

(69 Minutes to Titan)

by  
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(fiction)

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FADE IN:

INT. PRISON HOLDING CELL - DAY

CLEM LDZEK, 60, bald, spindly, mushy in the middle, grizzled, with a gray mustache and sideburns, allows a black male guard to inspect him naked. He then suits up, walks in leg and wrist manacles with the guard past the telephone pens to an interview room. They pass one outside view of sunshine and low mountain ranges in the distance, as they walk through the exercise area.

TOBEY STRICKLAND, 28 with black hair, mop haircut, neat beard, and business suit, sits with SHEILA DAVIS, 27, slightly pregnant, across a plain table. Tobey has a briefcase with him.

Clem offers his hand, and Tobey hesitates then shakes it.

CLEM

I thought you had made the A-list.  
Instead you come looking like my  
lawyer, Tobey.

Tobey takes Sheila's hand.

TOBEY

Whatever you mean by A-list. Sounds  
awesome. Yeah, you liked to scope  
me. I've changed, too, Clem.

CLEM

You know Erich never proved it. He  
never showed me Cassini. The probe  
showed nothing. But his world was  
continents and oceans, like ours.  
Even equatorial sand dunes. Good  
for a social studies teacher.  
Geography teacher.

Tobey starts to smile, then smirk.

CLEM

So you brought your girl friend.  
Sorry, fiance. I gotta watch my  
words.

TOBEY

We'll give you your words now,  
Bill. I know you don't want us to.  
Sheila, well, I'm moving out of the  
1569 Club, finally.

(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

We bought a big brick house in a good school district.

CLEM

Like real life.

TOBEY

We got a kid coming now. I'm sticking around, Clem. Don't know if you'll want to hit on me forever.

Sheila motions with her hand, but Tobey restrains her, and then pulls out a picture of baby girl from his wallet.

CLEM

If I had my own kids, they would be just average.

Then, Tobey opens up the briefcase and gets out a large camcorder. Sheila maneuvers, and an artificial metal leg shows.

SHEILA

You get it, Clem. Tobey, ask him.

TOBEY

Let him see what he wants, first, honey. He has to be over his disgust for his own age to get out. You know, the Oscar Wilde problem.

Tobey sets up his camcorder with a projector and casts a picture on the interior wall.

INT. 1569 CLUB FRATERNITY HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Tobey, now 21 and clean shaven and in a v-neck t-shirt and shorts with appropriately hairy legs, sits on a sofa with a large cell phone (typical of the late 90s). Through the picture window there is a snow-covered lawn, and a heavy rain is pelting it into a slush. Around the room there are computers, stereos, speakers, and sexually explicit art work.

TOBEY

So, Clem, we've got you all set up. Now make sure you have your suit pressed and tie cleaned.

Tobey looks at his laptop, at an email he is writing, title "Public Speaking Is Easy" and a second one, "Laugh a Little, Cry a Little." He positions his finger to press send but then withdraws it.

INT. CLEM'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

Clem's MOTHER, 84, lies on the couch, as Clem staggers, past wires tangled over the living room carpet, to put his phone handset back on the couch over her.

MOTHER

You spend so much time on this.

CLEM

It's my life.

MOTHER

But it's not real life. He's still in college. Isn't he too young for you?

CLEM

That's college, not high school. He's adult. He graduates this year. And, well, it's all mental. Platonic.

MOTHER

I mean, even for friendship.

INT. PRISON INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TOBEY

It hurt your mother, didn't it Bill. That you liked someone like me more than your own blood.

CLEM

You enjoyed that, didn't you, Tobey. Telling a man I know you respected, old enough to be a grandfather, almost, how to dress, for business.

Tobey grabs Clem's arm. Clem goes limp, but Tobey lets go.

CLEM

I let family down.

TOBEY

With a kind of contempt.

CLEM

I know. Look, I liked who I was. I did. It's asymmetry.

(MORE)

CLEM(cont'd)

Outliers get to make the rules for everybody else.

Tobey clinches his fist and then backs away.

TOBEY

You decide, Clem.

MONTAGE

Clem slips and falls in a convenience store.

Clem lies in a hospital bed, his left leg stimulated by an exerciser, as Tobey visits.

INT. CLEM'S HIGHRISE APARTMENT - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

Clem, still using his crutches lightly, plugs in an independent Panasonic VCR unit on a dumpy bench near his TV. The apartment is now cluttered with three computers, two laptops, various newspapers, magazines, and books, and a few coffee stains on the beige carpet.

Tobey comes onto the picture, as it focuses and gets past the snow, and an initial cable marquee "THE LIBERTY CHANNEL".

TOBEY

Gays in the military, and other things that he writes about.

Clem fast-forwards the tape a bit to where he is talking. He is still on crutches, in a business suit. There is an outline written on the green blackboard in white chalk, looking like a test on the board. It lists items like "gays in the military," "sodomy laws," "free speech."

CLEM

And finally, we come to the Relationship Paradox. In our modern world, you are supposed to be your own man, or woman, before you commit yourself to a relationship.

Clem hunts through some loose stuff behind his 1980s CD player and picks up a miniDV tape.

MONTAGE

Clem sits next to Tobey eating a cheeseburger dinner at a trendy restaurant in a group of other graduate students.

Clem gets stopped by police driving back. The policeman sees his crutches and writes a ticket.

INT. PRISON INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLEM

Those were red letter days. I had my life. My own. A good life.

TOBEY

We've made space for you at the wedding.

SHEILA

You're not the best man.

TOBEY

No kidding.

CLEM

Erich is.

TOBEY

We'll see about that. He made it through tribunals this time. But you won't have to pay for proper sartorial taste.

INT. PRISON HOLDING CELL - DAY

Clem is getting inspected again and shackled. The guard scratches at Clem's grizzled sideburns.

INT. WARDEN'S ROOM - DAY

Clem sits in a small red chair in front of WARDEN BOGGS, 35, bald and fat, in casual gear, while FRANK L'ISTESSO, 40, in a business suit a just slightly mushy, stands aside. Outside the sun and mountains show.

CLEM

Yeah, I'll be on the outside. With my life back.

FRANK

No, Clem, you'll have to answer a lot of questions.

CLEM

I was a nuisance. You can do better than that for me, right, after all this?

WARDEN BOGGS

He's been through some real shit.

FRANK

You say you're not a --bad--.  
Really. But we both know better,  
don't we.

CLEM

That's private choices. Just  
fantasies.

Boggs clears his throat, and his chest crackles.

WARDEN BOGGS

That's the book in this state. For  
what you actually did. I don't make  
the rules.

CLEM

All I did was measure people. Look,  
may I?

FRANK

Unbeknownst to me, you think you'll  
see Tobey again.

CLEM

I already did.

FRANK

He's not what you think anymore.

WARDEN BOGGS

Look, you have any other family of  
your own?

CLEM

I had to worry about the dead hand.  
Like George Elliot in those English  
lit novels. Those good books.

FRANK

She cut-Oh, I see. It's just as  
well, maybe, if I gauge right.

CLEM

They once said she was OK.

MONTAGE - FLASHBACK

Clem shakes hands with SURGEON WHALE in whites in a doctor's  
office. The surgeon looks well scrubbed.

Clem on a plane, looking at his authored book with a striking black-and-white cover that reads "(book title)".

FRANK

But you knew she wasn't.

WARDEN BOGGS

So you won't have family left. Like Tobey makes you a godfather, but that's all.

FRANK

That's vicarious living.

CLEM

There's Tovina. She cares.

WARDEN BOGGS

Yeah. She does. Lucky for you.

FRANK

Oh, I guess gal Tovina was hard work for you. Too much woman.

CLEM

I guess I want my life back.

WARDEN BOGGS

Well, you know the rules, Mr. Ldzek. So what can we do for you, really?

CLEM

Let me write again. And publish.

WARDEN BOGGS

Frank L'Istesso, you're point man on that issue.

FRANK

Well, Clem, you have to have a change of heart.

CLEM

Like want to procreate.

FRANK

You said that. You're kind of a Dorian Gray with me the portrait.

CLEM  
 Or maybe Peter is the wizened  
 picture. You know, the hit man.

MONTAGE

Clem buffs a cell floor.

Clem washes dishes with a Hobart machine.

PETER (55) mimics hitting somebody with a car in a prison  
 therapy session.

EXT. PRISON EXERCISE YARD - DAY

Clem, still in his orange jumpers, stands around as a few  
 prisoners, mostly minority, play hoops. He spots a  
 whiffleball bat and little fuzzy rubber ball. He picks them  
 up.

ERICH JZZET, (24), in shorts, shaggy legs, very handsome,  
 slender, medium height, golden blond, slight mustache and  
 goatee, approaches from behind.

ERICH  
 Go for it, Clem.

Clem fungoes the ball, as it flies through the courtyard and  
 bounces against the masonry wall, then turns around and looks  
 at Erich.

ERICH  
 I can do it better.

CLEM  
 Erich. I mean.

ERICH  
 I fell to earth. Get used to it.  
 Tobey talked to you?

CLEM  
 I'm invited.

ERICH  
 You are part of the package, then.

They walk over the courtyard. Erich picks up the ball and  
 fungoes it over the wall.

ERICH

Turn around.

There is a swishing sound, and Erich is gone.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Clem reads one paperback book in an empty cell with metal toilet and night light on. The book is Arthur C. Clarke's "Childhood's End." He reads the last page and closes the book. He covers his eyes with a blanket and lies down and goes to sleep.

EXT. DESERT LANDSCAPE - EVENING - FANTASY

A train moves from a lake shore toward a small village that looks like a western town from the distance. There is a small, oily lake and one tower looking like a lighthouse. The landscape is a mixture of ice and rocky desert. The sky is dusky, with a large planet showing through the haze. The planet is ringed.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

(Indicate that it is 4-1/2 years earlier). Erich (looking like a young teen) looks away from his computer screen. He pulls up his shirt, sticks it with a small probe, and reads a small metric scale. He gets up, picks up a hypodermic syringe, and packs it away, out of site.

He goes back to the computer, with the extraterrestrial landscape. On the monitor, ROGER, 26, extremely tall, appears, seated in a kayak on the lake. He gradually strips to his shorts, folding his white garments neatly. He looks appealing.

ROGER

Erich, now do you really believe in God?

ERICH

It matters what happens here when I grow up.

ROGER

No it doesn't. You can come soon. But come quickly.

## INT. LIGHTHOUSE - NIGHT

Roger climbs the narrow staircase up into the Lighthouse. There are a few sleeping pods in stacks (like submarine Northhampton bunks) around the circular room. There central metal lead furniture is decorated by a digital holographic image, spreading out like an arena stage, arranged in as many metallic-like colors as possible. The letters "TOWER OF NED" appear, then "REVEAL", followed by a series of images of young adult individuals, nude, in three dimensions, in rapid succession. Underneath there is the character string "1.44 REVOLUTIONS REMAIN - YOU SAVE YOURSELF, THEN RESURRECT."

Roger looks out over the lake, and walks and looks over at the knobby desert in the twilight. As far as he can see, a single row of concrete, one floor barracks, extends to the horizon, along a rail track. The computer hologram reads "BARRACKS FOR PROGRAMMERS."

Roger makes some clicks on a three dimensional keyboard, then just concentrates. He shakes his head at a hologram of solitaire, but his eyes light up as a three dimensional game of chess comes up, with graphic letters "English Opening."

## INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Tobey (now 21, since it is the same six years earlier) stands in front of a world history classroom, with appropriate classroom maps, pictures, charts for social studies and history.

On the board, he writes: MIDTERM, Greece, Friday

TOBEY

After my test, you'll be rid of me.

The ninth graders chuckle. They remain attentive.

TOBEY

But the biggest point is about Socrates. He taught us how to question things. Life is not multiple choice.

Erich, now (), raises his hand. (He talks like a teen whose voice recently changed.)

ERICH

Mr. Strickland.

TOBEY

No, Erich, you shouldn't have to memorize anything.

Suddenly, Erich starts shaking, staggers, and falls to the floor. Tobey finds a spoon in the top desk drawer, walks over, and calmly inserts the spoon in Erich's mouth. Erich doesn't react. Tobey leans down and does CPR (mouth-to-mouth) one cycle, with perfect Red Cross technique. Suddenly Erich dry-coughs.

MALE STUDENT

God, he kissed him.

TOBEY

Johnny, call the nurse on the desk phone. 5421.

INT. NURSES OFFICE - DAY

Erich sits quietly in the nurse's office as his father, BRIAN Jzzet, 44, arrives. The nurse BETH COHEN, 33, finishes taking Erich's blood pressure.

BRIAN

You're OK this time, son.

ERICH

Dad? Sure.

BRIAN

Sure, sure. You haven't gone down with the spirit yet, have you.

ERICH

Dad, you really don't want me to.

BRIAN

I want to meet the teacher. Like he could really pull this off.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Erich sits on the examination gurney as a young male resident, DR. BERG, finishes scrubbing his smooth hands and forearms and then examines him.

BERG

Unbelievable. All the chemistries are normal. Like you rebooted your bod.

ERICH  
Safe mode, all right. But it's the  
going down that is pleasurable.

BERG  
Where did you get that idea?

BRIAN  
Come on, not your going down, son.

ERICH  
Thus spake Zarathustra. No,  
"Childhood's End." I don't like  
your hands.

Brian steps forward, and puts his hand on his son's shoulder.

BRIAN  
He's too young, sorry, too sinful  
to notice.

INT. JZZET ESTATE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Erich, Brian, ELAINE Jzzet (40), and BELLE Jzzet (8), eat  
dinner, family style. The food is noticeably healthful with  
lots of fruits and vegetables. Brian clicks off the news  
program on the TV set, after a quick view of a gasoline line.

ERICH  
What would taste good, a chocolate  
mousse.

BRIAN  
Son.

ERICH  
I think I beat it. Roger came back.

MONTAGE - FLASHBACK

Roger, speaking in tongues in a revival sanctuary, falls  
down.

Roger is carried to an ambulance in a body bag. But the  
ambulance crashes into a ravine on the way to the morgue, and  
the bag spills out. As sirens in the distance increase, even  
with a Doppler effect, the body bag starts to move.

BRIAN  
They said it was AIDS. I mean what  
could have been worse.  
(MORE)

BRIAN(cont'd)

You have to set an example for your  
sister, young man.

ERICH

I've told you. They were wrong.  
Roger was fine.

BRIAN

Son.

ERICH

He was slain, but not in the  
spirit!

INT. COFFEE BAR - EVENING

Clem (now in mid 50s) munches on deviled eggs and roast beef sandwiches from an hors d'oeuvres table, and mills around in a crowd of mostly older men. There are a lot of libertarian books for sale at one table. He roams back to the table and signs the book for one customer, shakes his head at a Visa card and accepts a \$20 bill. He wanders to the window, and looks out over a lake, appearing to mutter. Then Clem opens up an old ribbed leather briefcase, and pulls out four black-and-white paperback books named "(book title)" and puts them on the table. Tobey, dressed in a navy blue sweater, waltzes into the room.

TOBEY

Hey, Clem. Your books look cool.

Tobey offers his hand and makes eye contact as Clem shakes it, with increasing grip.

TOBEY

So, you've done some public  
speaking. I mean, public speaking  
is easy.

Tobey writes out an email address and phone on a small gum label in a kind of backhand penmanship.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL JOGGING TRACK - DAY

Tobey, in sweats, times Erich as he finishes a mile run. The other kids stands back at some distance. A couple of the other students vomit.

TOBEY

7:02. Not bad. You don't mind pain  
as much as I do, or a lot of  
people.

ERICH

Not sure you could run that, Mr. Strickland. And whatever my health, I never puked on the track.

TOBEY

That's not the best word.

ERICH

You want to set yourself up with me.

TOBEY

I'm still cool. But it's back to law school prep. Got one more week of student teaching PE. Shooting for the moon, covering all the bases. Don't want to get left in open water.

ERICH

Can I show you what I can really do? Not just wrestling.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Tobey watches Erich perform at tumbling and then at wrestling, from a distance. At one point, Erich accidentally kicks a principal walking by. Tobey grins.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Erich stands at the plate, batting left-handed, and Tobey, throwing right, pitches curve balls. Erich lines the ball past Tobey's ear into centerfield. Tobey makes another pitch. Erich drives it to the opposite field, left center. It barely clears the fence.

Tobey approaches the plate, smiling.

TOBEY

I still think jogging will take you further into safe mode.

Erich walks towards the little dugout and picks up a typical teenager's backpack. It starts to sprinkle.

ERICH

The wind helped kick the ball out of the stadium. Look at this.

As Erich speaks, it is apparent that his voice is changing rapidly with the onset of puberty. He takes a little device with a sharp edge, places it against his abdomen after pulling up his shirt, and then reads a meter.

TOBEY

Oh. I thought.

ERICH

I do this where it doesn't show. Or matter. Look, I know you think I had a lot of problems. But look, I'm clean now. And you think that's

TOBEY

Cool. I don't use that word too much in class. In front of students other than you. Or profs other than, well.

ERICH

Look, I didn't take insulin today. And the sugar, it's normal.

TOBEY

Check that the kit is working.

ERICH

Come on, Mr. Strickland, you have more faith than that. Nobody coddles me now. When I grow up, my legs will still stay manly.

They walk on, not quite touching, and watch some kids playing with a UFO-balloon-frisbee as they chase it onto the field.

ERICH

Let me ask you, do you think people have freedom in Heaven?

TOBEY

Not really. Unless they stay married.

ERICH

So we don't get to do what we want unless we are human.

TOBEY

Or more.

INT. GYM SHOWER - DAY

Erich is showering with a number of other guys ("PG-13" shot). Tobey, with some care, pokes his head in.

                  TOBEY  
          Middle school kids, stay up  
          tonight!

INT. ASSEMBLY OF GOD - EVENING

Thunder and the patter of heavy rain fill the sanctuary. Under candlelight, teenagers, reasonably dressed, are raising their hands in a religious revival. Brian (the minister) touches a young woman who is babbling baby talk, and she falls down. Erich brings a blanket to cover her. Brian waves his hands in the air in front of some more women who reach for him. PETER MOUCH, 55, with white hair and noticeable pot belly, approaches Brian, babbling. He looks at Erich.

                  ERICH  
          Girls first, Mr. Mouch!

Peter shakes his head when Brian reaches out, and then falls down. Both Brian, and then Erich, back away from Peter and continue to lay blankets on the women and girls.

                  BRIAN  
          You show hospitality for everyone,  
          because you never know your  
          personal messenger. But when that  
          angel comes, you know God talks to  
          you.

Erich babbles and falls down himself, as the lights flicker.

EXT. ICE FIELD - EVENING - FANTASY

The sky is smoggy, with purplish-gray wall funnel clouds, and a horizon opening with a beige disk showing through.

Erich, in shorts, looks at himself in a twilight reflection in the ice. He has grown an inch taller and is hairier. He looks out toward the horizon, at the edge of a glacier. There is, off to the left, an oily looking sea.

He picks up a baseball and bat and drives it a half mile, it seems, to the wall of the glacier.

He walks back toward a village, or a mural of a village and spots a train approaching it. There is a passenger car and two oil cars. He stares until he sees the train move.

INT. ASSEMBLY OF GOD - EVENING

Then the power comes back on. Erich sits up, tugs at his pant legs, nods. Brian walks over.

ERICH

Dad?

BRIAN

You call me that.

ERICH

I'm OK. I'll be fine from now on. I can take care of myself. It was nothing this time.

BRIAN

Just a junior moment, son.

ERICH

We don't call it a spirit slaying. No. Still no.

BRIAN

We could call it a coma.

Erich walks along and sees a media (TV station) truck approach the church. Men, well dressed, from the station come and escort Peter from the building.

BRIAN

No interviews on the nightly news.

MAN FROM MEDIA TRUCK

Don't worry. We have tornado damage everywhere but at the church to keep our audience busy.

The Man on the truck shows Brian a video of Jzzet's house with roof damage.

MAN FROM MEDIA TRUCK

Hope your son's antenna is OK.

INT. 1569 CLUB FRATERNITY HOUSE - DAY

Tobey, in a sports shirt and slacks, looks through the refrigerator, past the V-8 and other juices. He pours and sips on orange juice as Sheila types on the desktop computer. Tobey has his own laptop connected to the same server tower, and is finishing some puts and calls in the stock market.

SHEILA

Let me finish this program. Then we can listen to all the songs we want.

TOBEY

Careful. I mean.

SHEILA

Copyright. Oh, you're taking the law school test. Like another backup plan, job insurance. Just like teaching.

TOBEY

The kids are fun.

SHEILA

I bet they are.

TOBEY

The good kids. They're grown up, like young adults. Even middle school.

She plays through a slide show of Tobey's upscale modeling shots. She gets up and wrestles him to the bed, and starts to unbutton his shirt.

SHEILA

Let's see if you're ready for Clem yet. Erich's small potatoes.

TOBEY

One potato, two potato...

She walks over to the bathroom, inspects the medicine cabinet and sees no patent medicines. She then picks up a bottle of shaving cream.

Tobey sits up.

TOBEY

Sheila, it's too early.

She walks toward him with the cream and squirts it, some of it precipitating like snow on his chest.

TOBEY

I mean it. It's not funny.

INT. 1569 CLUB FRATERNITY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Tobey, clad just in boxer shorts, is sleeping on the sofa face down. In front, on a beaten up coffee table, are the components of a portfolio: upscale pictures of Tobey in several different ads for men's suits, wine, jewelry. Sheila is taking pictures of the whole scene as Tobey gets up, and puts on a full undershirt before turning around.

TOBEY

So it's time. And you're really recording this for my posterity. Mine. And you don't even need flash.

SHEILA

You're still in the game with that agent?

TOBEY

Yeah, I've got to make up my mind. Some day. You know, I skipped out on the missions.

Tobey now sports his shades and looks a bit like a model as he goes out the screen door to his little gray Honda.

INT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Clem's apartment is even more cluttered this time, as he roots through his closet for a nicer sport shirt, then touches up his 5 o'clock shadow, hastily. He turns off his computer, and watches impatiently as it prompts him to load more updates, until he finally pulls the plug.

He locks up, travels the elevator to his somewhat beaten up Escort, then drives through the City, with the Schumann Symphony 2 playing on the car's FM. He stops at a railroad track as a freight train of oil cars passes. He finally arrives at the restaurant, and spots Tobey, just recognizable in the distance, talking on a pay phone.

Clem parks, picks up some books, and approaches the entrance, as Tobey does. Tobey, with the afternoon sun hitting his hairy legs, looks very sharp.

TOBEY  
Lit-er-a-ture!

INT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Tobey is finishing a BLT as Clem makes eye contact and pushes his books and home-typed manuscripts across the table. Clem is cleaning his own plate of flabby veal. Clem maintains eye contact.

TOBEY  
You're attached to this memory stick. It must have been a blow to you, when your dad told you.

CLEM  
Those were here words. 'We have to take you out of school.' They were determined that I would take my part in the generations and create a family myself. Already, I didn't want to.

TOBEY  
Who's they?

CLEM  
The College and my roommate, even more than my parents. I was seen as a total loss.

MONTAGE - FLASHBACK

YOUNG Clem, 18, hides in an empty basement, as some other college freshman are led up onto a small stage, where two pails of soapy water sit. They start to shave YOUNG SYDNEY, 18, and he giggles.

Young Sydney lies in a top bunk, Young Clem in the bottom bunk, in a narrow dorm room with a noisy fan running.

CLEM  
That's what Syd said, that I would take on a super strength.

TOBEY  
Sounds like you were the Nietzschean superman. Well, super.

CLEM  
I'm the odd man out. So I take on the strength in my lust for semens.

TOBEY

They call it asymmetry. Or maybe they call you a vampire. Well, Anne Rice didn't write "The Gay Science."

CLEM

They admitted twice as many boys as girls, so he had competition. And I had watched his fall in the tribunals. Things were hard on him.

TOBEY

So they had to take you out.

MONTAGE - FLASHBACK

Young Clem, 18, hides in a basement dorm as he watches a hazing ritual where some freshmen get their legs shaved.

Young Clem, finds a handwritten note on his dorm door.

Young Clem trudges across the campus in the fog.

Young Clem sits in front of the Dean of Men.

YOUNG CLEM'S DAD drives a Ford Galaxie in front of the campus, with MOTHER inside, and Clem climbs in the back seat.

CLEM

That's the moment, my Before and After.

MONTAGE - FLASHBACK

Young Clem and his parents sit in front of the Dean.

Clem and his dad carry a mattress down a winding dorm staircase, and Dad points to a stain.

CLEM

He really said that. That's why I was no homo.

TOBEY

So they wanted to rehab you.

MONTAGE - FLASHBACK

Clem sits in front of a psychiatrist, but not on a couch.

Clem empties his pockets of Roloids and nose spray as he checks into a hospital ward.

CLEM

I recovered. Lived at home, got a lab job, finished school, then went back to the dorm for grad school.

TOBEY

I know. And you're here today, giving speeches and getting on TV.

CLEM

It's like no time had passed. But it makes sense. The best way to protect our rights is to take care of ourselves and make our own ways in the world. Now, I hope you'll help me set up our Bill of Rights 2 forum.

TOBEY

First, we gotta use you winning some converts. Then you can win your arguments.

Clem winks at Tobey, who flexes and leans towards Clem, inviting a touch or pat.

CLEM

I'd like to try the tribunals myself. Some day.

TOBEY

Like you want to become a movie star rather than me.

CLEM

Well, you're good. They'd let me.

They start to walk toward the cashier.

TOBEY

And you say you don't have a right to be. So I'm better than you.

CLEM

It's a theory. Then I can enjoy men like you.

INT. RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Clem and Tobey approach the cashier.

CLEM

My treat.

Clem puts it on his Visa card. He motions to embrace Tobey, who shakes his head slightly and backs away. They leave the restaurant and Tobey turns towards his old car, then looks at Clem.

TOBEY

Remember your humanities, Clem.  
When Napoleon lived out his exile,  
words are all he had left.

CLEM

I haven't conquered anything.

TOBEY

And I guess you don't want to. But  
you picked me. I've been selected.

INT. 1569 CLUB FRATERNITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Tobey shows his room to some students, and there are books packed up in cartons for moving. They move down the steps to the main party area.

TOBEY

Packing the rest of this up will  
take me exactly 75 minutes.

Tobey, Sheila, roommate PATRICK EWING, 21, and a number of other college students mill around in the living room and kitchen. There are two punch bowls marked "WITH" and "WITHOUT", and a keg of beer for tap. Current disco music plays in the background.

TOBEY

So, this is what we really are.

SHEILA

Clem would miss this. And Erich.

TOBEY

He can't be here. You know that.

SHEILA

Patrick. You ready now?

Sheila walks up to Patrick and starts to unbutton his shirt.

SHEILA

Take it off.

EXT. GAY PRIDE FESTIVAL - DAY

Clem looks chagrined when he sees STEVE DAWES, 38, slender but with a protease paunch (shirt reads "John Galt"), and, clad in shorts, revealing prematurely balding legs. Nevertheless, Clem motions Steve to follow him to the Libertarian Party tent, where Tobey relaxes in a lawn chair, legs extended, carefully dressed in tight-fitting t-shirt. Tobey hesitates to extend his hand, but jumps up.

EXT. RESTAURANT PORCH OVERLOOKING PRIDE - DAY

Tobey, Clem, and Steve all eat hamburgers and overlook the festival.

TOBEY

So you just know Clem from work.

STEVE

It's enough. There's not much time.

TOBEY

You know, the clock's running on me, too.

Tobey looks at his cell phone time display.

TOBEY

I guess I can't be a young man forever, either.

INT. STATE FAIR TENT - DAY

Erich stands in a booth, pan-frying vegetables underneath a sign "Jzzet'S ORGANIC." Bryan is talking to customers.

Tobey is in the next booth for the Libertarian Party. Bryan rinses off a skillet, scrubs it with some elbow grease and Chlorox, and walks over.

TOBEY

Be careful. You know, zoning inspectors. You still don't have a commercial kitchen.

They giggle.

ERICH

You set this all up for me.

TOBEY

What do this call it, teacher  
fraternization.

ERICH

You use the big words.

TOBEY

So can you.

Clem ambles in, and first notices Tobey, with the shorts, and then makes eye contact.

TOBEY

Clem, you ready to go to work for  
me.

ERICH

That's how you get to see him.

TOBEY

Erich...

CLEM

They call it ballot access  
petitioning. It's an institution.  
We did it up north last weekend.  
The women were much better at  
collecting petition signatures than  
the men. Like Trump.

ERICH

That's because they have pretty  
legs. They're supposed to.

CLEM

Or allowed to.

TOBEY

That's not binding.

ERICH

Only for sissies.

EXT. STATE FAIR GROUNDS - DAY

Clem, Erich, and Tobey walk around with clipboards and tailgate the crowd. Clem tends to stand back a bit, while Erich is the most aggressive, as people line up to sign for him.

TOBEY

Come on, Clem, you can do it to.  
Pretend you're back in the lab.

EXT. STATE FAIR TENT - EVENING

Erich and Clem are finishing a cheeseburger, fries, and ice cream supper.

CLEM

You sell the health stuff.

ERICH

I don't have to do what I say  
anymore. I met Tobey.

CLEM

How?

ERICH

Oh, as a teacher's pet. Finishing  
his student teaching. He told me  
you were big on the liberty stuff.  
A big head.

CLEM

Decapitated, maybe. Looks like you  
are, well, sharp yourself.

ERICH

You know your history. Dad says,  
the Prussians didn't get strong in  
Europe until they had a draft.

CLEM

Dad.

ERICH

He was R-A all the way. But then  
church got to be too much.

CLEM

But not for you.

ERICH

Oh, I believe it. You gotta have  
heart. And only then, faith.

CLEM

Like you don't get to do just what  
you want.

ERICH

Right, that's how you get to live forever. If you don't have to get your way. But, you don't need girlfriends.

CLEM

Or babies. Other people's causes.

INT. STATE FAIR TENT - LATER

Tobey is packing up his backpack as kids and adults come by and vote on a marijuana legalization plank by throwing pennies in jars.

CLEM

So the older kids vote for legalization.

TOBEY

They break (), they don't have to think like their parents. Well, Clem, you can be in charge of tailgating tomorrow. I got to catch that bird to L.A. for summer seminars.

CLEM

Sounds like telemarketing!

Tobey checks an airline schedule on his cell phone and leaves. He looks back.

TOBEY

Just make sure you tell Bill you're old enough for his stuff. He's pretty careful.

INT. STATE FAIR TENT - MORNING

Erich sits by Clem, working some math problems on a newsletter.

CLEM

It's two equations with two unknowns. You got it.

ERICH

Now, Mr. Clem, we gotta go out and do the signatures. And you're the green boss.

CLEM

Is that so.

ERICH

I made a problem for you. You solve the equation.

CLEM

Differential. Partial diff e qu!  
You knew how to do these all along.  
Well, I'm impressed.

Erich starts rubbing Clem's back as Clem moves the pencil.

CLEM

Did you vote?

Erich runs up and throws in a penny in the "for legalization bottle" and returns, continuing the light back rub.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Clem sits in front of MING, 45, as she swivels back and forth between her computer and Clem, who is looking at a chicken-scratched checklist.

MING

So how many bugs have you fixed by yourself?

CLEM

Um, two or three.

MING

In one month? We need to have you do two or three a day now. Can you handle that? Without help?

CLEM

Yes, by myself. I work alone well.

MING

What do they say, crawl off into a corner!

INT. CLEM'S CUBICLE AT WORK - DAY

Clem's terminal is filled with a dump that he apparently is trying to solve on his own. He is on the phone.

The (movie) screen splits with a SURGEON WHALE in scrub clothes, forearms covered in soap and extended; he talks with a hands free device.

CLEM

I can't come back without quitting. Back in DC the company just sold to the military. I'm not allowed to work there now.

SURGEON WHALE

I'm approving her surgery now because I get it. And, yes, I told you she was OK. But she's going to have a hard time without you. If you aren't man enough to get time off for your own mother, the help those SNF's get will take advantage of her.

MONTAGE

The surgeon scrubs his soapy forearms almost raw with brushes.

(DC one more scene)

INT. SALOON BAR, LARGE CITY - NIGHT

Clem, 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, one young man, about 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 dirty-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, Clem stares intently.

Clem recognizes a familiar face, slightly changed, near the center stage but towards the back. Patrick is dancing with Sheila, her 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.

Clem walks around the dance floor and stands in the dark, so he can watch the couples closely. Sheila starts to unbutton Patrick's shirt, revealing a hairy chest. Clem stares closely. Lorraine approaches Clem and Clem looks away.

LORRAINE

Hey, man.

CLEM

Okay.

LORRAINE

You're Clem. You're watching us.  
Gawking.

CLEM

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

LORRAINE

When's your next birthday?

CLEM

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

LORRAINE

But, what birthday?

CLEM

Fifty-nine.

LORRAINE

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

CLEM

Even with a girl friend? Okay, I'll go.

Clem looks up as he leaves and sees Roger on the dance floor. One of the other men plays with Roger's shirt, as Roger makes eye contact with Clem and shakes his head. Erich, unseen by Bill, then sneaks into the bar and nods at Roger.

EXT. SALOON BAR - LATER

Clem is leaving the bar when the bouncer taps him.

BOUNCER

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

Clem walks along Main 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?

CLEM

I don't smoke.

Clem 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 city police car swings by.

INT. AGENTS'S OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Tobey, dressed business casual-California style, makes his way to an agent's office in an older Hollywood-looking area. He carries a portfolio. He notices a number of young actors passing, some in shorts. He stops in the restroom and pulls out the slightest crow's marks under his eyes and near his mouth. He smiles. He walks to the agent's office and knocks.

SYDNEY (O.S.)

Hold it. Come on in.

SYDNEY GIBBS, 58, slender with thinning hair but sucking in his tummy as he stands, offers his hand, hesitating and then ambling from behind his power desk. He wears a special orthopedic shoe. Tobey looks startled, but composes himself quickly. Tobey looks around the room and sees diplomas, theater directing awards, and a several pictures of an apparent wife and three teenage kids on the wall. There is also a picture of a trailer with a cross in front of it, and a sign, "Give me that old time religion, it's good enough for me."

SYDNEY

Yeah, I made it in life. You have your head shot?

TOBEY

Sure. It's in here.

Tobey pulls out the head shot, an upscale picture in a business sweater.

SYDNEY

I see. Can you come into the next room please? Now there are no tattoos, right? I actually had a candidate with body art. Doesn't get it. Even for a confirmed straight like me.

They walk into a little room that looks like a doctor's exam room. But there are more books and pictures, including one of Clem's DADT with the black-and-white cover.

TOBEY

I know what you must want. Or desire.

SYDNEY

Like I'm a Scorpio. There are some swim shorts in the closet. I'll step out for a moment.

TOBEY

Thank you.

Tobey changes quickly into swim gear. Sydney turns around.

SYDNEY

Melanie's not here today.

TOBEY

For the inspection.

Tobey turns around, his back to Sydney, who gawks at the legs, and then up at Tobey's smile, with the slight gap-tooth.

SYDNEY

I notice. You're entering midsummer of your life. It can come quickly. You know, you don't want to get into August too soon.

TOBEY

I'm from Britain, remember, not Canada. No early frosts there. Or freezes.

SYDNEY

Be careful with your legs. You'll need one titanium implant up front, too. You're working now?

TOBEY

I'll be teaching full time next year. History.

SYDNEY

And some P.E. I bet.

TOBEY

No license, yet. Looks like you read a lot. You have to in theater.

SYDNEY

I grew into it. I watched too much television, didn't grow up until after my tribunals in college.

Sydney looks at the black and white book and winks.

TOBEY

By the way, I'm super strong, too.

SYDNEY

No you aren't. Erich is. You don't have a right to be.

TOBEY

Sounds like gay talk.

EXT. CITY BLOCK PARTY - EVENING

Revelers stroll a main street, buying food and beer with tickets, with rock bands in the distant background. Clem and Erich are tailgating the crowd for signatures. They are sticking together but this time Clem is much more aggressive.

CLEM

Got 51 so far.

ERICH

You won't beat me. Up to 74. You probably want a break for some buzz.

CLEM  
A beer would feel good. You can't  
have one.

ERICH  
Who says.

CLEM  
The law.

ERICH  
Sure. I'm a kid. You want to come  
by tonight? My folks, well, it's  
home alone. I won't drink!

Erich taps Clem on the waist and even teases the mush in  
front.

ERICH  
And, man, I was counting on you for  
a ride.

EXT. MODERN HIGH-RISE APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Clem and Erich approach. Erich gently pedals his bike after  
Clem dismounts. An ambulance sits in a semicircular driveway  
at the entrance. Paramedics wheel a stretcher with a cadaver,  
covered, toward the ambulance.

PARAMEDIC 1  
Yeah. He expired ten minutes ago. A  
nice gentleman.

Erich breaks away from Clem and approaches the stretcher.

POLICEWOMAN  
Please, keep away, sir.

ERICH  
I can help.

Erich approaches. The policewoman tries to block him but the  
paramedic lets him approach closer. A babbling sound emerges  
from underneath.

PARAMEDIC 1  
My god.

ERICH  
Clem, let's go upstairs.

An older woman walks by and shakes her head as she sees the bike.

ERICH

That the manager probably. We aren't supposed to have bikes.

CLEM

Well, I'm glad you're here. You could ...

INT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Erich leads the way, as if he knew the building, towards the door. A stray cat is in the hallway and follows. Clem follows and opens the door. Inside they find Clem's messy and cluttered apartment with its multiple computers. Erich drags the bike in.

The cat follows them in and runs to the kitchen and meows. Clem picks it up.

ERICH

He's yours.

CLEM

No. He must have gotten loose. You have to pay a pet deposit.

ERICH

For the pee, no doubt. Or is it pooh? Look, I'll take him back.

Erich pulls out his PDA and keys in some digits.

ERICH

Nuts, the airlink isn't up. Can we log on to your machine for a moment. I need to telnet. Then we'll go to my place for the show.

Erich walks over and boots it up in safe mode, and keys in some commands. No pictures come up, only text.

ERICH

I didn't let you see the pictures of Purgatory here. For now, we're done.

The cat comes over and marks him on the bare, hairy legs.

CLEM  
You could take him.

ERICH  
I would. I have a house.

Erich picks up the cat.

ERICH  
Bring your book! Oh, it's OK for  
me.

Clem backtracks, picks up his authored book with the black-and-white cover, and locks up, with some deliberation.

INT. APARTMENT GARAGE, CLEM'S ESCORT - NIGHT

Erich fixes the bicycle carriage on the roof of Clem's Escort.

Clem climbs in, as Erich cleans out the passenger's side, while cradling the cat, who keeps needling.

ERICH  
Little fellow. I'll have to start  
over with a name.

Clem struggles with the key fob to get the security to pop.

ERICH  
Why'd you wait to now. Sounds like  
you didn't expect it to work.

CLEM  
Erich.

Erich reaches under the dash and manipulates a bolt.

ERICH  
Start the car.

On the second try, it starts.

ERICH  
It's only magic. Now just keep this  
jalopy going until we cross the  
river.

The car pulls out of the garage onto city streets. The cat jumps into Clem's lap, almost making him lose control by kneading, until Erich pulls him back and keeps him.

ERICH

You're a reticent driver. I'm good at vocabulary in English class.

CLEM

I'll bet. How old are you?

ERICH

Dad says that's a rude question. You want to know? You can guess. I'm ahead in school, though.

EXT. JZZET ESTATE - NIGHT

Clem pulls up the long driveway, to a two-story Tudor house. Erich climbs out, carrying the cat, and motions Clem, who follows. Erich unlocks the door with a metal card, and then disables security.

ERICH

We believers can be rich.

Erich looks toward Clem's car, where one tire is almost flat. He points.

ERICH

You'll have a hard getaway. You know how to change that man?

Erich quickly changes the tire with the spare in the back as Clem, holding the cat, has to pull magazines out and throw them on the drive to get to the spare. They approach the house. Erich looks back at the car with the bike on top but turns around and ignores his own property.

CLEM

You're good at everything.

ERICH

Like Tobey. That's how we get rich around here.

CLEM

Before being raptured.

ERICH

You're kidding. But I'm not.

Two other cats approach, as Erich sets the new pet down. He turns on the light.

He leads them downstairs to a recreation room set up with about six computers, and padded plastic mats on the floor, with old lounge furniture. There are also a lot of Bibles and books about prayer and speaking in tongues.

ERICH

I like free stuff, so we'll watch the show on the Linux machine. It's been about an hour since we left your place, so the show has time to get here.

Erich turns on the flat screen monitor. A picture of his fake ID card come on the monitor first.

ERICH

Come over, come close. You can help me finish this.

But Erich starts a video, which shows a barren landscape, that gets richer as it fills in texture and detail -- rocky surface, orange and brown in hue, with a black mass giving off a moving glint from a beacon in a distance, as if coming from a lighthouse.

CLEM

I could guess.

ERICH

Don't. I'll identify these. Like it was an English test.

There follows a slide show, this one labeled: Io, Europa, Mars, Venus, even Triton.

CLEM

Like a biology lab.

ERICH

Draw and label. OK. See those canteloupe effects on Triton. Pretty cool artwork.

Clem reaches over to play the slide slow, and Erich touches his arm.

ERICH

You got family, Clem?

CLEM

You mean that?

Clem puts his hands on Erich's shoulders. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION. He keys some strokes to turn on some Remy Zero music.

ERICH  
So you're in for just good clean  
fun. Christian. You go to church,  
too, I bet.

Clem kneads lightly.

CLEM  
We call it MCC.

Erich leans forward, and switches back to the lighthouse video, and then leans back into Clem. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION.

ERICH  
You're like the cat. You know the  
name of the video.

The cat jumps into Erich's lap.

CLEM  
Do not go...

ERICH  
Do not go near the Tower of Ned.

CLEM  
What. I mean, mind reading.

ERICH  
Mind control. You know what that  
corpse was doing.

CLEM  
Oh. Maybe. It's real. Speaking in  
tongues.

ERICH  
I've never really done it yet. Go  
ahead. I know what you want.

Clem takes small liberties. DIRECTOR'S LEGAL DISCRETION.

CLEM  
So you believe in that.

ERICH  
You can't corrupt me. I guess your  
x-ray eyes aren't enough.

Clem runs one hand through Erich's blond hair. DIRECTOR'S LEGAL DISCRETION. Erich abruptly grabs Clem's wrist, lifts Clem away from the computer, and throws Clem down to the mat and pins him. Clem reaches, and for a moment grabs the leg.

ERICH

You're right. Go for my gams. It's good for you that I took up a new sport. Wrestling!

Erich runs over to the computer, presses a couple commands.

ERICH

Good thing my parents stay out late after some of their revivals. By GPS, they'll be back in half an hour. We have a little time left.

Erich lifts Clem and carries him downstairs to the recreation room, where there is an HO-scale electric train, with block-like switch engine and passenger cars with small windows, as well as one flat car, running through an arid landscape. But there are a few items, such as puppet-men boxing in an outdoor ring.

CLEM

Ghosts of Mars.

ERICH

Not yet. This isn't what you saw. I'm going to make the movie now.

Erich takes a small camcorder and mounts it on the flatcar. He starts the train.

ERICH

See, it's a pallet. Dangerous.

Erich backs into Clem, who again reaches into his shirt from behind.

INT. CLEM'S CAR

Clem notices the black-and-white cover of his authored book on the back seat.

CLEM

Damn.

Clem picks it up, and stuffs the book in the mailbox on the road outside the house. He drives off, running over some of the magazines that he had thrown out.

He looks up again and notices the bicycle carriage on the roof. He shrugs. He struggles to remove it, and leaves it on the doorstep.

As he drives away, he meets a Lincoln Continental with a middle aged couple approaching the drive way.

INT. CLEM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Clem is "sleeping" on his stomach, with movements. He gets up in the dark, wipes and changes into other pajamas as the beeper goes off. He picks up the beeper, reads it, and runs out the apartment door, letting it self-lock, not noticing he has forgotten his keys and wallet.

INT. SKYWAY COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

JOHN McDONNOUGH, 28 with curly black hair, hands him a cardboard cup of Colombia Roast. Clem, still in loose pajamas, reaches for his money and sudden realizes his gaffe.

JOHN  
Look at yourself, man.

CLEM  
Euuu.

JOHN  
That's all right. Your pick-me-up is on the house. But stay out of jail!

INT. CLEM'S CUBICLE AT WORK - MORNING

The cubicle is typical, messy with listings and papers, with the monitor at the kitty-corner, but no family pictures; rather a Java game board and several scenic calenders on the wall.

Clem is still in pajamas (yes, no lock on the barn door!), desperately surfing around on the computer and trying to solve his problem. He is a little slow and clumsy typing in long commands. DAN CZERNY, 30, albino and tall, works in the next cubicle, and looks over, picking up a magnifying glass.

DAN  
Clem. They ought to send you home.

CLEM  
Gotta problem.

DAN  
I think I figured it out for you.

CLEM  
You aren't supposed to bail me out.  
Remember, Ming wants me to pass  
your IQ test. My problem solving  
ability.

DAN  
Yeah, like you can really fix these  
on your own. After all, we wrote  
them.

CLEM  
Before my time.

Clem farts.

DAN  
Go home Clem.

The phone in Clem's cubicle rings. Clem's facial expression  
dances into eventual glee.

EXT. CEMETERY WITH A PARKED FUNERAL PROCESSION - DAY

Clem takes a closed urn and places it on the grave stone.

There is a crowd of about thirty well-dressed old people, who  
stare at him closely.

CLEM  
I really have no speech for this  
occasion. Nothing to say.

MOURNER  
There are no words. There are no  
words.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Tobey parks his Honda after looking for a spot for new  
teachers, walks in, finds the office. A female ADMINISTRATOR  
greet's him.

ADMINISTRATOR  
Oh, Mr. Strickland. We remember  
you. So you're joining us for good.

Tobey nods.

TOBEY

Exactly.

ADMINISTRATOR

You look sharp in those GQ ads.

TOBEY

Despite my background, I'm not above tasting wine. Just sipping it.

ADMINISTRATOR

I still think we're your backup.

TOBEY

Oh, well, they call those head shots. Now you want my state teaching certification papers now?

INT. HISTORY CLASS - AFTERNOON

Tobey is standing at a lectern, addressing a class of tenth graders. Erich is in the class. The maps on the wall suggest a class of World History.

TOBEY

And Socrates taught us to question things, just to get at the truth.

A class bell rings. All of the kids but Erich get up and leave for the cafeteria. Then Erich ambles toward Tobey, slowly.

ERICH

First day of school is confusing. They took advantage to get an early lunch.

TOBEY

I'm the real teacher now.

ERICH

For good. If you stay on the planet.

TOBEY

Permanently. I've got a career. I even have the power to give them grades, help decide if they get in to a top school some day. They'll have to deal with me Wednesday. Thanks for your candor.

ERICH

But you don't decide me.

TOBEY

Probably not. If I know best.

ERICH

You should come by the house this afternoon. It's still hot out. By the pool.

TOBEY

What? That's dangerous, Erich. Lawyers call it fraternization.

ERICH

You have a girl friend. Bring her.

EXT. JZZET ESTATE SWIMMING POOL - AFTERNOON

Tobey, Sheila, Erich, Brian, and ELLEN Jzzet (42) stand along the pool side, dressed for swimming. (Show them first from the back.)

TOBEY

It's good and hot today. But the days will be getting shorter.

BRIAN

Like your stocks? It sounds a good time to have come over. You, Mr. Strickland, are a man of many talents.

TOBEY

I get to see your natatorium.

ERICH

A swimming-a-torium. But this is not my chosen sport.

TOBEY

Like wrestling is safer.

There are some rumbles of thunder in the far distance.

BRIAN

It is only because you want it to be.

TOBEY

So I understand, when we all jump in, and float for a few minutes, I'm supposed to get the message.

ERICH

You can dogpaddle, can't you.

BRIAN

You're the PE teacher.

TOBEY

Was. Not now. I gave that up.

BRIAN

They didn't make you take a section of special ed, did they?

TOBEY

The school district is negotiating.

BRIAN

On count. Three, two, one.

The security camera takes a picture. Tobey and take hands and they dive in. Then so does Erich, but gingerly.

BRIAN

If a nuclear blast went off, I wouldn't have to save them first.

Cloud-to-ground lightning strikes the pool. Tobey, Erich and Sheila get out quickly and seem unscathed.

ERICH

You're really getting into your summer now.

TOBEY

Come on.

Tobey and Sheila dive in and reach Brian and Ellen, already clumped together, and pull them to safety. Erich hesitates, then jumps in just as Brian and Ellen are coming out. Erich jumps out and dials on his cell phone (oversized, by the year) by the pool. Tobey inspects them.

TOBEY

They're Ok this time.

Brian rises.

BRIAN  
This was just for you, Tobey.

INT. JZZET ESTATE - DAY

Erich connects the camera to his computer and plays a video of his model railroad. It looks like a real place with deserts, lakes, buildings, and even some light snow.

ERICH  
See, it really works.

TOBEY  
But you made it up. Or

Tobey motions toward the sky.

ERICH  
It matches what's on the computers.  
Even Clem's computer. It's a world  
I can reach.

TOBEY  
Sounds desolate. I'd rather be an  
old married man in a plush condo in  
a place that looks like heaven.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - DAY

Sheila and Tobey sit on her bed, still in swimming gear, not looking at each other.

SHEILA  
I know, my pool isn't as big.

TOBEY  
But you see. Look at me. I'm  
already getting older. But that  
makes me right for you.

SHEILA  
Good for a man to be young. Stay  
young.

TOBEY  
We're running out of time. You  
don't want Erich. He's too young  
for you.

They giggle.

INT. MORMON TEMPLE - DAY

Sheila and Tobey take a walking tour through the various lushly furnished rooms of a new Mormon temple, and look at the paintings.

SHEILA

So you think the Telestial Kingdom  
is a real place.

TOBEY

Yes. Like you can fly to it on  
Northwest. No discount carriers,  
please.

INT. MORMON BISHOP'S OFFICE - DAY

Tobey, dressed impeccably in a business suit worthy of old IBM, sits in a richly upholstered chair in front of BISHOP MOORE, 50, who is at his power desk. The room is richly decorated with both Mormon art and Mr. Moore's family pictures, which seem to suggest he has about ten children.

BISHOP MOORE

So, you really want to become a  
Mormon. Or you want to come back.

TOBEY

Yes, sir.

BISHOP MOORE

So you need to ask for my  
recommend. Well, you don't seem to  
need any help. This already sounds  
like a girl friend's idea.

TOBEY

It's me. The real me.

BISHOP MOORE

You're sure. This is a heavy  
commitment, if I could talk like  
you.

TOBEY

I'll be freer, in the longer run.

BISHOP MOORE

You're abstinent?

TOBEY

Abstain until marriage? Not quite.  
She likes her courtship games.

The Bishop chuckles.

BISHOP MOORE

You really want to marry her. Or to  
get married?

TOBEY

If I have a wife and kids, I'll  
keep going. Even after the final  
generation.

BISHOP MOORE

So would Erich.

TOBEY

If you want to live forever in a  
wilderness.

Some holographic pictures from the wall of the telestial  
kingdoms come into focus.

BISHOP MOORE

You're right. The elders confirm  
we've got about a generation left  
to go before the next pestilence.

TOBEY

That's why we keep ourselves health  
and do good works.

BISHOP MOORE

And that's why you need to show you  
still believe.

TOBEY

Precisely. Clem doesn't. I don't  
even think Erich does.

BISHOP MOORE

Maybe. Now, do you really love  
Sheila?

TOBEY

Love? Sure. I like it when she  
teases me.

BISHOP MOORE

Well, you'd owe us the two years of  
missions. Proselytizing.

(MORE)

BISHOP MOORE(cont'd)

But I see from your politicking candidates, winning converts, that wouldn't bother you. Since you're a little older, we could put you in charge of some of the boys.

TOBEY

Sounds like it's a little bit like the military.

BISHOP MOORE

I know what you mean. There's also getting used to the garments. You've might find the whole idea of wearing them, uncomfortable.

TOBEY

But I'm an actor, too.

INT. SKYWAY - MORNING

Clem, dressed in loose, worn jeans and sneakers, is walking to work. He arrives at his cubicle at work, logs on, looks at his work calendar, and sees "1:1" on his schedule for late afternoon. He fidgets and then looks quickly at a stock market site and glances at an essay on "capitulation."

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

(ABOUT ONE YEAR LATER.) SANDY O'BRIEN, 40, casually dressed and with a tattoo on her ankle, comes by Clem's cubicle. She is carrying a mass of notebooks and folders.

SANDY

Clem. You're ready for the assessment?

CLEM

I guess I figured this out. How many bugs have I fixed now.

SANDY

Oh, Clem, I don't know. I've lost count.

CLEM

Twenty-eight by myself. It was slow at first. Now it's faster. The learning curve, that is.

SANDY

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

Clem 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. Clem hesitates, waiting for a handshake that does not come.

FRANK

Clem, 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.

CLEM

You're debriefing all of us.

FRANK

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

CLEM

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

FRANK

Oh?

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

CLEM

I support stuff in a lot of the new object-oriented languages.

(MORE)

CLEM(cont'd)

It's hard to pick it up in the trenches when you didn't code anything in the newfangled stuff.

FRANK

Clem, 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.

CLEM

You mean boot camps and certifications.

Frank forces the eye contact.

FRANK

Clem, you read my hiney well.

CLEM

Sandy says you know me.

FRANK

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

CLEM

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

FRANK

You remember.

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

YOUNG ADULT Clem (somewhat bald) stands next to YOUNG FRANK (20), who kisses him on the lips. Clem 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.

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. I changed. I've really changed. Seriously, Clem, 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.

CLEM

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.

CLEM

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?

CLEM

I'd be happy to show you.

Frank stands and points.

FRANK

Not now. I hope it makes you money soon.

CLEM

Not yet.

FRANK

Well, I don't know if your heart is in this.

(MORE)

FRANK(cont'd)

You know, nerds like you are supposed to be curious like unaltered cats. You don't need your own agenda. We can give you the words.

CLEM

I don't think so. My effort is special.

FRANK

Different, not special.

CLEM

I just connect all the dots. And publish it. I'm proud of that.

FRANK

Well, let's just look at you on the job here.

Frank puts some old greenbar computer listings on the table.

CLEM

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.

CLEM

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. You'd never go out and brag about being a programmer, try to sell code on message boards.

CLEM

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. Clem 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.

CLEM

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

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL THEATER - 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 Clem his California burger supper and ale. The movie playing shows a teenager putting together a computer. Underneath, the title reads "TEENAGE HACKERS: WHAT MAKES THEM TICK?"

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL THEATER, MINNEAPOLIS - LATER

Erich Jzzet, in slacks and sport shirt without undershirt, sits on a utility chair on the stage as Peter, still potbellied, interviews him in front of the audience. Brian and Elaine sit on stage with him. Erich should look a little taller than last time.

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?

Clem, seated in the first elevated row and just finishing his burger, raises his hand, and the usher hands him the microphone. Erich's father makes eye contact with Clem.

CLEM

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.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bill looks at one of his webpages, and finds it overwritten with nuclear terroristic threats. He starts to make a call on his cordless and stops.

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

(About another year has passed.) Clem 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." Clem works with the customer a few seconds longer but keeps getting the message.

CLEM

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

Clem 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.

CLEM

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

Clem, we have a meeting.

Sandy follows Clem 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. Only then does Clem notices the security guard standing in the corner.

INT. CLEM'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The television is broadcasting a talk show. It shows just a little of Erich's video. Theb Peter is interviewed.

PETER

No, we can't just go on pretending  
the world is a candy store. Not  
with 90% of the world in poverty.

A news banner flashes across the screen. "TENTH SUICIDE BOMBING IN U.S." Clem watches it, and then looks back at his computer, which is coming back up.

Clem dials on to AOL. He enters his own domain name into the display line. A CLEANING MAN, 40, oriental, almost trips on a wire across the rug leading to his computer. Clem waves him off. The vacuum cleaner comes on and starts sucking debris off the carpet. Clem waves again and then looks at his computer screen.

INSERT

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

END INSERT

Clem fumbles his cell phone and then brings in the (new) cordless handset from the bedroom. He picks up a printout of an essay part of which is overwritten with Unicode gibberish. He dials and gets through the menus.

ISP VOICE

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

CLEM

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.

CLEM

About what?

ISP VOICE

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

INT. CLEM'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The cleaning man is leaving with all his heavy duty gear, including carpet cleaning, and looks frustrated.

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.

CLEM

But I count on you for security.

ISP MANAGER

You know you're playing the same game. Get with it!

EXT. INTERSTATE HIGHWAY AND EXURBAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Clem is driving his cluttered Escort, the back fender covered with political insignia, on a sunny early spring day. He exits and pulls into a family-style restaurant and walks in and sits down.

Clem looks at the menu, the fidgets. Erich, in shorts and with longer (head) hair than before and just the beginnings of a light mustache, sits at the counter. The overhead television monitor is showing a CNN report about hunting for Osama bin Laden. Suddenly, Erich, operating an HDCAM, appears in the video monitor.

Clem stares at Erich momentarily.

CLEM

I hate it when nobody comes to take your order.

ERICH

Well, we need to have somebody not pay. You get it.

CLEM

You're watching the video, too. I mean, it's you!

ERICH

Yes. I'm still a growing boy. A real teenager. And you're a grown man. With a job.

CLEM

They told me take my severance, fly over to Pakistan and go for the 25 million dollars! Good thing I got it, too.

ERICH

Oh. So you were watching for me, too. You have good peripheral vision. No glaucoma.

CLEM

You're pretty good. Now you are..

Erich starts to laugh.

ERICH

Walk out of here and we'll have enough help.

CLEM

And I'll have a job again.

ERICH

Oh. So you told them, gently, where to show it. Well, serving food was beneath you.

CLEM

This is just spending money for you, too. You're already an emerging filmmaker, right.

ERICH

I'll clock in and cook your breakfast, even though I didn't dress for it. You wouldn't believe that this is bike country.

Erich walks over to the time clock. The camera focuses on his shorts and even shaggier legs.

CLEM

So you really work here?

ERICH

Yeah. Dad calls it, paying my dues. Not like my history teacher. You know, Tobey. I got him again. He like showed up.

CLEM

I expect to see him in the movies.

ERICH

He wanted to check up on me. So he came back.

CLEM

You're a good incentive. But teaching is just his re-insurance policy. I'm sure he's good.

ERICH

He may go on a Mormon mission. Talk about giving things up. Probably would be hard if you see him again.

CLEM

As a friend only?

ERICH

That's a lot for you. Now, you want breakfast?

Erich puts a plate of fried eggs, over easy and messy, with relatively uncooked bacon in front of him.

CLEM

When I was just a little younger than you I used to say, never eat breakfast in restaurants.

ERICH

Dad always says eat what's set before you. When it's healthful.

INT. FAMILY RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Clem is eating the greasy grand slam breakfast. The CNN feed shows a map of Afghanistan.

CLEM

You know, in Ninth Grade I wrote a geography report on that country.

ERICH

Sounds prescient. Maybe it's my turn.

CLEM

You're still that young. But you get around.

ERICH

You saw my pad then.

BILL

Like four years ago.

ERICH

Past the statue of limitations. That's what they name it. I've added virtual reality to the pad, could almost use a datasuit. Dad made the studio for me on good behavior. Yeah. I read your book. Really read it.

CLEM

It'll be a good book report.

ERICH

What for? I gotta keep it from Dad, you know. You're out to run around.

CLEM

Personal business. You're too young.

ERICH

No I'm not. You're a senior. I mean, I can give you a discount by how you look now. You've changed too.

CLEM

That much? I'm not 60 yet.

ERICH

Grandpas change quickly. It's been a year.

CLEM

A man is known by his legs.

Clem puts down a \$2 bill after he finishes eating.

ERICH

I'm watching Tobey. He'll change, too. Hope you can get enough gas to run around. By the way, you know where to get a fake ID?

CLEM

I don't know those things as well as, well, maybe, Tobey, or even his former frat buddies. Or maybe your dad.

ERICH

Dad's for real. Don't say that.

CLEM

You're Assembly of God?

ERICH

Well, since I've been slain once, I guess so.

CLEM

You weren't really slain, were you. Do you really do the baby talk. Or is it baby play?

ERICH

It's a good way to see things without the Net.

CLEM

Good if I got heckled off of it.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Tobey turns around and faces the class after writing "PLAGIARISM" on the white board with a magic marker. He whiffs at the marker, and the class laughs.

TOBEY

We have an Internet service. Turnitin.com. If I catch anyone, you won't graduate.

Erich has a copy of Clem's black-and-white-covered book on his desk. He points to it. Tobey nods.

INT. MORMON TEMPLE CHANGING ROOM - DAY

Tobey is changing, and picks up the neatly stacked undergarments from an Executive-looking wood locker. An ELDER, 40, approaches.

TOBEY

Boy, you can have something nice here. This is plush.

ELDER

And you know what's good. You're just a little older. And you already look it. They, the college-age boys will respect you.

TOBEY

Grow older. That's how I get to tell people what to do.

ELDER

Except your wife.

TOBEY

Soon.

INT. MORMON TEMPLE BAPTISMAL FOUNT - DAY

The Elder immerses Tobey, who is now clad in the official white garments.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING SHOT

A major city street with bars and restaurants shows lights going out. There is a major city clock showing 11 PM. National Guard trucks take their positions along the street.

EXT. SPORTS BAR - EVENING

Tobey and Erich are enjoying cheeseburger platters in front of multiple screens of track meets.

TOBEY

The LDS let us have all the fat we want. They are very specific. Caffeine, drugs, tobacco, bad. Even coca cola. Otherwise good.

ERICH

So I could eat all I want there.

TOBEY

But you have to get married first.  
That's the only way I can finish  
the term.

ERICH

YOU have to get married. Well,  
there's no way anybody could cheat  
with Clem's book. No way.

Suddenly the jumbo monitor switches to CNN, that comes on with a newsfeed. "Curfew in four more cities now" goes across the bottom. "FEMA instructions for martial law, tonight at 8 PM" then rolls across.

TOBEY

That's another reason to get  
married. The family home evenings  
that keep us grounded, once we have  
a blessed event.

ERICH

You need it. What I need is  
chocolate mousse.

INT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment looks much cleaner this time. Clem completes a credit card transaction to sign up for a new domain online. But it keeps bouncing. He tries a second card. It still bounces.

CLEM

Damn. They mean it.

INT. A MORMON TABERNACLE SERVICE - MORNING

The choir finishes singing the closing stanza from Mozart's Requiem. Tobey and Sheila, church dressed, sit toward the front, near an aisle, holding hands, with a space saved. Erich, also in a suit but lighter in hue, walks forward and is seated. Bryan starts to come in, but looks from the back, until an usher chases him outside.

ERICH

You saved it for me.

TOBEY  
You capitulated.

SHEILA  
He did not. Don't misread him.

TOBEY  
He didn't pay for the suit.

Bishop Moore stands at the lectern and raises his hand.

BISHOP MOORE  
I'm going to continue with how you  
get involved.

Syd operates his Panavision camera.

SYDNEY  
Cut! It's a buy!

INT. INTERNET CAFE - DAY

Clem tries another card and another domain service. It still bounces. Mozart's Requiem is playing in the background. Clem slams his fist on the table. The coffee spills on his laptop.

INT. PHOTO SERVICE ON STRIP MALL - DAY

Clem hands out \$200 in cash and picks up two cards.

PROPIETOR  
Yeah, good thing I found both  
domains this time.

INT. A MORMON TABERNACLE SERVICE - LATER

The Elder is preaching.

ELDER  
For those who just choose to get  
their own way, there is only  
capitulation. It's service to your  
stake, your mission, that earns you  
the right to an everlasting place  
in the world. And it's marriage,  
eternal marriage, that guarantees  
that someone will always needs you  
once you get your way.

Erich fidgets, and starts to mumble very quietly. Tobey taps his shoulder.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Tobey, in white shirt and tie and riding a bike with two other young men, knocks on the door of a Cape Cod house. A housewife answers and politely closes the door.

Tobey walks about and turns to the young men, as he adjusts one of the boys' seats.

TOBEY

Seat too low. Be glad you're not Lance. But you see, if it's for faith, you get to proselytize. Sell door to door. Like a home service life insurance guy. That's what you offer.

Syd, maneuvering with a Panavision camera, follows the boys as they climb on their bikes.

SYDNEY

Cut!

EXT. BEACH CAFE - DAY

Sydney, Tobey and Sheila have a healthful South Beach lunch on a boardwalk. Sheila seasons her fruit salad and Tobey declines.

TOBEY

Funny, the latter days don't really go for health foods like they claim. But I'm OK by it.

SYDNEY

You look a little more manly now than on your head shots.

TOBEY

Yeah, so I cut away from the carbs. Finally. Erich, he should be careful.

SYDNEY

Sounds like he's a growing boy, again.

SHEILA

Tobey, as long as you are single, you gotta look like an authority figure this summer as a house warden.

She takes his hand.

TOBEY

Yeah, we get married and I get to stay young. But the main thing is that we help Erich. I mean really channel him.

SYDNEY

I think I get it.

TOBEY

You did my room inspection. And my gams inspection.

SYDNEY

Give me that old time religion.

TOBEY

It's good enough for me. But not for Erich.

INT. HEALTH SPA - DAY

Patrick, in a tank top and shorts, dress that highlights his hairiness, does some pull ups on a high bar. He flips through the air onto a tumbling mat. Then he dismounts in perfect form.

Frank, in a suit, watches the workout and approaches.

PATRICK

Oh, I'm much better at this stuff than Tobey. He was never that serious about teaching PE, anyway. It was just another option.

FRANK

He could have wound up teaching special ed. There was going to be a big demand for that.

Patrick adds 300 pounds of dummies to the bar and lies down for the free weight bench press.

PATRICK  
Spot me, will you.

FRANK  
In good clothes, yeah.

Frank stands behind, a bit passively.

FRANK  
I guess I can't practice what I  
preach.

Patrick does a set of 6 and grunts on the last one. Frank barely guides the barbell back onto the track.

PATRICK  
So I got to be ready. I'm gonna get  
it, too.

FRANK  
We got to be able to monitor you  
with the leads. You know what that  
means. I need to find out what  
Tobey does, first.

Frank walks over to a table and picks up some electrocardiographic leads and starts applying paste, even through thick chest hair. Roger walks in.

FRANK  
Roger, you're a much better subject  
for this.

ROGER  
Because I'm immune to you. Give me  
a couple days.

FRANK  
You're gonna get it when you take  
your trip. I mean, I needed a  
reason to hire you.

PATRICK  
Pleasing Tobey turns you on doesn't  
it?

INT. SCHOOL SYSTEM JOB FAIR - DAY

Clem is seated in front of a female INTERVIEWER.

CLEM

So if I invested the \$4000 in a certification course you would consider me.

INTERVIEWER

Being a teacher isn't about getting to teach Clark Kent. You'll required to have one class of special education. You've got to be committed to it. The students have to be number 1. You're sure you wouldn't rather have your business back?

INT. SALOON BAR - NIGHT

Clem, his face and sideburns carefully close-shaved (to obscure the gray whiskers) and with a new cap, flashes his fake ID at the bouncer and gets in. He moves past the main dance floor to a patio, where more men are dancing while soap foam descends upon them and accumulates on the floorboards like wet snow.

He spots Roger, standing in the foam-storm, and then sees Erich, carrying a Pepsi, approaching. Erich puts the Pepsi down on a rail. It falls and breaks. But Erich approaches Roger and unbuttons his shirt as the dancers pounce all around. Foam accumulates in Roger's hair and then on his chest. Clem makes eye contact with Roger, who shakes his head. Erich walks away, and in about a second Roger himself has disappeared.

The bouncer comes and escorts Erich out of the bar.

INT. SALOON BAR - LATER

The bouncer escorts Clem out of the bar.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - MORNING

Sheila is eating breakfast and sipping orange juice, when she suddenly grimaces. She runs to her bathroom and leans over the toilet.

She comes back to the kitchen table and sips more orange juice.

MONTAGE

She is lying on top of Tobey in bed.

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL THEATER - NIGHT

The audience watches the short HDCAM film of Tobey proselytizing Mormonism. Sydney sits with Tobey and Sheila, and Erich sits some distance away, out of sight. In a different part of the audience, Frank and Peter sit, with an empty seat between them (although rest of the "stadium" seating is pretty full).

Clem staggers in just before they close the door, and walks over to a waiter to give a complicated food order before sitting down.

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL THEATER - LATER

Peter leaves his seat, climbs out, and walks to the stage with a microphone. Tobey sits with Sheila on stage, waiting. Tobey is dressed simply, in slacks and sports shirt. Sheila is in pampers. Clem has finished his cheeseburger and looks up eagerly from the first row. Tobey seems to avoid eye contact.

The film shows their dress rehearsal for a wedding ceremony.

PETER

So you have a surprise for us.

Sheila turns to Tobey, who stands up, and then kneels.

TOBEY

Sheila, will you marry me?

The audience starts to clap.

SHEILA

Stand up.

Tobey stands, Sheila approaches him, and unbuttons his shirt. They kiss. The audience cheers loudly. But Erich remains silent. Peter frowns, clenches his mouth, and looks away.

INT. BRYANT LAKE BOWL BAR - LATER

Erich sits by Tobey and Sheila at the bar.

BARTENDER

You aren't supposed to be here,  
son.

TOBEY

He won't drink. I'm his history teacher. The boy can be trusted.

ERICH

Boy.

TOBEY

Soothsayer.

ERICH

It's gonna start tonight.

SHEILA

What? Who, Erich?

ERICH

You know. Peter. Mr. Mouch. Let me pay him respect. He goes to our Assembly. He fell down and scrubbed the ground on his hands and knees before I did.

TOBEY

So you can read his mind.

ERICH

Like he was a substitute.

Clem walks up to the bar. Tobey smiles.

TOBEY

Well, Clem, I guess you're supposed to say congratulations.

CLEM

Getting married. For you, Tobey, it was just inevitable.

TOBEY

But it isn't for Erich. He just doesn't need it. And you, you think you aren't good enough.

CLEM

You didn't make me say it.

ERICH

Your book says it.

CLEM

I have a feeling you're going away, Erich.

(MORE)

CLEM(cont'd)

If somebody like me fell for the tender trap, you wouldn't get to go.

TOBEY

But you could live forever, Clem.

CLEM

If I pursue anybody else's ends, I die. But I don't want Erich to have to.

TOBEY

We will. But Erich, here, he is the end point.

Erich rubs his hand through Tobey's moppy hair.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Tobey and Sheila walk arm-in-arm past some midwestern houses toward a cafe. There is no sidewalk.

TOBEY

If I'm to be a good husband, I'm supposed to walk outside.

SHEILA

And father. Life will go on.

She breaks away and walks on the outside.

SHEILA

I'm a big girl, Tobey. But I gotta tell you this. This was not Anita Bryant's best morning. That tangy orange juice tasted too good for me.

TOBEY

I didn't know. I really didn't even suspect.

SHEILA

So it isn't that you think we have to.

A Ford Escort driven by Peter runs all the road, strikes Sheila on the left leg, then running over her foot, and then goes on. She falls, her lower leg extended at an odd angle, her foot mangled with shoe material. Tobey stares and memorizes the license plate, then runs to her aid.

INT. RENTAL OFFICE - DAY

Clem walks into the rental office of his apartment highrise, carrying an opened letter with no postage stamp. The clerk motions him to the property manager, PATTY, 56 and fat, with bandages on her arm that seems to cover a medical fistula.

PATTY

I know why you're here.

Clem waves the letter toward her face.

PATTY

We aren't renewing, because you're attracting trouble to the building.

CLEM

You mean my domains.

PATTY

Whatever you call it. I've got the safety of three hundred residents to think about.

Clem turns around and walks out, with some defiance.

INT. HYATT REGENCY HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Clem, among many other middle aged men, walks through the atrium to the sign that reads "HANDYMAN SYSTEMS: JOB FAIR"

INT. HYATT REGENCY HOTEL BALLROOM - DAY

Frank stands at the podium, with a picture of a modern cinder-block compound that looks a bit like a low security prison broadcast in a Powerpoint presentation from a laptop.

FRANK

Remember, gentlemen. There is no they! Right. As reservists, you become the last resort. You become the link to our keeping our freedoms. You've seen the suicide bombers, the curfews. And ultimately, some day, there will be a WMD attack, there will be a breakdown of everything. We'll be the guys to bring it back.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Tobey sits and caresses Sheila's hand as Sheila sits up, her leg covered with bandages and rods and steel. DR. OWEN, 45, looks down over them, but looks strictly institutional in his white coat.

DR. OWEN

Frankly, Ms. Daniels, you would get walking sooner and back to your life if we cut it off.

TOBEY

But that's another operation.

SHEILA

My baby, he means.

DR. OWEN

We'll keep the baby OK. But I do need to speak to you, Mr. Strickland.

INT. HYATT REGENCY HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Clem stands in front of and looks up to Roger, a head taller. Roger ignores the paperwork but looks Clem in the eye.

ROGER

So you understand how it works. Tell me.

CLEM

A one thousand dollar deposit, refundable after three months training.

ROGER

In two increments, mind you.

CLEM

I hate spending my own money to get work.

ROGER

You get more. You know, why did you keep those sites so long if they didn't make money?

CLEM

Recognition.

ROGER  
Your own kind of vanity.

CLEM  
I know. It doesn't get it. But  
there's also objectivity. I could  
afford to be objective. Most  
people, like people raising kids,  
can't.

ROGER  
I see your resume, though. Thirty  
years of programming, and you never  
moved up. Never wanted to.

CLEM  
You're the one to tell me that.

ROGER  
Could have been Frankie.

CLEM  
I wanted to enjoy people like him.  
But he's no longer in flower.

ROGER  
Well, they'll find out about me  
soon enough.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Tobey, in casual clothes and shorts, sits in front of Dr.  
Owen.

TOBEY  
No, she didn't tell me before I  
proposed.

DR. OWEN  
You didn't know until the wreck.  
Well, accident.

TOBEY  
No, sir.

DR. OWEN  
Then.

TOBEY  
How I feel isn't your business. But  
the baby would keep us going. Do  
what's best for that.

DR. OWEN

That's what she said. You know,  
repeated surgeries to fix the wing  
would...

TOBEY

The cosmetics don't matter. Believe  
me. The wedding still goes. So, you  
can cut it off.

DR. OWEN

I gotta ask her.

INT. JZZET ESTATE

Elaine Jzzet is cleaning up daintily after Erich in his  
teenager's playpen-room (more computers, Google balls and  
toys), when she spots a copy of Clem's black-and-white book.

ELAINE

Brian, honey.

BRIAN

What's up now.

ELAINE

This book that some guy gave Erich.  
What is this, *Schindler's List*?

INT. ASSEMBLY OF GOD REVIVAL HALL - EVENING

Erich and Tobey, now in good clothes, stand side by side in  
an empty sanctum. Outside there is a violent thunderstorm and  
lightning hits the building. They close their eyes. Their  
shoulders barely touch. Erich starts to babble, and drops to  
the floor. Tobey catches him, and gently lays him down. Tobey  
starts to pray. Erich keeps breathing soundly but stays  
asleep.

TOBEY

Erich!

He keeps sleeping. Tobey checks him, then backs away. Tobey  
resists going to sleep himself, staggers around, then regains  
his composure.

EXT. PLANETARY SURFACE FROM ABOUT 50000 FEET UP - EVENING -  
FANTASY

Tobey looks down on a desert-like surface in deep haze. He sees jagged outcroppings that look like broken icebergs, and a few isolated lakes and rivulets that go nowhere. The surface is rather beige. He looks up at the sky and sees Saturn, with some of the rings discernible.

He turns around looking for Erich, and sees Sheila instead. They are seated in a boudoir that seems like a flying condominium, as they look out together and see Titan.

Roger comes from behind and embraces them both.

INT. ASSEMBLY OF GOD REVIVAL HALL - LATER

Tobey shakes his head, trying to stop the vision. Tobey leans over Erich, and notices that two hours have elapsed. He leans over and still hears Erich breathing. Suddenly Erich rises, colliding.

ERICH

Sorry. Well, it looks like you  
wanted to kiss me.

TOBEY

You're not going to my kingdom. It  
looks like Purgatory. Honestly.  
Maybe just 150 minutes.

INT. GAY VIDEO BAR - EVENING

Clem notices Roger seated on a high stool at the bar. Roger beckons Clem and lifts Clem onto his lap. Clem kisses Roger about the neck.

Roger puts Clem down. The music hesitates between songs, and there is a swishing sound. Clem turns around and Roger is gone.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Peter stands before JUDGE HARTNETT, 34, tall, sandy haired and very youthful looking.

JUDGE HARTNETT

So, Mr. Mouch, you have plead  
guilty.

(MORE)

JUDGE HARTNETT(cont'd)

I have reviewed the sentencing report. You wanted to do something bad to see what it would feel like. Do you have anything you would like to say.

Erich, dressed in a suit that is almost a disguise, sits in the last row. Harnett keeps shaking his head.

PETER

Your honor, no. It is what it is like.

JUDGE HARTNETT

I've heard that before. What it would be like. You can't undo redo now. The damage is done. I sentence you to five years at the state correctional facility. You will get the help you need.

Erich gets up and leaves quietly.

JUDGE HARTNETT

Bailiff.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Tobey picks up a stack of blue booklets and puts them down.

TOBEY

A moment. You know, I am a young adult now, just a little more along than all of you. I think of you as adults. There is only so much time. You will go into this world and compete, and if you fall behind, and some of you will, you may never be allowed back in. There are people who say that is a way to make it fair. A kind of royalty of merit. I think I know better than that. Just think about it.

Tobey picks up the booklets and passes them out. He gives one to Erich, who sits in the corner.

TOBEY

You know how it is. Not much multiple choice. More essay and problems.

(MORE)

TOBEY(cont'd)

But you've got to follow the instructions precisely, and arrange your materials. This is, after all, a test.

ERICH

Problem solving ability.

EXT. STADIUM AND JOGGING TRACK - DAY

Tobey and Erich are jogging lightly. They slow down.

TOBEY

Do me a favor. Don't tell the substitute you're a teacher's pet.

ERICH

We shouldn't be seen together, should we.

TOBEY

We can. You know, the wedding is in five weeks. She'll take her first steps on the peg tomorrow. You want to be there.

ERICH

Not to see 'em cut it off.

TOBEY

They already did. I mean the wedding. That's how I go on forever, you know, regardless. How do you think you did.

ERICH

I aced it.

INT. ACUTE CARE REHAB EXERCISE ROOM - DAY

The rehab room has large mats, parallel bars, steps, small weights, and lots of wheelchairs and crutches. It looks out over a view of the river and city. Sheila wheels herself to the parallel bars, and stands up. Tobey is by her side. She starts walking gingerly, holding herself up. One leg has been replaced by an metal rod prosthesis below the knee.

SHEILA

No Nair for me. Damn.

She starts to fall as Tobey moves toward her, but she catches herself.

INT. 1569 CLUB FRATERNITY HOUSE - NIGHT

Tobey finishes marking Erich's test paper, which includes multiple choice and short essay questions. He writes in red, 95. He leafs through the other quizzes, and the number grades range from 40 to 93. He then goes to his closet and looks at his tuxedo.

He goes back and looks at Erich's test. He reads one answer again, to which he gave full credit. "When you're free, you get to decide what is good. At least good for you. But people who are not good will have to drop out. They don't get another chance. Those are the rules. The end result is a kind of royalty of merit."

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Clem walks in and writes his name on the board. His face quivers when Erich walks in and sits in the corner seat. The rest of the class is noisy as he hears the word "substitute" a lot. He takes out the quiz papers. The class starts to quiet down. He looks over to Erich, seated in the corner chair.

CLEM

What a coincidence. Erich. You're the official teacher's pet. So keep this place quiet so I don't get fired as an ineffectual authority figure.

Erich gets up and helps hand out the tests.

CLEM

By the way, Tobey, or Mr. Strickland takes the dive today.

The glass giggles.

ERICH

Order! And by the way, it's just the dress rehearsal.

ANOTHER MALE KID

The teacher your buddy?

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - NIGHT

Sheila sits in a chair, her artificial leg on. Tobey is in shorts, sports shirt half open.

TOBEY

Once I finish the duty and buy a house, I'll look into ramp man.

SHEILA

Come here. You have to be prepared for the ceremony.

TOBEY

It's just a rehearsal.

On a table before her is a bottle of shaving cream and a straight razor.

TOBEY

I gotta last a little longer, Sheila.

He slaps her good leg gently, and they start making out, soap-opera style.

INT. MORMON TEMPLE - DAY

Tobey, looking cleansed, puts on his temple undergarments and then his suit.

He walks down the aisle with Sheila, still hobbling on the artificial leg, is presented an imitation ring. Patrick is best man.

INT. MORMON LOUNGE - MOMENTS LATER

Patrick and Tobey sit, not looking at each other, on a luxurious sofa, in front of telestial paintings. Roger walks in, and towers above them even as they rise, and then sit down.

PATRICK

Wait for the real thing.

TOBEY

That's why we still need our other secret ceremony. You holding up?

PATRICK

So far. Frank wants to have the tribunal in two weeks. You really shouldn't do the formal ceremony until then.

TOBEY

We have fifteen weeks until the blessed event. It's going to be close.

PATRICK

You're into this being a dad.

TOBEY

We have to be. What else is there going to be in another generation. Looking at the rationing, the curfews. The rest of the world won't let us.

PATRICK

And you were the libertarian. We get Clem into the ceremony, because he'll follow Erich. That gives the system about four months to work then.

TOBEY

You believe all that.

ROGER

Erich will need about two weeks or so for his trip.

TOBEY

And I've got one more generation of kids. To raise, to teach.

Tobey and Patrick embrace. Roger starts to engulf both of them but they back away.

INT. CLEM'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Clem 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. Especially now, with people staying in the city, closer to home, with the highways closed nights.

Clem looks up, then keeps working. He gets a credit card transaction to accept with his new ISP, which displays as "legup.com".

He transfers a few of his files, and browses them. 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.

CLEM

Hello.

ERICH (O.S.)

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

CLEM

I don't get visitors real often.

ERICH

This is your studio, Clem.

CLEM

Yeah, my home office. Great. Let me see if I remember how to do this.

ERICH

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

CLEM

You're the geek squad.

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

CLEM

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. Clem runs over and opens it.

Erich walks in, in shorts, sports shirt half unbuttoned without undershirt, sandals and no socks, still a "typical" teenage boy but a little taller than last time, which a trace of beard shadow. He slaps Clem's hand with a High 5. Then, he smirks and hugs Clem.

The TV is still on. They show a picture of Sheila in traction in a hospital room, and then of her walking in rehab; but Clem has missed what she said. Tobey appears in the picture momentarily.

ERICH

I think I know him, too. But turn it down.

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

ERICH

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

CLEM

You read my mind.

ERICH

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

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

CLEM

It won't boot. Damn.

ERICH

So, some hacker attacked your machine? Like I know who. Well, you didn't hit F2. Where's your rescue disk? And, by the way, where are your swimshorts? You know, you're at no return. I thought they made you subs buy them to go on pool trips with special ed.

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

CLEM

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

ERICH

Well you go to your own apartment pool, don't you.

CLEM

During the curfews, yes.

ERICH

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

CLEM

I hadn't seen you in a while.

ERICH

I know.

CLEM

You look great!

ERICH

I'm a grown man now.

Clem 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. CLEM'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

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

CLEM

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.

CLEM

Not Jake 2.0?

ERICH

More like him. No red kryptonite. I don't need to wear a costume. Look, you lost your domains.

CLEM

You found out?

ERICH

I read your mind. Remote viewed you. Actually, some benevolent teen hacking.

CLEM

I got taken down as a nuisance after I attracted the hack. Finally this new place took me, and as soon as I start using them, the machine crashes.

ERICH

I can find your old domain again.

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

ERICH

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.

CLEM

So you work for 'em.

ERICH

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

CLEM

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. Actually, this looks like it came the Tooele Depot.

CLEM

Oh? Our own government. So that means this is classified.

ERICH

Well does it matter. Somebody here is in cahoots. But they look for accomplices.

CLEM

Not like you.

ERICH

Weakies like you. There are plenty of 'em among my classmates. At my school. You're right. We shouldn't trust the Russians. Any more than you trust the government.

CLEM

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

ERICH

I think Tobey thinks that, too. 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 interviewed?

Erich strokes a few more commands at the prompt on the black screen, and a webcam comes up, showing Patrick running on a treadmill in an exercise lab. Nearby there is an electrocardiograph machine, not yet hooked up. Suddenly, the screen turns blue.

CLEM

I know that guy! Shit! Another crash.

ERICH

I guess you weren't supposed to see that. You can take care of it, I taught you. Let me show you one more thing.

Erich goes into terminal mode, keys in a bunch of commands, and brings up a screen with pictures of several planets and moons. He runs through them.

ERICH

Venus. Mars. Europa. Not much there but ice. We aren't ready to work underwater yet looking for tubeworms. But here's the granddaddy. Titan. Let me start something here. It takes an hour to get there. When we get back, we'll get an answer. Let's do your swimming lesson.

INT. APARTMENT ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Clem and Erich ride together up the elevator, and Erich smiles at him, then measures himself, now indeed two inches taller than Clem.

ERICH

At least I never had the measles.

INT. APARTMENT LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Clem stands in front of Erich. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION. Erich then goes out to the swimming pool and throws some chemicals into the water.

ERICH

You gotta shower first, man. Clean up.

INT. APARTMENT LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Clem is rinsing himself in an open stall. Erich approaches with his hand filled with foam. He reaches up toward Clem's chest. (DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION. Shoot characters waist up only.)

ERICH

This is all the soap I could find. Like our rain melted it. I used to watch that, rain on the snow, punching holes.

CLEM

So did I. In my own bathtub.

ERICH  
With your toy wooden boat.

CLEM  
Boy you did look at my domains.

INT. APARTMENT SWIMMING POOL

Clem is kicking in the pool, on his back. Erich is in neck deep and then jumps up, lifting Clem against his chest.

ERICH  
Come on. Arch your back! I'm gonna  
let you go.

Erich backstrokes to the edge, on the 8-foot side, and sits on the edge, his hairy legs dangling.

ERICH  
Clem, come and get me.

Clem finally dogpaddles toward the edge and grabs Erich's knees.

CLEM  
(gasping)  
I know. I'm over your edge.

INT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT - LATER

Clem lets Erich in again, and immediately sees a rapidly rolling display on his computer monitor.

ERICH  
Sixty nine minutes each way. That's  
all it took. That's actually a bit  
fast.

CLEM  
That sounds about how long it would  
take light to get to Saturn.

ERICH  
It's cheating a little. Maybe some  
Doppler effect or diffraction.

CLEM  
You can't cheat the speed of light.

ERICH  
Angels can, Clem.

CLEM

You are so clean cut.

ERICH

I'm a little older now. Not that much. Still a kid.

CLEM

The cat work out?

ERICH

Got a family now. Now look at these messages. Notice the index numbers. They're in the Bible.

Clem brings up one record. The number 144000 comes up as the index.

CLEM

Oh, those Sunday school sword drills. That's Revelations, isn't it. Or Thessalonians.

ERICH

It's a revealing. Chapter 14.

INT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT - LATER

Clem and Erich seat at the kitchen table, playing chess, both eating sweets. Erich is winning an end game pawn race. Clem knocks over his king. They hold hands.

CLEM

That's the third theoretical gambit bust you've shown me. Do they still play chess on Titan? Or have you angels played the game out?

ERICH

I won't know until I get there.

Clem grips Erich's hand.

ERICH

You really enjoy this, you call it, capitulation.

CLEM

Yeah. But it's just affection. There's a difference. As long as it's just that, it's OK, isn't it?

(MORE)

CLEM(cont'd)

You know, I always wondered about calling the second player Black.

ERICH

Oh did you. So politically incorrect. Let me show you something.

Erich navigates on Clem's website and brings up an amateur film of a toy wooden boat covered with Ivory snow that is disappearing as rain falls in it.

ERICH

They called that baby play.

Another picture comes up, of bubbles of water accumulating around his legs, with the boat, covered with dry Ivory snow, sitting in the corner. DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION.

CLEM

What the hell. That was when I was, maybe ( ).

ERICH

Like I was then.

CLEM

You're gonna do better than me.

EXT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT

Clem walks Erich down to visitor parking.

ERICH

On your question, it's OK for you. And for the Angels. But not for Tobey. He's got to function for another generation. The last one.

Clem looks away, at the skyline.

CLEM

You even remembered to sign in.

ERICH

And not for the government. And, oh yeah. I've been here before. This is a high rise. You showed me the ropes. Look, I'd ditch my computers and join the team. That Mono Lake academy looks good. Something is going on there.

Erich pops the security system of his Saturn and gets in.

ERICH

You should be proud of me. I'm just barely old enough for this. Still too young for you.

INT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT - DAY

Clem finishes playing with his computers, and now they are all giving nothing but blue screens.

He unplugs everything, picks up his luggage, and locks the door.

INT. JZZET ESTATE - DAY

Brian comes in to Erich's room while Erich is pounding away, zeroing in on maps of specific areas of Titan, appearing to have buildings. Erich toggles between two sets of pictures, one based on his model train set downstairs (show). Brian holds Clem's book.

BRIAN

Son, what's this about. Why do you keep such ungodly stuff here. You know the rules.

ERICH

Oh, dad, Clem is one of Tobey's friends.

BRIAN

Tobey.

ERICH

Mr. Strickland. The history teacher in that film about Mormons. He's becoming a Mormon.

BRIAN

He must be OK, then, but what about all this gay stuff.

ERICH

Coverage. That's all.

BRIAN

Son, I went over the security tapes at Frank's company and you brought him in about a year ago.

(MORE)

BRIAN(cont'd)

The picture matches the cover, down to the closed eyes. This guy is an Asperger's zombie if there ever was one.

ERICH

He's OK.

BRIAN

Did he make a move? You know. Tell the truth, son.

ERICH

I want to see his initiation, dad.

EXT. HIGH PLAINS COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Clem, driving, looks at this gasoline gauge. It is almost empty. He pulls into convenience store gas station, with the store part half empty. The sign reads "12 GALLON MIN." Clem looks at his ration card and inserts it into the pump.

CLEM

I'll actually make it.

INT. ACADEMY CLASSROOM - DAY

Clem sits with about twenty other middle aged men in a classroom arranged like a high school chemistry or biology lab, except that here the benches are covered with computer hardware parts. Frank stands in front of the class. Patrick moves around, prepared to help the students with the lab work.

FRANK

Remember, folks, there is no they. You are the last resort, the last person called in to solve a problem.

MONTAGE

Bill makes his dorm bed with hospital corners, as he struggles and gets it right.

Bill, his hands in cumbersome plastic gloves, makes a large salad in the kitchen, lemon juice dressing.

INT. JZZET ESTATE - DAY

Roger stands up, his shirt open. Soon it is clear that Roger is showing on a high definition screen in front of Erich.

ROGER

You got it right, son. You finish your work, turn it over, before you move on.

ERICH

It's not like I'd really be slain. That was just a dress rehearsal, practice. I'll be back. I can be myself. Tobey will get married to go on living, and Clem probably really will check out.

Erich presses some keys and the monitor reads "TIME-LAPSE STORED RESPONSE" before the high definition image of Roger returns.

ROGER

He's got one more chance. One more woman. His problem is that he wants to be special. He isn't.

ERICH

But I am.

He presses the keys again.

ROGER

Turn everything over.

Erich types a little more, then shuts down all his machines, his model railroad downstairs, turns out the lights, and goes out to Clem's car. He drives away, just as Brian and Elaine arrive home.

INT. ACADEMY DORM ROOM - DAY

The room has two long single beds in front of windows, with closet space on two of the three walls, and desk space with laptop computers on the other wall. There are unopened cartons in front of the closet space. Clem rummages through the cartons and finds a lot of old magazines, including old porno magazines.

AMOS NEFF, 38, short, a bit fat, and stubby walks in and shakes hands.

AMOS  
I'll be your roomie.

CLEM  
You're displaced, too.

He nods.

AMOS  
I can tell. Your mind wasn't on the class. You were thinking about the initiation hike tonight. They might want you to go. Or maybe not.

Patrick walks in, still dressed in an IBM suit.

PATRICK  
Probably not. It would taste too good for you, Clem. Actually, Frank says you were an old friend of sorts.

CLEM  
Yeah, maybe one of the best moments of my life. As a vigorous young man.

PATRICK  
You're gonna have to pay absolute attention in class to your regime the next month to see if you fit. It's like P.E. class, or even seventh grade shop. Industrial arts, they call it. You just get that one weekend.

CLEM  
It's just easier if I get one last fix. You know I haven't watched break dancing in a month.

PATRICK  
You're afraid you won't get another chance, eh.

CLEM  
It was my own making.

PATRICK  
Well, people with ADD need self-discipline.

AMOS  
He's a deep six, Pat.

PATRICK  
But maybe he can get over it. Just  
maybe.

INT. ACADEMY DORM ROOM - LATER

Clem has put on his casual clothes, as Amos, in shorts with rather girlish legs, passes in front of him.

AMOS  
Sport, you didn't bring your shorts  
for gym.

CLEM  
If you were an old man, would you?

AMOS  
I am. I'll have to find some for  
you.

CLEM  
Look, I really want to go on the  
tribunal this time. Remember as a  
freshman I skipped out.

AMOS  
I think you just watched. You hid.  
Didn't participate.

EXT. FOREST TRAIL - EVENING

Clem walks along behind about twenty other men. Amos stays with him. Patrick holds back, and keeps only slightly in front of Clem. In the twilight, Clem makes out Frank and Tobey.

AMOS  
Clem, you must want to know why I  
am here.

CLEM  
Indirectly. You were an I.T.  
professional, so to speak.

AMOS  
You guessed right. But no techie.

CLEM  
You got displaced. Or the word is  
marginalized.

AMOS  
That's Frank's word. I gave in.  
They say I planted a logic bomb.  
All I could do is deny it.

CLEM  
But did you?

Amos hesitates as they keep walking.

AMOS  
I didn't go to jail. I came here.

CLEM  
Same for me. You took the fall for  
my fantasies. But I got  
marginalized, too. But, now I'm  
free.

Clem hears jogging behind him, and sees Erich pulling up.

CLEM  
Great, Erich, you're here.

ERICH  
Until we get to the clearing. This  
is a school night, you know.

CLEM  
Oh, sure. Having you as cornerback  
was a pleasant surprise.

ERICH  
Not for my dad. Actually, Clem, I  
think you would be in ecstasy at  
seeing me.

CLEM  
Oh. Yes.

ERICH  
Kind of relieved. You see Mr.  
Strickland here, too.

AMOS  
You know why they're all here.

CLEM

Some kind of capitulation. Like the world is going to change tonight. You're the guy the passes on the secrets.

ERICH

Through your domains. Tobey says I wrote a good exam. Belongs in a blue book. I echo what you said in your speeches.

CLEM

It's a kernel. I want to be around people younger, stronger--better than me. Upward affiliation.

ERICH

It rubs off.

CLEM

But you can't get away with it. You have to live with others, take care of them, make them respect you. Women do that.

ERICH

Sure. That's why Tobey gets married. But I don't have to. But maybe you do, Clem. Maybe there's still time.

They come to a clearing, and a fork. Suddenly, rain is pouring down, even though there still is some sunlight. The cloud bank over the clearing is very high. It obscures the sun and creates a sun dog. Erich slips off his shoes.

ERICH

This isn't Holland, and these are just slippers anyway. The guys in the wooden shoes are coming.

Erich walks out on the clearing, which has suddenly become a bit muddy.

ERICH

Go on. Have your own tribunals.

Clem runs back to the march, and continues. Looking up, he sees a sphere of ball lightning descending. He hesitates and goes on, as the patter of rain stops. Everyone dries quickly.

INT. CLEM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Two FBI agents, with the typical blue sweatjackets reading "FBI", pick up all five computers in Clem's apartment (including two laptops and one iMac). Outside, the streets around his building are still closed for police investigation.

FBI AGENT  
Should we wait for him?

FBI AGENT 2  
We need a secondary charge to make this work. They don't want to talk about this.

The first FBI Agent picks up an unopened, shrinkwrapped, gay porn video, showing shaving.

FBI AGENT  
It's called "Smooth."

FBI AGENT 2  
That must mean it's not about kids.

FBI AGENT  
Still prurient, though. This is how things work for him. I'll call Brian now.

INT. FOREST TRAIL - LATER

Clem, with Amos tailgating him, approaches a second clearing, a slight dip, filled with water. Beyond the dip there is a big red wood chair. Frank moves and sits in it. Clem gets closer and sees a pudgy, middle aged man who would have looked "young" eight years ago but not now.

Clem puts his hand over his mouth and calms himself. Patrick steps forward, and Clem maneuvers among the crowd.

FRANK  
Clem. Come on. Capitulate.

Clem hesitates.

FRANK  
Come on. I'll give you what you want. Tobey? Roger?

Roger steps from the other clearing, moving in lightning time.

FRANK

Patrick.

Roger sprays the pond.

FRANK

Time for a baptism.

Tobey, shirtless, stands in front of Patrick. He reaches and touches Patrick's neck, as if his hand were a wand. Then he shakes his head.

TOBEY

I can't any more.

Roger reaches for Patrick from behind and embraces him, pulling apart his shirt, massaging his chest. Foam falls from the sky around Frank, and toward the initiation subjects.

ROGER

Kneel.

Roger forces Patrick to slide into the water until only his head is above. Lightning hits the pond, even between the trees.

Frank yanks Clem from behind, into his lap. Clem vomits and passes out, falling into the pond. Lightning hits it again. Frank picks him up and holds him in his lap and starts to rub.

EXT. SMALL SPACE SHIP - NIGHT

The space ship approaches the system of Saturn and the orange moon of Titan.

INT. SMALL SPACE SHIP - NIGHT

Erich lies on a gurney, as two Grays begin to remove the thirty electrodes covering his chest. They gently massage his legs as he sits up.

FOREST TRAIL - MORNING

Clem walks back, alone. He checks his shirt, then his chest. and rebuttons the shirt.

He approaches the first clearing, and follows the footsteps, imprinted in mudpie cake. The steps, in one direction only, stop cold.

CLEM

He went up. He really went up.

INT. ACADEMY CLASSROOM - DAY

Patrick, in short-sleeves and obviously changed by the ritual, is teaching the class. Clem looks distracted.

INT. DORM COMMUNAL LATRINE AND SHOWER - EVENING

Clem steps out of the dorm shower and looks at himself, nude, in the mirror.

CLEM

Mother f\_\_k. I'm cured.

He goes back to his dorm room and picks up the dirty books in the locker, and tosses them in the trash.

CLEM

It's hard to have fun.

EXT. CLEM'S HIGH RISE APARTMENT - DAY

Clem drives back and parks in his garage, gets his luggage, makes the elevator trip back to his apartment, goes in and finds his computers missing.

CLEM

What the hell?

INT. RENTAL OFFICE - DAY

Clem approaches the office, which has the sign "Property Manager is authorized to accept service of process." The PROPERTY MANAGER, 55 and obese, steps out.

PROPERTY MANAGER

You have a nice flight back from your classes?

CLEM

What happened. I've been cleaned out. I mean, this is a high rise. We aren't supposed to have robberies.

PROPERTY MANAGER

You aren't wrong.

CLEM

You didn't even wait. Move out is on the thirty-first.

PROPERTY MANAGER

We do what the government tells us.

INT. AIRPORT CHECK-IN MORNING

Clem, dressed carefully in long-sleeve shirt despite the warm weather, walks up with his black luggage. He presents his passport.

CHECKIN ATTENDANT

Thanks. You didn't need...

CLEM

It's easier.

She keys in some information.

CHECKIN ATTENDANT

Wait.

DETECTIVE WATKINS, black, 35, plain clothes, walks over to the counter.

WATKINS

Mr. Ldzek

Clem turns around.

WATKINS

You need to come with us now, please. Just bring your luggage.

Clem follows Watkins out to the curb, where there is a black sedan.

CLEM

Is this an arrest? Or is it a shake down?

Watkins shows his badge.

WATKINS

Not yet. But we have to take you downtown to talk.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Clem sits in a plain room with a phone.

CLEM  
Shouldn't I call a lawyer.

WATKINS  
Do you want to eat up your savings for one? I mean you just made that thousand dollar deposit.

CLEM  
You're keeping me.

WATKINS  
We can make it easy.

CLEM  
You're state. So it must be Erich.  
I mean, the culprit.

Watkins nods.

WATKINS  
No. He's not an enemy. It's because he disappeared that we came in. And his dad does have a complaint about you. Look, Clem, you're talking too much.

CLEM  
An Assembly of God minister would want to take me down.

WATKINS  
There's more to it than that. You know it. We'll I'm supposed to be your opponent, too, and I'm slipping.

CLEM  
I do have a legal plan. To play for defense. Never thought I'd need a tabloid criminal defense lawyer. Look, he just went up. His foot prints went up. There's mud, the kind kids make pies out of, along the trail. He went up! So how could ...

WATKINS

His son wrote an essay about you.  
As well as your book. He turned  
them both in to a Mr. Tobey  
Strickland.

CLEM

Sure. That's what I always wanted.

WATKINS

But then there was this fake id.

Watkins holds up Erich's fake id card and shakes it, then  
puts it in an envelope.

WATKINS

I know. This is unreal. A big mess.  
Let me mirandize you know. Then we  
can get to your service plan. You  
have the right to remain silent.

He puts the cuffs on Clem, from behind, and Clem grimaces,  
then smirks.

CLEM

You let me talk. That sounds like a  
defense. Or at least hesitation.

WATKINS

Don't play Clark Kent in me, old  
man. You ain't worthy of it. Well,  
Clem, you don't like pain. Erich  
wrote in his report that you  
thought it demeaning.

Watkins tightens the handcuffs and leads Clem to a locker  
area with orange jump suits.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

Attorney ORKNEY MEADOWS, 33, black, comes to Clem's cell. The  
warden leads them to a conference room.

ORKNEY

Well, I'm on your side.

CLEM

Have you read up on it?

ORKNEY

No. It doesn't work that way.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - LATER

CLEM

No, I don't see spending my life savings to defend myself. And spend the rest of my life in poverty.

ORKNEY

You could do another book. I'm kidding.

CLEM

If the fibbies let me. I'm surprised I'm the one to bring it up.

ORKNEY

Are you really a writer? Or do you just blog.

CLEM

Erich proved that I had attracted a lot of attention. It sounds crazy, but the people who took him away.

ORKNEY

I know I'm not part of your world. I see Mr. Jzzet as a religious man who just wants to get a gay.

CLEM

But why would they bring the case when it's harder to prove.

ORKNEY

Maybe Erich would prove them wrong. Say it really didn't happen.

CLEM

Is it really a crime. We just played. And he told me he was old enough.

ORKNEY

You believed it, sure. See how he looks. They're going to say you're deliberately creating an attractive nuisance.

CLEM

Well, we gotta straighten this out.  
Simply. Let's find out what the  
fibbies are up to.

ORKNEY

Let's start with Tobey. We can do  
that under our little budget.

CLEM

He'll see me. He'll help me.

ORKNEY

He's getting married. That's  
something you could never consider.  
That's not something you ever  
wanted, right.

CLEM

What I don't do sends a message,  
too.

EXT. ATM BANK MACHINE - DAY

With Orkney watching, Clem withdraws cash from several  
accounts.

CLEM

I wouldn't do this in a carjacking.

ORKNEY

You'd let them kill you.

CLEM

This way, there is something worth  
fighting for.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - DAY

Sheila, now swollen but well adopted to "the leg," looks out  
over the ramp Tobey built leading to the door, and turns  
toward him. She adjusts a high-end camcorder, already on a  
tripod. She approaches Tobey and unbuttons his shirt, and  
coaxes him to the sofa.

She applies a gel to his chest, and then picks up a wand,  
connected to a small generator, and begins to massage with  
the wand. She puts it down and massages with his fingers.

Tobey raises and kisses her.

TOBEY

I survived.

SHEILA

I wanted you to. Until now.  
Finally. We already have a kid  
coming.

TOBEY

You look so pregnant. Ready to  
burst.

She leans forward and rubs all the harder.

TOBEY

Well, I'll be young enough to win  
converts every year now.

SHEILA

You're letting me do this for Clem,  
aren't you.

TOBEY

I'm giving up something you don't  
have.

SHEILA

But Clem doesn't want.

TOBEY

It's his deselection ritual.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL NATATORIUM - DAY

Tobey finishes swimming a lap and climbs out, and sits down  
on a bench next to Orkney.

TOBEY

I heard. You could say the  
grapevine is pretty good.

ORKNEY

So you're the swimming coach.

TOBEY

I don't quite look it yet, do I.  
Come on. The gams.

ORKNEY

Well, you are so young. You're like  
a student.

TOBEY

Well, Erich and I have different ideas as to how to live forever. I'll be helping with a mission this summer. It'll be harder when the baby comes.

ORKNEY

And you teach. Permanently.

TOBEY

Yes. As a career. And act. Clem, I think he wants to check out. He has it counted to days.

ORKNEY

But he first joined as a reservist.

TOBEY

He can't go anywhere with it. He's too well known.

ORKNEY

But it looks like you're all in this together.

TOBEY

You're checking me out aren't you? I mean, Mr. Jzzet would have told you...

ORKNEY

He wouldn't talk to me.

TOBEY

He may want a prosecution, but he wants it wrapped up quickly. He knows everything, too.

Tobey jumps in, swims a lot, and comes back.

TOBEY

Things are gonna change soon for everybody. We all know that. Clem might find it easier to watch it from jail. There's no pillory now, like there was in Williamsburg. We need to get him out in three months.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Tobey helps a very pregnant Sheila out of the car, and joins Orkney walking down the street.

ORKNEY

So she can even drive now.

TOBEY

What do you mean even. She will be my wife! If you want to press it, I think we can guess who set Clem up.

EXT. COURTHOUSE BUILDING - DAY

Clem and Orkney walk into the building among protestors, with signs mentioning upcoming curfews.

INT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE BUILDING DA OFFICE - DAY

Assistant District Attorney KIM HAAS, 36 (female), talks to Clem and Orkney.

KIM

We have a very fair Judge who would get this. (DIRECTOR'S CUT -- ADD MORE)

CLEM

I thought it was OK. (DC - ADD MORE)

KIM

What do you think Erich would say if he returned.

CLEM

I asked him once, or I told him. Probably he'd say that I'm a know it all. He really knows, and so does Tobey.

KIM

Did he egg you on at all?

CLEM

Huh. Once, when we first met doing the petitioning.

(MORE)

CLEM(cont'd)

And he teased me, about believing in God. It was before I knew he was AOG.

KIM

So you're that big. You think that the government really wants to take you down. How conceited.

CLEM

I'm part of the asymmetry. Look, you can't prove exactly what happened four years ago. Look, if I was his Dad, what I did would be nothing. It would be Okay.

KIM

But you've never been a dad. It's all about your intentions. Your website depicts all of this personal stuff and you never could get bonding insurance. We can get you on that. Who's going to believe you? You seem too twisted to marry and have a family. No jury will find reasonable doubt. You're a big nuisance. Cut us a deal. We do need to keep a secret. You can say how Erich said he was grown up.

INT. SPORTS BAR - EVENING

Clem finishes a cheeseburger, while Orkney takes the check.

CLEM

I won't be able to enjoy this much longer.

The CNN news feed explains the curfews in three cities because of radiation contamination from explosions in each city.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Judge Harnett's chambers are filled with law books and science fiction and action sciene magazines about astronomy.

KIM

So you don't object to making part of the conviction classified top secret.

JUDGE HARTNETT

I do, but I don't have a choice.  
I'm still too young as a judge.  
Just look at me.

KIM

So it's sealed. In perpetuity.

He pulls up a pantleg.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Clem, with Orkney besides him, stands in front of Judge Hartnett.

JUDGE HARTNETT

So you have entered a plea of Gulty for one class 1 misdemeanor count (DC MORE DIALOGUE) for creating a nuisance and inciting imminent threat of lawless action, and one class 1 misdemeanor count for depicting criminal activities in a public space without purchasing bonding insurance. The state has agreed not to prosecute you further, and the United States Department of Justice has agreed not to take further action for the classified materials that it found on your servers. By the guidelines, I sentence you to six months at the Department of Corrections, and two years of probation. You will undergo a psychiatric evaluation, and your cooperation will determine the course of your sentence after your release (DC - MORE DIALOGUE)

Clem and Orkney leave the courthouse as reporters take pictures.

ORKNEY

See, you are really a public figure now.

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - MOMENTS LATER

Harnett whispers to Kim.

JUDGE HARTNETT

We'll keep him off the registry. He just needs the treatment.

EXT. MIDWESTERN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Clem, in leg irons, rides a prison bus to the Department of Corrections.

A montage shows his going through processing, being showered, issued his gray prison suit, being taken to his cell, being assigned menial kitchen police work, especially in the grease pit.

INT. CLEM'S CELL - NIGHT

Clem tries to sleep at night with the light on.

INT. PRISON INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Clem sits in a circle of other prisoners, one of whom is Peter. TOVINA HICKS, 38, moderates the group therapy session. For the circumstances, Tovina looks surprisingly well built. She leans toward Clem as if wanting to tempt him.

TOVINA

Clem, you haven't wanted to come clean yet.

CLEM

You know, at NIH forty years ago, the therapists smoked in the individual therapy sessions. Even in group therapy. Family art therapy. Unit government. Group activities.

PETER

But you never got close to the brink. You never cried.

TOVINA

Peter, I don't think you did either.

CLEM

Well, I liked playing Mother May I. If I enjoyed my own abasement with my nuts, I was wielding the forbidden knowledge of good and evil.

PETER

You smile at that, you faggot!

TOVINA

Give it up, Clem. Yield. That will bring you your pleasure.

CLEM

Okay. But please don't expect me to become a joiner.

She approaches him. Peter suddenly collapses.

INT. DANCE BAR - NIGHT

Roger and Erich sip on lemonade and watch the dancers, most of them very fit and tall, in the distance. The music is all new. Erich flashes his fake ID card to Roger and smirks.

ROGER

You haven't been outside yet.

ERICH

At minus 280.

ROGER

You won't feel it. I want to show you something.

EXT. STREET ON TITAN CITY - EVENING

They walk outside on a main street that kind of resembles Disney's false fronts. The soil is pinkish brown, as are the facades. In the distance one can make out a dark lake with a lighthouse.

ROGER

That's the Tower of Ned.

ERICH

I read you. You can't go near it.

ROGER

It doesn't feel bad out here does  
it. Just a little cold. Like  
Michigan.

They look up through a haze and can barely make out part of  
Saturn with the rings.

ERICH

Or like Antarctica. What happens  
when it starts to snow?

ROGER

It's like the foam parties at  
Velvet Nation.

A pinkish foam is accumulating around them on the street, and  
then a quick downpour erases it as Erich and Roger hide under  
one of the street false fronts.

EXT. TITAN LAKE - EVENING

Erich and Roger are rowing in a canoe in an oily lake. They  
are playing some piano music on an MP3 with them, some Chopin  
piano music in 5/4 time.

ROGER

I got to show you what can happen  
when we go back. It's in the Tower  
where they make the judgments. You  
know, they burn us with tasers to  
see if we can survive the scars.

ERICH

I don't want to have to go through  
that.

ROGER

Be good, and you won't.

ERICH

Yes, Santa Claus!

EXT. STREET ON TITAN CITY - LATER

Now it is "night" and they go through the false fronts into a  
small hotel that could have come from High Noon. The sky is  
partially clear through the brownish haze, and part of Saturn  
with the rings shows.

The boudoir is furnished like a late 19th century hotel, with several mirrors. There is a chess set, rimmed, with the pieces lined up along the edges rather than placed in the conventional position.

ROGER

You know, we're gonna make up new rules for chess. Now, Strip.

ERICH

What?

ROGER

I want you to watch yourself. The mirror gives a time lapse.

Erich quickly strips and looks at himself in the mirror. He sees Tobey, not himself, as a twenty-four-year-old, but gradually morphing into a thirty-five-year-old.

ERICH

This is what it would be like to be my teacher. There's no special powers. Stop.

ROGER

You want to be perfect. Now watch me.

Roger strips, and watches himself in the other mirror. He sees Peter as a young adult, much less appealing, turning bald and starting to look like Clem, even as the legs, as well as the pate, go bald. His paunch grows steadily.

Roger reappears, and is OK.

ROGER

If you stay with your Sun, you will be fine. If you go to other worlds, you'd be like me.

ERICH

Otherwise I'd have to date and get married some day.

ROGER

When you finish growing up, sure. You get to be a teenager forever. You'll be perfect, and beautiful, forever. But don't make any mistakes.

ERICH

What was yours.

ROGER

You're close the edge, young man. I just enjoyed myself too much. You did a good job with Clem, too. You made him tick, for once.

ERICH

He really came alive through the Lord.

ROGER

He just doesn't know it yet.

ERICH

Neither do you.

INT. PRISON INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Tovina stands up.

TOVINA

Clem, sit in the center of the circle.

CLEM

It won't make any difference.

TOVINA

Do as I say. Now confront Peter.

CLEM

Peter, why did you hit Sheila?

PETER

You know why.

CLEM

Because you could. You wanted to know what it would be like.

PETER

But I can go back.

CLEM

No you can't.

Clem pulls up his pants.

PETER

Look at yourself. It doesn't grow back.

TOVINA

But you're satisfied now. You can have a family, too, and go on living, Clem.

CLEM

In my own way. But so did Peter.

TOVINA

He's different, too.

Peter starts to undress. He is pretty ugly, and Clem puts his hand over his mouth, digs in his pockets as if looking for a mint to put under his tongue. He retches.

INT. SALOON-HOTEL ON TITAN - MOMENTS LATER

Roger keeps looking at himself in the mirror, switching between Clem and Peter.

ROGER

Clem will have to get well. But only when I go into the Tower of Ned. You see, Erich, what the deal is. You want to stay an angel, and live forever.

ERICH

It's an honor.

ROGER

Just don't enjoy it too much. I've got to go to the trial for the tribunal. You can row out for a while, but don't get too close. Don't get exposed. Even if I survive the tribunal, I'll start to get older.

Erich picks up a copy of Clem's book.

ERICH

You know, I bought a second used copy of that from Amazon when Dad caught me.

He picks it up and shows it to Roger, a passage about the tribunals that Clem skipped, with photos. Roger nods.

ROGER

Yeah, but this is not to become a man. Bye man. Study your lessons. This is your epiphany.

ERICH

You're not gonna look like another Peter are you?

ROGER

If I do, that's your challenge. To care for me. For all eternity.

ERICH

No, I caught you. You can go on.

ROGER

You go on forever. With no time lapse.

EXT. TITAN LAKE - NIGHT

Erich and Roger row again. Roger jumps out and floats toward the tower. Erich rows back to shore.

ERICH

On the shores of endless worlds.

ROGER

There's dorms over there, beyond the horizon. You won't have to live in them.

EXT. TITAN LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

The "passenger" train with the block switch engine moves from the lake back to the town. Erich is taking pictures from the flat car and climbs into the passenger car.

INT. TOWER OF NED - NIGHT

There is a single window in the stone structure, below the light, that looks the lake below, the little town, and the foam on the pinkish desert-like landscape.

Erich sits in a chair, rolling up his pant legs, along with seven other handsome, tall young man. An older bald man, dressed in black, who may resemble Clem, walks in. A second, slightly younger man, fit but a bit elderly, with a face that resembles Sydney, also walks in.

CLEM-LIKE MAN

Talk.

ROGER

I did what I could.

CLEM-LIKE MAN

You set him up.

ROGER

I hacked his domains and sent the emails. The law says he is responsible because he gets an unearned right of publicity.

CLEM-LIKE MAN

So I'm the sacrifice.

The Sydney-like man takes a hot towel, dips it in some foam, and approaches Roger. He applies the towel and Roger begins to shrivel. He applies the taser, and Roger turns gray. The Sydney-like man puts a cloak on him, takes him to the window, and shows him the barracks.

ROGER

No. I'll live.

INT. SPACE SHIP - NIGHT

Roger, looking much older and less impressive, is attended by grays, who stroke his face, which is rapidly becoming like theirs.

MONTAGE

Bill scrubs a grease pit in the kitchen and stops a lot, bowling over.

Bill, leaning over a side sink of dishes, and vomits.

INT. PRISON MEDICAL TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

DC - EXTRA SCENE

THERAPIST

You can winnow down to this aversion...

CLEM

The worst thing is to be made to subordinate yourself to serving someone else's sexuality. They're heterosexuality. Serving their interests so that you can stay alive. That's so, shameful.

THERAPIST

But you could enjoy shame, couldn't you?

Clem nods, slowly.

INT. PRISON MEDICAL TREATMENT ROOM - LATER

Surgeon Whale, in smocks with arms completely barren, marches in, will Clem spread out on the examination table. He picks up Clem's shiny white legs, and palpitates a gray lesion outside his shin.

SURGEON WHALE

Nurse, I need a full tray. Boy, your skin is icy.

He starts cutting away the lesion, and then wraps it up.

SURGEON WHALE

Well, Clem, here's your posterity.

He puts the lesion in a tray and starts to bandage the leg.

SURGEON WHALE

Look, Clem, I got your numbers. Your PSA is 8, and your coronary arteries are likely too brittle to rotor rooter.

CLEM

No, I don't want to be mutilated. Not by you. And I know what the PSA means.

SURGEON WHALE

You sound like a scared little boy. You don't need to resist. You know it. You're cured. You suspected that already.

CLEM

Tovina, maybe.

SURGEON WHALE

She can do the stress test before  
you get out.

CLEM

So this is what it comes to. The  
doctor. Tobey gets married to live  
forever, and Erich just gets to fly  
on his own. Now I've run my course.  
I don't need all these heroic  
measures. My god, for prostate  
cancer, they castrate.

SURGEON WHALE

Well, if you aren't normal yet,  
that's the final option. You could  
still teach, give grades, have a  
life, decide for this last  
generation who's good and who  
isn't.

CLEM

Like a poor old ruler.

SURGEON WHALE

But then, you know you really don't  
have to care, do you.

Tovina walks in with the warden.

TOVINA

You can take care of your duties  
this go round, Clem. You can pay it  
forward, still. There are so many  
children out there you could  
mentor. So let us help you.

CLEM

You'd really let me.

WARDEN BOGGS

If you've changed. Tovina thinks  
you can still try. I mean, that  
Frankie fellow flushed you out,  
washed out those bugs.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Surgeon Whale finishes a delicate examination of Sheila, with  
Tobey watching.

SURGEON WHALE  
It looks like it's female.

TOBEY  
It. This is a person.

SURGEON WHALE  
Half these angels are women. That  
doesn't change, even on Titan.

EXT. AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK NEAR AYERS ROCK - DAY

On top of the rock, visitors point towards a UFO.

What starts as a second sun becomes ball lightning and then a space ship as it gradually lands in the outback. Erich climbs out, gently rips the electrodes off his chest, shoulders and thighs, inspects his legs, puts on a comfortable shirt and sandals, and starts walking to civilization.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Clem sees Erich, dressed in a suit, on the street. He hesitates, and then walks carefully toward him. Wet snow is falling.

CLEM  
I'm not supposed to see you.

ERICH  
Well, it's going to be sweater  
weather. I'll be covered up enough.

A hooded figure, now about six feet tall, approaches them. Clem peeks, and it looks back. Clem grimaces and puts his hand over his mouth.

ERICH  
Roger? Indeed. Clem, you have to  
practice self-control. I get marked  
on it.

CLEM  
So now we have proof.

ERICH  
He'll be all right. He just needs  
to keep moving. On the shores of  
endless worlds. Try Ganymede next.

INT. OPERATING ROOM AT HOSPITAL - DAY

Surgeon Whale scrubs down and walks over to watch Clem being sewn up.

SURGEON WHALE  
We can go for five years, max.

INT. HALFWAY HOUSE - DAY

Clem looks at himself in a small handheld mirror, noticing the zipper on his chest. He carefully lifts a suit off a wooden hanger and lays it on the bed, keeping the creases intact.

Tovina approaches from behind and wraps her arms around him.

CLEM  
No. I may gave to go all the way down with this.

TOVINA  
That's OK. We'll go for it.

She continues to rub, and Clem's eyes light up.

TOVINA  
Let's get you dressed. I've got the mental competency certificate.

INT. GAY VIDEO BAR RESTAURANT - DAY

Clem orders two cheeseburgers, crisp fries and grilled onion rings.

CLEM  
As long as you eat, it's OK.

ERICH  
Like I believe you.

CLEM  
You get caught, I go back on the list. But whatever, I get my words back.

ERICH  
Yes Napoleon! They've made you a good person now?

This time, the food looks like it tastes too good.

CLEM

If I enjoy someone like you, well, there are implications. I chose you. I chose Tobey.

ERICH

Did you choose Roger?

CLEM

Not quite. I don't know why. It looked like he was changing back. If you're really better. You know, if I'm not good enough to make things better for someone my own age, why should anyone believe me?

ERICH

You're no joiner. I'm not either. But Tobey is.

CLEM

He'll be married forever. But I don't see anything happening to him anyway.

ERICH

It already has. But he should have good kids. They'll come first. He'll make them good no matter what. He says that's his mission.

CLEM

You don't need them.

ERICH

I earned my fate. I already got it. Do you believe in God now?

CLEM

Now I do.

ERICH

It's your word, capitulate. You don't get anything by that. Like in anybody.

CLEM

Maybe Tobey. But he is going to have a family.

Clem reaches over and grabs Erich by the collar and laughs.

ERICH  
You're out of character, Tobey  
would say. Shaking me down.

CLEM  
You've told me what you know.

ERICH  
I don't think I have to.

CLEM  
You go on forever.

ERICH  
And about a hundred thousand more.

CLEM  
144,000.

ERICH  
To be exact. So you know what  
happens to Tobey's kid.

INT. BLESSED EVENT STORE - DAY

Sheila looks very pregnant as Tobey guides her past the  
feminine accoutrements. Erich tags along.

TOBEY  
We don't like to talk about Clem  
now. He needed to do this to, to  
like himself.

ERICH  
I couldn't have been his son. His  
kids would have been too ordinary  
for him.

INT. MORMON VISITOR CENTER MURAL ROOM - DAY

Clem, Tobey and Erich walk around and look at the art work of  
a verdant paradise.

CLEM  
Okay, if knew what I was doing. If  
I enjoyed my own demise, that meant  
I was deciding who was good. For  
eternity.

TOBEY  
For Erich's eternity.

CLEM  
And you think that is evil.

ERICH  
You'd better not, Tobey.

TOBEY  
It's not what I chose for myself.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

Clem, seated alone, watches a movie, flat format, in which Tobey is playing a Mormon missionary.

INT. ROOMING HOUSE - DAY

Clem picks up a rotary style phone. He has a laptop that is displaying his old website. He quickly plays a VCR tape on an adjacent VCR-TV of Tobey helping disabled students (as a special education teacher). Clem dials.

TOBEY  
Oh, hey.

CLEM  
I'm gonna take you up. You say one more generation.

TOBEY  
To fight for. You gave us those words once.

Clem looks over at a stack of material, the top sheet displaying "Teacher Certification." On his computer, he toggles between two pictures, one hard and realistic, an icy wasteland of Titan, and then a fantasy land with green plants and trains running through it, with children playing, and Tobey and Sheila watching them.

CLEM  
To fight for. Like maybe your kid will get to see what Erich sees.

TOBEY  
In spite of yourself. That's good enough for you, isn't it. And it's real life. No more political forums. You've still got hope.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - NIGHT

Sheila is sleeping in her own bed, and Tobey, shirtless and "young" on the couch. She suddenly cries out.

SHEILA  
It's time!

Tobey jumps up, looks at himself for a moment, and approaches her.

TOBEY  
I know how to do it.

INT. SHEILA'S CONDO - MOMENTS LATER

Tobey slaps a baby girl to get her breathing. The baby screams.

TOBEY  
No surprise.

INT. MORMON TEMPLE - DAY

Clem, Erich and Syd walk through the temple and see all the art work of the telestial kingdom.

ERICH  
It's a nice place.

SYDNEY  
Like Indianapolis.

CLEM  
San Francisco, in April.

SYDNEY  
Only during the era of Vertigo.

CLEM  
Well, I'm glad you made him watch his legs.

They walk into the temple sanctuary and wait as Tobey and Sheila walk down the aisle. Sydney places himself between Clem and Erich. John and Dan are already in the audience, clapping silently, holding Belle between them. Roger, still in a cloak and looking like a Gray, follows, carrying a baby, crying sporadically. The baby only quiets down for the official enteral marriage ceremony to start.

Tobey turns around and looks at Clem.

CLEM  
I'm the godfather, right?

TOBEY  
It's up to you. Why don't you  
prattle about it.

SYDNEY  
And Clem, I'm not sorry about it  
forty years ago. You just got  
caught up.

INT. MORMON STAKEHOUSE - AY

Clem stands next to Erich, and then Tobey and Sheila as a  
couple. Brian and Ellen watch from a distance.

ERICH  
You're ready, Clem. Take the dive.

CLEM  
Please. God. I know you are there.

Tovina walks up and embraces him.

CLEM  
Let us pray.

Clem starts to babble in baby talk and falls to the floor.  
Tobey and Tovina both stand over him.

INT. TOWER OF NED - NIGHT

Roger appears in a hologram, gradually aging and shriveling  
up.

ROGER  
Do not come here, Clem. You would  
be like Ned. Stay with Tovina.  
Teach. Care.

Clem keeps sleeping.

FADE OUT.