

(Do Ask Do Tell: Pilot)

by
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(Based on, If Any)

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EXT. WASHINGTON-LEE HIGH SCHOOL (1961 KENNEDY INAUGURATION DAY YEARBOOK PICTURE IN BLACK AND WHITE, WITH HEAVY SNOW) - DAY

Play credits. VISITOR to this website should view instructions for background information for this script near the top of the index page for the directory that this script is in. Also, please see the treatment file (HTM) for this script, as shown clearly on that index. (PDF files cannot give direct links.)

EXT. WASHINGTON-LEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

A shot of a new high school addition under construction, and a still of the old school and 1961 yearbooks. BILL, 60, talks.

BILL (O.S.)

I became a man in my own thinking my senior year--not the way you think. I learned to value my friends.

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - DAY

YOUNG BILL, 16, plays the concluding passages of the last Rachmaninoff Prelude in D-flat, with great bombast. In front of the stage, there is a table where three judges write comments. One of the comments reads "You should make music your life's work."

BILL (O.S.)

But I didn't get to become composer or concert pianist. Not by profession. Those would be private hobbies. We had a cold war on. Young men had to pay their dues to get to do what they wanted. By the way, for that contest, I had to pick an American composer. Choosing Sergei Rachmaninoff was sneaky. And politically incorrect. But he did live here at the end of life.

EXT. W-L ATHLETIC FIELD - AY

Young Bill and other boys are in PE blue uniforms. Bill is batting, and hits a softball across the width of the field into the bleachers. The other boys seem to ignore him as he runs the bases.

BILL (O.S.)

I actually got to the point that I liked softball. They thought I played like a girl. Now girls can be good at it.

INT. CHEMISTRY CLASS - DAY

A runner brings Bill a note into class inviting him to join the Science Honor Society.

EXT. WASHINGTON-LEE HIGH SCHOOL IN 1961 - EVENING

YOUNG BILL, 17, walks along busy Washington Blvd, in front of the football field and jogging track in front of his high school. Football players in half-length jerseys are congregating on the other side of the fence. Bill walks past, along the street.

BILL

And I figured out that it made more sense to be with the best, and affiliate with the best, than date just to reproduce your own kind. Make sense?

INT. FOOTBALL GAME CONCESSION STAND - NIGHT

YOUNG BILL stands with some other high school seniors, arranging cokes at a sales stand with the noises of a football game in the background.

FEMALE STUDENT

Bill, this is a Saturday night.

MALE STUDENT

Bill is back in his semantics.

EXT. ARLINGTON HOUSE - DAY

Bill stands on the front lawn after mowing it.

BILL

Like on that show of the time, Day in Court, I had looked at myself in the mirror, and for a short time I liked what I saw, then I forgot. I could make fun of myself, and with my friends it was OK.

INT. CHEMISTRY CLASS - DAY

Bill struggles to light a match to get a Bunsen burner going. A classmate BOB, 17, helps him.

BOB

Hey, you gotta light matches.

BILL

I meant it. Don't kiss her on the lips.

BOB

Like, O go way butterfly.

The class cackles.

INT. BILL'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

Young Bill stands in front of a grandfather clock in a recreation room, paneled and tiled, with a chartreuse ping pong table and about ten high school students eating fast food. Behind Bill is a poster, "REPLACING CARBON WITH SILICON" and he holds a flask with a powdery substance.

YOUNG BILL

This was MY project.

INT. WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE LECTURE HALL - DAY

Young Bill sits among a number of students taking a paper and pencil chemistry test. (Precede with outdoor shots of the College of William and Mary.)

MONTAGE

Young Bill in a car of students driving up a mountain road.

A shot of the summit of Mount Washington.

Young Bill in caps and gowns.

Young Bill stands behind the valedictory lectern.

YOUNG BILL

It was the best of times, the worst
of times.

INT. CLASSROOM AFTER SCHOOL - DAY

Bill plays a game of chess with a handsome teen MICHAEL, 17,
and beats him in an endgame.

EXT. - TENNIS COURTS - DAY

Bill plays at tennis with Michael, who, after slamming the
last shot, yanks off his t-shirt and offers his hand with a
smile.

INT. BILL'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

Bill plays ping pong conservatively with Michael and seems to
be winning with his unusual keep-the-ball-on-the-table
strategy.

MICHAEL

Well, Bill, you are very frank. So
you have to be one of the best
friends that I have ever had.

Bill looks agitated.

EXT. WILLIAM AND MARY CAMPUS - DAY

Bill rides in the backseat of a Ford Galaxie, his parents in
front, as they arrive at Brown Hall Dormitory on the College
of William and Mary campus.

INT. BROWN HALL DORM ROOM WILLIAM AND MARY - DAY

Bill shakes hands with YOUNG SYDNEY, 18, with both boys
having partially unpacked suitcases on top and bottom of a
bunk bed. The rest of the room is still relatively clean, but
small and hot.

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

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

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

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

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

YOUNG SYDNEY
Get serious.

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

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

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

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

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

INT. DORM ROOM BROWN HALL WILLIAM AND MARY - NIGHT

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

YOUNG SYDNEY
Yeah, Bill, your'e a fine fella.
You've got a great future.

YOUNG BILL

I hope so.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Where were you tonight? You played
h Where ooky buddy on the
Tribunals. We're gonna send out a
blanket party for you.

YOUNG BILL

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

YOUNG SYDNEY

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

INT. DORM ROOM BROWN HALL WILLIAM AND MARY - DAY

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

YOUNGER BILL

You like my clothes.

YOUNG SYDNEY

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

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

INT. STUDENT UNION BUILDING WILLIAM AND MARY SERVICE COUNTER - AFTERNOON

Young Bill walks up to the counter with Sophomore #2 in shorts behind him.

YOUNG BILL

Today I want to borrow the Schumann
Second.

The FEMALE ATTENDANT, 20, hands him an old LP record. On it there is a sticker, "THIS RECORD BADLY WORN." Bill takes out the plastic LP and inspects it, looking at scratches and pits.

YOUNG BILL

It's not that I mind. I isn't mine.
Your record players track heavier
than mine.

ATTENDANT

You want it?

Sophomore #2 approaches from behind, in shorts.

SOPHOMORE #2

Still a warm day, ain't it. You're
the infamous Bill.

YOUNG BILL

Yes. I am.

SOPHOMORE #2

You exist. We missed you that
night. Like you don't play football
either.

YOUNG BILL

I don't have to.

SOPHOMORE #2

Because you're smart.

ATTENDANT

You're talking about the tribunals.
Where they shave the boys legs,
like for football and all.

YOUNG BILL

And it doesn't always grow back.

ATTENDANT

Well, mine grew back. A little bit.

INT. DORM SHOWER - DAY

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

YOUNG BILL

Homosexual on the loose!

INT. DORM ROOM BROWN HALL WILLIAM AND MARY - NIGHT

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

YOUNG BILL

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

YOUNG SYDNEY

Just a moment. Let me finish
praying.

YOUNG BILL

You really pray. Talk to God. With

YOUNG SYDNEY

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

YOUNG BILL

Yes, immersed with my mother at
twelve. I told you. But we played
choral music. Bach. Mozart. And
Brahms, whom you hate.

YOUNG SYDNEY

Sometimes no music is better, then.

YOUNG BILL

So, now, what happened to you at
summer camp?

YOUNG SYDNEY

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

YOUNG BILL

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

YOUNG SYDNEY

You want to jump to conclusions.

YOUNG BILL
But you already have.

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

YOUNG BILL
And that's really Tarzan's quest
for male (production)? You talk
like you really believe this. And
my father thinks I'm gullible.

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

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

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

INSERT:

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

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

INSERT

Carson W. Barnes

DEAN OF MEN

Bill knocks, timidly.

CARSON

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

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

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

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

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

CARSON

Mr. Ldzett, this is yours.

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

Yes, sir, it's a bit southern.

CARSON

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

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

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

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

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

YOUNG BILL

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

Dean Barnes looks back.

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

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

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

INT. UPPERCLASS DORM ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

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

FAT BOY

Bill, what do you think sixty-nine means.

YOUNG BILL

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

The other boys cackle and roll on the floor.

FAT BOY

Bill, what do you think of homosexuality?

YOUNG BILL

I don't approve of it.

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

INT. DEAN OF MEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bill swallows hard.

CARSON

You with me, Bill?

YOUNG BILL

My chum Michael last summer was right. I'm naive about these things. He's at VPI instead of here. Hope they don't shave him. That's another thing. I didn't go to the Tribunals. I didn't get hazed. So I guess that's another reason I'm a sissy. But I had never heard of all this until living away from home. Of all the untidy things homosexuals are supposed to do.

Now the Dean puts his hand over his mouth.

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

I'm just trying to follow the Honor System.

CARSON

So you are. Or is that a ruse?

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

Sure.

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

I'm very glad that you confided in me that you think you're a homosexual. Frankly, I had heard rumors that you were a homosexual, but I was slow to act on it. You made it easier on me and easier on yourself. Now, are your parents home?

YOUNG BILL

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

CARSON

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

Bill leans over but controls himself and sits upright.

YOUNG BILL

That was a private joke. Intra-
personal.

CUT TO:

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

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

YOUNG BILL

The Schubert B-flat Sonata. Heart-
rending.

JOHN

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

BILL'S FATHER

He learnt it. He got that from me.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. DEAN OF MEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

CARSON

Bill, come back. I will have to
call them. Your parents. Long
distance. It will be a big deal.
Don't worry about it all weekend.
It will be all right.

(MORE)

CARSON(cont'd)

We aren't going to ask you to leave school or anything like that. You just don't want to slide into anything like homosexuality.

YOUNG BILL

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

INT. FAMILY LIVING ROOM, CHARLOTTE NC - EVENING

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

MR. MCCARTHY

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

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

MR. MCCARTHY

Hello.

TELEPHONE OPERATOR

Mr. McCarthy, this is the long distance operator in Williamsburg, Virginia, calling for Mr. Ronald Ldzett.

MR. MCCARTHY

Sure, interesting. Ronald, long distance for you.

BILL'S FATHER

Huh, honest a Pete. From Bill?

MR. MCCARTHY

I guess. The operator had to connect us.

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

BILL'S FATHER

Bill?

TELEPHONE OPERATOR

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

CARSON

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

BILL'S FATHER

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

CARSON

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

BILL'S FATHER

Can I see Bill first?

CARSON

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

INT. DINER IN WILLIAMSBURG - EVENING

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

YOUNG BILL

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

BILL'S FATHER

It's more than just that.

YOUNG BILL

The Dean of Men asked, and I told.

BILL'S MOTHER

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

YOUNG BILL

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

BILL'S FATHER

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

BILL

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

BILL'S MOTHER

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

BILL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BILL'S FATHER

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

YOUNG BILL

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

BILL'S FATHER

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

INT. DEAN OF MEN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

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

BILL

I said I never did anything.

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

But my courses.

CARSON

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

YOUNG BILL

There's Eastern State.

CARSON

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

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

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

BILL'S FATHER

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

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

JOHN

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

YOUNG BILL

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

JOHN

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

BILL

I'll write soon and explain.

BILL'S FATHER

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

JOHN

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

INT. FORD GALAXIE - AFTERNOON

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

BILL'S FATHER

We'll call the Dean of Admissions at GW tomorrow.

(MORE)

BILL'S FATHER(cont'd)

But if you ever mention
homosexuality again, not a college
in the country will take you.

YOUNG BILL

It's fair enough.

BILL'S MOTHER

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

INT. BILL'S HOME - DAY

Bill paces the living room floor, walks to the kitchen and looks outside. There is light snow on the ground. He sees Michael's car pull up. He walks out into the hall and waits until he hears the doorbell ring.

Michael enters, dressed in his ROTC uniform. He offers his hand, and Bill shakes it like in the days of the past summer.

INT. BILL'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Bill seems to be staring at Michael, who sits at some distance on the sofa.

BILL

Yeah, I admitted to the Dean... I blurted out. And they want to say I'm sick. They say, straighten out my thinking.

MICHAEL

It sounds like a stupid thing to do. But wait. You said the day after Thanksgiving. He must have waited around for you all day.

BILL

Yeah. I was in the lab, catching up on Qual. And at the end of the day, he was still there, in Wren hall.

MICHAEL

So you were his mark. He needed to find somebody. That's how all the hazing is. You skip out...

BILL

Yeah.

MICHAEL

Mine grew back. You don't need to look.

INT. NIH CLINICAL CENTER, MENTAL HEALTH WARD - AFTERNOON

Montage: The NIH Clinical Center from the outside, patients playing ping pong in a day room, Bill playing piano in the solarium, Bill and his parents drawing on easels in an art therapy session.

INT. NIH CLINICAL CENTER GROUP THERAPY ROOM - FLASHBACK

About ten patients, young adults, sit around in a large conference room with a one-way mirror on one side. A window looks across a large lawn to the rest of the hospital campus.

A YOUNG WOMAN, 19, lies catatonic on the floor. A YOUNG MALE PATIENT, 24, picks her up in a fireman carry to take her back to a chair.

YOUNG BILL

God damn MP. Nothing to be ashamed of. Sure.

YOUNG MALE PATIENT

You're ashamed to be here. Get over it. This is all that's real now!

YOUNG BILL

I'm the only one who goes On the Outside.

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

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

YOUNG BILL

Dr. Pincock, why I had to see a psychiatrist is irrelevant now.

(MORE)

YOUNG BILL(cont'd)

I'm back in college at GW with all A's. So I really can't say.

HAROLD

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

Bill picks up a black rotary phone and dials it.

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

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

HAROLD

OK, I approve of you.

INT. U.S. ARMY INDUCATION STATION - AFTERNOON

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

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

SERGEANT

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

INT. CLASSROOM AT KANSAS UNIVERSITY - AFTERNOON - FLASHBACK

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

INT. DORM ROOM KANSAS UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

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

BOBBY

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

YOUNG BILL

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

BOBBY

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

YOUNG BILL

You could kill somebody and never know it.

BOBBY

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

MONTAGE (DURING THIS CONVERSATION)

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

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

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

BILL

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

TOBEY

And you played snitch on that second roommate.

BILL
That's part of the story.

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

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

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

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

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

OFFICER NO 2
Computers are filled up. We don't need that. Private, I am a lawyer, but you see that I wear the infantry crossed sabres. We need leaders of men in combat. They become brothers, and then democrats.

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

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

INT. BAY IN A BARRACKS, BASIC TRAINING - NIGHT

A tall black SOLDIER touches Bill's chest as Bill lies on the top bunk.

SOLDIER

You've got a soft bod and a nice chest. You want (...), Lassie?

YOUNG BILL

Gett of me or I'll have you court-martialed.

The soldier backs away.

EXT. TENT CITY AT FORT RONALDSON - DAY

Bill and other soldiers jump off a truck and run into formation, screaming.

INT. COMMUNAL ARMY LATRINE, FORT RONALDSON - MOMENTS LATER

Some soldiers in fatigues, sweaty and in shock, urinate in a long wash basin that is not a urinal.

DRILL SERGEANT

Never call attention in the latrine!

INT. FORT EUSTIS VA BARRACKS - EVENING - FLASHBACK

A group of soldiers, some of the other soldiers with shirts off, march around the day room in a love train chanting "Tiptoe Through the Tulips." Young Bill, watching first, joins in, putting his hands on the shoulders of a particularly attractive soldier.

ONE SOLDIER

Oh, go way butterfly!

The soldier breaks out of the march, bends his wrists and sticks out his tongue.

YOUNG BILL

Francis. You did the gesture again.

THE SOLDIERS

The gesture! The gesture! Oh-ho-ho-ho. Tip toe through the tulips with me."

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

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

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

CHAD

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

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - EVENING

The phone, sitting on the rim of a worn, cluttered sofa among a mesh of wires connected to the computer and television, rings and BILL BERKOWTIZ, 54 and bald, hobbles on crutches to it, picking it up just in time.

BILL

Oh, Tobey! Thanks for calling back.

TOBEY (O.S.)

We got the auditorium for you set for the 25th. Now make sure your suit is pressed.

BILL

Sure.

TOBEY (O.S.)

You'll be taped. Candid camera.
You'll love the attention.

INT. AUDITORIUM - EVENING

Tobey, in a sweater, adjusts Bill's tie backstage, then leads him on stage and introduces Bill, on crutches but in a suit, to the audience.

INT. BILL'S HIGHRISE APARTMENT, MINNEAPOLIS - AFTERNOON

Bill plugs in an independent Panasonic VCR unit on a dumpy bench near his TV. The apartment is 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.

TOBEY

Gays in the military, and other things that he .

Bill fast-forwards the tape a bit to where he is talking. He is on , 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."

BILL

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.

EXT. EMPTY STAGE - DAY

Bill continues to interpret.

BILL

I changed jobs, even careers, many times, traveled, pretend to conquer the world, which I didn't/ I lectured. I got attention. But one little mystery remains. So, what did I miss, slipping out on the tribunals? Something like the present day circuit party?

EXT. COLONIAL COLLEGE DORM BUILDING AT WILLIAM AND MARY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A group of college boys, including Young Sydney, lead eight freshmen, blindfolded crudely, from the sunken garden toward a door in the basement, that has a simple stage and folding chairs set up.

YOUNG SYDNEY
 Go through, what was it, the
 proscenium doors. We have our eight
 parts of the theater.

The freshman march, wavering in a precession, onto the stage.
 Without protesting they sit down.

YOUNG SYDNEY
 Stagecraft is ready. World drama.
 Oh, the ways of college boys.

A couple of the freshmen look down at their thighs.

YOUNG SYDNEY
 You're all in shorts. You know why,
 too. Just what the hippopotamus
 ordered. Is that how you pronounce
 it. Skin's so tight that when he
 blinks his eyes he m().

The sophomores laugh.

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

The laughter turns to cackling.

SOPHOMORE
 Ldzett.

YOUNG SYDNEY
 He skipped out on the Tribunals.
 Like a deadbeat.

SOPHOMORE #2
 Then Syd why aren't you on stage?

YOUNG SYDNEY
 No.

SOPHOMORE #2
 We know what you're afraid of.

Sophomore #2 a redhead, leads Syd up to the stage. He stands
 behind the men. The sophomores scramble and look for another
 chair but don't find one.

YOUNG SYDNEY
 Ldzett would get h() as a brick if
 he saw this.
 (MORE)

YOUNG SYDNEY(cont'd)

When he sees *Playboy* you can't even tell (what is) there.

SOPHOMORE #2

How about you, (xx)-head? Syd's not got b() at all. So he doesn't matter. Let's see how you guys perform.

Now Sophomore #2 brings in a pail of soapy water, and the first sophomore brings in a full tray filled with razors. The first sophomore kneels before the first freshman, lathers the freshman's super hairy legs, and then starts scraping.

SOPHOMORES

Ouch!

EXT. W-L HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

BILL, 60, walks into the new high school, goes to the office, and puts on his substitute teacher badge. Teenagers amble by in the hallway.

He walks into a class, which looks like an English class given the various book-covers of classics on the walls and around the room. Silently, he takes attendance.

BILL

Before I take roll, I'll announce that I graduated from this place over forty years ago, in 1961.

He logs onto the computer and brings up a photocopy of the black-and-white cover of his own book, "DO ASK DO TELL" on the terminal. It shows through the overhead projector.

BILL

Some day, you will remember what I wrote, too. But like many writers when they are remembered, I'll be gone. Just like your teacher's classroom as I see it is her domain, my own body or writings, in books and on the Internet, is mine. It's like my Ring. Well, I'll break the rules, ignore the lesson plans for a minute, turn this into social studies and flash my powerpoint demo of "Our Fundamental Rights.

(MORE)

BILL(cont'd)

" If you go into Google and enter my name and this school name into a boolean search, you'll find me anyway. What do they call it, "Google hacking"?"

Bill proceeds to show the demo of his classification system of individual rights. HandsomeMalestudent, 14, taller than most of the other students, raises his hand and gets restless.

HANDSOMEMALESTUDENT

You still believe in this, man.

BILL

I do. But don't take your freedom for granted. Someone else may decide that your freedom is his peril. Remember, do as I say, not as I do. Somebody want to say, what is a "social right"?

HANDSOMEMALESTUDENT

It's a right you can make other people pay for.

BILL

Anybody else.

The class is silent but HandsomeMalestudent rises.

BILL

But remember, about freedom of speech, the more people who speak because they have a message, and write to promote themselves, the less writing is a profession, the less it is a way to make a living. Like computers.

The bell rings, and only HandsomeMalestudent stays.

BILL

Thanks for not taking advantage of the fact that I'm a substitute. That's moral.

HANDSOMEMALESTUDENT

Well, I get it. But I want to know something. Are you a hypocrite?

BILL

I know what people think.

HANDSOMEMALESTUDENT

We had that other lesson. A lot of people don't like writers.

BILL

Like we're not real people. But your permanent teachers are.

HANDSOMEMALESTUDENT

Teach me. Look, I already read the chapter in class on my PDA.

BILL

Google hacking.

HANDSOMEMALESTUDENT

You're impressed. Don't you think you could google hack to find out what happened to Syd?

HandsomeMalestudent leaves the classroom.

EXT. WILLIAM AND MARY CAMPUS PRESENT DAY - DAY

Bill walks in front of the Wren building, taking pictures with a large camcorder. He crosses the street and approaches Brown Hall from the distance and takes pictures. A security guard approaches him, accompanied by another man in a business suit. Bill walks away, keeping his camera.