prosecution under the new counter-
 terrorism initiative from the
 Justice Department.

HUBERT
 The government, by god. You have to
 trust your government.

ART
 And this is a growth business for
 us.

TOBEY
 So you do need me.

FRANK
 You have the complex skills, son,
 for today's job market. Even more
 than your girl friend.

EXT. SANDLOT SOFTBALL FIELD - AFTERNOON

Frank Webber, wearing a T-shirt that reads "HANDYMAN
 ACADEMIES: CAREER AUDITORS" slow-pitches a softball to the
 plate, where Tobey, wearing a T-shirt for "SCRUGGS AND MYERS,
 LLP" takes the pitch. Sheila, umpiring, extends her right
 hand for a called strike. The scoreboard shows that Frank is
 pitching a 1-0 shutout in the bottom of the seventh inning.

FRANK
 OK, gumshoe.

Frank tosses another pitch with a bit less arc. Tobey winds up on it, pulling the ball and lofting it down the left field foul line. The ball hits a foul pole over a chain-link wire fence with the sign "230 FEET" below. The left fielder rushes over and catches the ball on the carom off the foul pole. The left fielder relays the ball in.

SHEILA

The game is over. 2 to 1.

Frank approaches the plate, offering Tobey a high five before Tobey crosses the plate from running the bases.

FRANK

You were always good at this.

TOBEY

So were you.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT MINNEAPOLIS - NIGHT

Now the apartment is even more cluttered with computers, VCRs and laptops. The piano is covered with even more CDs. Bill sits at his Sony Vaio computer with liquid plasma screen. He looks at the statue of a cat on his beat-up piano. He rubs out a coffee stain at his feet, and it won't come out.

Bill types an email to Tobey on AOL.

INSERT

Tobey, would you and Patrick like to come to Bryant Lake Bowl next Wednesday. There is still time to submit your dinner film from the 1569 graduation.

INT. TOBEY'S LAW STUDENT DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Tobey lies in his own small bed with Sheila on top of him. They are still in their softball clothes.

SHEILA

You know how it is. We won, they lost. Hey, you ticklish?

She tickles Tobey through his shirt and tugs at his shorts. She reaches for his belt and navel, and Tobey protects the area with his hand. She backs up on the bed and begins to massage his hairy legs.

TOBEY

What do you mean, we? You're a contractor.

SHEILA

Roll over. Now, you're just a paid intern.

She massages his calves.

TOBEY

For now. And you don't have to like real people. I do.

SHEILA

Well, some people don't know the rules. You remember Bill?

TOBEY

Yes, more than I can respect him.

SHEILA

But you would help him, or let him help you.

TOBEY

It gets back to me. All the stories about my commercials, my cameo movie appearances.

SHEILA

Like as a janitor in 8 millimeter.

He turns over and she keeps on massaging his shins. She gets up and heads toward the washbasin for some cream.

TOBEY

Sheila, don't.

She climbs down and resumes massaging, dry, moving to the thighs.

SHEILA

So you would go to Bryant Lake. You know how to read the files that you send back, so I can ask.

TOBEY

Maybe. Now he really showed you the hacked file from his site? That's interesting if he did.

SHEILA

Why?

TOBEY

That he would remember you.

SHEILA

He doesn't care.

She leans down and kisses him.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT MINNEAPOLIS - MOMENTS LATER

Bill gets back an email.

INSERT

MAILER DAEMON: Tobey@hotmail.com is not accepting email from this sender.

Bill brings up Grokster, after some struggling, and finds an index entry for Tobey's dinner movie. It starts to load and then gives an error.

(END of ACT 2)

(ACT 3 - BILL)

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT MINNEAPOLIS - MORNING

Bill carries some handwritten papers from his walk-in closet to his twin bed. The bedroom is also messy, with many papers on the floor and more laptops. He fumbles through the papers for a phone number, scribbles a script to leave on an answering machine, and then calls on the silver cordless phone.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

Sheila's cell phone beeps.

SHEILA

Hello, this is Sheila.

BILL

Sheila Daniels, this is Bill.
Ldzek. Remember, you proofread my
second booklet for Bill of Rights
2. Tobey didn't really have time,
remember?

SHEILA

OK. Sure. You gave me that file,
too.

BILL

Huh.

SHEILA

We'll have to take your brain
fingerprint, I'll bet. I remember
you look pretty bald. You know, the
tech fair.

BILL

Oh, yes.

SHEILA

And you're not exactly a techie.
You want me to check with Tobey
about the email. No problem. He
could recover it. It still might be
a problem on your computer from the
hack, you know.

BILL

A virus. It scans clean with the
latest McAfee files.

SHEILA

McAfee can't catch everything. You
really have to know what you're
doing these days.

She hangs up.

EXT. DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS - MORNING - ESTABLISHING SHOT

Show downtown Minneapolis, the Churchill Apartments and
skyway, then follow the Skyway to the IDS Center and offices
of Postulate-A Financial.

INT. POSTULATE-A FINANCIAL BILL'S CUBICLE - AFTERNOON

SANDY O'BRIEN, 40, casually dressed and with a tatoos on her
ankle, comes by Bill's cubicle. She is carrying a mass of
notebooks and folders.

SANDY

Bill. You're ready for the
assessment?

BILL

I guess I figured this out.

SANDY

Good. You'll meet with a Mr. Webber. You know, he says he thinks he remembers you.

Bill follows Sandy into a conference room with a circular table and UFO-style phones. Frank, dressed in a Navy blue suit, is separating computer listings and personnel files.

FRANK

Have a seat, Mr. Ldzek.

SANDY

I'll leave him to your mercy.

Sandy leaves. Bill hesitates, waiting for a handshake that does not come.

FRANK

Bill, I'm from a company called Career Auditors. What I do is go through your technical background and determine whether your performance and compensation of commensurate with other companies. Of course, the details of your situation stays confidential within the company.

BILL

You're debriefing all of us.

FRANK

No, Bill, just you. Sandy was concerned about your 360 evaluation. Your peers are more concerned about you than she was.

BILL

Well, I guess I can't snow the boss. It's hard to keep up.

FRANK

Oh?

Bill leans forward, then backs up, as if he were trying to speak with body language but can't.

BILL

I support stuff in a lot of the new object-oriented languages. It's hard to pick it up in the trenches when you didn't code anything in the newfangled stuff.

FRANK

Bill, Sandy mentioned her concern about your learning curve. She said you took a couple training courses down on the 494 strip. But I know the problem.

Frank is leaning forward, now seeking eye contact.

BILL

You mean boot camps and certifications.

Frank forces the eye contact.

FRANK

Bill, you read my hiney well.

BILL

Sandy says you know me.

FRANK

You're the master of fantasy, your own mind. Look, Bill, have you ever assembled a computer on your own? Or changed your own oil?

BILL

I don't think you did that in your own teen years.

FRANK

You remember.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOTS AND SADDLE BAR, NYC (1980) - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

YOUNG ADULT BILL (somewhat bald) stands next to YOUNG FRANK (20), who kisses him on the lips. Bill prolongs the event, unbuttoning two closely-spaced buttons on Frank's knit shirt and fingering his smooth chest.

YOUNG FRANK

If you didn't move away now, we'd
been something. I'd finish this.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Frank leans back and crosses his legs, almost in girlish
fashion.

FRANK

I'm too old to play with that
stuff, too. Seriously, Bill, I have
the upper hand now. I have to make
a recommend. Whether our boot camp
could get your career back on
track, a good shot in the butt.

BILL

Sandy thought you'd have picked up
a lot of this doing your website.
But I'm not a pure geek. I write
content.

FRANK

Sandy said it's gays in the
military.

BILL

Yes, I moved away from the military
business center back home in
Virginia to avoid conflict of
interest when I wrote the book.

FRANK

So you're serious about your
writing? That's what your past
friend Tobey says. Or are you just
a blogger?

BILL

I'd be happy to show you.

Frank stands and points.

FRANK

Not now. I hope it makes you money
soon.

BILL

Not yet.

FRANK

Well, I don't know if your heart is in this. You know, nerds like you are supposed to be curious like unaltered cats. You don't need your own agenda.

Frank puts some old greenbar computer listings on the table.

BILL

Those are ancient. See how they look.

FRANK

I ask you this as an old friend. Why do you need COBOL displays in a program in production? That's sloppy, like you have no confidence in what you did. Like you don't trust yourself.

BILL

They weren't explicitly forbidden.

FRANK

But they show you're not a professional any more. You did it for a paycheck. Like you weren't good enough to stay legit.

BILL

No, I just want to do a job here. They call it individual contributor. I needed a complete project so I could learn all this new stuff.

Frank sits back down and visibly crosses his legs again. Bill stares for a moment at shiny shins, revealed by a garter that has slipped.

FRANK

I think you just want money out of this place so you can start a second career. Or a real career.

BILL

Yeah, for the last act of my life. You sound like you get to decide.

INT. ORCHESTRA HALL MINNEAPOLIS - NIGHT

Tobey, Sheila and Morgan sit in the front row as the Minnesota Orchestra plays the loud triumphant C-major close of the first movement of the Schumann Symphony #2.

EXT. ORCHESTRA HALL MINNEAPOLIS - LATER

Tobey and Morgan stop by an ice cream stand. Tobey quickly buys a raspberry frozen yogurt.

SHEILA

They call it the symphony that talks to itself.

TOBEY

When we had that dinner, or I think at the gay pride fair, Bill used to say that he would hear from me whenever they played this on public radio. Look, Morgan, I appreciate your coming up from L.A.

MORGAN

So, what do you think? You still prefer to play at baseball, act the part?

TOBEY

I just have to prove that I can pump one out of a major league park, right?

MORGAN

Well, superman.

TOBEY

I mean, without steroids, too.

MORGAN

It's not Marvel comics time yet. We might need you to play the whole minor league thing. Even the combination chemo stuff.

TOBEY

Oh.

MORGAN

Lapp called. The doctor wants to check him again, for relapse.

Morgan walks towards Nicollet Avenue, and Tobey follows, leaving Sheila behind, as she approaches the ice cream stand, alone.

INT. POSTULATE-A FINANCIAL BILL'S CUBICLE - MORNING

Bill is seated at his cubicle, clicking on an internal GUI application (typical client-server, with buttons, panels and graphics) and talking on the phone. Suddenly the screen flashes a Netware alert: "0900 HRS: Your account is disabled. Please log off now." Bill works with the customer a few seconds longer but keeps getting the message.

BILL

I've got a work station problem. Maybe it's the old disk space problem. I suddenly don't have access. Gotta hang up.

Bill hangs up and logs off, tries to log back on and gets "access denied" messages. He dials another number.

HELP DESK

This is Harry. Your employee number.

BILL

Z23111. I mean, 423111. Look, can you check for a mistake. The system suddenly is telling me I am disabled. I got this last night got a moment before I went home but security cleared it up.

HELP DESK

I'll see what I can do. No promises, you know what I mean.

Sandy suddenly is standing over him.

SANDY

Bill, we have a meeting.

Sandy follows Bill to a sunny corner office, where there is a human resources woman with folders laid out on a circular table. A short gray-haired man offers a handshake. Bill takes out a piece of paper with some handwritten numbers written on it. Only then does Bill notices the security guard standing in the corner.

EXT. TORONTO LAKEFRONT WITH CNN TOWER - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT

Show the Toronto waterfront.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM IN TORONTO - AFTERNOON

Lapp reclines, his left arm immobilized and bandaged to receive an IV drip. A white sickness pail lies on the nightstand. There are three other PATIENTS in the room. Tobey and Sheila enter.

LAPP

There's nobody I'd rather see.

Tobey approaches, looking quizzical.

TOBEY

I hope we're still friends.

LAPP

Blame Canada. I don't have to pay for this. Except with my puke later. But they can take care of me here. What you and your dad believe notwithstanding.

TOBEY

Come one. You're hard on me.

LAPP

Tobey, you're healthy. I'm not. You're gonna have a higher profile. You'll probably have to do the minor league part, too. If you want baseball at all.

Lapp rises. His iv line is dangling and starts to slip out. Tobey catches it, then takes the cue and hugs Lapp.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Tobey, dressed in natty shorts fouls off a couple of fast balls from a mechanical pitcher. The radar gun register 90 mph. He then lines one to deep center field, off the wire fence. Frank approaches from the distance, keeping a stare.

INT. GOLD'S GYM - LATER

Tobey finishes a set of bench presses while Sheila spots. Morgan walks in, and stares.

TOBEY
I'll have to connive to get the
summer weekends.

MORGAN
Maybe they'll be able to shoot the
stripmine bus trip in July.

TOBEY
We'd race in a stripmine.

MORGAN
Only after reclamation. Making the
mountains low. Syd will love it.

TOBEY
The movie will be odd, won't it, if
Lapp shoots the bike parts when he
recovers?

SHEILA
Maybe he looked younger then.

TOBEY
Morgan, if Frank coming to give me
a pop quiz?

SHEILA
He's gumshoeing for his new case.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Bill finishes restarting his computer, and dials on to AOL. He enters his own domain name into the display line.

INSERT

This domain has been closed. No other information is available.

END INSERT

Bill fumbles his cell phone and then brings in the (new) cordless handset from the bedroom. He dials and gets through the menus.

ISP VOICE
Hello, this is Brett in tech support. Domain name, please.

BILL
Hppub.com. Let me cut to the chase. It comes up as being closed. It's not even temporary!

ISP VOICE
Yes, Mr. Ldzek, I see that we closed it at 11:30 this morning pending a terms of service investigation.

BILL
About what?

ISP VOICE
I'm going to ask a customer care shift manager to speak to you.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

ISP MANAGER
Mr. Ldzek, I don't know how to say it. Our attorney's asked me to. Your material is so controversial that it attracts too many hackers and jeopardizes other customers.

BILL
But I count on you for security.

ISP MANAGER
You know your playing the same game. Get with it!

BILL
This is just plain heckling.

ISP MANAGER
Granted. There's nothing we can do about it.

EXT. KIERAN'S PUB MINNEAPOLIS - DAY

Tobey. Howie Scruggs, Frank and Sheila eat lunch on the patio. They are all in business dress, and now Tobey is clean shaven again. Tobey has a Shepard's pie, the other three have burgers.

TOBEY

Yes, it's time to see Bill again. Morgan thinks a politco debate could make a good portfolio. But need a good transition. I've got to check out Bryant Lake.

HOWIE

Tobey, something came up. I hope you can stall letting Bill see you. Frankie came up with this soldier named Cronalin who's upset with the way people can Google hack him from Bill's book, and now it's on amazon, search inside the book.

CUT TO:

INT. CATO INSTITUTE ICE PALACE LOUNGE WASHINGTON - DAY -
FLASHBACK

Tobey, in business casual, sipping a beer, is talking to the another CATO PRINCIPLE at a reception.

TOBEY

Bill has written this book all right.

CATO PRINCIPLE

Bill mailed me one, too. It seems like he gives it away free a lot.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. KIERAN'S PUB MINNEAPOLIS - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

I'd have to dig out the book. The paper and binding wasn't real good.

HOWIE

No acid free.

TOBEY

Too low end for that. He gave me a manuscript, too, now that I remember the dinner. I'll have to look where Cronalin was discussed. Oh, but I can Google that because it's on the net too, all the text.

FRANK

Page 255, where Bill talks about Cronalin's palatial home in Virginia.

HOWIE

I'll look to online too. My own copy has split apart.

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL THEATER, MINNEAPOLIS - NIGHT

A full crowd is watching "home movies" in the stadium seats, interspersed with dining tables, of the Bryant Lake Bowl, which has the look of a cinema and drafthouse. A handsome waiter serves Bill his California burger supper and ale. The movie playing shows a teenager putting together a computer.

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL THEATER, MINNEAPOLIS - LATER

ERICH Jzzet, 18, short, slender and blond, in slacks and sport shirt without undershirt, sits on a utility chair on the stage as PETER, 30, interviews him in front of the audience. An older couple, apparently his parents, sits on stage with him.

ERICH

Boy, who was it who said public speaking is easy? A lot of us kids are just curious. If we're gonna make it, we have to know how things work. Do you remember being young?

Bill, seated in the first elevated row and just finishing his burger, raises his hand, and the usher hands him the microphone. BRYAN Jzzet, 48 (Erich's father) makes eye contact with Bill.

BILL

As for teenagers who hack, isn't this a kind of red kryptonite problem? They don't know if they'll make it, they see the grown-up world as arbitrary and corrupt, so why not compete at what they are good at?

PETER

That's a tough interview question.

ERICH

I think being curious about things
is a way to be good enough that you
won't want to do that.

Tobey, seated in a middle row in the "stadium seats" enjoys a beer and a burger and is hard to see. Tobey looks up and recognizes a cameo of JOSH H, 25, despite his stocking cap.

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL THEATER, MINNEAPOLIS - MOMENTS LATER

Patrick moves towards the front.

PETER

Now the last film is a five minute
study of life in a fraternity house
a few years back. It is called
"1569 CLUB."

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL RESTAURANT, MINNEAPOLIS - LATER

Erich finish off a burger himself, seated next to his father, as Bill approaches. Patrick watches them from a distance, but does not approach. Josh H, disguised in his cap, sits with his girl friend at the next table (cameo). Bill glances, and Josh glances back.

BILL

Could you look at my hacked file if
I sent it to you?

BRYAN

You're asking a lot, man.

ERICH

You know, there's a good chance it
was a hack. ISP's are pretty
careless about leaving FTP open.

BRYAN

I can suggest a lawyer. My boy
can't get into this.

ERICH

Dad.

Bryan briskly hands Bill a business card as Erich keeps chewing.

INT. SALOON BAR, MINNEAPOLIS - NIGHT

Bill, with his cap on and a visible gray T-shirt that reads "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Believe it!" pays for a Budweiser and turns around and stares at the dance floor. There are three wood stages, and on each stage as well as on the floor, break dancers make typical disco movements and sometimes grope each other.

On the other side of the dance floor, FRANZ, 21, mid-height and muscular, does upside down pushups by holding on to a wooden birm underneath the disk jockey cabin. A security guard approaches him.

About 2/3 of the dancers are male couples, but there are some female couples and in some cases women and men dance in "love trains." The music is "You are so beautiful" and then turns to "Save Me." On the stages, men sometimes reach under their partners t-shirts or and lift them up, or sometimes unbutton sports shirts, revealing usually hairless chests. When this happens, Bill stares intently.

Bill recognizes a familiar face, slightly changed, near the center stage but towards the back. Tobey is dancing with Sheila, and on the floor she looks like small young woman with hair pulled pack in a pony tail. Tobey has a light beard growth with long sleeve shirt and jeans, both fitting relatively tightly, so he looks fit. A black woman, LORRAINE SMITH, 24, tags along, and holds Tobey from behind, dancing in a train fashion. Then Patrick, looking tall, thin without shirt and hairy chest, takes Sheila from the other side.

Bill walks around the dance floor and stands in the dark, so he can watch the couples closely. Sheila starts to unbutton Tobey's shirt. Bill stares closely. Lorraine approaches Bill and Bill looks away.

LORRAINE

Hey, man. So finally I meet you,
but not on good terms.

BILL

Okay.

LORRAINE

You're Bill. You're watching us.

BILL

This is a public place. I think I
recognize somebody, though he's
changed a bit.

LORRAINE

When's your next birthday?

BILL

In July. July 10. I'm a Cancer. I guess I like to knead like a cat.

LORRAINE

But, what birthday?

BILL

Fifty-nine.

LORRAINE

Tobey's girl friend thinks you're watching him. And that is creating a problem.

BILL

Even with a girl friend?

EXT. SALOON BAR, MINNEAPOLIS - LATER

Bill is leaving the bar when the bouncer taps him.

BOUNCER

You know, you really don't have to come back.

BILL

I know you can't gawk at the Eagle. But this isn't a leather bar.

Bill walks along Hennepin Ave in a daze, his bald head quickly dripping from the rain. A black man, in a worn trench coat, approaches him.

HOMELESS MAN

Got a cigarette, fag?

BILL

I don't smoke.

Bill walks by

HOMELESS MAN

(talking on cheap cell phone)
A gay man just blew me off.

The homeless black man starts to give chase, but a Minneapolis Police car swings by.

INT. SKYWAY MINNEAPOLIS, DAGWOOD'S COFFEE BAR - MORNING

JOHN McDONOUGH, 31, well built, serves Bill a bacon and eggs breakfast meal with coffee.

JOHN

Okay, Mr. Burns. Stay out of jail!

INT. LAW OFFICE OF ALLISON, MINNEAPOLIS - MORNING

ALLISON KEARNS, 45, brunette, rather tall, sits behind a power desk, as Bill sits on a soft black sofa. There are professional law school diplomas and family pictures on the wall of her with another woman, SUSANNAH, 40, African American, shown in an Army dress greens uniform. There is a picture of the World Trade Center site with the proposed new tower shown.

ALLISON

I know this looks like a psychiatrist's couch. You got me from your legal subscription?

BILL

Actually I was referred. Erich.

ALLISON

The boy. You mean his father. He wouldn't let you near him.

BILL

I found out. That's the World Trade Center?

ALLISON

Yes, I have an office in New York. From here, though.

BILL

And the pictures. You have a domestic partner in the military?

ALLISON

Kind of a sanitary term, isn't it? Actually, I've read your book. Tobey can be a good friend of you if he wants to be. I've got to fly to Washington tomorrow to see Susannah. She's, well, a good civilian now. Doing the same work.

BILL

Oh.

ALLISON

Yeh, your ideas of appeasement. Look, you want me to pressure ISPCorp into putting your site back up? I'm not really sure I can help you. You have resources, of course?

BILL

Severance. And pension.

ALLISON

They won't last forever.

BILL

And without the ability to keep earning a good living with work. Well

ALLISON

I'm just debriefing you. I can see, they're probably protecting themselves from the Patriot Act. But nobody's prosecuted yet. But that can't last forever, either.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - EVENING

Sheila lies next to Tobey on her unmade bed. Tobey laughs.

TOBEY

I'll be ticklish now.

She unbuckles his belt and pulls off his trousers to his shorts. The legs are hairy but have a couple of scrapes.

SHEILA

We'll finish the break dancing.

TOBEY

I'm gonna get it now.

She slowing unbuttons his shirt, all the way, showing the light chest hair in the middle.

SHEILA

Reveal!

TOBEY

What do they call it? A make ready?

SHEILA
 No, an extreme makeover. Remember,
 this is a woman's pad.

She pats his chest.

SHEILA
 Stay put. Enjoy it.

She tiptoes to the bathroom, where he pulls a small vial of shaving cream.

She walks back and climbs over him and applies the cream to his chest.

SHEILA
 Relax.

TOBEY
 You'll go over the top.

SHEILA
 I said relax.

TOBEY
 You want me to feel like I'm
 eighteen.

SHEILA
 You're a heartthrob, not a jock.
 But I want you to look clean,
 straight boy!

Tobey lies there motionless, though his face quivers.

She looks over at a copy of Tobey, modeling a few years ago in "Straight Boys."

She makes another quick trip and brings back a razor, and starts shaving.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT BUILDING LOBBY - EVENING

Bill approaches his mailbox and sees a note. He walks over to the rental office where there is a sign that reads "PROPERTY MANAGER IS AUTHORIZED TO ACCEPT SERVICE OF PROCESS." The SECURITY GUARD (female) gives him a letter marked certified from his book publisher.

Bill opens it, and sees two letters, one cancelling publication and a second cease and desist letter from SCRUGGS AND MYERS.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - LATER

Sheila is on top of Tobey as they lay together under the covers. She throws off the covers, and leaves Tobey exposed. Now there is no hair on his chest.

He rolls over her, and kisses her energetically.

SHEILA

This is really your first.

TOBEY

Not quite. I'm still not prepped for the racing scene.

He starts to go down on her, then moves up, kissing her again, and begins his thrusts. He laughs.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Bill is working on the computer. CNN Reliable Sources is talking to an NTSB expert on car crashes.

EXPERT ON CNN

There are more fatalities in New York from right turns than any other maneuver.

Bill looks up, then keeps working. The phone handset, clumsily wired and placed on the sofa head, rings. He races over and picks up the handle, as the cradle falls down on his unplugged Yamaha keyboard.

BILL

Hello.

ERICH (O.S.)

Caught you home. At a bad moment. You know, dropsy.

BILL

I don't get visitors real often.

ERICH

This is your studio, Bill.

BILL

Great. Let me see if I remember how to do this.

ERICH

Sound like you're hiding from process servers. I think its 9 in these apartment buildings.

BILL

You're the geek squad.

Bill presses the phone pad. He walks over and sees his screensaver has frozen his PC mouse.

BILL

Not enough time for Scandisk. Damn.

For a moment, there is dead air, except for the street truck traffic. A warm breeze from the open balcony ruffles some papers on the carpeted floor. The door hinge knocks. Bill runs over and opens it.

Erich walks in, in shorts, sports shirt half unbuttoned without undershit, sandals and no socks, a "typical" teenage boy. He slaps Bill's hand with a High 5. Then, he smirks and hugs Bill.

Bill turns off the TV as Eric sits at Bill's computer, which is on an old wooden desk.

ERICH

I see your puter froze before I could get here. Your hard drive is no playpen. No Google rainbow balls.

BILL

You read my mind.

ERICH

It's better than asking and telling. Try safe mode. You know how to do that, sport?

Bill disconnects the machine and replugs it into his surge protector. It fails quickly again with the "blue screen of death."

BILL

It won't boot. Damn.

ERICH

So, some hacker attacked your machine? Like I know who. Well, you didn't hit F2.

(MORE)

ERICH(cont'd)

Where's your rescue disk? And, by the way, where are your swimshorts?

Erich touches Bill's collar. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION Bill's mouth crinkles. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION.

BILL

Old men like me shouldn't wear shorts in public.

Bill wheels Erich around and holds him, his hand sliding onto the smooth chest for a moment.

BILL

There. It's done.

ERICH

I get it. Because you went bald in the legs and you don't ride or swim as an excuse.

Bill fumbles around with a cardboard box, looking for the disk, and finally pulls it out.

ERICH

Look. I'll drive. Find a lawn chair from your kitchenette. You know, the Titanic.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Erich is focused on a dump on the screen, and navigates on a black screen with the command prompt.

BILL

So that's the corrupted file? You can really read all this machine code.

ERICH

Yup, I'm super-geek. And I think better adapted, because I can play sports, too. Like Clark Kent.

BILL

Not Jake 2.0?

Erich runs some programs, and the screen flashes by multiple technical websites.

ERICH

This is all native command prompts. When you play geekolater for customers, you have to know them. Yup, tech support. Well, I see your ISP leaves the Unix Site Command open. And I can find a cache of the corrupted file there. Dangerous stuff. Be glad you have friends like me. Geek Squad would charge a few hundred for this.

BILL

So you work for 'em.

ERICH

You got it. Tech support. Don't tell 'em I came over for free.

BILL

This is fun. I think they are talking about the suitcase nukes stolen from Russia.

ERICH

Three sites. You know, bald men like you in good clothes smuggle them.

BILL

George W. Bush never talked about this. The real enemy still could be Russia, communism.

ERICH

Well, you're trying to start a war, all right. Look here, I'll show you a few tidbits and freebees.

Erich types. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION. Erich keeps typing. Some classified documents from FEMA come up.

A website comes up showing "Evacuation after a volcanic eruption at Mono Lake."

Then, "Evacuation of the Yellowstone area."

Finally, "infrastructure recovery after a ground-level electromagnetic pulse generation detonation."

ERICH

And you want to know what happens
to people who go to that Academy
you visited at Mono Lake?

Erich strokes a few more commands at the prompt on the black screen, and a webcam comes up, somewhat fuzzy, showing Patrick, his chest covered with electrodes as he runs on a treadmill in an exercise lab.

BILL

I know that guy!

ERICH

He acted in one of your films.

BILL

So, um, you know.

ERICH

Well, you know, Bill.

Suddenly, the screen turns blue.

BILL

Shit! Another crash.

ERICH

Watch your language, Bill. I guess
you weren't supposed to see that.
You can take care of it, I taught
you. Let's do your swimming lesson.

INT. APARTMENT ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Bill and Erich ride together up the elevator, and Erich smiles at him, then measures himself, now a few inches taller than Bill. Bill is carrying two swimming trunks.

BILL

We didn't talk about the Grokster.

ERICH

You're changing the subject on me,
when it suits your purposes. But
that's how you found out, eh?

INT. APARTMENT LOCKER ROOM NEXT TO SWIMMING POOL - MOMENTS LATER

They pass the pool area, with it's view of downtown Minneapolis, into the locker room. The elevator bell rings one more time behind them. Erich leads the way.

Bill clumsily changes to his swimming trunks, revealing his bald legs, while Erich hesitates to change. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION. There is a knock on the door. Bill opens it. Bryan and Patrick are there. Bryan hands Bill an envelope.

BRYAN

Touch the envelope.

As Bill takes it Patrick snaps a picture.

PATRICK

You are served. Erich, find friend you were.

INT. SOUNDSTAGE - EVENING

Morgan and Sydney watch a clip of Tobey's race in Bayeux.

MORGAN

So, Tobey, Lapp has a treatment for you.

SYDNEY

Tobey needs the whole story. Including the Tribunals.

TOBEY

He's going to shoot for the Moon.

MORGAN

Lapp's better now. You should see him again.

TOBEY

But I can still do the baseball first, right?

INT. BASEMENT IN HOUSE IN ARLINGTON - AFTERNOON

Bill pounds away at his older computer in the wood-paneled basement in his Mother's house. It crashes.

BILL

But this is Windows ME, to be expected.

Outside a summer thunderstorm batters the casement windows with hail. The Straus tone poem "Thus Spake Zarathustra" is ending on a small VM stereo.

In side the recreation room is filled with knick knacks, family pictures, and his late dad's Masonic certificates, shop projects from high school like a varnished book case, blue plastic letter opener, and undersized ping pong table. MOTHER OF BILL, now 90, comes to the stairs.

MOTHER OF BILL

Bill, she's come.

Allison walks down the steps and quickly finds a rocking chair.

BILL

So Arlington is your original home, too.

ALLISON

Yes, back to the days of Hall's Hill and High's Ice Cream.

BILL

You look young here.

ALLISON

Like a kid? You went to W-L, too? You were class of 61. I was 64. It hadn't gone down hill yet. Your mother's upstairs so I can say it. I'm no candyass.

BILL

We used to say stuff like that in the Army. You've been through a lot.

ALLISON

So you just found me again.

BILL

Well, you were referred.

ALLISON

I'm not as bombastic on the net as you.

BILL

But back to basics. You and Susannah are trying to adopt your foster child? I heard about the case in the Blade.

ALLISON

Now that Susannah is a so-called good civilian, I can tell. They're having her do the same work as she did before 9-11.

CUT TO:

INT. WORLD TRADE CENTER SOUTH TOWER - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Allison is on the phone in her 80th floor office and can see smoke coming from the North Tower.

INT. PENTAGON WEST SIDE, OUTER CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Susannah, dressed in Army Greens (she is a LTC with silver oak leaf) is talking on a phone, motioning a female private away from her family pictures of Allison and Izzy.

SUSANNAH

No, get out now, Allie. I know.

ALLISON

So ignore them? They told us to stay put, that it was a small accident.

SUSANNAH

Think about it. How could it be. That was a big plane. I can go home and check on Izim's placement after the meeting.

Allison hangs up and heads for the stairs. On split screen, Susannah heads for a conference room where she sees a feed on the second plane hitting the WTC South Tower. She puts her hand over her mouth but says nothing.

INT. ARLINGTON HOSPITAL NEXT DAY - MORNING

After a quick overhead shot of ambulances running through Arlington, Susannah lies in bed, her legs in bandages, with iv's in her arms. Allison walks in quickly, crying. She wants to take her hand and the nurse pushes her away.

NURSE

Infection. She is going to San Antonio tomorrow. She's a real hero

CUT BACK TO:

INT. BASEMENT IN HOUSE IN ARLINGTON - CONTINUOUS

BILL

I keep up with this, but I never heard about your case.

ALLISON

I know. The lawyers wouldn't discuss it. Neither would SLDN, not even with friends. Her commander just called her in and offered her the same job as a civilian. You can figure that one out for yourself. But don't put it on your website. Oh. That's right, you don't have it now. Good thing!

BILL

Somebody may have a video of it. Like you're running down the elevator. We'd have to recreate the phone call to Tower 2.

ALLISON

We've got to save your case first before we can move on with all your ambition, Bill.

BILL

I thought as my lawyer you had to stay on my side.

ALLISON

Just giving you some of your own medicine.

BILL

I was affected mainly as a civilian. Thrown out of college. Served in the military OK. But transferred to Minneapolis in the same company to get away from the division that sells to the military. I call it the miliary!

ALLISON
You really think that's a
provocative story!

CUT TO:

EXT. AUSCHWITZ GATE, POLAND - DAY - FLASHBACK

Bill gets out of a hired cab and walks onto the grounds,
looking toward the railroad gate.

INT. NURSING HOME ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Mother of Bill stumbles from the bed into the bathroom, as
the nurse doesn't move from the bed to help her.

INT. ST PAUL SCIENCE MUSEUM CAFETERIA - DAY - FLASHBACK

Bill sits on a bench next to his mother, looking out over a
view of the Mississippi river.

BILL
You know what happens if I come
back.

MOTHER OF BILL
It's just the help in a place like
that.

BILL
I know. They expect next of kin as
ombudsman. To go to bat for you. I
couldn't be there for you. It was
awful. But I can't say I'm sorry.

MOTHER OF BILL
I know you can't.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. BASEMENT IN HOUSE IN ARLINGTON - CONTINUOUS

BILL
No, I don't fight for my own blood
very well. Just for causes.

The Mother of Bill descends the stairs carefully.

ALLISON

I really think you really just like to draw attention to yourself. Without fighting. I figured you out. You disappointed her.

MOTHER OF BILL

Not really. Bill does his own thing. It's just that his friends are too young for him.

ALLISON

Like Tobey.

MOTHER OF BILL

He's too young. He needs friends of his own age so he can have real life.

ALLISON

Oh.

INT. LAW FIRM LARGER BOARD ROOM - DAY

Tobey, Sheila, and Hubert Myers sit in a business conference. They back away from the table a bit, and an omniscient observer notices the long stockings on Myers, but not Tobey.

TOBEY

So where is Mr. Scruggs today?

HUBERT

Don't be a know-it-all with me, young fellow. I know you can conquer whatever you want. Howie Scruggs has his needs, shall we say. Gospel preaching ain't enough. But you get our point, don't you?

TOBEY

So, Grace of God maintains that Bill is unfairly impersonating a business, theirs. Too.

HUBERT

He doesn't even have a valid address, by golly. Just a commercial mail place. Mail Boxes ETC. A land address but not an office.

SHEILA

In other words, we can tell which addresses are real offices and buildings.

HUBERT

You have the script done to do that?

INT. BASEMENT IN HOUSE IN ARLINGTON - CONTINUOUS

BILL

So, suddenly I've got three things I don't like.

ALLISON

Like a kid. It's a legal virus, isn't it.

INT. METRODOME CONCESSION AREA ON RAMPS - NIGHT

Bill takes the temperature of a frankfurter, loads a tray and carries it from the back kitchen area (make it look like a fast food commercial kitchen with many accoutrements!) to the serving area. Bill checks in to his cash register duty.

BILL

Will I balance?

Tobey and Patrick, both in suits, are walking on the ramp. Tobey suddenly recognizes Bill behind a Frank-en-sense concession, with one both open, the other gate being pulled down. There is a sign "Metropolitan Community Church" to identify the "charity."

Tobey hesitates and then approaches. Patrick follows, but stands back.

Bill, dressed in a smock, stands by an MCC SUPERVISOR who is counting his money.

BILL

Tobey!

TOBEY

I guess the best way to start is for me to buy something.

BILL

Just in time.

TOBEY

Um, just the nachos.

The supervisor gets them and squeezes the cheese dip.

BILL

I guess you don't need the knockwurst either. Finally, I'm paying my dues as cashier. Have to balance at the end of the shift, ha, ha.

PATRICK

I'll bet.

TOBEY

I should make you buy something to talk to me.

BILL

I didn't see you there. But I saw the film about 1569. And Patrick.

PATRICK

Yeah, Bill.

Bill is distracted for a moment as a bunch of teenagers, some with super hairy legs, walk buy. Bill stares.

TOBEY

Same old Bill. If you weren't behind a counter working as a prole, you'd hug me.

BILL

Thanks, Tobey. I really would! What's the score, Patrick.

PATRICK

You're serious. Oh, 5-4 Cubs. Look, you know I can't talk about it, what happened.

Tobey and Patrick take the food and start to walk away. Bill bolts out of the booth, through the exit door, and follows them. He gets in front and trips, and Tobey breaks his fall.

TOBEY

Kind of serious, don't you think? Really, it's OK now, Bill. You could career switch back to your piano.

BILL

If I compose rather than perform.
Well, actually Sheila told me about
the problems first. You're doing me
good.

TOBEY

How about some emotion, man! I know
you don't risk your friends by
getting mad. Your real friends.
Yeah, the best way for you to get
your movie made is to get sued
first.

They can see down the causeways to the playing field. SAMMY
SOSA steps to the plate. Rather than bunt with a man on
first, Sosa drives the first pitch deep into the left field
stands, just fair, over the 342-foot marker on the foul line.

TOBEY

Bill, you once wrote this. They
have never tried letting the home
team bat first.

PATRICK

Or drawing chess openings out of a
hat.

(END ACT 3)

(ACT 4 - OUT OF COURT)

EXT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM - DAY - ESTABLISHING SHOT

Tobey, with Sheila riding, drives his own rental car to a
high rise building on the edge of West Hollywood.

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM EMPLOYEE CUBICLES - DAY

Tobey unpacks a box and decorates a large cubicle in the law
firm. There are upscale modeling photos and pictures of
Sheila, and one poster shot of his bike race with out-of-
place hairy legs. The cubicle is neat.

SHEILA

So you're making yourself home
here.

TOBEY

Howie says I could be here a month.

SHEILA
So you might as well get noticed.

TOBEY
And I'm worth noticing, for myself.

SHEILA
You found all the references.

Tobey picks up a stack of printouts from his box and waves it.

TOBEY
Before I came, yes. He keeps his newsletter on his domain. Even the reference to that soldier-boy's "palatial home."

SHEILA
You could have waited on that. I'd have done it.

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM LAW LIBRARY - MORNING

Bill, Allison, Tobey, Scruggs, CRONALIN (47, short, a bit foppish with an obvious gut but well dressed) and SHERRY WILKINS, 30, an attorney for Cronalin, sit around the table.

The COURT REPORTER takes their oaths. A videocam is apparent, and Patrick operates it.

The library is filled wall-to-wall with law books in overwhelming volume, on the scale of an alcove in the Library of Congress.

COURT REPORTER
So say ye all.

SHERRY
OK, Mr. Cronalin, can you tell us what brought you to contact the defendant?

DICK
Well I got ribbed about Bill's blogging comments at First Boston and let it slide. Then I got laid off.

ALLISON

But that was a big downsizing. That didn't have anything to do with my client's book.

DICK

But then I lost a media gig. My agent says there is no market for my story because Bill already told it. He's crowded me out. Like I'm old hat. Bill put me in my place, put me in his own perspective.

ALLISON

So that's somehow not fair? Bill, how do you counter?

BILL

That's the old coffee table argument. I think keeping his name alive in my book and website gives him exposure, advertises him. If it is going.

TOBEY

I think Bill you mean his story fits into a bigger argument. So you used him.

BILL

Right.

ALLISON

Bill, when did you first meet Mr. Cronalin.

CUT TO:

INT. GARDEN APARTMENT LIVING ROOM DALLAS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Younger Bill, now 38 and still bald but reasonably youthful in visage, and YOUNG DICK, now 23, are making out on the sofa in Dick's apartment. There are ROTC pictures on the wall, with Dick shown as platoon leader. Bill unbutton's Dick's shirt and rubs a smooth chest.

INT. GARDEN APARTMENT BEDROOM DALLAS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Dick lays on top of Bill with thrust motions. Bill moans.

INT. GARDEN APARTMENT BEDROOM DALLAS - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Dick is sleeping and is unarousable. Bill carefully picks up his own wallet and leaves Dick's in place, glances back, sees Dick barely breathing, and leaves.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM LAW LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

BILL

I always felt squeamish about finding out what happened that night. I checked the papers for several days to make sure you hadn't been found dead. We didn't have email yet. So it was the Dallas Morning News and then the Times Herald. I guess you were a hard player and sound sleeper.

SHERRY

So, Dick what was your next encounter with the defendant?

DICK

He parked himself on base in the mid 90s at my admin hearing. In the meantime, my lover, Bobby Nimitz, had gone to work for the FBI and decided to attend Quantico and become an agent.

INT. SMALL INTERVIEW ROOM QUANTICO VA - DAY - FLASHBACK

ROBERT NIMITZ, 26, dressed in a suit, talks to an INTERVIEWER.

INTERVIEWER

Yes, you do have to tell us everything for your top secret clearance. We get into everything. Double agents, Commie pinkos ain't gone away yet.

ROBERT

Dick won't go for it. The Air Force you know. He's making Major.

INTERVIEWER

And you're very part of him. But he's your gay partner.

ROBERT

You say you don't consider sexual orientation.

INTERVIEWER

We say we don't. But the Air Force does. We do have a problem.

INT. AIR FORCE BASE QUONSET LACKLAND - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Major Cronalin sits on a hard wood chair in front of a board of officers at an administrative discharge hearing.

Bill sits (outside) in a rental car with an instant camera.

INTERROGATOR

Relax. This is just an administrative process. But, Major Cronalin, Mr. Nimitz told you that he is a homosexual, and yet you chose to cohabit with him. Chose. Nobody made you do it.

DICK

I was off duty, off base, at my own expense.

INTERROGATOR

You know the rules. We must presume that you are committing homosexual acts with him. Do you have a rebuttal?

DICK

It's our private life. It's out of sight. It's non-public. Nobody sees it.

INTERROGATOR

Yeah, and the World Wide Web is coming at you. I'll give you one more chance.

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM LAW LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

DICK

I know I saw Bill on the outside then. He hadn't changed that much. God, he hated his own legs. Then, a couple years, I saw Bill's article about my case in the gay libertarian paper *The Quill*. At Lambda Rising.

BILL

This was small stuff. I remember my friends chided me in those socials at Kammerbooks that *The Quill* was too much of my own ruminations and not newsy enough. So this was a good factual story.

DICK

You're no journalist. Not a professional.

BILL

You know what that means.

ALLISON

Come on, the facts, please.

DICK

Then I do show up in the book.

Bill holds up a copy of his DADT book with its "Schindler's List" cover. Tobey smirks at Bill, smiles, and then relaxes his face.

TOBEY

Bill, you remember the description of his house?

BILL

I made the trip there to Colorado Springs during the vettings for the book.

CUT TO:

INT. CRONALIN'S PALATIAL HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The living room is ringed with a picketed upper living room area. There is a big stereo and stacks of CDs. A dog plays ball with Bill in the patio while Dick reads the manuscript.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

Bill, did you think it could have been too personal?

BILL

Just calling it palatial. Those were just my words.

EXT. BLUE PARROT WEST HOLLYWOOD - DAY

Tobey and Hubert are seated at a trendy mixed restaurant.

HUBERT

Tobey, whose side are you on?

TOBEY

I thought I was probing enough.

HUBERT

You sound like you want to do him a favor? It's not your job to enforce the truth. You represent our client.

TOBEY

I do indeed. But that doesn't have to hurt Bill.

Tobey stands, and pulls a copy of the black-and-white DADT book from his valise, and opens it to early pages.

TOBEY

If you read this between the lines, you can see how he was set up.

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM - LATER

Now Howie Scruggs is also at the table.

ALLISON

So Bill, you then say him at the rally?

BILL

Yes, on one of those self-date field trips.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAY PRIDE FESTIVAL DC - AFTERNOON

Bill is standing in a Pride booth for Gay Libertarians with copies of his black-and-white book to sell, and Dick walks by, loosely holding his hand with Bob. Dick looks spindly with a real paunch. Another MAN is talking to Bill in the tent.

ANOTHER MAN

But, Bill, self-publishing doesn't count.

Bill recoils as he notices Dick.

BILL

Dick.

Dick approaches and offers his hand.

BILL

You've changed.

DICK

Medicines can do that.

BILL

Oh, but it worked out.

INT. PALATIAL ESTATE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Dick's beagle brings a tennis ball to Bill. Bill throws it against a picket fence. Bill looks at a sheet of paper with a prescription on it, for a drug known to be a protease inhibitor.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM - CONTINUOUS

DICK

Yeah, Bob helped me get a computer civilian job at the FBI. I don't recall offering Bill my hand. I guess I would until he bullied me. Yes, I scolded him in an email later. This whole thing about looks, it destroys our community.

TOBEY

Bill, maybe you can tell us, though, what was your basic point in doing the book?

BILL

It starts with my expulsion from the College of William and Mary as a freshman. The college used the same reasoning that Senator Sam Nunn tries to use for the military today. Forced intimacy. But it was the taunts of Sydney, my roommate. He'll pay someday. He's a low-level director in Hollywood.

Bill hangs his head, sulking. Tobey squirms, and rolls up his sleeves upon moderately hairy arms, staring at them.

TOBEY

(quietly)
Oh, my God.

BILL

But I went back into the closet for college, living at home and going to GW, and then lived in a dorm again in grad school. I volunteered for the draft to redeem myself, and stayed in the closet in the beginning.

INT. BAY IN A BARRACKS, BASIC TRAINING - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A tall black SOLDIER touches Bill's chest as Bill lies on the top bunk.

SOLDIER

You've got a soft bod and a nice chest. You want to (...) my (...), Lassie?

YOUNG BILL

Gett of me or I'll have you court-martialed.

The soldier backs away.

EXT. TENT CITY AT FORT JACKSON - DAY - FLASHBACK

Bill and other soldiers jump off a truck and run into formation, screaming.

INT. COMMUNAL ARMY LATRINE, FORT JACKSON - MOMENTS LATER

Some soldiers in fatigues, sweaty and in shock, urinate in a long wash basin that is not a urinal.

DRILL SERGEANT

Never call attention in the latrine!

INT. FORT EUSTIS VA BARRACKS - EVENING - FLASHBACK

A group of soldiers, some of the other soldiers with shirts off, march around the day room in a love train chanting "Tiptoe Through the Tulips." Young Bill, watching first, joins in, putting his hands on the shoulders of a particularly attractive soldier.

ONE SOLDIER

Oh, go way butterfly!

The soldier breaks out of the march, bends his wrists and sticks out his tongue.

YOUNG BILL

Francis. You did the gesture again.

THE SOLDIERS

The gesture! The gesture! Oh-ho-ho-ho. Tip toe through the tulips with me."

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM - CONTINUOUS

BILL

So they would joke that one day I would be famous by breaking the ice. I would write a book about homosexuality in the United States Army. But there would be many books. The idea was novel, even if the practice was accepted, even with the brass above. Except that they would not give me a Top Secret.

ALLISON

So then,

BILL

The Army was really a better place for gays than a lot of the civilian establishment in my day. By Cronalins's fifteen years later it had flipped. A few years later I tried to get a civilian top secret. I got confronted by whether anyone had ever tried to blackmail me, even by an NIS investigator. Even my father warned me that I would get demands for \$300 blackmail money, and my employer would have me followed when I made trips in to New York City from my job in the Jersey burbs to come out again. Eventually I got a job in the City, moved into the land between the two Villages, the Cast Iron Building. Across the street from where the United States Chess Federation had been, in my days of tournaments. I would soften the landing with visits to gay talk groups like the Ninth Street Center in the East Village.

MONTAGE

A group of hippy men sit around talking in a circle in a long narrow basement room with cement walls painted orange. Young Bill appears on the verge of tears.

Bill gradually waddles his way into the orgy room of the Club Baths, with the sound of kissing and sucking, as men scrambled like apes on the mats in the low violet light. Finally, an attractive man grabs Bills legs, already balding slightly, and goes down on him, as Bill reaches over and vigorously rubs his hairy chest. Bill's face expresses climax, and then relief.

BILL

So I had my second coming. And that set me up for President Clinton's proposal to end the military gay ban in 1993. That's when I started meeting with the Pastor of the First Baptist Church where President Clinton had first attended, writing down the letter that he delivered up to the White House.

MONTAGE

A scene of the 1993 March on Washington in the Mall, overhead showing several hundred thousand people.

VOICE FROM SPEAKER

We just want to be treated like everyone else.

MONTAGE continues

Senators Nunn and Warner low crawl on the deck of the Hammerhead submarine (news footage).

Bill walks out on to a dock where several submarines are parked. There is a sign that says "NO POLITICAL BUTTONS." Bill, escorted, climbs down a Rama staircase into the submarine where the enlisted men are serving chocolate and doughnuts and are selling caps for the Sunfish.

Bill looks into a crowded bunk room stacked with Northhampton bunks.

BILL

So all of this is how I established my right to speak to the issue.

DICK

But Bill you never really served. And you tried to crowd us out. We're the guys who know what we're talking about.

BILL

A story that shows all of you was stronger than just one person's. It took an outside man like me with an oblique view to present it.

SHERRY

But the way they found you was when you put the complete text of your books on the Internet and gave away content free.

ALLISON

Bill, can you explain why?

BILL

It was taken down because my ISP believes that a steganographic image was placed in my essay on terrorism.

TOBEY

They call it an attractive nuisance. Like a swimming pool without a major league fence around it.

BILL

I still have my personal space on hometown AOL. The book is still there. But it doesn't get as much visibility.

SHERRY

So, you admit, people could still find my client online there, too.

BILL

Yes, but it wouldn't mean anything. People think of AOL as the place for family pictures.

SHERRY

Which you are above having.

TOBEY

Oh, well.

DICK

Oh well, my eye. A space for lookism.

TOBEY

Maybe we can help you out.

SHERRY

Bill, you just don't want to let go.

INT. SYDNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tobey, Hubert and Howie stand, in suits, in front of Sydney. Syd stands.

SYDNEY

So this is his other life.

HUBERT

Tobey thought you should know about it.

SYDNEY

Oh I do. Lawyers are bad, but being a law student, or intern, not such a bad thing. Not such a bad insurance policy.

HUBERT

So we thought that you should see it.

TOBEY

I think your story means we can help him. Because it's really his story. He still owns it. I know, I'm still on your side.

INT. MEDIA RISKS LAW FIRM - DAY

Finally, there is a single coffee pot as well as lots of ice water jugs. Now there is no court reporter.

SHERRY

So the Air Force went after you, too?

DICK

We settled for twenty thousand dollars for my medical training. I was supposed to be a military epidemiologist. Go the Amazon and look for bugs.

ALLISON

But you still got a good job with the FBI through your domestic partner?

DICK

I do forensic medicine for the FBI. True.

SHERRY

And, Bill, you're not working now?

BILL

I'm trying to get on as a debt collector. Now that my old fashioned comfy business systems career is over.

TOBEY

You gotta learn to act to do that, Bill.

BILL

Better than learning to hack.

SHERRY

Do you advance in it?

BILL

Well, I can't see myself as the alpha male looking over a bunch of collectors doing the rah rah.

TOBEY

I could.

BILL

Right now, it's a job. It's not management or public relations. So it doesn't present a conflict.

SHERRY

So Bill, if you wanted to write and publish a book about gays in the military, why didn't you quit that company that sold to the military outright? In your own book you admit that access to military records could create the appearance of impropriety, of conflict of interest.

BILL

Probably because I needed to get that retirement package first, to be honest. To be stable financially.

His eyes cloud up.

SHERRY

So it was self-serving.

ALLISON

Object.

BILL

That's all right.

TOBEY

Sure it is.

SHERRY

Bill, what if we drop out action if you remove all references to Mr. Cronalin from your book.

BILL

(The cooperative publisher) would have to take it down then. I'd have to take it back.

ALLISON

Even your own admission, Bill, is that you don't make a living from your writing. Then it's unfair to attract attention and compete with people who do.

TOBEY

It sounds like negative spam. I kind of like his spirit, fighting that union mentality.

SHERRY

We could cut the deal that you restrict yourself to what people pay for. You already have a pension now. So why don't you make a run for it?

BILL

So no more on line.

SHERRY

If your publisher offers it, why do you need to offer it free, to. Why don't you really try to sell it, stand behind it.

TOBEY

Bill, I thought you were proud of it. You were when you did the speech. So is it a deal?

BILL

If we're friends again, Tobey.

Bill's eyes being to tear now. Tobey approaches him, but then withdraws.

INT. SMALL OFFICE AT A COLLECTIONS FIRM - AFTERNOON

A youngish HR COLLECTIONS MANAGER, male, 30, overdressed, admonishes Bill while interviewing.

HR COLLECTIONS MANAGER

Bill, it's clear that you understand the job. My only concern is that you can actually do the job.

EXT. TWO-LANE ROAD APPROACHING AUSCHWITZ POLAND - DAY

Chris drives and Tobey rides front seat of a beige Honda as it approaches site of the camps. The railroad gate is visible in the far distance.

Tobey removes his trousers, leaving decent shorts with still manly legs.

TOBEY

I think you like what I became, dad.

CHRIS

The time machine has kind of stopped. Show me.

Tobey yanks off his shirt. Chris looks over.

CHRIS

My god, you are a boy again.

TOBEY

It only gets better.

CHRIS

You know, this is the car that stranded Bill. And our rental agreement says not to drive it into former Eastern Europe.

TOBEY

Dad, you're the exception that swallows the rule. Like you swallow up companies.

CHRIS

That was a good tip you gave me.

INT. AUSCHWITZ GATE, POLAND - DAY

Tobey and Chris view the exhibits, including the collections of hair stripped from the prisoners.

EXT. BRANDENBURG GATE BERLIN - EVENING

Chris and Tobey ride past the gate.

TOBEY

You know, this place made it possible for you to swallow up Postulate.

CHRIS

Aren't you proud of me? You plotted it.

INT. DISCO BASEMENT BERLIN - NIGHT

Chris leads the way past the exhibit in the basement of makeshift concentration camp bunkers. Disco music plays in the background.

TOBEY

You just wanted to see this, dad.

CHRIS

Good thing you're strong son. Now when Bill was here, his mother was in the nursing home?

INT. LOCKER ROOM AT FENWAY PARK - EVENING

Tobey, in a Yankee uniform with pinstripes, sits on a bench as a TRANSGENDERED LADY applies makeup to his face. Sydney and Morgan watch with a little chagrin.

TOBEY

I'm really going to hit the ball off the Green Monster in front of 30000 fans. That's all that fit into the Fenway. I'm not putting on an act this time.

TRANSGENDERED LADY

Don't be nervous, girl.

SYDNEY

Then you'll never have to make it as an actor. You'll be too much your own man.

MORGAN

That's what we need, is it not. Not toy soldiers who shout E-4-1.

SYDNEY

Sure, like this whole military thing was an act.

MORGAN

That's what young men are supposed to do until they get married.

SYDNEY

I did. And it didn't last.

TOBEY

They call it abstinence. But I don't believe in it.

EXT. FENWAY PARK IN BOSTON PLAYING FIELD

Tobey fouls off one pitch from a mechanical pitcher. He lines the next pitch over the Green Monster, just barely, and the ball caroms off the foul poul. Men dressed as Yankees circle the bases. The fans boo. But they cheer when Tobey crosses the plate.

EXT. COMMUNITY CELEBRATION SUBURBAN MINNEAPOLIS - NIGHT

Lapp looks down from a temporary stage, while Tobey and Sheila are in the crowd. Fireworks go off as a rendition of "God Bless America" concludes.

MC FOR CELEBRATION

I am pleased to introduce a real American hero, Lapp Fawley, who has overcome cancer, lymphoma, and will enter the Best of the West bicycle race this summer.

Lapp mounts the stage, dressed in cycling spandex tights.

LAPP

I had to leave the Tour de France to the Triplets of Belleville. But this is a great rendez-vous.

MC FOR CELEBRATION

And Old Time Studios has announced today the production of a TV cable film, DO TELL, about Lapp Fawley's story, including his tryout for the major leagues, where he is played by a rising star Tobey Strickland.

Tobey mounts the stage, dressed in Yankee pinstripes. Bill, first hidden in the crowd, snaps a picture and then approaches.

EXT. MORGAN'S HOUSE IN HOLLYWOOD HILLS - AFTERNOON

Tobey, Morgan and Sydney sit at a lawn table near a modest swimming pool. The view looks out over Hollywood below, with the famous sign in the distance. The smog is visible, and the characters sweat a bit.

TOBEY

It smells sweet.

MORGAN

You went LA, young man. Here's the deal. You got the full baseball part. But you gotta sign the option.

TOBEY

You mean to peak for the cycling scenes.

MORGAN

I didn't just mean the SAG papers did I. We film those next spring. God, Spring comes late in the Pyrenees. Anyway, you have to be there are ready to film.

TOBEY

Lapp still wants to play himself. He never even did the race.

MORGAN

Yeah, if the doctor says no.

TOBEY

He's gonna pretend he entered. And I get to win the race. So this is good for me.

SYDNEY

Depends on how you look at it.

They get up out of the lawn chair and walk toward the pool. Sydney angles to get between Tobey and the pool, and notices the chest, that apparently is shaved but very smooth.

TOBEY

Come on, what are you staring at, Sydney. You're not the gay man here.

SYDNEY

I guess I'm found out. Do Tell.

TOBEY

You expect me to shave down for the race.

MORGAN

We do, if you really want the job. The career. The life. You can't take yourself too seriously, young man.

TOBEY

Yeah, yeah. The attitude. I am that character. I take his abuse. But I don't abuse myself.

SYDNEY

With mankind!

TOBEY

I just thicken my skin. And I
change.

They walk inside, past the sliding glass doors, to a family room where an 8-mm projection is set up. Sydney picks up a King James Bible, ruffles it to make crunchy sounds, and puts it down.

CUT TO:

EXT. COLONIAL COLLEGE DORM BUILDING AT WILLIAM AND MARY -
NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A group of college boys, including Young Sydney, lead eight freshmen, blindfolded crudely, from the sunken garden toward a door in the basement, that has a simple stage and folding chairs set up.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Go through, what was it, the
proscenium doors. We have our eight
parts of the theater.

The freshman march, wavering in a precession, onto the stage.
Without protesting they sit down.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Stagecraft is ready. World drama.
Oh, the ways of college boys.

A couple of the freshmen look down at their thighs.

YOUNG SYDNEY

You're all in shorts. You know why,
too. Just what the hippopotamus
ordered. Is that how you pronounce
it. Skin's so tight that when he
blinks his eyes he masturbates.

The sophomores laugh.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Don't kick sand in that poor
beast's eyes!

The laughter turns to cackling.

SOPHOMORE

Ldzek.

YOUNG SYDNEY

He skipped out on the Tribunals.
Like a deadbeat.

SOPHOMORE #2

Then Syd why aren't you on stage?

YOUNG SYDNEY

No.

SOPHOMORE #2

We know what you're afraid of.

Sophomore #2 a redhead, leads Syd up to the stage. He stands behind the men. The sophomores scramble and look for another chair but don't find one.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Ldzek would get hard as a brick if he saw this. When he sees Playboy you can't even tell that a dick is there.

SOPHOMORE #2

How about you, dick-head?
Syd's not got balls at all. So he doesn't matter. Let's see how you guys perform.

Now Sophomore #2 brings in a pail of soapy water, and the first sophomore brings in a full tray filled with razors. The first sophomore kneels before the first freshman, lathers the freshman's super hairy legs, and then starts scraping.

SOPHOMORES

Ouch!

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE IN HOLLYWOOD HILLS FAMILY ROOM -
CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

You really shot that?

SYDNEY

Well, a third sophomore did. In 8 mm.

TOBEY

The least I can do is finish filming my dinner with Bill.
(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

It's tame. It's talk. This was action. My god, preserve it on HDCAM.

SYDNEY

I like home movies. They seem more real. People still teach 8 mm film at IFP. And this is good for drama classes.

TOBEY

Makes me want to dip in your pool now.

SYDNEY

Can't get away from it. I heard that Bill asked about it three weeks later, when he went to listen to some records. You know, how he was married to his own records.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDENT UNION BUILDING WILLIAM AND MARY SERVICE COUNTER - AFTERNOON

Young Bill walks up to the counter with Sophomore #2 in shorts behind him.

YOUNG BILL

Today I want to borrow the Schumann Second.

The FEMALE ATTENDANT, 20, hands him an old LP record. On it there is a sticker, "THIS RECORD BADLY WORN." Bill takes out the plastic LP and inspects it, looking at scratches and pits.

YOUNG BILL

It's not that I mind. I isn't mine. Your record players track heavier than mine.

ATTENDANT

You want it?

Sophomore #2 approaches from behind, in shorts.

SOPHOMORE #2

Still a warm day, ain't it. You're the infamous Bill.

YOUNG BILL

Yes. I am.

SOPHOMORE #2

You exist. We missed you that night. Like you don't play football either.

YOUNG BILL

I don't have to.

SOPHOMORE #2

Because you're smart.

ATTENDANT

You're talking about the tribunals. Where they shave the boys legs, like for football and all.

YOUNG BILL

And it doesn't always grow back. You know, like if you're a diabetic.

ATTENDANT

Well, mine grew back. A little bit.

INT. LISTENING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

While the scratchy record plays, Bill looks over a manuscript of one of his own amateur compositions.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. MORGAN'S HOUSE IN HOLLYWOOD HILLS - MOMENTS LATER

Tobey climbs out of the swimming pool and shakes. Morgan's Laborador Retriever walks up and follows suit.

TOBEY

You want me to make this. Go for it all, don't you.

SYDNEY

I don't mind if Bill outs me. I really don't. It's the way he did it. But, you see, I got into his game.

TOBEY

That was really Frankie playing him on the WM campus.

SYDNEY

He looks too old for the part, already, doesn't he. Frankie must have disappointed Bill. Or he would have. But me, I'm the enemy. Hollywood. Small fry, though.

TOBEY

Yeah, yeah, you had a family, rose in your profession, department head, film director, put sons and daughters into college. Bill just wrote things down and put them out.

SYDNEY

I wasn't as cute as you are, even then. I went downhill faster than you did, sexy legs!! But I raised a family.

TOBEY

I will. One day. Maybe soon.

Tobey looks down at his own chest and grimaces. He looks at his legs as they dry out, and moves out of the sun.

SYDNEY

Not too smoggy today.

TOBEY

You know, your 8mm. Bill wandered the campus that Friday after thanksgiving. Kind of a ghost of Friday. The Dean sat around and waited for him.

SYDNEY

Like he was interested.

TOBEY

Or like he would stalk him!

SYDNEY

No, just like he was waiting for him. Really waiting for him.

INT. DANCE BAR MINNEAPOLIS, DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

Men are break-dancing on a large, colorful dance floor while the song "Beautiful" plays. The dancing includes the lifting up of T-shirts of men and the frottage of smooth chests.

There is a barber chair on the elevated part of the dance floor, towards the back wall. A YOUNG MAN his shirt unbuttoned and gets up and walks away from his BOYFRIEND. The boyfriend chases him and grabs the shirt.

BOYFRIEND.

Take it off!

Tobey and Sheila walk in, as well as Patrick and Lorraine. Both start dancing in pairs. Tobey and Sheila dance a bit. They migrate toward the chair. Lorraine and the Boyfriend, nudge Patrick to sit in the barber's chair. The Boyfriend unbuttons and yanks off Patrick's shirt.

BOYFRIEND.

Reveal!

Bill approaches the chair, and looks agitated. Tobey and Sheila keep dancing.

TOBEY

You know. I'll be dancing.

Suddenly, there is an explosion and flames. People scream and cry, and the sprinkler system immediately showers everyone.

TOBEY

No Great Northern. Patrick!

Tobey forces his way through the crowd. Patrick is on the ground, his trousers apparently burned. He appears unconscious. Tobey administers CPR.

Sirens go off quickly, as the crowd exits, though still screaming and crying.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE NEW YORK AND PLANET HOLLYWOOD - MORNING

Bill and Allison walk in the renewed Times Square area, past the Planet Hollywood where Trump apprentices are offering free drinks. CNN reports Breaking News on a large Jumbotron above the new sci-fi looking buildings and Disney symbols.

BILL

So they cleaned this up. Made it suitable in front of the kids. But I like it better. One of my favorite movies was "The Vanishing Prairie."

ALLISON

So the straight porn days were beyond your taste.

BILL

My first trick insisted on going to a straight porno movie here. I remember he said something irresponsible, weird, like his mother had been responsible for the La Guardia locker bombing. That was like, 1975. So I never had anything more to do with him.

The CNN monitor shows a CNN REPORTER interviewing Tobey.

CNN REPORTER

They still are saying nothing about the cause. There were three deaths and, frankly, they won't speculate about the idea of a suicide bombing. But young law student and part-time commercial actor Tobey Strickland is hailed as a hero for saving his friend with CPR in the blast last night.

FIREMAN

That shows the importance of everyone learning the chest compressions. He carried them out perfectly. And he doesn't have a mark on him.

CNN REPORTER

Witnesses, Mr. Strickland, say you went right into the flames.

TOBEY

If I talk about it too much, I'd be crazy.

CNN REPORTER

And you're appearing in a new film.

TOBEY

Well, I'm still just a law student.
My best friends like to start
rumors.

Allison looks at Bill, who smiles.

BILL

It's no rumor.

ALLISON

You pick your best friends
perfectly.

BILL

Yeah, friends who imprint on me.

EXT. WORLD TRADE CENTER GROUND ZERO SITE - LATER

A crowd gathers. Bill stands in front of the police line,
looking up at the podium with MAYOR BLOOMBERG behind.

ALLISON

Yes, I voted for the tallest of the
towers, the tower that we start
building today, because I want our
city to stand tallest and number
one again in expressing personal
freedom. And, once and for all, we
want to affirm that we do not have
to live in fear that our way of
life will come to an end.

INT. STUDIO OLD TIME PICTURES - DAY

The stage is set up as a typical motel room with double queen
beds. Tobey and Matt enter, in briefs, ready to rehearse
their lines.

SYDNEY

Okay, this is our last screen test.

Tobey and Matt climb into their respective beds. Tobey covers
up, but Matt does not.

SYDNEY

Action!

Tobey coughs.

SYDNEY

Try again. We need some crackle.
Make it sound like a little
bronchitis.

Tobey coughs again, with a bit of a wheeze.

MATT

Lapp. Come on. Another night of
this, noise, again.

TOBEY

You got to scratch again. Me that
is.

Matt gets up and approaches the bed.

MATT

Whatever you say, chief.

SYDNEY

Cut! We're gonna tray again. Tobey,
you gotta sound sicker. I know it's
hard. You're the actor, the
professional. You're not yourself
again. May the cough dry again.
And, Matt, you need to hesitate
before touching him. Don't sound
like an eager oyster.

INT. STUDIO OLD TIME PICTURES - LATER

SYDNEY

It's a buy!

INT. SAG OFFICE - DAY

Tobey walks in, dressed in business casual, and deposits his
application and check on the desk.

TOBEY

It's for real now.

SAG REP

I see you won't be a starving
artist who waits on tables
sometimes. And then, you know,
transitions. That's the word. To
collecting bills.

TOBEY
I'll be a star.

SAG REP
Not a starlet. That's it. Be cocky.

TOBEY
Awesome. Cool.

MONTAGE

Tobey sits on the beach near Chateau St. Michel.

Tobey sweeps floors as a janitor in a prison.

TOBEY
My two spots were within the thirty
day limit. Exactly.

Tobey sits on the circular beach at San Sebastian, Spain,
within sight of the film festival.

INT. TOBEY'S PREVIOUS BEDROOM AT 1569 - DAY

Tobey sneaks into the room and turns on a laptop computer and
manipulates airport drive, and then watches a webcast of his
own body, in time lapse, progressing in years from this
point. His face frowns.

INT. HOLIDAY INN ROOM - EVENING

Tobey and Shelia lie in bed together, in briefs.

TOBEY
We've already done the rituals
before.

SHEILA
We can just have at it.

Tobey laughs as he kisses her and teases her breast, and
reaches for her panties, and pulls.

SHEILA
There's one thing. You've got to
get ready for riding.

TOBEY
That's not for nine months. Pun
intended.

SHEILA
Wouldn't it be fun to peak now.

TOBEY
You know, we've never...

SHEILA
That's why.

TOBEY
I want to do this myself.

SHEILA
Just make sure you shave close.

TOBEY
That's a downer.

Tobey rolls over on his back, and then Sheila climbs on top of him. They start kissing, and then she goes down on him and rubs his thighs.

INT. TOBEY'S PREVIOUS BEDROOM AT 1569 - NIGHT

Tobey again sneaks into the room and turns on a laptop computer and manipulates airport drive, and then watches a webcast of his own body, in time lapse, progressing in years from this point. This time, his face grins.

INT. LAW FIRM LARGER BOARD ROOM

Howie Scruggs approaches Tobey with an envelope.

TOBEY
Mr. Scruggs.

HOWIE
I know about the deal.

TOBEY
Sheila talked.

HOWIE
Okay. She's loyal.

TOBEY
Mr. Scruggs, she's a contractor.

HOWIE
And she's your girl friend.

TOBEY

Oh. Cool.

HOWIE

We need you with one more matter.
And we have the power. Want to
travel?

Howie handles Tobey the summons.

TOBEY

Asheville, North Carolina? Grace of
God?

HOWIE

You can be an expert witness. And
get paid. No waiting on tables to
pay your dues.

TOBEY

Too bad, this wasn't in time to
save my legs for another month.

(END ACT 4)

(ACT 5 - SEE YOU IN COURT)

INT. ALLISON'S OFFICE, NYC

Allison's office in a medium rise in Tribeca overlooks the
WTC pit. Bill looks at the pit and then sits down.

ALLISON

We'd be better off without a jury.
Much cheaper. I mean, you will have
to deplete your savings on this one
if it takes much time.

BILL

It's probably better. A judge will
have more sympathy.

ALLISON

Maybe. The judges in that circuit
are young. They may be more modern
in their thinking, even on the
Bible belt buckle.

EXT. VANDERBILT ESTATE TO ASHEVILLE NC AND BLUE RIDGE - DAY -
ESTABLISHING SHOT

Tobey rides quietly with Art Mandible, Howie Scruggs and Hubert Myers in a Cadillac, off the parkway and into town towards the court house, early fall scenery.

TOBEY

So, Mandible, it sounds like they want you do to do the pitching.

ART

Quiet. All you need is to pull an October surprise. You like this being the jet setter don't you, Tobey, after your dad. Just don't stay still on those long flight to much, you know, the legs.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - DAY

Bill and Allison sit on the left side, and plaintiff ARCHIE EAGLETON, 38, overweight and balding, sits with Attorney Art Mandible on the plaintiff's side.

JUDGE ROY HARTNETT, 36, tall and youthful, sits on the bench with robes flowing like a dress.

ART

So, Mr. Eagleton, what really happened when you called the 800 number?

ARCHIE

It identified himself as High Productivity Publishing. The voice recording was broken, like the owner was stuttering. Not professional.

ALLISON

Objection!

JUDGE HARTNETT

Sustained. Sir, just the facts, please, no theories. No opinions. No philosophy. No religion.

ART

You left a message.

ARCHIE

I waited a day and tried again.
Three times. Thrice.

ART

And what did he tell you?

ARCHIE

He asked if I was the one who had sent the email about the book proposal. I asked him if this was Mufreesboro, Tennessee, and he said, no, Minneapolis. I hung up.

ART

So what did you do?

ARCHIE

I finally tracked down High Productivity Publishing as the religious publisher in Tennessee. When Mr. Price called me from there, it was past the submission deadline. All because Mr. Ldzek, a non-believer, impostered a real publisher. A Christian publisher.

ALLISON

Objection!

ART

The jury will disregard the references to Christianity.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - LATER

ALLISON

So, Mr. Ldzek, can you state your perception of your own writing business in your own words.

BILL

Well, I'm almost famous. Not a journalist or a Chloe Sullivan writing a high school journal.

Tobey, sitting hidden in the audience, chuckles. Bill looks down for him.

ALLISON

So anyone else on this entire planet can read anything you've written, from your website, free of charge.

BILL

With an 15 minute delay they could read it from Mars. I agree. It's profound. A self-published website can be reached anywhere, limited only by the speed of light, and a person named on the site can be found by most search engines, especially Google or others like Teoma. This wasn't possible until a few years ago. Depuis quand. A great idiom that people miss. Since when.

ALLISON

So, what do you think you're accomplishing with your writings?

BILL

Call it the "Do Ask, Do Tell" paradigm. It means learning to walk in another's shoes, to know how he thinks and feels. We have to unveil the downstream implications of things rather than cover them up just not to hurt other people's feelings. I think playing Devil's Advocate gets respect, say, of law clerks in the Supreme Court when they find my stuff, writing the Justices' opinions.

ALLISON

You can prove that?

BILL

Sort of. I can tell from the logs. Good old Unix logs. I think they read them for both the COPA case and then the sodomy laws.

ALLISON

And what was COPA?

BILL

The Child Online Protection Act of 1998, which is enjoined.

(MORE)

BILL(cont'd)

It could have made it a crime for me to put writings dealing with homosexuality, at least overt homosexuality, in a public space where children could find them without a credit card. Depending on how you interpret it. I guess integrity would demand that I stick to the interpretation. Here, I reflect back to my impression when I joined the litigation in 1998. At worst, the HTM, harmful to minors, could have referred to all minors (not just "Clark Kent" or "Ephram Brown" minors), the "whole" could have been the image or text that a minor would see from a search engine access (in the case of a teaser this would have been one image, maybe), and "prurient" might have referred to any sexually provocative language beyond merely clinical discussion.

ALLISON

So you do sell books on your site.

BILL

I did. Until ISPCorp pulled the plug. I sold hardcopies in paperback of my book under my imprint name. That is where the name High Productivity Publishing comes from. A registered imprint from the Books in Print people.

ALLISON

So what happened to your site?

BILL

The ISP pulled it after proto-terrorists hacked it and place hidden messages on it.

ALLISON

And you didn't just open it with another ISP.

BILL

No. I figured it would follow me. I just have the backup on AOL Hometown. I am left with selling hardcopies.

ALLISON

And you have a record of those. How many. How many have you sold and not given away.

BILL

Not a lot. Twenty in the last year.

Allison enters an exhibit.

ALLISON

Please enter this into evidence, a notarized copy of Bill's sales records.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE ANTEROOM - LATER

Howie Scruggs spots Tobey by the water cooler. Tobey is in shorts, his legs now shaved but with stubble showing.

HOWIE

Tobey, I thought you understood. Allison wants to call you.

TOBEY

You said OK.

HOWIE

I must say, you look sharp, in your own way.

TOBEY

I have to do the bike race in Colorado in two weeks.

Howie Scruggs gawks like a real leech, not moving his eyes.

TOBEY

You're staring. This bothers you doesn't it.

HOWIE

It was supposed to bother Bill. But just take it easy, son.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE, CHAMBERS OF JUDGE HARTNETT - LATER

Judge Hartnett leans back in an easy chair, and looks a bit silly for a youthful athletic man. He peruses his peers and makes a few keystrokes on his computer.

JUDGE HARTNETT

So, you way, Sir, you want Mr. Strickland on the stand now, for crossing Ldzek, so he can jet to Colorado tomorrow for his movie shoot. Oh, he gets his fifteen years of fame. But why should my plaintiff give you any slack?

ALLISON

It's all going to come to a head your Honor.

JUDGE HARTNETT

I get it. This is all politics.

INT. YMCA GYM LOCKER ROOM DOWNTOWN ASHEVILLE - DAY - LATER

Tobey finishes a set of bench presses, and walks toward the locker room. Moments later, he meticulously re-shaves his legs, lathered, with an unprotected blade as he is seated in front of some executive-style lockers.

TOBEY

Close enough, for government work.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - MORNING

The courtroom is about three-fourths full, with Tobey still sitting somewhat inconspicuously toward the back.

ALLISON

I call Tobey Strickland.

Tobey comes forward, dressed in rider gear rather than a business suit. As Tobey climbs onto the witness stand, Bill looks away, puts his hand on his mouth, and then stares at Tobey's legs, fighting the urge. He gasps and leans back, and then throws up a little behind the chair.

Tobey takes the oath.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Mr. Ldzek.

BILL

It's nothing. I haven't done this since, getting out of the Army.

JUDGE HARTNETT
I mean an upset stomach. Let's
recess for thirty minutes and get
the stink out of the room.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - LATER

Allison paces in front of Tobey.

ALLISON
So, Mr. Strickland, did Mr. Ldzek
tell you that his writing justified
his pursuing you as, you say, just
a friend.

TOBEY
You know, that will come out when
we make the video some day. My
impression is that he did.

ALLISON
In other words, that's how you
felt.

TOBEY
Absolutely. He never made anything
like an inappropriate advance. But
I'll fix that.

ART
Objection.

Tobey makes an embracing motion.

JUDGE HARTNETT
Overruled.

TOBEY
The book is in evidence already. If
you read it closely, you can see
that Bill was set up.

Allison picks up a roll of super-8 film and approaches the
bench.

INT. LEAR JET - AFTERNOON

Tobey, still in shorts, sits in a small parlor with Morgan
and Sydney, as the plane flies south of Yellowstone. Frank is
also at the table. Frank and Tobey both decline Morgan's
cigarette offer.

MORGAN

Just once.

TOBEY

No. You know, in Eagle Scouts they told us this could all blow up some day.

SYDNEY

Like a sick little girl after breakfast in a restaurant. Or like Bill yesterday.

MORGAN

You would say that, Syd. Maybe it wouldn't be too bad. We came out OK after Mt. St. Helens.

FRANK

That's what Handyman is for. Tobey, with all you can do, you'd be a good asset man.

Tobey sips the drink.

FRANK

But, Tobey, did you really like Bill's interest. Did you appreciate it?

TOBEY

Did you?

FRANK

At first. I would have gone home with him if he had stayed in New York. But after I grew up, no. No longer. Ne plus.

TOBEY

That's not exactly a rejection. It's not jamais. Look, he just thinks he's not likeable just as a person. Just for what he writes. Otherwise, he knows he thinks too big for his britches.

FRANK

Does he? Yeah, like yon Cassius. Or can you fix that, Tobey?

TOBEY

I'll throw it back to you.

FRANK

No.

TOBEY

I guess a man of action like me can
redeem him, just once.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Bill sits on the witness stand for cross-examination by Art
Mandible.

ART

So, Mr. Ldzek, what is your
profession?

BILL

You mean, how did I make a living?

ART

It's similar.

BILL

I was a computer systems analyst
until I got laid off and forced to
retire. Bought out. Not nerdy
enough. I've done some fund raising
part time.

ART

Telemarketing.

BILL

Telefunding. But that's the only
job some people can get. So now
I've started collections.

ART

But for most of your workforce
life, computers were your
profession. Or, shall I say, your
profession comprised programming.
Is my English good enough? You were
a geek.

BILL

Not exactly. I never built a PC
from scratch or a kit. I never
rebuilt my harddrive after a virus.
I didn't let bad things happen,
until I couldn't stop it.

The room chuckles.

BILL

I did business systems. A ggod
stable living until after Y2K.
Then, zero.

EXT. AIRPORT IN ASPEN COLO - EVENING

Tobey walks, picks up his gripsack, and turns towards Frank.

TOBEY

You know, Mandible was a relief
pitcher himself. For a month. They
would call him in to do the
pitching when the Twinbies were
four runs down at home.

FRANK

Yeah, against Tampa Bay. That's
what we want.

TOBEY

Jacks of all trades.

FRANK

Read that as unprofessionals.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - LATER

Art Mandible paces and rolls his shoulder like a pitcher.

ART

So how did you maintain your
credentials in your profession?

BILL

Information technology has always
been unregulated, rather. Vendors
and organizations have their own. I
had an ICCP certified computer
programmer designation until 1998.

ART

And then. You lost it.

BILL

Like my legs. I didn't take the
test again to renew it.

ART

Why?

BILL

OK, I didn't have time. I was busy with books and websites.

ART

But they weren't supporting you?

BILL

Do they have to?

ART

Just answer the question. It's OK. Let's get back to your business. You registered your business only in Minnesota?

BILL

In Virginia, too, before I moved.

ART

But no other states.

BILL

No. I put the assumed name information on my domain. Anybody could find it.

ART

And look up where you live.

BILL

Right. That's a security issue.

ART

But when did you learn that other people were still confused by the name?

BILL

OK, I got a package once, a call from a post office in Asheville, here, on a Sunday morning. One letter from a lawyer requesting a catalogue, and two other phone calls from writers.

ART

So-called Christian writers.

BILL

I suppose.

ART

So you knew people were confused.

ALLISON

Objection!

JUDGE HARTNETT

Overruled. Answer, please.

BILL

In a trivial way. If I had a website with real content, why didn't the plaintiffs?

ART

Objection! Argumentative!

INT. TRAILER, FILMING BIKE RACE, UTAH - MORNING

Tobey and Lapp sip gatorade in the production trailer. Outside, bike riders assemble. Monument Valley landscapes show in the distance.

LAPP

So we made you a real rider now.

TOBEY

The dry heat won't bother you?

LAPP

Not with you suited up and feeding my words. How's Patrick?

TOBEY

His dad, you know on the Joint Chiefs, is trying to get him into the Army Burn Center for skin grafts on his legs. He'll heal fast. But he's over 21. Much over.

LAPP

Doesn't sound pretty.

TOBEY

No, it won't look too good. Not good for the aesthetic sense of men like my dad.

LAPP

He can become a rider, too. But how did he come up with this idea that aliens will get rid of money and just give us merit grades like teachers.

TOBEY

Like stock valuations.

LAPP

He's testing his own teachings.

TOBEY

Not really. He hasn't learned Bill's lessons. He's already made a softlock e-book for the Internet.

MORGAN

Maybe Patrick won't give it away free, either. Back to work.

The go outside and see a bank of video cams, and a truck that reads "ENTERTAINMENT TODAY."

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - MORNING

REV. LINUS BROWN, 49, takes the stand. His face looks like a bowling ball, and his bald head gives off "black light." Howie Scruggs questions him.

HOWIE

Thank you, Mr. Brown, for helping us with redirect. Can you state your position?

LINUS

I am president of Grace of God, a religious media publisher here in Asheville.

HOWIE

So what is the relationship to High Productivity Publishing?

LINUS

That's our outreach ministry imprint, literature for our African missions in the Congo, Uganda, places like that.

HOWIE

And you've registered it in every state?

LINUS

No, sir, in thirty states, including all of the southern states, and four countries in Africa for our missions.

HOWIE

Minnesota or Virginia?

LINUS

We did do Virginia in 1999.

HOWIE

Why don't you have a website by that name?

LINUS

Well, we really didn't think about it for years. Christian ministry is based on direct contact among people, you know, word of mouth. The Great Commission in Matthew says...

ALLISON

Objection.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Overruled.

LINUS

Says to go out into the world on our own rather than by hiding behind a computer, you know, by being secretive and anonymous.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Allison is questioning Linus under cross examination.

ALLISON

So, then, how did you get the name in Virginia? The defendant had already used it.

LINUS

No, ma'am, he didn't keep it. It had expired. Probably when he moved.

Judge Hartnett takes a long drink of a full eight ounces of water, then stands.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Counsels, I want to see you both in chambers now. Court in recess.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE, CHAMBERS OF JUDGE HARTNETT -
MOMENTS LATER

Hartnett is munching on a cheeseburger as Howie Scruggs and Allison stand in front of him, suggesting a power switch.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Ok. I'm going to ask the defendant a question or two myself. But I must say, Mr. Scruggs, this is a bit of ambulance chasing. I saw your witness Tobey last night on Extra. Maybe he's young and wants all of his options. I did, and I'm not that much older. What's you got with him.

HOWIE

His best interest, your honor. I mean, he is a grown man. Maybe he didn't look it yesterday.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Yeah, he didn't.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Bill is on the stand, and Judge Hartnett faces him from the bench, with a smirk.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Mr. Ldzek, just one question from the court. If your books are out that long and don't make money, why do you keep them in print?

BILL

I can help with that one. People notice me. Look at what happened with Lawrence v Texas.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. U.S. SUPREME COURT BUILDING WASHINGTON - MORNING -
FLASHBACK

Demonstrators with signs regarding sodomy laws march along Maryland Avenue in front of the Supreme Court steps. Bill waits in the "three minute line" while it snows.

INT. U.S. SUPREME COURT BUILDING WASHINGTON - LATER -
FLASHBACK

Bill, in a suit, sits in the simple chairs in the back.

ATTORNEY SMITH

The one thing, that I submit the court, the state should not be able to come in to say is: We are going to permit ourselves, the majority of people in our society, full and free rein to make these decisions for ourselves, but there's one minority of people [who] don't get that decision and the only reason we're going to give you is we want it that way. We want them to be unequal in their choices and their freedoms, because we think we should have the right to commit adultery, to commit fornication, to commit sodomy. And the state should have no basis for intruding into our lives, but we don't want those people over there to have the same right.

JUSTICE SCALIA

I mean you can put it that way, but society always - in a lot of its lives - makes these moral judgments. You can make it sound very puritanical, the, you know, the laws against bigamy. I mean, who are you to tell me that I can't have more than one wife, you blue-nose bigot?

(MORE)

JUSTICE SCALIA(cont'd)

Sure, you can make it sound that way, but these are laws dealing with public morality. They've always been on the book; nobody has ever told them they're unconstitutional simply because there are moral perceptions behind them. Why is this different from bigamy?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - LATER

Allison gives her summary, walking back and forth.

ALLISON

I know, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, that this is largely a matter of equity. There is no law, no statute, against what Mr. Idzek did. We have a religious plaintiff who is offended by what he sees as the defendant's self-promotion, and who wants to punish him for it. His argument is that the defendant didn't pay his dues. That the defendant has no validity. But look at the record of his ideas in court in the past two years.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - LATER

Art Mandible gives the summary, as Howie Scruggs, a bit scruffy now, looks around the courtroom, hoping Tobey has come back.

ART

The defendant admits in his writings, exhibits in front of the court, and brags to his supposed friends that he deserted his ailing mother to move away from home to avoid a conflict of interest, just to keep his own peculiar mix of ideas circulating. And he really doesn't play by the rules of business. He doesn't rent commercial space, hire employees and provide them and their families benefits, for all his talk of family values. Why?

(MORE)

ART(cont'd)

He has no business. He is a self-promoting blogger pretending to be a businessman.

The audience grumbles and then breaks out into cheers. It claps, but some of the clappers produce a rhtyhm, British style.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE, CHAMBERS OF JUDGE HARTNETT - LATER

They finishing watching Syd's original b-w William and Mary film.

Allison and Mandible sit in front of Judge Harnett. This time he sips coke and burps.

JUDGE HARTNETT

So Tobey didn't come back, right?

ART

He's got his stardom now, your Honor.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Like a star or an actor. There's a difference. That's OK. We don't need him now. I want you to talk to Bill. I'd talk to him in chambers, but it's illegal. I like what he tried to do, and then I don't.

Hartnett leans back in his chair and smirks, as if to joke.

ALLISON

We showed it visually, we the film. Tobey really did help us out.

Judge Hartnett laughs.

JUDGE HARTNETT

I'm just young or old enough to remember grade school filmstrips. Before Internet.

He stands and adjust his robe, as if to cover up. He looks at Tobey's head shot and shakes his head.

JUDGE HARTNETT

What would you want for Bill to shut up and take his remaining websites and books down.

(MORE)

JUDGE HARTNETT(cont'd)

Then you won't ding him for this half million dollars, or for anything right? Your plaintiff wants a moral victory,

ART

My client was injured.

JUDGE HARTNETT

No he wasn't. Not really. But I'll agree with you that Ldzek shows a curious lack of integrity. Not dishonesty, that's different. Even given what happened to him. Tobey makes a case. We'll give him a chance.

ART

He won't take it.

JUDGE HARTNETT

That's your risk. But I know where he could put on his forum. I'll tell you after the decision.

INT. ASHEVILLE COURTHOUSE - LATER

Judge Hartnett leans forward to give his ruling.

JUDGE HARTNETT

I find for the plaintiff. But I waive all monetary damages if the defendant removes all of his publications from circulation within thirty days. Now, after adjournment, we will set up a meeting. Mr. Ldzek, if you can do some community service, I could arrange another opportunity for you.

EXT. SPORTS BAR IN UTAH NEAR CYCLING FILM SHOT - MOMENTS LATER

Lapp and Tobey watch a Jumbotron news feed in an outdoor cafe with mountain views. Tobey eats heartily, while Lapp sips tea.

LAPP

No, Tobey, this isn't the Tour de France.

TOBEY

It's no piece of cake.

CNN Breaking News comes on, with the outdoor Courthouse in Asheville.

CNN REPORTER

Not a big case, but important for free speech advocates, whether self-publishers can be forced out of business by publishers under general tort law when they give their stuff away for free just to attract attention.

The screen shows a few pickets from both sides.

JEFFREY TOOBIN

Yes, they call this the blogging case. But that's a bit of a misnomer.

CNN REPORTER

So, Bill Bertkowitz, are you going to appeal?

BILL

Can't afford this.

ALLISON

I defended him. His writings about gays in the military are very important to the debate. My own partner was forced to take off her uniform for a civilian job in the Pentagon when we tried to adopt a child from overseas. His speech is important.

CNN REPORTER

The judge offered some kind of carrot.

BILL

They call it community service first. I guess he wants me to wear shorts in public after going bald in the legs.

CNN REPORTER

But you do have another career coming, don't you? You can mentor kids now, right?

BILL

I'm not a good swimmer anyway. I don't know if the Judge really gets it. But Tobey does.

CNN REPORTER

Wasn't this a real First Amendment case? What happened to freedom of speech?

BILL

It's still very much alive. But the Court seems to think that the right to publish and the right so speak are not necessarily identical.

CNN REPORTER

Well, almost, right?

BILL

After the printing press was invented, you had to have a license to publish. We don't here. But maybe you need a license to promote yourself. Or at least you need accountability. Or authentication.

INT. LARGE COLLECTION FLOOR - MORNING

It is six months later. Bill walks along a railed pathway that looks out onto the collection floor. He can see snow falling through the windows outside, and airplanes landing in the distance. He looks momentarily at his supervisor's cubicle, which expands out as a wedge and is filled with sports trophies and scenic and family pictures.

Bill walks to his desk. He opens a newspaper to the movie section. The headline reads

LOCAL ACTOR TOBEY STRICKLAND NEW HEARTTHROB AS 'THE SPORTSMAN' OPENS AT THE LAGOON THEATER, BENEFIT PREMIERE FOR AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

COWORKER

So I see your friend made it big time. But you got to put the newspapers away.

BILL

No Internet here. Tobey's success is what I've got left.

COWORKER

Come on, hit your goal today Bill
or you could be out.

Bill dials a number through the automatic dialer.

BILL

Is Cynthia there?

DEBTOR (O.S.)

Speaking.

BILL

This is Bill Idzek from Agressive
Enterprises. We are a collection
agency representing Visa on your
past due balance of \$600. The
purpose of this call is to collect
a debt and any information ...

DEBTOR

I'm an actress. I'm between
assignments. I'll start paying with
my next job.

BILL

Just because you don't work now
doesn't mean you don't owe the
money.

DEBTOR

Who do you think you are to talk to
me that way? I know you. I saw you
on the TV. Why are you working for
a collection agency? Why are you
calling me?

At that point Bill passes out.

INT. LARGE COLLECTION FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The paramedics bring Bill back to life with the
defibrillation paddles on his exposed and somewhat hairy
chest.

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE ROOM - AFTERNOON

A young resident, NICK STILES, 28, handsome, approaches
Bill's bedside. He leans over. His hands and wrists are
conspicuously smooth, to the point of looking almost
artificial.

NICK

You don't have much choice, Sir, if you want to live. But we can save you from the zipper club. We can do a keyhole. That'll save you for the dirty dancers. You don't have to look like Letterman.

INT. HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE ROOM - MORNING

Bill is seated in a chair with various tubes. A nurse gives him an ice cube to suck and adjusts his IV.

NURSE

Let's save some hair on your arm.

She repositions the IV.

BILL

Hospital.

The TV above plays a news spot showing surgeons scrubbing for surgery, and then one of them sticking his forearm under an intense light.

NURSE

Oh, you notice our tanning lamps.

BILL

Change.

The nurse smirks.

NURSE

Pretty soon the male nurses will be affected.

She switches the channel. Now there is CNN, with Patrick, walking in his home with his legs bandaged, being interviewed.

CNN REPORTER

So you're concerned about how you'll look after all.

PATRICK

We are. In our community we used to say, ruined. We're starting to measure each other the way schools did in earlier generations. They say, only God should measure people.

(MORE)

PATRICK(cont'd)

But now we are inclined to say, if you don't make it, you should step aside and spend a life in slavery. And that's disturbing.

CNN REPORTER

But not a science fiction novelist like you.

The Reporter holds up the cover of the novel PRESCIENCE, that shows the map of a continent on a fictitious planet. There is only one inhabited continent on the planet.

PATRICK

Well it matters to someone like me who used to brag about coming in his shorts.

Suddenly the CNN Monitor shows BREAKING NEWS.

CNN REPORTER 2

There has been a volcanic explosion in the western part of Yellowstone Park, just across on the Montana side. The whole town of West Yellowstone, often the coldest location in the U.S. in the summer, is on fire.

INT. HOSPITAL SEMI-PRIVATE ROOM - AFTERNOON

Bill presses the help button. When no nurse appears, he struggles to get up without using his arms, and then screams in pain. An iv pops out. Still, Bill makes it to the bathroom and heaves.

Nick walks in to help. He leads Bill back to the bed.

NICK

It's OK. We did the keyhole, remember. You can get up.

BILL

So I'm not sentenced to the zipper club.

NICK

We'll see about that.

A new CNN news feed comes in. Frank is being interviewed.

FRANK

Yes, we have a crew of civilian reservists helping restore communications infrastructure, even the Internet. Helping me is the right-hand man, Tobey Strickland. Jack of all trades, movie star, graduating from law school, and reservist.

TOBEY

I stepped in. I was passing through for some skiing, and look.

FRANK

He did our program. Good thing you weren't on the slopes when it blew.

TOBEY

Having fun.

(NEXT SUMMER)

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE IN ARLINGTON - DAY

Bill rides a mountain bike slowly from his house, past his boyhood schools to Glebe Road.

CUT TO:

EXT. GLEBE ROAD ARLINGTON - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Ambulances are streaming from the Pentagon all the way to Arlington hospital. Inside, a female officer is being treated for bad burns on her legs and arms.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. MACDONALD'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Bill, in a uniform, operates a cash register and serves up bags of burgers and fries. The other workers are a mixture of teens and seniors. Tobey, Allison and Judge Hartnett walk in to be served. Then Erich follows, and Patrick, walking with a gimp.

TOBEY

Biggest employer of seniors, fast food. Too bad.

(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

You could join the movies as long as you don't have those senior moments.

BILL

Order please.

JUDGE HARTNETT

You've actually got to do your job, right.

BILL

I actually make change and balance the register OK. So they put me here rather than flipping burgers.

PATRICK

Flippin is for the deadbeats after the bill collectors call you.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Yeah, with the Mini Miranda. I thought no involuntary servitude was one of Bill's amendment proposals.

TOBEY

Come back on break.

JUDGE HARTNETT

You could still be a teacher Bill.

TOBEY

You got it. They really need to lift the ban first.

Tobey opens a brief case and takes out of roll of 8mm film.

TOBEY

These are right here, from Buckingham. Your own family. Ought to be worth some money to the History Channek.

INT. BALLYS GYM SWIMMING POOL - DAY

Bill wades into the pool. Tobey approaches the edge and poses. The body hair has mostly grown back, but it is stubbly. Erich follows, looking "younger" and also stands on the edge.

At the pool's edge, Sheila is running the DVCAM from a tripod.

SHEILA

Action!

Tobey jumps in and starts a breast stroke. Erich jumps in from the other side. Both surround Bill.

TOBEY

Now, Bill, paddle towards me, not Erich.

Tobey draws Bill close and releases him.

TOBEY

Arch your back!

Bill is sinking, but Tobey grabs Bill by the waist. Bill latches on, and presses his head against Tobey's chest. Tobey lifts Bill up. Bill now floats on his own. Erich approaches. Erich flips on his back. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION.

BILL

You are all my people. But with Erich, it was better!

Finally, Tobey pulls Bill away from Erich and hugs him. Bill goes limp.

TOBEY

Bill, you do have to change. Then you can really compose.

INT. RALEIGH'S TAVERN WILLIAMSBURG - DAY

Bill, Tobey, Patrick, Frank, Art Mandible, Allison, and Judge Hartnett all sit around a dinner table with many other attendees, all sporting Colonial Williamsburg name tags. Some sit at adjoining tables.

Sheila is operating the DVCAM. They watch a transcription of some of Syd's Williamsburg film, then of Bill's family's Buckingham films.

BILL

See, these apartments enforced segregation when I grew up there. It's a matter of history.

SHEILA

Bill, you should sit at the head, and Tobey, next on his right. Tobey, this is your dinner with Bill.

They shuffle around, and then start passing food, family style.

BILL
Ooo. Cornish game hen.

FRANK
You eat what's set before you.

The trouble lights come on, highlighting Tobey and Bill.

SHEILA
OK. Lights. Camera. Action.

TOBEY
So in a moment, as we finish off this game, Mr. Ldzek will take the podium. I hope that you will purchase his books. That helps him. He has to find an outside publisher, but I believe that this debate on a Bill of Rights II will help him get going.

Bill now takes the podium.

BILL
I'm not going to give you all that jazz, like Always Be Closing. No Glengarry Glen Ross. No sales pitches. But I'm going to pose several questions. Each team will then debate. Let's have a good time.

INT. RALEIGH'S TAVERN WILLIAMSBURG - MOMENTS LATER

BILL
So if I have the fundamental right to marry a man, how does that affect your family.

TOBEY
You mean me.

SHEILA
A likely story. I get first dibs.

OLD BLACK MAN
Bill, you aren't serious about this. You hang around youngsters like Tobey.

TOBEY
He likes even younger.

BILL
If I had been allowed to debate men
when I went to college.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE BEDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Child Bill lies in bed, his face and neck covered with
measles spots.

EXT. SUBURBAN SIDEWALK - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Now Bill tosses the ball to playmate, who bats the ball and
it lands on the porch roof.

PLAYMATE
It's a homer.

Bill approaches the playmate, smiling, until he notices that
the Playmate is now much taller.

BILL
And you say I can get well if I get
married.

PLAYMATE
Yeah. You can marry men. I can
marry girls.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. RALEIGH'S TAVERN WILLIAMSBURG - CONTINUOUS

OLD BLACK MAN
But you would hardly have stayed
with him as he grew older and you
would never have picked someone who
looked like me.

BILL
But I did answer the question.

OLD BLACK WOMAN
Kids need to believe in having a
mother and father or there won't be
young men like Tobey growing up.

BILL

See, if that's a fundamental birthright for a child, imagine the sacrifices we adults would have to make with the way we lead our own lives. I had proposed the opposite, a fundamental right to a relationship with a consenting adult significant other, without prejudice from the state.

FRANK

But that's a conflict isn't it?

BILL

My right doesn't involve forced sacrifices. But that gets to my fundamental paradigm. Time for a speech.

Bill sips some coffee and clears his throat. Sydney walks in, with his WIFE, and four children.

SYDNEY

Bill, my family. It's not instant. It's mine. It's what makes me free. So back to what's yours.

BILL

You're right. If I look up to Tobey or others like him, like Erich, I have to play by some rules myself. Otherwise his accomplishments wouldn't mean anything. You have to be accountable, valid, authenticated. If you are less gifted, then you have less choice in what you want to do, and you have to be more tuned in to what other people want. I wouldn't play along with that. I separated from myself, and looked on from the outside. I liked my spirit but not my being, with the balding legs. Nobody will need me or respect me for being me, but they will for what I write. So that's the rule, I'm supposed to give that up.

(MORE)

BILL(cont'd)

Money or other gifts can let you do what you want, can seem like a measure of a man, but you have to be more than the some of that, more than just what your fundamental rights give you access to. There is, as Patrick said, merit or value. You have to earn that by meeting the needs of others, by maintaining consistency in your motives, and we call that integrity, not just honesty or even honor. If you're not gifted like Clark Kent, that's hard. So people want relief, they want the political system to invent rights for them, that others will have to support and pay for, because they need something. They don't want to be accountable for their own merit.

Tobey motions to Patrick, who stands up, in his shorts.

BILL

But we have to be. Freedom means we're all accountable and valid and able to be judged. It's our accountability that keeps us from sliding back towards another Reich. It's a gamble. Freedom is a gamble, you don't take it for granted.

They clap in half time, British style.

Allison stands up with Susannah York, holding a baby girl.

ALLISON

What about our children?

BILL

That's what other people want.

The people start to clap in full time.

ALLISON

He can save himself when he wants to.

EXT. WILLAMSBURG DUKE OF GLOUCESTER STREET - DAY

The local theater has a marquee, "THE SPORTSMAN." A sign says "BENEFIT PREMIER. SPECIAL SHORT: BILL OF RIGHTS 2"

INT. UNFINISHED HOUSE - DAY

Tobey and Sheila look at the family room of an unfinished house on the Minneapolis lakes.

REALTOR

Well, we got the volcanic soot out of the yard completely, and the home entertainment center is hooked up.

She turns it on and a shot of Bill and Allison talking to LARRY KING appears.

ALLISON

Yes, we spent a month in Roumania, and we had a certificate from a family services officer who visited our home.

LARRY KING

You and Bill?

ALLISON

No. Susannah. Uh Huh.

But you said something very interesting, Bill. You said people respect your writing, but they don't respect you.

BILL

I'm no father figure. I'm a disconnection.

Tobey turns it off.

TOBEY

Bill would never wear his shorts in public. He used to say, a man is known by his legs.

INT. WEDDING SCENE CHAPEL ALONG OREGON COAST - AFTERNOON

Bill, dressed as a best man, hands the ring to Tobey, as Sheila approaches, dressed in the wedding gown.

After the ceremony, the organ plays Mendelssohn's "War March of the Priests."

EXT. THE HANDYMAN ACADEMY GROUNDS IN WEST TEXAS - MORNING

The camera follows the grounds. First, it shows a fenced baseball field, jogging track and gridiron (few stands), and outdoor swimming pool. Then there are two buildings at a right angle, forming an L around a small well-sodded yard. One building is long and narrow and looks like a dormitory. The other is four stories, concrete and small. The air is a bit dusty and hazy, and an orange sun is out. Barren mountains rise in the background.

Frank and Bill walk along the jogging track towards the buildings. From a distance, Frank looks like a young man. Both are dressed in gym clothes. The camera migrates from Bill's eyes to Frank, who in close-up looks visibly middle aged.

FRANK

So you came by to check me out?

BILL

You gave me a last chance out of this.

FRANK

And you still like to stare at me.

BILL

Well.

FRANK

Like you did once before.

BILL

Those were the days of innocence, before AIDS. I was a young vigorous man then, like you, well, just barely.

FRANK

With our lives ahead of us. Well, I'm an old married man myself now.

Frank manipulates his clothing, pulling up his tee shirt and now it appears that some object is taped to his chest.

They approach the building.

FRANK

And proud of it, you bet!

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD AT ACADEMY - CONTINUOUS

Tobey, Sheila, Judge Hartnett, Sydney, and Erich watch Bill and Frank. Erich picks up a DV camcorder and takes another shot of the two men talking. Then he turns to Tobey and Sheila and picks up the sparkle of their (now) wedding rings.

Sheila puts her arm around Tobey.

TOBEY

Sure, before I was without a wife.

SHEILA

Careful with your own ring.

SYDNEY

You feel different, Tobey?

TOBEY

Being married? Not really.

SHEILA

He did better than a lot of men. He kept most of himself.

ERICH

I'll take the camera inside the building so I can follow the interview.

SYDNEY

Let's see Bill practice what he used to preach.

TOBEY

I don't think he'll have time for our little reunion. But then, neither will you, Sheila.

INT. WORKOUT ROOM AT ACADEMY - MOMENTS LATER

There are multiple workout stations and some medical monitoring equipment, like an electrocardiograph, with diagrams showing men doing stress tests. There is also other stuff in the room, including electronic keyboards and Bill's old spinet piano from the apartment.

Frank and Bill approach one corner, where there is a fancy desk with chair in front of it. Frank motions to Bill to sit down, and then keystrokes on his computer.

The camera quickly shows Frank browsing news reports on the volcano cleanup and then doing a Google search. On his desk there is an upscale magazine turned to an ad with a man with a necktie painted on his chest. Bill looks at.

BILL

That's what men are for.

Frank looks up at him and focuses.

FRANK

Well, I see they've gotten most traces of your blogs off. I guess no girl friends -- pardon me, boy friends, can google you for dates now.

Frank leans back.

BILL

You know what I've given up.

FRANK

You're gonna be challenged here. You'll feel tired a lot, like you were in Army Basic. You'll learn to work, literally, to stay on your feet eight hours a day without bathroom breaks and balance a cash register at the end of a shift. You'll even take a turn at waitressing.

TOBEY

(entering)

That's cocktail waitressing!

Tobey, Sheila, Erich, Judge Hartnett (casual), and Sydney enter now. Tobey nods at Frank, who makes a few keystrokes.

TOBEY

John, you may be the best subject. Syd is too old.

Judge Hartnett strips to his shorts and stands on the treadmill. Sheila creams and sticks numerous electrodes on his chest, covering any hair, as John starts to jog.

FRANK

Postulate-A Financial, no. We suggested they cut you loose. And there's no commission for me now in this. No ponzi scheme.

BILL

It's your agenda now.

FRANK

And yours. You know as well as I do that the country needs a swat team to fix things, get things going after the next purification.

BILL

Suitcase nukes, or more explosions at Mono Lake.

FRANK

That's sure to happen.

ERICH

Or solar flares, or pole shifts. Or super storms.

BILL

I give up my own voice. On my own claims to social equality. I now surrender the debate to well-funded organizations.

FRANK

Bill, there won't be anything more to debate. And you were never equal, you enjoyed your submission. Even to Erich. The only way for you to rise up is to speak someone else's words. We'll give you the words. If you come to Handyman Academy, it will be your whole life. But you'll get on camera, make movies. That's what you've always wanted.

The computer screen shows Tobey, Sheila and Erich setting up stuff and Judge Hartnett doing the run. Some of the electrodes fall off his chest. In the meantime, a trial music theme starts to play.

BILL

That's mine.

FRANK

The music? Indeed it is.

BILL

So I made it.

Tentatively. You'll be handy with setting up this stuff. Even if you don't make it here, we'll use you in training films. You'll leave the showbiz to others.

BILL

But I chose them. I got to decide who was best. Who could father. That is good enough.

FRANK

You chose me once, and that was good entertainment. Now see this.

Frankie pulls out a large photo of men floating face up in a bubbly natatorium, broken into sections. The men are covered with electrodes. One of the men is Erich. Next to him is Howie Scruggs, rendered hairless, perhaps by the chemicals.

TOBEY

Frankie, are you going to suit up too?

FRANK

I don't think I'll have to.

Tobey runs over to Frankie's desk, keys a few strokes, and starts a video, showing Frankie being made up to look like Young Bill, with a matte painting of the William and Mary Wren building in the background.

Then Tobey starts a second video, polished, of his dinner with Bill. The William and Mary video (in black and white) feeds follows it perfectly as Bill talks on the video.

TOBEY

Bill, you will get back to your music.

BILL

I want to make it.

TOBEY

Then keep on writing.

INT. DANCE FLOOR AT SALOON IN MINNEAPOLIS - NIGHT

A week later, the break dancers are celebrating as usual, after going through tighter security.

Bill is seated in the barber chair, and Sheila unbuttons his shirt and peels off his pants while the D.J. plays "Macho Man." The camera focuses on the scar and stubble. Sheila applies the shaving cream to his hands.

SHEILA

Handyman will start you with the Tribunals. We have you all set up to perform.

The camera pans to a piano on the stage.

EXT. WYOMING TOWN, EAST OF YELLOWSTONE - DAY

Bill, looking rather barren but much younger, flips burgers at a lunch stand for volunteer workers still cleaning up after the volcano's explosion.

EXT. WORLD TRADE CENTER GROUND ZERO SITE A FEW YEARS LATER - NIGHT

Allison, Susannah, Sheila (now pregnant), Tobey, and Bill watch as the new WTC tower lights up. The ending of the Tchaikovsky 1812 Overture Plays.

ROLL CREDITS

Play the last movement of the Schumann Symphony #2 during the credits. Give the music credits near the end. The credits should finish before the final descending chords and drum beats of the coda. Complete the symphony to the final octaves. During the credits show some of the outdoor scenes, including European, from earlier in the film, as well as the symphony orchestra.

FADE OUT.