

PLEASANTVILLE

A Fairytale by Gary Ross

October 7, 1996

"He was part of my dream of course
but then I was part of his dream too."

- Lewis Carroll "Through the looking glass"

FADE IN:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM. DAY.

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

COLLEGE COUNSELOR

... For those of you going on to college next year, the chance of finding a good job will actually decrease by the time you graduate. Entry level jobs will drop from thirty-one to twenty-six percent, and the median income for those jobs will go down as well ...

There is some rustling in the audience.

COLLEGE COUNSELOR (CONT)

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

INT. HIGH SCHOOL. HEALTH CLASS.

A different teacher lectures a different class of students.

HEALTH TEACHER

... The chance of contracting HIV from a promiscuous lifestyle will climb to one in one hundred and fifty. The odds of dying in an auto accident are only one in twenty-five hundred.

(beat)

Now this marks a drastic increase ...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL. SCIENCE CLASS.

Same angle. Different teacher.

SCIENCE TEACHER

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

REVERSE ANGLE. STUDENTS.

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

SCIENCE TEACHER

(chipper classroom tone)

Okay. Who can tell me what famine is?

CUT TO:

1958.

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

MAN'S VOICE (OS)

Honey, I'm home.

SUBURBAN HOME.

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

WOMAN'S VOICE (OS)

Hello darling.

WIDER.

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

BETTY

How was your day?

GEORGE

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

BETTY

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

WAGNER LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

1996 -- (LIVING COLOR)

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

GEORGE (OS)

(on T.V.)

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

DAVID

(by rote)

"It might be ..."

BETTY (OS)

(shy smile)

It might be.

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

GEORGE (OS)

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

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

DAVID'S MOM (OS)

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

INT. KITCHEN.

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

DAVID'S MOM

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

(pause)

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

INT. LIVING ROOM.

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

DAVID'S MOM (OS)

No I can't bail you out, I'm supposed to go to La Costa ...

(beat)

Well if I want to get a mud bath, that's really my business, isn't it?

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

GEORGE

(on T.V.)

Hey. Where are those kids?

DAVID

(reciting--a little louder)

"Right behind you father."

BUD AND MARY SUE TOGETHER

(on T.V.)

Right behind you father.

RESUME T.V. (BLACK AND WHITE)

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

MARYSUE

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

BETTY

What's that Bud?

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

BUD

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

BETTY

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

BUD

Well gee whizz, Mom. It wasn't the "English" fair.

There is another jarring LAUGH TRACK.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

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

DAVID'S MOM (OS)

Well sure they can stay by themselves, Barry, but that's not the point. You said you'd take them.

(beat)

Well fine--they'll stay by themselves then.

DAVID

(quietly)

What's a mother to do?

BETTY (OS)

(on T.V.)

Oh--what's a mother to do?

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

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

CUT TO:

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

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

SCHOOL COURTYARD.

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

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

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

DAVID

Hi. I mean ...

(pause)

... Hi.

REVERSE ANGLE.

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

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

DAVID

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

REVERSE ANGLE. GIRL.

She smiles wider at him, inviting him to continue.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

DAVID

(pause ...)

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

REVERSE ANGLE. GIRL.

She nods at him ...

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

DAVID

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

(pause)

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

REVERSE ANGLE. GIRL.

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

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

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

WIDE ANGLE. SCHOOLYARD.

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

ANGLE. DAVID.

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

CUT TO:

EXT. "LUNCHEON COURT". DAY.

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

HOWARD

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

DAVID

Easy. Mr. Jenkins. What JOB did Mr. Jenkins have?

Howard looks at him, puzzled.

DAVID (CONT)

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

HOWARD

Scout?

DAVID

Marmalade.

They all nod--and murmur with admiration.

DAVID (CONT)

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

Everybody thinks.

Nobody knows.

DAVID (CONT)

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

It's quiet for a beat.

HOWARD

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

DAVID

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

HOWARD

(weighing it)

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

DAVID

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

CUT TO:

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE.

David's sister, Jennifer, hangs out with her friends in the parking lot. All the girls are dressed in the exact same uniform: Blue jeans, beeper on the belt, white V-neck T shirt, car keys in their hand. (Even the girls WITHOUT a car hold car keys in their hand). Jennifer is by far the prettiest and, thus, is the leader of the group. They all look toward the Luncheon Court where David and his friends are hanging out.

KIMMY

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

JENNIFER

Only on my parent's side.

KIMMY

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

(beat)

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

A group of VERY HIP boys strut through the parking lot. They bob up and down with the self-confidence of all cool sixteen

year olds. The girls freeze when they see them.

KIMMY (CONT)

Omigod, omigod--here they come.

CHRISTIN

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

JENNIFER

(cooly)

Hi Mark.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

He pauses then looks over at her. Jennifer slides sinuously off the fender of the car, flicking her hair like a young racehorse. She has a perfect 16 year old body and the whole parking lot knows it. Mark heads over to her, followed by his lackies. The two groups meet at the tail-gate of the Nissan Pathfinder like a small summit conference.

MARK

(to Jennifer)

Hey.

JENNIFER

(right back)

Hey.

Beat ...

MARK'S LACKEYS

(to Jennifer's lackies)

Hey.

JENNIFER'S LACKEYS

(back to them)

Hey.

MARK

Saw you at the mall yesterday.

JENNIFER

Yeah ... Saw you too.

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

JENNIFER (CONT)

So you watching Pearl Jam on MTV tonight?

MARK

Yeah.

(beat)

Jennifer pauses, weighing the next statement.

JENNIFER

My mom'll be out of town.

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

MARK

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

JENNIFER

(smiling)

Cool.

MARK

(nodding faster)

Cool.

VARIOUS LACKEYS

Cool.

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

CUT TO:

EXT. WAGNER HOUSE. DUSK.

It is a south-western version of "Leave it to Beaver." The uniformity of Suburbia has been washed in earth tones. There is a red tile roof gracing every home. All the houses have the same anemic palm tree. It's a urban planner's version of hell.

JENNIFER (VO)

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

INT. WAGNER HOME.

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

JENNIFER

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

(beat)

I know, he's just so smart.

(pause ...)

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

(pause ...)

It is not slutty, Daph, it's cute.
(pause ...)
Well, "hello?" He's not coming over
here to study ...
(beat)
I know. Well I'm jealous of you too
sometimes.

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM.

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

DAVID
... He's not homeless Howard, they just
don't say where he lives.
(pause ...)
Well it's a silly question.
(pause ...)
Because nobody's homeless in
Pleasantville.

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV.

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

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

She fires up the car and pulls out of the driveway...

DAVID (CONT)
Listen Howard--it's almost six-thirty.
I gotta go.

INT. WAGNER LIVING ROOM.

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

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

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

JENNIFER
(stunned)
What are you doing?

DAVID
What are you doing?

Neither one moves. They clutch the remote together.

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

Well great. The Pleasantville Marathon starts at six thirty.

JENNIFER

Pleasantville Marathon?

DAVID

(almost reverently)
Yeah. Every episode ever.

JENNIFER

(getting hysterical)
Omigod, I don't be-lieeeeeve this! He's gonna like beeeee here!

DAVID

Weil great. You can watch TV upstairs.

JENNIFER

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

Jennifer gets panicked and yanks at the remote. David yanks back and before they know it, the remote goes flying out of their hands, CRASHING onto the hardwood floor. It smashes into a million tiny pieces.

DAVID

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

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

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

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

JENNIFER

Oh my God! He's here!

Jennifer sweeps some of the pieces frantically under the sofa

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

DIFFERENT ANGLE. FRONT DOOR.

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

DICK VAN DYKE

TV repair.

JENNIFER

(beat)

TV repair?

DICK VAN DYKE

Yeah. TV busted?

JENNIFER

(pause ...)

Yeah ...

DICK VAN DYKE

(smiling wider)

Well here I am.

REVERSE ANGLE. DAVID'S POV.

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

INT. LIVING ROOM.

David looks back at Dick Van Dyke who smiles at him, then crosses to the living room STEPPING NIMBLY AROUND THE OTTOMAN. He heads toward the TV.

DICK VAN DYKE

(seeing the smashed remote)

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

DAVID

Yeah ... Sort of ...

DICK VAN DYKE

(setting down the toolbox)

We'll get you fixed up in no time.

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

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

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

DAVID

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

DICK VAN DYKE

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

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

JENNIFER

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

DICK VAN DYKE

What's the rush?

DAVID

(cutting her off)
The Pleasantville Marathon starts at six
thirty.

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

DICK VAN DYKE

Pleasantville?

David recoils slightly. Dick Van Dyke flashes him a smile.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

Gosh, I loved that show. Watched it for
years.

JENNIFER

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

DICK VAN DYKE

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

DAVID
(stunned)
... Her father.

DICK VAN DYKE
Right. And how did she dress him?

DAVID
(still staring)
... Like Prince Charming.

DICK VAN DYKE
(studying David/
nodding)
Nice ... Nice ...

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

DICK VAN DYKE
(ignoring her)
Remember the one where Bud lost his
cousin when he was s'posed to be
watching him?

DAVID
Yeah ...

DICK VAN DYKE
What department store did they go to?

DAVID
McIntire's.

DICK VAN DYKE
McGinty's.

DAVID
No. McIntire's. Remember:
(sings)
"For the very best in men's attire,
Head right down to McIntire's."

DICK VAN DYKE
(stunned)
That's right.

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

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)
Say--why don't you take this remote
instead. It's got a little more "Ooomph"
in it.

DAVID

Oomph?

DICK VAN DYKE

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

JENNIFER

(quickly)

We'll take it.

CLOSER.

He flashes them a big smile and holds out a weird looking contraption that seems more primitive than space age. It's a strange combination of an early transistor radio and Flash Gordon ray gun. Dick Van Dyke extends it with pride, while Jennifer and David stare at him warily ...

DAVID

(beat)

How much does it cost?

DICK VAN DYKE

Oh--couldn't charge you for something like that. It's free.

JENNIFER

Free?

DICK VAN DYKE

Oh sure. Big fan like yourself. It's the least I could do.

There is a SECOND CLAP OF THUNDER even louder than the first. The house rattles for a moment then is quiet.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

Well, I better get going. Your show's almost on, and ...

(smiling at Jennifer)

It's almost time for your date.

He places the remote control gingerly on the coffee table and smiles at them. Dick starts across the living room when he suddenly catches his foot on the leg of the ottoman and tumbles end over end. He rolls on the carpet, executes a perfect somersault and comes right back to a standing position. David and Jennifer stare at him stunned when he looks back at them and smiles.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

(grinning)

Take care now.

There is another flash of lightning as he reaches for the doorknob. David and Jennifer look at one another while the

front door shuts with a THUD. It's quiet for a second or two before there is another CLAP OF THUNDER. David cocks his head.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

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

CLOSER.

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

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

The TV set turns on. Oprah's face fills the screen as an angry housewife screams at a transvestite!

DAVID

Hunh.

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

DAVID (CONT)

(relaxing)

Great.

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

JENNIFER

Lemme see that.

DAVID

No way.

He continues to flip through the channels, coming to rest on the Pleasantville Marathon.

BUD'S VOICE fills the room.

BUD (OS)

(on TV)

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

MARY SUE (OS)

(on TV)

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

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

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

ANGLE. DAVID AND JENNIFER.

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

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

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

BUD (OS)

(on TV)

"But I told Mr. Miller I'd bring a transistor in to electric shop."

MARY SUE (OS)

(on TV)

"And I told Betty Jean she could have it for the picnic with Roy."

JENNIFER

(yanking at it)

God, David. Just give it to me!

DAVID

(yanking it back)

Get lost!

JENNIFER

YOU get lost!

WIDER. LIVING ROOM.

She tugs at the remote trying to wrestle it out of his hands. David pulls in the opposite direction as they POINT IT DIRECTLY TOWARD THE TV.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. SPECIAL EFFECT.

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

WIDE ANGLE. LIVING ROOM.

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

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. (PLEASANTVILLE) DAY.

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

DAVID

(a whisper)

Oh my God.

JENNIFER

What happened?

DAVID

I'm not sure.

WIDER

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

GEORGE

(as if to his own children)

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

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

JENNIFER

(desperately)

What did you do?

DAVID

I don't know.

JENNIFER

(examining her black and white skin)

Uhhh! Look at me?! I'm like so ... pasty!

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

VOICE (OS)

Psst! Over here.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

They whirl around to see DICK VAN DYKE'S FACE smiling at them from the TV set in the corner. It's an old '50s set with a big round picture tube. They run over to him as he smiles. His face is the only color in the room.

DICK VAN DYKE

(beaming)

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

JENNIFER

What happened?

DICK VAN DYKE

A miracle.

They stare stunned at the TV set.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

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

DAVID

(to the TV set)

What the hell's going on!

DICK VAN DYKE

Shh! Can't talk like that now. You're in ...

(smiles)

You know ...

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

BETTY (OS)

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

DAVID

We're in Pleasantville?

DICK VAN DYKE

(grinning)

Dream come true, hunh?

JENNIFER

(panicking)

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

DICK VAN DYKE

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

FULL SHOT. TELEVISION SET. (COLOR)

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

MARK DAVIS
(under his breath)
... Bitch.

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. (BLACK AND WHITE AGAIN)

Jennifer flings herself at the screen, as Dick Van Dyke appears all over again.

JENNIFER
Noooooo!

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

DICK VAN DYKE
(recoiling slightly)
Why would I do that?

DAVID
Because we don't belong!

DICK VAN DYKE
Oh sure you do ... "McIntire's
Department store" ... "Their father
dressed as Prince Charming." That was
gorgeous Bud.

DAVID
My name's David.

JENNIFER
(wailing on the floor)
Oh GOD ...

DICK VAN DYKE
(a little snippy)
You know--this is a pretty strange way
of showing your appreciation.

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

DICK VAN DYKE
(hurt)
But you don't know how long I've been
looking for someone like you.

A long face slowly descends on him.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

I'm very disappointed ...

(deep breath)

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

David moves toward the screen.

DAVID

Don't get upset.

DICK VAN DYKE

(snapping back)

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

(shakes his head)

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

DAVID

Where are you going ...

DICK VAN DYKE

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

DAVID

WAIT A MINUTE!!

DICK VAN DYKE

(turning his back)

Maybe in a day or so when I'm not so emotional ...

DAVID

COME BACK!!!

Dick Van Dyke shakes his head and walks out of the shot as the screen goes completely BLACK. It cuts out entirely as Jennifer and David just stare. David grabs the remote and starts rapidly pushing buttons.

Nothing happens.

DAVID (CONT)

(dropping the gizmo)

Oh God.

JENNIFER

What's going to happen?

DAVID

I don't know ... It's not possible ...

(looking at her)

Is it possible?

BETTY (OS)

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

DAVID

It can't be possible.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

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

BETTY

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

They just stare at her.

BETTY (CONT)

Forward march.

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

BETTY (CONT)

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

JENNIFER

(dazed)

Thanks.

INT. KITCHEN.

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

THEIR POV. PARKER KITCHEN.

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

GEORGE

(once again)

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

They nod, stunned, and wander forward into the room. Bright sunlight streams through the kitchen window as a gentle symphony of songbirds sings outside. David and Jennifer stare

straight ahead as their "mother" adds some waffles to the heap.

DAVID
(under his breath)
I don't believe this.

JENNIFER
Neither do I.

GEORGE
Well, c'mon. Dig in.

David and Jennifer stare at her stunned as she puts two heaping plates at their places. Neither one moves.

BETTY
(to Jennifer)
I put blueberries in them just the way you like.

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

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

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

BETTY (CONT)
(oppressively chipper)
Here. Why don't you have some waffle cakes.
(beat)
And there's sausage and eggs and some good crisp bacon ...
(beat)
... And a ham steak.

Betty drenches the waffles in syrup and slathers on a huge slab of butter.

BETTY (CONT)
... And of course, a nice big bowl of oatmeal.

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

CUT TO:

FULL SHOT. PAT BOONE.

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

PAT BOONE

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

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

PAT BOONE (CONT)

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

SERIES OF SHOTS. PLEASANTVILLE.

The MUSIC CONTINUES as the CAMERA CUTS TO image after image of this strange "Utopia." The effect is a weird, sanitized version of MTV--as if Ronald Reagan had shot a music video. There are men tipping their hats and women walking their dogs; cheery gas station attendants and smiling policemen.

PAT BOONE (VO)

(slowly ...)

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

Pruned hedges. Twin beds. BIG houses. The CAMERA CRANES DOWN in the middle of a beautiful tree lined street to find David and Jennifer walking up the sidewalk, holding their stomachs.

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

Just take deep breaths.

JENNIFER

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

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

JENNIFER (CONT)

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

DAVID

We're supposed to be in school.

JENNIFER

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

(wailing)

Oh God ...

A man calls out from across the street.

MR. SIMPSON

Hello Bud.

DAVID

Hello Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON

Hear your Dad got a new car.

DAVID

Oh yeah. A Buick. It's swell.

JENNIFER

You know him?

DAVID

Owens the hardware store.

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

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

JENNIFER

Play along?

DAVID

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

JENNIFER

(ripping the barette from her hair)
No! I'm not gonna do it! If I don't dress like this for Mom I'm sure as hell not going to do it for you!

DAVID

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

JENNIFER

Why can't we just EXPLAIN IT?

DAVID

To who?

Jen looks around this cheery little street, and the horror starts to dawn on her. At that moment, they hear a screaming

SIREN and a bright GRAY FIRE ENGINE comes racing up the block.

WIDER.

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

DIFFERENT ANGLE. (FOLLOWING THE FIREMEN)

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

FIREMAN

C'mere, kitty ...

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

JENNIFER

Oh God, we are. We're stuck in like "Nerdville".

(shakes her head)

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

(voice wavering)

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

BOY'S VOICE (OS)

Hello Mary Sue.

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

BIFF (CONT)

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

JENNIFER

Um ... It's ...

Biff turns to see the fireman climb into the truck, with the kitty in his arms.

BIFF

Ah, right ...

(smiling at her again)

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

He takes off down the street with the sun glinting on his really keen convertible. Jennifer gapes as he disappears around the corner.

JENNIFER

Who's that?

DAVID

Biff Martin. Captain of the basketball team.

JENNIFER

(still gaping)

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

DAVID

As a matter of fact he does.

JENNIFER

(flicking her hair)

Hunh.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLEASANTVILLE HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

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

ANGLE. FROM ACROSS THE STREET.

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

JENNIFER

Those are my friends.

DAVID

Peggy Jane, Lisa Anne and Betty Jean.

JENNIFER

(staring at them)

Can we do any better?

DAVID

I don't think so.

LISA ANNE

(seeing her)
Mary Sue. You're gonna be late for
Geography.

JENNIFER

Okay ...

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

CUT TO:

INT. GEOGRAPHY CLASS. LATER ...

It looks like a propaganda film from the Eisenhower
Administration. The boys all wear crew cuts and short sleeve
button down shirts. The girls all have lacy dresses buttoned
to the neck. Everyone stares straight ahead at the
blackboard.

ANGLE. FRONT OF THE ROOM. TEACHER.

Miss Peters stands in front of the class with a pointer in
her hand. She indicates a diagram that spans the length of
the blackboard.

MISS PETERS

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

(pointing)

Tommy.

TOMMY

It's not as long?

Jennifer looks stunned as several students nod.

MISS PETERS

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

ANGLE. JENNIFER.

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

MISS PETERS

Mary Sue.

JENNIFER

What's outside of Pleasantville?

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

MISS PETERS

What?

(beat)

I don't understand ...

JENNIFER

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

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

MISS PETERS

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

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

CUT TO:

INT. GYMNASIUM. DAY.

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

SHOT. DAVID.

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

DAVID

Wow.

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

FULL SHOT. OTHER SIDE OF THE GYM.

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

COACH

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

ANGLE. DAVID.

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

BIFF (OS)

Bud ...

WIDER.

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

BIFF

(a little nervous)

Hi ya Bud.

BUD

Hi ya Biff.

He fidgets nervously for a moment looking down.

BIFF

Can I ask you a question?

BUD

Sure.

BIFF

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

DAVID

Oh God! Are we in that episode?

BIFF

What?

DAVID

I don't believe it.

BIFF

What's the matter?

DAVID

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

BIFF

Yeah ... How'd you know?

DAVID

(shaking his head)

Lucky guess.

(beat)

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

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

DAVID (CONT)

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

BIFF

(stunned)

She won't go out with me?

DAVID

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

BIFF

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

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

WIDE ANGLE. GYM.

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

SHOT. DAVID.

He retrieves the ball quickly then hurries back to Biff. David pulls him aside as play slowly resumes on the other side of the gym.

DAVID

(under his breath)

Look, I'm sure we'll work something out. I'll talk to her or something.

Biff looks at him, troubled.

DAVID (CONT)

Honest. It'll be fine.

Biff nods, a little confused, as David pats him on the back.

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR. LATER ...

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

JENNIFER

No way.

DAVID

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

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

What?

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

What were you doing in a library?

JENNIFER

I got lost.

(beat)

Oh here ... look at this!

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

DAVID

JENNIFER!

JENNIFER

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

Sure enough the tissue has become flame retardant.

DAVID

Jen, listen ...

JENNIFER

(trembling)

I like--really need a cigarette, too.

DAVID

(putting his arm around her)

I'll get us out of here. I really will. But if we don't play along we could

alter their whole existence. We may
never get home.

She looks over at him, slowly.

JENNIFER

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

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

PEGGY JANE

(high-pitched--rapid fire)

You won't believe what we just heard.

LISA ANNE

Biff Martin's going to ask you out.

BETTY JEAN

And that's not all ...

PEGGY JANE

No, that's not all ...

ALL THREE TOGETHER

He's going to give you his pin!

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

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. DUSK.

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

JENNIFER

You sure I'm supposed to wear this?

INT. MARY SUE'S ROOM.

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

JENNIFER

(looking in the mirror)

I could like kill a guy with these
things.

DAVID

It's in your closet.

JENNIFER

(examining her profile)

I've worn some kinky stuff before ...

DAVID
He won't notice anyway.

JENNIFER
What do you mean?

DAVID
They don't notice that kind of thing.

JENNIFER
So what's the point?

DAVID
Jen please ...

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

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

CUT TO:

EXT. SODA SHOP. DUSK.

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

CLOSER.

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

INT. SODA SHOP.

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

MR. JOHNSON
(looking up)
Bud?

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

MR. JOHNSON
Oh.

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

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

I didn't know what to do.

He stares at the rag a little troubled.

DAVID

What's wrong?

MR. JOHNSON

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

DAVID

(confused)

Yeah ...

MR. JOHNSON

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

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

DAVID

I'm sorry.

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

DAVID (CONT)

(gently)

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

MR. JOHNSON

I'm so glad you're here.

DAVID

I understand.

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. NIGHT.

Biff's convertible rolls up to the curb with Pat Boone playing on the radio. He runs a comb through his short blonde hair before grabbing the bouquet of flowers next to him and heading up the walk. Biff rings the doorbell and, a moment later, Jennifer's silhouette appears in the doorway ...

BIFF

Oh. Mary Sue ...

EXT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT.

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

INT. SODA SHOP.

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

DAVID
(frazzled)
Peppermint shake, chocolate soda, two orders of fries and a split?

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

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

MR. JOHNSON
There aren't any cheeseburgers.

DAVID
(turning)
What?

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

DAVID
Listen to me!

Mr. Johnson recoils slightly.

DAVID (CONT)
Do you have the lettuce?

MR. JOHNSON
... Yeah.

DAVID
Have you cooked the burgers?

MR. JOHNSON
(quieter)
Yes.

DAVID

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

Mr. Johnson stares at him.

DAVID (CONT)

Really. It's fine.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. SODA SHOP ENTRANCE.

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

ANGLE. DAVID.

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

FULL SHOT. TABLE.

Biff stares across the table at Jennifer with the wholesome devotion of a labrador retriever. He looks like a cross between Troy Donahue and a mannequin.

BIFF

(haltingly)

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

JENNIFER

(full blown "Mary Sue")

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

He guffaws for a moment or two before speaking again.

BIFF

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

JENNIFER

Really Biff? The keenest?

BIFF

Oh yeah.

JENNIFER

(all sarcasm)

Gosh. I hardly know what to say.

DAVID (OS)

What can I get you two?

WIDER.

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

BIFF

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

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

JENNIFER

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

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

JENNIFER (CONT)

Cheeseburger it is.

ANGLE. FOLLOWING DAVID.

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

RESUME. TABLE.

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

BIFF

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

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

BIFF (CONT)

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

JENNIFER

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

BIFF

Hunh?

(goony laugh)

Oh, right ...

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

BIFF (CONT)

So I know I haven't been steady with anybody, but I just don't want to rush it. You don't want to make a mistake with something that important.

JENNIFER

Oh, gosh no.

BIFF

I mean, there's kids that are even holding hands already but I figure there's plenty of time for that kind of thing later on. Don't you?

JENNIFER

Oh you bet.

(beat)

Will you excuse me for a sec?

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

ANGLE. DAVID.

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

INT. BATHROOM.

Of course there aren't any toilets. Jennifer gropes her way to the sink and leans against the counter.

JENNIFER

Jesus Chirist ...

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

GIRL'S VOICES

(overlapping)

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

JENNIFER

(straight ahead)
I don't think he knows how.

They TITTER away, even though they don't get it either. It sounds like an aviary.

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

PEGGY JANE
I bet he is. I bet he is.

BETTY JEAN
I bet he's even gonna hold her hand!

They TITTER some more as Jennifer shakes her head.

INT. SODA SHOP.

David is standing beside their table as she returns from the bathroom.

DAVID
(chipper)
Couple of cheeseburgers and two cherry cokes.
(pointedly)
If you need anything, I'll be right over there.

JENNIFER
(Mary Sue)
Gee whiz "Bud", what could we possibly need when we have each other?

She flashes him a "sweet" smile then reaches out and TOUCHES BIFF'S HAND. Both boys jump slightly as Jennifer gives her brother a venomous grin then suddenly waves "bye bye." David just stares at her panicked as he moves haltingly back to the Soda fountain.

BIFF
(befuddled)
Anyhow ... I really wanted to come over and sit next to you in civics but ...

JENNIFER
You want to get out of here?

BIFF
What?

JENNIFER
You wanna get out of here? You wanna leave?

DAVID (CONT)
(to God)
Thanks a lot.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

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

SHOT. BIFF'S CAR.

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

BIFF
Sure is pretty.

JENNIFER
(staring at him)
Oh yeah ... Gorgeous.

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

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

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

JENNIFER (CONT)
(breathy)
Or maybe I should just "pin" you.

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

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

CLOSE UP. BIFF.

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

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

BETTY

Bud?

WIDER.

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

GEORGE

Son, what's wrong?

DAVID

Have you seen Mary Sue?

BETTY

Why no. She's still on her date with Biff ... is something the matter?

DAVID

(still panting a little)

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

His mother and father exchange a "knowing" look. George rests a hand on his shoulder.

GEORGE

(oppressively paternal)

Bud, your sister's a little older now and she's naturally going to start going out with boys.

(beat)

... In fact pretty soon--she's even going to get married and make someone a good little home-maker like your mother here.

(smiles at Betty/

inside joke)

That's IF she can learn to bake.

BETTY

Oh, George ...

GEORGE

But your sister is a fine young woman and she would never do anything for us to be concerned about.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

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

CLOSER.

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

INT. CAR.

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

BIFF

(some terror)

I think I better go home now Mary Sue ...

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

JENNIFER

(breathless)

... Why?

BIFF

(more terror)

I think ... I might be ill ...

He glances down at his lap a little confused.

BIFF (CONT)

(a whisper)

I think something's happening to me.

He looks at his crotch then back at Jennifer. She reaches up and grabs a handful of his hair.

JENNIFER

It's s'posed to happen, Biff.

BIFF

It is?

JENNIFER

Trust me ...

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

and OUT OF FRAME ...

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. NIGHT.

A single light is burning in the kitchen window.

BETTY (OS)

Do you want some more cookies?

INT. KITCHEN.

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

DAVID

(sick)

Oh no ... I'm fine.

BETTY

How 'bout some Marshmallow Rice Squares?

DAVID

I'm fine.

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

BETTY

Now who could that be.

FOLLOWING DAVID.

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

DAVID

Oh hi!

MR. JOHNSON

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

DAVID

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

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

MR. JOHNSON

Bud ...

DAVID

Yeah ...

MR. JOHNSON

(sotto)

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

DAVID

Yeah ...

MR. JOHNSON

(proud)

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

CLOSER.

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

MR. JOHNSON

(more confidential)

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

He looks at David with pride then suddenly shifts his glance behind him.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

Oh, hello Betty.

BETTY

Hello Bill.

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

DAVID

(quickly)

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

He turns and starts hustling him down the walk just as Biff's convertible pulls up at the curb.

INT. CAR. CLOSE UP. JENNIFER.

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

JENNIFER

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

ANGLE. BIFF. OTHER SIDE OF CAR.

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

BIFF

... Me too.

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

EXT. CAR.

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

JENNIFER

(sweetly)

Hello Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh, hello Mary Sue.

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

DAVID

(urgent whisper)

What did you do to him?

JENNIFER

(innocently)

Nothing.

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

DAVID

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

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

JENNIFER

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

(mock YAWN)

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

She flashes her brother an evil grin.

JENNIFER (CONT)

'Night.

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

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT.

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

CLOSE UP. BIFF.

The stunned look turns to one of sheer amazement:

BIFF'S POV. ROSE.

There, against a gray picket fence, on a black and white street in a black and white neighborhood, A SINGLE RED ROSE IS BLOOMING.

CUT TO:

AERIAL SHOT. PLEASANTVILLE. MORNING

It would be a stunning vista if it wasn't in black and white. The church steeple gleams in the sunlight. The perfect little houses look like a row of pretty toys ...

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. DAY.

David sits parked in front of the TV furtively turning through the channels. He flips the dial frantically. No sign of Dick Van Dyke.

BETTY (OS)

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

He gives her a sheepish grin and sighs ...

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL GYM. DAY.

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

CLOSER.

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

HIS POV. BIFF AND OTHER BOYS.

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

WIDER ANGLE. INCLUDING DAVID.

DAVID

(quietly)

Oh no ...

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

COACH

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

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

DAVID

Oh my God ...

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR. DAY.

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

DAVID

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

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

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

JENNIFER

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

(beat)

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

PEGGY JANE

(walking past)

"MS". How you doin'?

JENNIFER

Kewl "PJ". How you doin'?

PEGGY JANE
(relishing her new word)
"Kewl."

Jennifer smiles at her friend as she goes by.

DAVID
You have no right to do this.

JENNIFER
Well if I don't who will?

DAVID
They're happy like this.

JENNIFER
David, nobody's happy in a Poodle skirt
and a sweater set.
(pause ...)
You like all this don't you?

David recoils slightly.

JENNIFER (CONT)
I mean, you don't think it's just like
dorky or funny or something ... you
really like it.
(shudders)
Oh God! I am just so personally
horrified right now ...

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

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

DAVID
They don't have that kind of potential.

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

Jennifer motions behind her to a boy and girl who are locked
in an intimate conversation. The girl wears bobby socks and
the boy wears a letterman's sweater, but the conversation is
sexually charged. They speak to one another in a close
whisper--their faces inches apart. All at once the girl gets
shy and glances away. She blows a big bubble with her gum,
but the BUBBLE IS BRIGHT PINK IN AN OTHERWISE GRAY FRAME.

BOY

Wow. What kind of gum is that?

CLOSE. DAVID AND JENNIFER.

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

JENNIFER

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

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

It is the exact same shot as before: The CAMERA STARTS ITS LONG SLOW TRACK behind the vehicles, except this time ALL OF THEM ARE ROCKING. Various limbs and articles of clothing hang out the open windows. MOANS of pleasure waft out over Lover's Lane as the pond glistens in the distance ...

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

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

DR. HENDERSON

Let me see it again.

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

DR. HENDERSON (CONT)

(examining it)

Well ... I don't think it's anything to worry about ... It'll probably just clear up by itself.

(to Lisa Anne)

Cut down on greasy foods and chocolate. No french fries, that kind of thing.

(aside/

to the Mother)

It's just a "teenage" thing.

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

It is really rocking now. More cars are lined up along the edge of the lake as the REAL (AND NASTY) VERSION OF TOOTY FRUITY (BY LITTLE RICHARD) PLAYS OS:

LIL RICHARD (VO)

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

SERIES OF SHOTS. (MONTAGE)

PARKER LIVING ROOM.

TOOTY FRUITY CONTINUES AS DAVID FLIPS FRANTICALLY THROUGH THE CHANNELS LOOKING FOR DICK VAN DYKE. THERE IS ONLY A PEPSODENT COMMERCIAL. HE SHAKES HIS HEAD ...

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

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

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

David examines the back of the TV set ...

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

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

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

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

LIL RICHARD (OS)

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

SODA SHOP. NIGHT. ON DAVID.

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

SODA SHOP.

The place has been transformed. What was cheery and benign a couple of days before, has gotten a little bit dangerous. The letterman sweaters have been replaced by leather jackets. The Pat Boone and Johnny Mathis have given way to real Rock and Roll. There is a James Dean/Marlon Brando edge in the air. Somebody has played the flip side.

ANGLE. DAVID.

He enters the soda shop adjusting his paper hat. A young couple makes out passionately in the doorway--all tongues and hands. When they break David sees that the girl's cheeks are

FLUSHED WITH RED. He stares at her for a beat as they return to normal. David shakes his head.

FOLLOWING HIM.

He crosses to the counter and grabs his pencil and little pad of paper. Various things have already GONE TO COLOR AROUND THE ROOM: The JUKE BOX ... The COKE SIGN .. THE NAUGAHIDE STOOLS ... David crosses to one of the booths where his sister's arm is draped over Biff's shoulder.

DAVID

What'll it be?

BIFF

(still chipper as ever)

Gee whizz, Bud. Guess I'll just have the usual. Cheeseburger and a cherry coke.

Bud has already written it down. He glances over at his sister.

JENNIFER

Me too. Sounds swell.

DAVID

(pointed)

Really? It seems so fattening.

Before she can answer he smiles to himself and crosses behind the counter. Bud posts the order and turns to Mr. Johnson.

DAVID (CONT)

Two cheeseburgers, two cherry cokes.

MR. JOHNSON

(staring straight ahead)

There aren't any cheeseburgers.

DAVID

(exasperated)

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

MR. JOHNSON

Oh--what's the point, Bud?

CLOSER.

Mr. Johnson. looks up at him with a weird kind of emptiness in his eyes. David grabs his arm.

DAVID

C'mere.

He pulls him along the counter toward a little office storeroom in the back. He yanks him inside and shuts the

door.

INT. STOREROOM.

It is just as cheery as the rest of the place. There is a small table with a telephone on it. A Texaco calendar shows a happy family motoring in their Rambler.

DAVID

What did you say?

Mr. Johnson glances down with a little shame and confusion.

MR. JOHNSON

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

DAVID

What are you talking about! You make hamburgers! That is the point!

MR. JOHNSON

No I know ... I know I do ...
(he pauses, then looks up)
But it's always the same, you know?
Grill the bun, flip the meat, melt the
cheese ... It never changes. It never
gets any better or worse ...

DAVID

Just listen to me ...

MR. JOHNSON

(not hearing him)
... Like the other night, when I closed
up by myself. That was different ...

DAVID

Forget about that!

MR. JOHNSON

Oh ... Okay.
(beat/
lower)
... But I really liked it.

Bud takes a deep breath. He stares at Mr. Johnson, then tries to speak softly.

DAVID

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

MR. JOHNSON

Why?

DAVID
(exasperated)
So they can have their hamburgers!

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

MR. JOHNSON
(like a secret)
You know what I really like?

DAVID
(warily)
... What's that?

MR. JOHNSON
Christmastime.

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

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)
See every year on Dec 3, I get to paint
the Christmas decorations in the window.
And every year, I get to paint a
different thing ...
(beat)
One year it's the North Pole. The next
I do Santa's workshop. Here I'll show
you.

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

DAVID
(impressed)
Wow ... That's pretty good ...

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

David looks at him speechless.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)
Well don't you?

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

MR. JOHNSON

Really?

DAVID

Yeah.

MR. JOHNSON

Oh. Okay. I'll try that then.

CUT TO:

INT. BARBERSHOP. DAY

The Barber Pole spins in three shades of gray. Several men are gathered around the two chairs in the front of Gus' shop. Besides being the barbershop, it is the bastion of all male life in Pleasantville. Bud and Mary Sue's "father" (George) sits in one of the chairs. "Big Bob" McGee, owner of the drugstore, supermarket and Chevy dealership sits in the other. He has a crew cut that's getting shorter.

GUS

Have they ever lost before?

GEORGE

Basketball? No they sure haven't.

BOB

Just feels "wrong", that's all.

There are several murmurs.

THIRD PATRON

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

GUS

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

BOB

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

GUS

Well, yeah. That's true too.

More murmurs, Everyone looks straight ahead trying to figure.

CUT TO:

INT. PARKER KITCHEN. DAY.

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

woman who accompanied her daughter to the doctor's office.

MARGE

(dealing the cards)

... He said it would clear up on its own if she just stayed away from fried foods and sweets ...

BETTY

Well that makes sense.

MARGE

Except it's spread to her lips now too. Oh, I don't know.

MARY

(a THIRD WOMAN)

And you say it's just "red?"

MARGE

Well--like red, only ... "redder."

MARY

Hunh. I know what you mean. That's like the front of Bill Johnson's shop. I was going by it the other day and it looked green only "greener."

SHOT. BETTY.

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

MARGE

(lowering her voice)

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

MARY

That is strange.

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

HER POV. BRIDGE HAND.

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

CLOSE UP. BETTY.

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

lifting them up and taking another look.

MARGE

Betty, it's your bid.

She swallows trying to keep her composure.

BETTY

Uh ... Seven hearts.

They murmur at the strength of the hand.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. NIGHT.

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

INT. KITCHEN.

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

BETTY

Mary Sue?

JENNIFER

Yeah?

Betty hesitates. Rinses out a pot.

BETTY

Can I ask you a question?

JENNIFER

Sure.

She pauses for a long moment.

BETTY

What goes on up at Lover's Lane?

JENNIFER

(turning toward her)

What do you mean?

BETTY

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

(she looks over)

Is it holding hands? That kind of thing?

JENNIFER

Yeah ...
 (beat)
That--and ...

She stops herself.

BETTY
What?

JENNIFER
It doesn't matter.

BETTY
No. I want to know.

JENNIFER
 (glances toward the living room/
 lowers her voice)
... Sex.

BETTY
Ah.

Betty nods from the import of the tone but not the meaning. A beat goes by ...

BETTY (CONT)
What's sex?

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

JENNIFER
You sure you want to know this?

BETTY
Yes.

JENNIFER
Okay.

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

JENNIFER (CONT)
You see Mom ...
 (softer and with understanding)
When two people like each other very
much ...

Betty looks at her and nods ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARKER HOUSE. NIGHT.

The TV keeps flickering in the window.

INT. KITCHEN. LATER ...

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

JENNIFER

You okay?

REVERSE ANGLE. BETTY.

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

BETTY

Yes ...

(softly)

It's just that ...

JENNIFER

(gently)

What?

BETTY

Well ...

(looking up)

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

SHOT. JENNIFER.

She bites her lip weighing her next sentence ...

JENNIFER

(leaning forward)

Oh. Hmm ...

(whisper/

woman to woman)

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

ANGLE. BETTY.

She looks across the table, perplexed.

CUT TO:

INT. PARKER BEDROOM. NIGHT.

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

GEORGE
Sweetie? You coming to bed?

There is no answer.

GEORGE (CONT)
Betty?

INT. BATHROOM.

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

BETTY
(calling out)
Yeah ... I'm just going to take a bath first.

CLOSER. BETTY.

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

CLOSER STILL ...

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

EVEN TIGHTER. ON HER FACE ...

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

EXTREME CLOSE UP BETTY'S FACE.

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

HER POV. BATHROOM ...

ALL AT ONCE, EVERYTHING AROUND STARTS TO TURN FROM BLACK AND WHITE TO COLOR. A BIRD OUT THE WINDOW BECOMES A RED BREASTED ROBIN. THE TILE ON THE TUB TURNS OUT TO BE PURPLE. GREEN TOWEL ... PINK ROBE ... BRIGHT YELLOW DAISIES ON THE PLASTIC SHOWER CURTAIN.

CLOSE UP. BETTY'S FACE.

She stares in amazement. Beads of sweat form on Betty's forehead as the world goes to TECHNICOLOR. The THUNDERING WATER POUNDS IN THE BACKGROUND, but beneath can be heard the beginnings of a faint, low, MOAN. Her eyes dart around the room. Her breathing quickens: Faster ... Harder ... More intense ... THEN SUDDENLY ...

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT.

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

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

DAVID

Oh my God!

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT.

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

DAVID

Jesus Christ ...

FOLLOWING DAVID.

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

EXT. FIRE STATION.

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

DAVID

FIRE! FIRE!

INT. FIRE STATION.

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

INT. BUNKROOM.

All the firemen are sitting around playing Gin Rummy when

David rushes in the front door. They can hear his voice from down the hall.

DAVID
(entering)
FIRE ... FIRE ...

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

DAVID (CONT)
(beat)
CAT!!!

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

EXT. MAIN STREET. NIGHT.

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

DAVID
Right here!

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

FIRE CHIEF
Where is it?

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

FOLLOWING DAVID.

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

DAVID
Here! Grab this nozzle.

FIREMAN
But where's the ...

DAVID
Just grab it!

He strips out about fifteen feet of hose, then grabs the fireman and pulls him toward the curb. David parts the crowd and positions the man right in front of the flames.

DAVID (CONT)

(shouting)
Okay! Now point this right at the
flames--like this.

The Fireman nods and does as he is told. David opens the
valve sending out a huge FLUME OF WATER.

FIREMAN
Whoa!
(beat)
So that's what these do.

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

BOB (VO)
(fading in)
... In honor and in recognition of
your heroism ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY

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

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

WIDER.

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

BOB
I am pleased to present You with this
special commendation, from the
Pleasantville Chamber of Commerce!

He hands the plaque to David as the entire town bursts into
APPLAUSE.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. LATER ...

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

GIRL'S VOICE

Hi Bud ...

WIDER.

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

MARGARET
That was sure swell ...

DAVID
Oh. Thanks, Margaret.

MARGARET
(smiling)
I baked you my oatmeal cookies.

DAVID
(vaguely remembering an episode)
Oh, no ... You baked those for Whitey.

MARGARET
No. I baked them for you.

DAVID
No. You baked them for Whitey.

MARGARET
(low and guttural)
No. I baked them for you.

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

DAVID
Um ... thanks.

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

MARGARET
See ya.

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

CUT TO:

SODA SHOP. DUSK.

David heads toward work with his apron and little paper hat. The BUDDY HOLLY music has given way to "hip" '50s JAZZ. DAVE

BRUBECK drifts out of the soda shop as David pauses for a moment, takes a bite of his oatmeal cookie, and heads inside.

SODA SHOP.

The place has "morphed" even more. If it was a teenage hangout before, it has become almost a Bohemian coffee house now. Brubeck's "TAKE FIVE" plays in the background while several patrons talk "intensely" in their booths.

DOORWAY.

David walks into the building and pauses. Next to him, one of the boys from the basketball team plays along with the jazz on a BONGO DRUM. There are several COFFEE cups on the table. Jennifer gets up quickly and comes over to him.

JENNIFER

(in a whisper)

I had nothing to do with that fire.

DAVID

(quietly)

It's okay.

JENNIFER

Not directly anyhow ...

DAVID

It's fine.

David glances at the booth beside them and realizes that the bongos have stopped playing. All the kids are staring up at him, with a weird expression of awe.

JENNIFER

(still under her breath)

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

DAVID

Sure.

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

DAVID (CONT)

How you doin'?

VARIOUS KIDS

Swell ...

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

BOY

How'd you know about the fire?

DAVID

What?

BOY

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

David hesitates, weighing his words.

DAVID

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

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

BOY

And where's that?

DAVID

(carefully)

Um ... Outside of Pleasantville.

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

BOY

What's outside of Pleasantville?

DAVID

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

BOY

What is it?

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

DAVID

It's really not important.

GIRL'S VOICE (OS)

What's outside of Pleasantville?

REVERSE ANGLE. INCLUDING DOORWAY.

Margaret Henderson (the girl with the cookies) stands in the
doorway staring at David. She hangs on his words with the
same excitement as the others, it just means so much more.

MARGARET (CONT)

(hungry for knowledge)

C'mon. Tell us ...

She stares right in his eyes. She's ten feet away but might as well be touching him.

DAVID

(slowly)

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

There's an excited giggle. They lean forward.

MARGARET

(an exotic concept)

Keeps going ...

DAVID

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

2ND BOY

(from the back)

Like the "Mighty Mississippi".

DAVID

... What?

He moves forward extending a book. The cover reads: "THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKELBERRY FINN." David opens the first page. There is printing inside.

BOY

(quoting)

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

DAVID

(turning to Jennifer)

I thought the books were blank?

JENNIFER

They were.

He looks over at her.

JENNIFER (CONT)

(quickly)

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

DAVID

The pages filled in?

JENNIFER

But like only up to the part about
the raft, because I didn't read any
farther.

CLOSER.

David flips through the book and sure enough only the first
chapter has print. The pages are blank after that.

2ND BOY

Do you know how it ends?

DAVID

(hesitating)

Well, yeah ... I do.

MARGARET

(breathless)

So how does it end?

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

DAVID

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

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

DAVID (CONT)

(quietly)

Oh my God.

2ND BOY

Wow!

3RD BOY

Do you know this one?

He shoves another book in front of David.

DAVID

Hunh?

(looks down at the book)

Oh yeah ... Well this is great.

(beat)

See--Holden Caulfield is like this
really lonely kid...

EXT. PLEASANTVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

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

EXTREME WIDE SHOT. LIBRARY. FROM ACROSS THE STREET.

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

GUS

I don't know Phil. It's pretty strange.

PHIL

I'll say it's strange. Gettin' stranger.

Big Bob McGee nods and rubs his hands over his fresh haircut.

PHIL (CONT)

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

BURT

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

WIDER STILL.

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

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

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

GEORGE

Want some bridge mix?

BOB

Oh, no thanks ...

GEORGE

Betty's making some pineapple kabobs ...

BOB

I'm fine--but thank you.

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

BOB (CONT)

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

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

BOB (CONT)

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

(beat)

You know what I mean by "changes"?

GEORGE

"Changes."

BOB

(nodding)

"Changes."

(takes a belt of martini)

And it's not just the fire or big stuff like that. It's little things.

(beat)

Did you hear about Bill Miller?

GEORGE

(concerned)

No. What?

BOB

Wife wants him to get one of those new beds.

GEORGE

One of those ... big beds?

Bob nods.

GEORGE (CONT)

Oh my gosh. What's he gonna to do?

BOB

I really don't know.

(beat)

Ben Miller's son just quit his job as a boxboy at the market.

GEORGE

... How?

BIG BOB

Said he didn't want to do it anymore. Just took off his apron in the middle of an order. Mrs. Thompson had her

groceries spread all over the counter
... Took 'em four hours to sort the
whole thing out.

GEORGE

Holy cow.

Bob takes a belt of his drink ...

BIG BOB

George, everyone likes you.

GEORGE

Oh well ...

BOB

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

GEORGE

(heartfelt)

Thank you very much.

BOB

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

GEORGE

No. Of course not.

BOB

(big patriarchal smile)

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

GEORGE

(stunned/
moved)

Oh my Gosh. I hardly know what to say.

BOB

(smiling)

Why don't you start by saying "yes,"
and then getting me one of those swell
pineapple kabobs.

GEORGE

Oh sure ... You bet.

(calling out)

Betty ...

There is no answer.

GEORGE (CONT)
(louder this time)
BETTY ...

Still no answer.

GEORGE (CONT)
BETTY--BOB WANTS TO TRY ONE OF YOUR
GREAT HORS D'OEUVRES ...

WIDER.

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

DAVID
I'll get her.

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

INT. KITCHEN.

David gets a couple of steps in and stops. He looks across the room to see:

REVERSE ANGLE.

Betty standing at the kitchen sink, just staring out the window. Her back is to him. She grips the formica kitchen counter.

DAVID
(approaching slowly)
Are you okay?

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

DAVID (CONT)
Are you alright?

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

BETTY
(fighting tears)
What am I going to do?

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

DAVID
It's okay. It's alright.

BETTY
(trembling)
I can't go out there. How can I go out
there?

She looks right up at David.

BETTY (CONT)
(quieter)
Look at me ...

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

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

DAVID
Have you got any make up?

BETTY
In my handbag.

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

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

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

CLOSER.

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

REVERSE ANGLE. OVER BETTY'S SHOULDER.

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

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV. BETTY'S FACE.

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

BETTY
(off his reaction)
What?

David shakes his head and forces a smile. He hands her the
compact so she can examine herself. Betty holds it up to her

face, turning her head first right, then left.

BETTY (CONT)

(beat)

Does it look okay?

DAVID

Looks just like it did.

BETTY

And they won't be able to tell?

DAVID

(even quieter)

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

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

DAVID (CONT)

Wait.

BETTY

(turning back)

What?

He wants to say something, but doesn't. David shakes his head.

DAVID

It's fine.

She smiles again and balances the tray in front of her.

BETTY

Thank you.

DAVID

(sadly)

Sure.

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

CUT TO:

INT. SODA SHOP. DAY.

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

MR. JOHNSON

Oh, hi.

DAVID
(entering)

Hi.

MR. JOHNSON
Aren't you a little early?

DAVID
(quietly)
I brought you something ... From the
library.

CLOSER. FOLLOWING DAVID.

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

DAVID
It's an art book.

MR. JOHNSON
Oh my Gosh, Bud ...

DAVID
Open it.

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

DAVID (CONT)
I just thought since you liked
painting it might help to ...

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

HIS POV. (INSERT) ART BOOK ...

Massacio's "Expulsion of Adam and Eve" leaps off the pages in vibrant, tortured color. The beauty of the garden is offset by their agony and their shame. HE TURNS THE PAGE ...

Titian's "Venus to Utano". Soft, fleshy, in a rich golden light. She is utterly real and entirely nude. The folds of her flesh almost seem to glow ...

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

MR. JOHNSON (OS)
Mmmgh ...

Faintly, almost imperceptibly, the SOUND of a rich ARIA begins to UNDERSCORE THE IMAGES. It's so faint you can't be

sure you even hear it at all ... like you're hearing it with your eyes.

He TURNS THE PAGES faster. Breugal's "Harvesters" ... Tumees "Steam Train" ... Monet's "Cathedralo" ... Cezanne's "Oranges" ... Mr. Johnson shuts the book.

WIDER. SODA SHOP.

They sit like that for a beat.

MR. JOHNSON

It's beautiful, Bud ...

He looks up at David, troubled.

DAVID

What's wrong?

MR. JOHNSON

I'll never be able to do that.

DAVID

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

MR. JOHNSON

No, that's not it.

Mr. Johnson shuts the book gently.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

Where am I going to see colors like that?

ANGLE. DAVID.

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

MR. JOHNSON

Must be awfully lucky to see colors like that. I bet they don't even know how lucky they are.

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

He just stares for a second.

EXT. MAIN STREET. LONG SHOT. DAY.

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

CLOSER.

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

DAVID

Hi.

MARGARET

(turning/
lighting up)

Oh ... Hi.

DAVID

(pause)

Look, I probably shouldn't be asking
you this--not knowing you that well
and all ...

Margaret stops in the street and turns to him.

DAVID (CONT)

It's just that my folks are gonna
stay home and they said I could use
their car.

(moment of truth/
abandoning his speech)

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

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

MARGARET

(breathless)

Sure ... Where would we go?

DAVID

(swallows)

... Lover's Lane?

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM STREET. DAY.

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

DAVID

(calling back)

Sorry ...

FOLLOWING DAVID.

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

INT. PARKER HOUSE. FOYER.

DAVID

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

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

MAN'S VOICE (OS)

Bud ...

He pauses a second and glances back.

MAN'S VOICE (CONT)

David ...

He peers into the living room. David goes a little grayer ...

HIS POV. TELEVISION.

Dick Van Dyke is looking back at him from the middle of the TV screen. He seems to have a bit of a stubble.

DICK VAN DYKE

Hello there.

DAVID

(wary)
... Hi.

DICK VAN DYKE

(stage whisper)
Well c'mere, young fella.

INT. LIVING ROOM.

David crosses slowly over to the TV set.

DICK VAN DYKE

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

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

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

So even though I can't make any

promises, well--I figured if you asked me real nice--I might just be willing to talk about it again.

DAVID

(quickly)

I can't.

DICK VAN DYKE

What?

DAVID

Talk about it. Right now, I mean. I got to ... um ...

The look turns suddenly dark and ominous.

DICK VAN DYKE

Bud--I thought you wanted to come home.

DAVID

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

DICK VAN DYKE

(getting testy)

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

DAVID

Re-runs?

DICK VAN DYKE

Like when Margaret Henderson makes her cookies for Whitey.

(losing it a little)

... Those aren't your cookies Bud.

DAVID

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

DICK VAN DYKE

Excuse me?

DAVID

Well they're not just cookies. I mean, they're great cookies ... Look, I'd love to get into this whole thing but I'm really running late. Why don't we hook up tomorrow?

DICK VAN DYKE

BUD.

DAVID

Terrific. I'll talk to you then.

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

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

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

REVERSE ANGLE.

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

JENNIFER

What's wrong?

DAVID

Nothing.

JENNIFER

Nothing?

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

DAVID

Listen ...

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

DAVID (CONT)

You're reading?

JENNIFER

(glancing at the book)

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

She holds up the cover.

JENNIFER (CONT)

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

DAVID

(amazed)

... Yeah.

JENNIFER
Seemed kinda sexy. Look. I read 35
pages.

DAVID
(still stunned)
That's great.

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

JENNIFER
So what is it?

DAVID
Well ... I just ...
(out of the blue)
Can I ask you a question?

JENNIFER
Sure.

DAVID
Remember when you told me that Lisa
Rosenberg liked me?

JENNIFER
Yeah ...

DAVID
Well--did she really like me or were
you just making that up.

JENNIFER
No. She really liked you.

DAVID
You weren't playing a joke? She
woulda gone out with me?

JENNIFER
Gone out with you. She woulda like
rearranged your tonsils.

DAVID
Wow.

He looks at her amazed--reliving the missed opportunity.

JENNIFER
Can I ask you a question?

DAVID
Yes.

JENNIFER

How come I'm still in black and white?

DAVID

(back to earth)

What?

JENNIFER

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

DAVID

Oh, I don't know. Maybe ...

(thinks)

... it's not just the sex ...

JENNIFER

(looking up quickly)

What?

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

JENNIFER (CONT)

No, it's not just the sex, is it?

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

CUT TO:

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

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

INT. CAR. NIGHT. LATER ...

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

HIS POV. MARGARET.

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

SHOT. DAVID.

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

WIDER.

They pass a sign with a happy family on it that reads:

"NOW LEAVING PLEASANTVILLE"

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

"NOW ENTERING PLEASANTVILLE"

DIFFERENT ANGLE. THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD.

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

MARGARET

Um ... You gotta turn off Main Street.

DAVID

Oh ... Right.

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

EXT. CAR. DUSK.

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

HIS POV. CAR SEAT.

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

INT. CAR.

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

DAVID

Wow.

THEIR POV. LOVERS LANE.

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

SAM COOKE (VO)
(over the car radios)
"Cupid, draw back your bow ..."

SHOT. CAR.

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

INT. CAR.

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

DAVID
What's that smell?

Margaret looks at him and smiles. She leans well out of the convertible, and plucks a Gardenia from a bush that is blooming beside the car.

MARGARET
Aren't these great?

David takes the flower, then puts it up to his nose. He takes a long deep breath then all at once, his posture seems to relax. As the fragrance enters his body his eyes drift like some strange narcotic is washing over him. David lowers the flower ...

EXT. MAIN STREET. DUSK.

Betty is walking down Main Street with a shopping bag on either hand. From a block away, she looks like any other homemaker in Pleasantville. You don't even notice the gray make-up.

CLOSER. FOLLOWING BETTY.

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

HER POV. ACROSS THE STREET.

There, in the middle of the block, sits Mr. Johnson's soda shop. The whole scene is still black and white, except for

the large CUBIST PAINTING THAT FILLS MR. JOHNSON'S WINDOW. It is rendered in bright PINKS, YELLOWS AND ORANGES, and looks like a Braque or a Picasso except for the unusual subject matter. Upon closer examination you see that all the spheres and cones add up to an avante garde snow scene, with a Cubist Santa hovering over the roof tops.

SHOT. BETTY.

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

INT. SODA SHOP.

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

MR. JOHNSON (OS)
We're closed right now ...

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

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

MR. JOHNSON
Oh, hi ...

BETTY
(turning to leave)
I'm sorry ...

MR. JOHNSON
No, no ... Come on in.

REVERSE ANGLE.

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

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

MR. JOHNSON
Thanks.

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

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)
I was just trying to do one of these

"still lifes."

He sighs and looks behind him. Next to the easel is a bowl of GRAY FRUIT.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

Having kind of a tough time.

BETTY

I think it looks nice.

MR. JOHNSON

Well ...

(shrugs)

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

He leads her over to the table and points down at the art book. It's open to a Cezanne that nearly burns off the page.

BETTY

Oh my ...

CLOSER.

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

MR. JOHNSON

Here. Look at this.

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

BETTY

(breathless)

Where'd you get this?

MR. JOHNSON

Bud brought it to me.

BETTY

Bud?

MR. JOHNSON

Here's my favorite.

INSERT. BOOK.

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

MR. JOHNSON

What do you think?

She doesn't answer ...

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)
Isn't it great how she's resting like
that?

BETTY
(faintly)
She's crying.

WIDER.

Mr. Johnson looks down at the painting.

MR. JOHNSON
What?

BETTY
She's crying.

MR. JOHNSON
No she's not.

BETTY
Yes she is.

He looks up at her ...

REVERSE ANGLE.

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

ANGLE. MR. JOHNSON.

He stares up at her in amazement.

ANGLE. BETTY.

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

WIDER.

MR. JOHNSON
(following her)
Wait ...

BETTY
I've got to go ...

MR. JOHNSON
It's alright.

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

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

It's alright. Let me see.

BETTY

(shame)

No ...

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

MR. JOHNSON

It's beautiful.

CLOSER ...

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

MR. JOHNSON

(a whisper)

... It's beautiful.

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

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

You shouldn't cover that up.

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

CLOSER STILL ...

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

CUT TO:

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

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

CLOSER.

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

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

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

REVERSE ANGLE.

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

JENNIFER

(impressed)

Hunh.

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

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

EXT. PARKER HOUSE.

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

BIFF

Mary Sue--C'mon ...

JENNIFER

(leaning out the window)

What are you doing?

BIFF

(jiggling in anticipation)

It's six-thirty ...

JENNIFER

So.

BIFF

We were gonna ... You know ...

He jiggles some more.

JENNIFER

Oh.
(remembering)
I can't.

BIFF

Why not?

She glances down at her book.

JENNIFER

I'm busy.

BIFF

(surprised)
With what?

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM.

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

JENNIFER

(turning to Biff)
I'm studying.

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

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

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

DAVID

(inhaling)
Mmmngh.

MARGARET

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

DAVID

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

MARGARET

You don't know?

Margaret laughs like that isn't even possible. She shifts on the grass hiking her skirt up above the knee. It reveals a long tan leg beneath it. David watches as she kicks off her shoes, rubbing her feet through the long cool grass.

MARGARET (CONT)

So what's it like?

DAVID

What?

MARGARET

(a whisper)

Out there.

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

DAVID

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

She leans forward.

MARGARET

How?

DAVID

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

MARGARET

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

She giggles. David looks at her in amazement.

MARGARET (CONT)

Do they have an Ocean? I've heard about the ocean.

DAVID

Yeah.

MARGARET

What's that like?

DAVID

Well it's big. And it's blue ...
(as if realizing it for the first time)
... It's really really blue.

MARGARET

Mmmm.

(beat)

Boy. It's hot up here.

Suddenly and without warning Margaret unbuttons her cardigan sweater. She slips it off, arching her back like the figurehead of a ship and David just stares at her breasts. She wears a light cotton blouse and even in the moonlight it forms a translucent silhouette ... She lays the sweater across the grass and leans back on it.

MARGARET (CONT)

You want some berries?

DAVID

Hunh?

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

MARGARET

I picked them myself. They grow wild up here.

(eating one)

Mmm. So sweet.

DAVID

(looking at them)

They just grow like that?

MARGARET

(looking straight up)

Oh yeah. There's a lot of stuff.

Currants and strawberries ... Here.

I'll show you.

She hops up and scampers across the grassy bank, kicking her heels behind her. Margaret reaches a tree in the distance and reaches toward an upper limb, stretching out her body like a piece of statuary. She picks a piece of fruit and scampers back toward him, hiking up her skirt as she goes ...

MARGARET (CONT)

Here.

CLOSER.

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

ANGLE. DAVID.

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

MARGARET

Go on. Try it.

HIS POV.

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

WIDER. DAVID AND MARGARET.

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

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT.

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

INT. FOYER.

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

GEORGE

Honey--I'm home.

There is no response. He looks a little perplexed but smiles as he calls out again:

GEORGE (CONT)

Honey--I'm home ...

There is more silence. George looks around a little confused when there is a BOOMING CLAP OF THUNDER ...

CUT TO:

INT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT.

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

CLOSER.

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

BOOM ...

ANGLE. WINDOW.

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

BETTY
(frightened)
What is that?

MR. JOHNSON
I don't know.

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

REVERSE ANGLE. INCLUDING THE PAINTING.

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

WIDER. BETTY AND MR. JOHNSON.

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

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVER'S LANE. NIGHT.

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

MARGARET
What is that?

ANGLE. DAVID.

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

MARGARET
What's going on?

DAVID

Rain.

MARGARET

Real rain?

DAVID

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

She looks at him frightened. David smiles.

DAVID (CONT)

Right. Of course you don't ...

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

MARGARET

What do we do?

DAVID

(reaching the car)

We'll just put up the top.

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

MARGARET

What top?

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

DAVID

It's fine. Come on.

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

DAVID (CONT)

It's alright. There's nothing to be afraid of.

They look a little reassured and Margaret looks up at him positively adoringly. She clings to his shoulder as the storm howls a few feet away ...

CUT TO:

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM. NIGHT.

She stands at the window looking out at the driving rain.

Jennifer still holds the D.H. Lawrence book in her hand. There is a huge flash of lightning and another clap of thunder.

JENNIFER

Cool ...

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

PARKER LIVING ROOM.

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

GEORGE

(a little frightened/
a little petulant)

Honey, I'm home ...

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

GEORGE (CONT)

(baffled)

Where's my dinner?

He sniffs a couple of times but there are no familiar cooking smells. George flings open the door to the kitchen but that's empty as well.

KITCHEN.

He crosses into the darkness ...

GEORGE

Where's my dinner ...

INT. FOYER.

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

GEORGE

(insistent)

Where's my DINNER ...

EXT. HOUSE.

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

GEORGE

Where's my DINNER!

ON GEORGE.

He stumbles down the front walk in a state of complete confusion. The rain pounds against his body and within seconds his shirt is soaked through to the skin.

GEORGE
(over the storm)
WHERE'S MY DINNER ...

EXT. ELM STREET.

A tree limb crashes to the ground but he keeps stumbling through the torrent. George reels down Elm Street screaming skyward in the distance.

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

SERIES OF SHOTS. FOLLOWING GEORGE ...

He turns on Main Street and goes reeling past the insurance agency where he works. George howls into the wind and he passes the hardware store, the gas station, the bakery ... Finally he pauses outside the barbershop. It's empty as well with the spinning barber pole being buffeted by the rain. George lowers his arms and just stares into the darkened shop. His voice grows quieter bewildered and shivering ...

GEORGE
(plaintively)
Where's my dinner?

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

INT. BOWLING ALLEY. NIGHT.

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

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

ANGLE. BIG BOB.

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

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV.

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

hair is drenched and dripping.

BOB

What happened?

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

WIDER.

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

BOB

Are you alright?

(looking at him)

What is it?

GEORGE

(faintly)

Rain.

BOB

(beat)

Real rain?

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

BOB (CONT)

Oh my God ...

He turns back to George.

BOB (CONT)

... We had no idea. Burt was rolling a 250 and ...

(beat)

Are you alright?

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

BOB (CONT)

What happened?

GEORGE

(still shivering)

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

ANGLE. MEN.

They all nod in recognition.

ANGLE. GEORGE.

GEORGE

... Only no one was there.

A MURMUR goes through the men.

GEORGE (CONT)

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

They all GASP.

GEORGE (CONT)

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

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

GEORGE (CONT)

But she hadn't. She was gone.

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

BOB

(gently/
the patriarch)

... It's gonna be fine George.

George looks up at him helplessly. Bob pats him reassuringly
on the back.

GUS

What do we do Bob?

BOB

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

They murmur again. Bob gathers a little steam.

BOB (CONT)

(like a WWII movie)

... That's real rain out there
gentlemen. This isn't some little
"virus" that's going to "clear up on
it's own." There's something

happening to our town and I think we
can all see where it comes from.

They nod in agreement.

BOB (CONT)

We're gonna need a town meeting.
Phil, how fast can you turn around
a leaflet in your print shop?

PHIL

Couple of hours.

BOB

Gus, why don't you get a bunch of
kids from the basketball team to help
you put them up on lampposts and tree
trunks ...

Gus nods. Big Bob turns to George and smiles. It's a warm,
patriarchal smile. He claps a hand on George's shoulder.

BOB (CONT)

(soothingly)

And the first thing you're gonna do
is get a cup of hot cocoa and a nice
dry bowling shirt.

INT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT.

The rain still pounds out the window. Betty and Mr. Johnson
are huddled in one of the booths watching the deluge through
Mr. Johnson's snow scene in the window. Betty is in soft
radiant color now. Almost the whole frame seems to glow
pink ...

MR. JOHNSON

You can't go out there.

BETTY

But I really should get home.

MR. JOHNSON

But you can't go out there.

There is another fork of lightning and a booming peel of
THUNDER. Betty sighs. She's past struggling. Betty shuts her
eyes for a moment and listens to the rain pounding on the
roof.

BETTY

Sounds nice ... Once you get used
to it.

MR. JOHNSON

(listening)

Yeah. It does.

There is another flash and a loud BOOM. Betty smiles this time.

BETTY

Like a drum.

MR. JOHNSON

Yeah.

(thinks)

Or like sprinklers in the summer ...

Betty smiles. They both listen for a moment and the fear seems to fade a little. The RAIN POUNDS harder on the roof as Betty nestles down in the booth, a little closer to Mr. Johnson. They just sit there listening for a moment or two. Betty starts to smile ...

EXT. LOVER'S LANE.

David huddles with Margaret under the rocky ledge as she nestles against him with her head on his shoulder.

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM.

She lies on her bed, still reading the book, the spitting image of Mary Sue. Her hair is up in a bun now. The glasses have slipped down her nose. There is another fork of lightning and the LOUDEST THUNDER CLAP of all. Jennifer smiles slightly and pulls Mary Sue's afghan over her shoulders as she fluffs the pillow and turns the page.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP. A BRIGHT RED ROSE.

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

AERIAL SHOT. PLEASANTVILLE.

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

INT. SODA SHOP.

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

MR. JOHNSON

(seeing the rainbow)

Oh my Gosh ...

EXT. LOVER'S LANE.

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

MARGARET

(awed)

Oh my God ...

INT. JENNIFER'S ROOM.

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

JENNIFER

(looking at the rainbow)

Oh my God ...

INT. BOWLING ALLEY.

The men are all passed out across the various lanes and scoring tables. It looks like a YMCA shelter. After a moment or two Big Bob yawns, and stretches, and glances out the glass doorway. He sees the rainbow and freezes in shock.

BOB

(horrified)

Oh my GOD!

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM ST. DAY.

David comes gliding up Maple Street in the sunshine with a huge smile on his face. He has that special grin and faraway look that a boy only knows once in his life. Perplexingly he is still in black and white. Bud turns on Elm Street and starts heading for his house when he glances up and suddenly freezes.

HIS POV. TREE TRUNK.

There, tacked to the bark, is a hastily scrawled public notice:

TOWN MEETING TONIGHT
ALL "TRUE" CITIZENS
OF PLEASANTVILLE

ANGLE. DAVID.

He looks up at it for a moment.

INT. PARKER KITCHEN. DUSK.

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

BETTY

I told you where I was.

GEORGE

All night?

BETTY

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

GEORGE

(the ultimate defense)

I was in a bowling-alley.

Betty turns--glances out the window.

GEORGE (CONT)

(sudden smile)

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

BETTY

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

GEORGE

(bigger smile)

Sure you are.

BETTY

No I'm not.

She turns to face him. George flinches slightly.

BETTY (CONT)

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

GEORGE

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

BETTY

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

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

GEORGE

(protesting)

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

BETTY

(gently)
I don't want it to go away.

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

GEORGE
(the '50s patriarch)
Okay--now you listen to me ...
(beat)
You're gonna come to this meeting and
you're gonna put on this make up, and
you're gonna come home at six o'clock
every night and have dinner ready on
this table.

BETTY
(softly)
No I'm not sweetie.

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

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

George's eyes widen.

BETTY (CONT)
I made a couple of lunches for you
and put them in brown paper bags ...
(much quieter)
I'm gonna go now.

GEORGE
Where are you gonna go?

BETTY
I'm gonna go now.

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

GEORGE
Betty, don't go out there like that!
They'll see you!
(beat)
They'll SEE you!

And she closes the door behind her.

GEORGE (CONT)

Betty, come back here!

EXT. TOWN HALL. NIGHT.

Dozens of black and white citizens stream in through the front door.

SHOT. OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE STREET.

Several "transformed" teenagers stare at the spectacle with their FLESH COLORED SKIN AND BRIGHT BLUE EYES. They seem to hang back in the shadows.

INT. TOWN HALL.

Big Bob stands at the podium beneath a permanent banner that reads "PLEASANTVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE." As the only legally constituted body in Pleasantville, it is a natural place for a town meeting. There is nothing bright and cheery however. The floor lamps in each corner cast huge, looming shadows up the walls. The light at the podium bathes Big Bob's face in a blinding splash of light. The whole thing evokes some weird twisted image from German Expressionism-- like they are about to go look for Frankenstein. It is grayer than gray.

CLOSER. PODIUM.

Big Bob stands at a lectern with a Rotary insignia on the front. He speaks calmly but compellingly to a hundred men and women who hang on his every word. Bob holds a BRIGHT YELLOW GRAPEFRUIT.

BOB

This was found over in Dave Murphy's
trash can. There were four of them
like this ...

There is a murmur from the crowd ...

CLOSE UP. GEORGE.

He sits up on the stage in an honored position right behind Bob. George wears a shiny new ROTARY PIN in his lapel, as a full-fledged member of the Chamber of Commerce. He sits stoic and upright with the sense of safety and reassurance that a shiny new pin can give you.

SHOT. BOB.

He holds up a pair of BRIGHT RED BOXER SHORTS.

BOB

Jane Davidson found these in her
son's laundry basket.

There is a LOUDER MURMUR. The crowd shifts in their seats.
Bob points behind him to a BRIGHT GREEN lawn chair.

BOB (CONT)

This is from Mary Petersen's front
porch. She found one last week.
There were two more this morning ...

The MURMUR starts to grow ...

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM STREET. NIGHT.

David and Margaret stand beneath the big Elm tree outside
Margaret's house: a statue of two young lovers. They wrap
their arms around each other in a classic silhouette. The
meeting across town seems a million miles away. After a
moment or two, David reaches behind the tree and pulls out a
beautifully wrapped gift. It is three feet long with a bright
RED bow.

DAVID

(softly)

I got you something.

Margaret's eyes widen. She beams at him, then tears off the
wrapping paper revealing a great big umbrella ... a real
umbrella. She looks up at him thrilled.

MARGARET

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

DAVID

It was a prop for the school play ...

She looks down and giggles.

MARGARET

Can I open it?

DAVID

Sure ...

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

WIDER.

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

DRIVER

Hello Bud ...

DAVID

(clipped)

Hello Whitey.

They smile at each other for no good reason. It's scary and arrogant.

WHITEY

(more pointed)

Hello Margaret.

MARGARET

Hello Whitey ...

WHITEY

(loud)

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

DAVID

(curt)

No reason.

(pause/

firing back)

How come you're not?

WHITEY

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

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

WHITEY (CONT)

No reason hunh ... See I thought maybe it was cause you were too busy entertaining your colored girlfriend.

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

DAVID

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

WHITEY

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

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

WHITEY (CONT)

(leering more)

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

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

DAVID

It's fine ... It doesn't mean anything.

She nods, groping for reassurance ...

CUT TO:

INT. TOWN HALL. NIGHT.

The chamber of commerce meeting is still in full swing.
Various citizens are now on their feet, screaming from the
audience.

WOMAN

Ed McFadden's got a blue front door.

ED MCFADDEN

It's always been blue!

WOMAN

Not that blue!

MAN

There's a big tree turning orange
in Joe Baker's front yard!

SHOT. GEORGE.

He still sits behind Bob with the same stoic expression on
his face. George fingers the little pin in his lapel ...

BOB

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

SHOT. BOB.

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

BOB

Obviously certain "changes" have
been happening. Up until now, things
in Pleasantville have always been--
well ... "Pleasant." And, recently,
certain things have become ...
"Un-Pleasant." Now it seems to me

the first thing we have to do is to
separate out the things that are
pleasant, from the things that are
"Un-Pleasant."

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

BOB (CONT)

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

CUT TO:

INT. SODA SHOP. NIGHT.

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

WIDER.

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

DISSOLVE TO:

FULL SHOT. SHOP WINDOW. MORNING.

Burt Campbell opens up the hardware store like he does every
morning, only today there is a slight difference. He swings
open the door, puts out the rakes and shovels, then sets a
newly handwritten sign clearly in the front window:

"NO COLOREDS"

SERIES OF SHOTS. SHOP WINDOWS.

As the businesses are opened on Main Street, more and more
"NO COLOREDS" signs appear in the windows: next to the
donuts ... by fishing poles ... beside the stationery
supplies ... Everything else looks frighteningly the same...

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. DAY.

Joey Anderson, the local paper boy, is finishing his morning
rounds. He reaches in his bag and tosses left toward the
bakery. Then he throws right toward the post office. Then he
turns left toward the soda shop, does a double take and slams
into a trash can ...

WIDER. SODA SHOP.

Where Mr. Johnson had once painted his cubist snow scene, there is a brand new painting that isn't cubist at all. A NUDE version of Betty graces the shop window--painted in curving sensual brush strokes. Joey stops his bike and just stares in amazement. He gets up and rides away as fast as he possibly can ...

CUT TO:

MAIN STREET. LATER ...

David is in a happy daze, wandering up Main Street and doesn't even notice the crowd gathered outside Mr. Johnson's soda shop. After a moment or two, he glances up and sees the window ...

CLOSER. DAVID.

His eyes go wide. The murmur of the crowd grows louder as stray derisive comments rise above the noise. David glances from the nude in window to the growing angry mob ...

MAIN STREET. DAY.

David goes tearing through the business district looking for any sign of his "mother." He glances in the flower shop ... toward the green grocer ... David is just about to turn on Elm Street when a booming voice seems to come from the sky ...

DICK VAN DYKE (OS)

Bud ...

David stops and looks to his right. There, in the window of the Philco TV store, are twenty screens of various sizes displaying the image of Dick Van Dyke.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

I want a word with you ...

DAVID

(scared)

Oh--well ...

DICK VAN DYKE

(BOOMING)

NOW!

The sound reverberates like God Himself. David ducks inside the store, slamming the door behind him.

INT. STORE.

Fifty Dick Van Dyke's stare at him from every TV in the store. The effect is smothering.

DICK VAN DYKE

(still pretty loud)
What the hell do you think you're
doing!

David glances around, not sure where to look.

DAVID
(terrified)
What do you mean?

DICK VAN DYKE
What do I MEAN!
(beat)
You think this is a toy? You think
it's your own little goddamn
coloring book ...

DAVID
Look--it just sort of "happened" ...

DICK VAN DYKE
A deluge doesn't just "happen."
Bolts of lightning don't just
"happen" ...
(louder)
You burned down an ELM tree for
Christ's sake ...

DAVID
I had nothing to do with that.

DICK VAN DYKE
Oh. I'm sorry--refresh my memory.
What episode does the orgy happen
in, again?

DAVID
Look ...

DICK VAN DYKE
It was a gift Bud. It was so
special. You liked these things
as much as I did, remember:
Warm smells in the family kitchen?
A smile from a stranger? You know
how rare that is?

DAVID
(beat/
quietly)
... Only if they mean it.

Dick Van Dyke looks at him for a beat, then goes "red" in the
face.

DICK VAN DYKE
OKAY. NOW YOU'RE REALLY STARTING

TO PISS ME OFF!

DAVID

(finding courage)

I didn't do anything wrong.

DICK VAN DYKE

Oh no? Let me show you something!

SHOT. TV SCREEN.

All at once a box appears in the upper right hand corner of the screen containing the image of David and Margaret at Lover's Lane. The VIDEOTAPE rolls forward as she extends the BRIGHT RED APPLE. David hesitates, then takes it, then puts it to his mouth and takes a bite.

DICK VAN DYKE

"YOU DON'T DESERVE THIS PLACE."

The image of David biting the apple PLAYS BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS like some football instant replay ...

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

YOU DON'T DESERVE TO LIVE IN THIS
PARADISE!

WIDER.

David just stares at the repeated images of Dick Van Dyke on the TV screens.

DICK VAN DYKE

(quickly)

Where's the remote control I gave
you?

DAVID

Why?

DICK VAN DYKE

Because you're coming home. I'm
gonna put this place back the way
it was.

DAVID

No you're not.

DICK VAN DYKE

EXCUSE ME?

DAVID

(gathering strength)

I'm sorry ... I can't let you do that.

DICK VAN DYKE

(nuts)

JUST GIMME THE GODDAMN REMOTE!

He lunges toward the screen and slams his hand against the "barrier."

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

OW!

DAVID

(terrified)

I'm going to leave now.

DICK VAN DYKE

You're not going anywhere. You're gonna get that remote and you're gonna come home and we're gonna make everybody HAPPY AGAIN!!!

Dick Van Dyke looks at him stunned as David turns and leaves the shop.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

Don't make me get rough with you!
I can get awfully fucking rough!

ELM STREET. DAY.

David sprints down the tree lined street toward his house. The leaves on some of the trees are starting to turn GREEN even this far into town. David vaults over Mr. Simpson's hedge and goes tearing up his front walk.

INT. FOYER.

The door flies open and he rushes in, breathless. David glances around the house to make sure that it is empty. He crosses into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM.

David rushes to the TV and grabs the remote. He looks down at it, glances at the television, then bolts for the front door.

MAIN STREET. DAY.

David moves quickly down Main Street looking for a place to stash the remote. He pauses in front of the Pleasantville Travel Agency. It has posters in the window depicting various destinations in and around Pleasantville (the place doesn't see much business). David bends down to stash the remote in a drain pipe near the entrance when he hears VOICES from up the street.

WIDER.

David turns to see a small crowd up near the end of Main Street. He sticks the remote in the drain pipe and rises to

his feet as the voices get louder.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

The crowd is moving toward him. A woman walks in front of a group of young men who circle around her, taunting and harassing her. A moment later David can make out the face: BETTY clutches her handbag to her chest while the crowd circles her like a pack of dogs.

CLOSER. BETTY.

The ROSY HUE of her face stands out in stark relief to the black and white faces around her. Betty holds her head high with dignity (and fear) while the ugly epithets overlap one another "Oooh--let's see the rest of you ... Let's see what's under that nice blue dress ... Bet she's even pinker than her picture ..." One of the boys yanks at Betty's skirt and she quickens her pace. Just at that moment the boy is shoved to the ground ...

WIDER.

David shields his "mother" as he shoves one of the boys into the dirt. The kid gets up but David punches him hard in the side of the jaw and the rest of them just stare. (Violence is as new as anything else and it seems to freeze the moment.) David steps in front of his "mother" with both fists clenched.

DAVID

(as scared as she is)

Come on!

He plants his back foot primed for action. The crowd of black and white thugs just stares at it.

DAVID (CONT)

COME ON!

ANGLE. CROWD.

They look at him warily. The boy reaches up and feels the side of his mouth where a trickle of RED BLOOD is running down his chin. He looks at his finger in horror and starts backing away.

DAVID

Get out of here!

They back away further and David takes a threatening step. The boys turn and run as he turns back to face his "mother."

DIFFERENT ANGLE. BETTY. (OVER DAVID'S SHOULDER)

David moves up to her gently.

DAVID

Are you alright?

She nods, still clutching her purse to her chest. David reaches out and touches her cheek when suddenly her eyes go wide.

DAVID (CONT)

(off her look)

What?

CLOSER. STILL OVER DAVID'S SHOULDER.

Betty reaches into her purse and pulls out her compact. She opens it, and holds it up to David, showing him the reflected image of his own face. AT LAST HE HAS TURNED TO COLOR.

REVERSE ANGLE. DAVID.

He holds the mirror staring at his own reflection. The courage which transformed him only seems to grow. They look at each other, both in color now, when David puts a gentle arm around her shoulder.

DAVID

(quietly)

Come on.

He begins to lead her up toward the corner.

CUT TO:

FULL SHOT. SODA SHOP WINDOW. DAY.

A larger crowd of hooligans has now gathered around the nude painting of Betty in the window. The jeers and cat calls are even louder. The "closed" sign still sits in the doorway. After a beat or two, a HUGE BRICK SHATTERS THE GLASS ...

WIDER.

A big CHEER goes up from the crowd. Drunk on adrenalin, the fever builds and ANOTHER BRICK SMASHES THE WINDOW. In an instant, Mr. Johnson's "canvas" is totally destroyed. The CHEERING grows louder ...

Almost by osmosis, the crowd rushes the building together. The door is kicked in and they stream into the place. Soon all that can be heard is the weird SOUND OF LAUGHTER AND BROKEN GLASS.

INT. SODA SHOP.

It is an orgy of destruction. Stools are hurled--tables ripped out. The cash register is turned over. Two boys kick in the front of the juke box ...

EXT. MAIN ST. DAY.

David and Betty round the corner to find the Soda Shop being destroyed. They stand at the far side of the intersection watching the carnage as the crowd continues to run amok. After a moment or two, there are some more HOOTS as MARGARET comes running toward them with the front of her blouse ripped open.

DAVID

Oh my God.

He takes her in his arms and Margaret starts to sob. David strokes her hair.

DAVID (CONT)

Are you alright? Are you okay?

She nods. Margaret catches her breath for a moment or two, then glances down to her side ...

WIDER.

She is clutching the umbrella in her left hand. The thing has been ripped to shreds. The spines are broken and the fabric is torn. Margaret stares at the thing with a combination of confusion and shame. David goes white with rage and looks toward the mob.

BETTY

(taking his arm)

No. Let's get out of here.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. (LEADING TO LOVER'S LANE).

They all ride in George's convertible up the twisting turning road. It has turned completely PINK with the dogwood petals. David winds up the trail, in the fading light, looking for refuge. He clutches the wheel tight.

DAVID

We should be okay up here.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD.

The car twists and turns up the narrow dirt road. After a moment, Lover's Lane reveals itself. It is lush and green like before only this time, there is one major difference. A phalanx of BLACK AND WHITE THUGS have created a roadblock in the foreground.

WIDER.

David jams on his breaks when he sees the barrier. It is a weird incongruous image: the black and white roadblock in

front with the vibrant colors of the pond and willow behind--like some perfect dream you can never get to. The thugs have turned their cars sideways and dragged several huge logs across the road. They hold axe-handles in their hands.

DAVID

(a whisper)

We better go.

EXT. MAIN STREET. NIGHT.

Darkness has fallen and the streetlamps have come on. Some debris is scattered around the street and distant sounds of the mob still fill the air. David rolls back into town with the headlights off.

CLOSER. CAR.

MARGARET

Where are they?

DAVID

I'm not sure.

They head down Main St. and turn the corner on Walnut. All at once, a weird ORANGE LIGHT bathes the car ...

REVERSE ANGLE. THEIR POV.

A BONFIRE has been lit in the middle of the street between the library and the barber shop. Twenty to thirty people are gathered around it still whooping and hollering as the bright ORANGE FLAMES shoot into the air.

ANGLE. CAR.

David pulls over by the curb, and their eyes go wide ...

REVERSE ANGLE.

From closer up, it becomes clear what they're burning. Huge piles of library books have been dumped onto the sidewalk, waiting their turn on the pyre. There is a strange celebratory atmosphere as they chuck book after book on the flames, with the glee of a teenager tossing a firecracker. David sees something and bolts from the car ...

DAVID

Oh my God.

ANGLE. SIDE OF THE BONFIRE.

Jennifer is locked in some strange wrestling match with Biff. He clutches a book over her head while she tugs at his wrist trying to stop him from throwing it on the fire ...

JENNIFER

Don't! Just let go.

BIFF

It's better, Mary Sue.

JENNIFER

I said, NO!

(yanking it)

... I've read like one book in my
whole life and I'll be damned if I
let you throw it on that fire ...

Jennifer wrestles with him for a couple of seconds and then suddenly kicks Biff in the groin. He doubles over in agony when Jennifer snatches the book and bolts in the other direction.

DIFFERENT ANGLE. STREET.

She sprints up the street and is just passing the barber shop when a hand reaches out and grabs her. Jennifer starts to scream but David puts a hand to her mouth.

DAVID

(a whisper)

It's okay. It's me.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT. SODA SHOP. OTHER SIDE OF MAIN STREET.

The crowd has moved on and all that is left is the dark wreckage of the soda shop. Several stools lie out in the street and shards of brightly painted glass are scattered around the sidewalk. It is eerily quiet.

WIDER.

David, Betty and Margaret sit silently in the car, across the street with the lights off. He unlatches the door handle and gets out slowly. The rest of them follow him into the empty street as they move silently toward the soda shop, like some platoon on patrol.

REVERSE ANGLE.

As they get closer, more of the wreckage comes into view. Half a booth ... a soda spigot ... After a moment or two Jennifer looks up and gasps.

CLOSER.

Several teenagers step out of the shadows. They have scraped faces and ripped clothing--the signs. Most are dazed and ALL OF THEM ARE IN COLOR. After a second or two, more appear: Mary Jane ... Lisa Anne ... The boy who was reading Huck Finn...

ANGLE. DAVID.

The kids turn to him as if he has some kind of answer. Of course he doesn't. The sounds of the Mob still carry through the air from somewhere off in the distance.

DAVID

Let's go inside.

INT. SODA SHOP.

The place is just sad. All the remnants of what they had are strewn around the floor, The jukebox is turned over. The stools are ripped out of the floor. Betty looks over at the corner where he painted her ... The easel is smashed to bits.

ANGLE. BETTY.

She brings a knuckle to her lip and David puts an arm around her and draws her close. After a moment or two they HEAR a weird SCRAPING sound.

DAVID

Hello?

The SCRAPING SOUND stops. They all look to the open door and after a second or two, Mr. Johnson appears holding a broom and dustpan.

MR. JOHNSON

Just thought I'd try to tidy it up a bit.

Betty runs across and throws her arms around him. The teenagers watch as she holds him tight.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT)

It's okay. Once we sweep it up it'll be alright again ...

Betty stifles a sob as he strokes her hair. No one says anything while they just embrace for a moment. Finally ...

DAVID

Well he's right. Come on. Let's turn these booths back up. "Mary Sue", why don't you help me slide this in front of the door. We'll be okay in here.

They respond to the tone of leadership. One by one the kids start to pitch in, sifting their way through the wreckage. Jennifer and David slide a barricade in front of the door as the kids try to put their shop back together.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWN HALL. (CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEETING) NIGHT.

Big Bob stands at the podium addressing a packed house. The atmosphere is odd: somewhere between a bake-off and a lynching. People sit in the aisles and in the window sills. Bob points his finger.

BOB

This is not the answer people.

The crowd quiets a bit. He leans over the lectern.

BOB (CONT)

No matter how upset we may get, or how frustrated we may be, we're not gonna solve our problems out in the street. It's just the wrong way to do it. We have to have a "Code of Conduct" we can all agree to live by.

His tone grows softer--more concerned ...

BOB (CONT)

Now, I asked George and Burt here to sketch out some ideas-and I think they've done a terrific job.

(beat/

scans the crowd)

If we all agree on these then we can take a vote and I think we'll start to move in the right direction.

ANGLE. CROWD.

They murmur and nod ...

BOB

(reading from the
CODE OF CONDUCT")

"ONE: All public disruption and acts of vandalism are to cease immediately."

EXT. BONFIRE. NIGHT.

It is still ablaze with books. As Bob continues to READ in VOICE OVER, a firetruck comes screeching up to the curb.

SHOT. FIRETRUCK.

The same fireman who learned to use the hose before pulls several yards of it from the back of the truck. He can barely contain his excitement as he gets to open the valve and extinguish the raging bonfire ...

BOB

"TWO: All citizens of Pleasantville are to treat one another in a courteous and "pleasant" manner ..."

SERIES OF SHOTS. LAMPPOSTS.

The CODE OF CONDUCT is nailed to lampposts and tree trunks in rapid succession. It is plastered on walls and in shop windows ...

SODA SHOP.

Debris is still strewn around the street. A dim light emanates from inside.

INT. SODA SHOP.

It looks like a scene from the French Revolution. Ten to fifteen kids huddle behind the barricade while David reads the code of conduct out loud by flashlight.

LISA ANNE

"Courteous and Pleasant manner."
That doesn't sound too bad.

David just looks at her then continues.

DAVID

(reading from THE CODE)

"THREE: The area commonly known as Lover's Lane as well as the Pleasantville Public Library shall be closed until further notice."

This sends a murmur amongst the kids.

DAVID (CONT)

"FOUR: The only permissible recorded music shall be the following: Pat Boone, Johnny Mathis, Perry Como, Jack Jones, The marches of John Phillips Souza or the Star Spangled Banner. In no event shall any music be tolerated that is not of a temperate or "pleasant" nature."

VARIOUS KIDS

(overlapping)

"Oh my gosh ... No ..."

David holds up his hand.

DAVID

"FIVE: There shall be no public sale of umbrellas or preparation

for inclement weather of any kind."

Various glances dart back and forth between them. David continues.

DAVID (CONT)

"SIX: No bedframe or mattress may be sold measuring more than 38 inches wide."

(pause)

"SEVEN: The only permissible exterior paint colors shall be BLACK, WHITE or GRAY, despite the recent availability of certain alternatives."

David looks over at Mr. Johnson who just winces slightly. Betty clutches his hand.

DAVID (CONT)

"EIGHT: All elementary and high school curriculums shall teach the "non-changist" view of history-- emphasizing "continuity" over "alteration."

(David pauses)

Wow.

David lowers the paper.

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

It is SILENT in the soda shop. Everyone sits motionless for a moment or two, letting the decree sink in. David just stares down at the piece of paper in his hand with a weird kind of sadness.

Off in the corner, however, one of the boys has been fiddling with the jukebox and hasn't paid any attention to what was being read. All of a sudden, his voice rings from the corner.

BOY

Hey. This thing works.

He hits a button and BUDDY HOLLY's voice fills the soda shop. RAVE ON blares at almost top volume recalling a more festive time.

BUDDY HOLLY

Well all the things that you say
and do Make me want to be with
you-oo-oo ...

LISA ANNE

(suddenly/
in a panic)
Turn that off!

The boy looks back at her.

LISA ANNE (CONT)

(shrieking)

You're not allowed to do that now!

He flinches and pulls the plug from the wall. The jukebox winds down with a groan as the electricity drains out of it. David looks at the kids then suddenly speaks in a calm clear tone.

DAVID

Sure you are.

He walks across the soda shop and plugs it back in. The kids watch spellbound at this personal display of defiance.

WIDER SHOT. SODA SHOP.

Buddy Holly's voice fills the Soda Shop but it has a suddenly different meaning. All the kids listen spellbound, as if to an anthem, while the Rock and Roll lives up to its rebellious reputation.

BUDDY HOLLY

The little things that you say and do

Make we want to be with you-oo-oo ...

RAVE ON! It's a crazy feeling ...

RAVE ON! It's got me reelin' ...

Jennifer looks over at her brother with pride. Betty puts an arm around Mr. Johnson, feeling a little stronger--a little safer ... The kids seem to relax a bit, and even if they don't feel totally reassured, at least they don't feel ashamed.

Twenty "colored" faces listen as Buddy Holly tells them RAVE ON. David stands beside the jukebox like a captain at the helm of his ship ...

EXT. STREET. LATER ...

He steps out over the debris and looks both directions. David motions toward the shop and a moment later the kids emerge. The disturbance seems to have died down and the street is silent although strewn with debris. David turns to the kids.

DAVID

(whisper)

Stick together till you get off

Main Street.

They nod and head off down the block. David just watches them silently from the wreckage of the soda shop ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE. NIGHT.

The Fire Department is cleaning up the charred remains of the bonfire ...

INT. SODA SHOP. LATER ...

Betty is asleep in one of the booths. Jennifer sleeps beside her on the floor. David and Margaret sleep next to them in another booth with Margaret curled up against his chest. David opens his eyes.

REVERSE ANGLE. HIS POV.

Mr. Johnson is standing in the middle of the shop, staring at the large piece of plywood where his window used to be. He just gazes at the thing as if he could look through it. There's a faraway look in his eye.

SHOT. DAVID.

He rises carefully from the booth, without waking Margaret. David crosses over to Mr. Johnson and speaks in a whisper.

DAVID

It's okay. We'll get you a new one.

MR. JOHNSON

(softly)

I don't know what I'd do if I
couldn't paint anymore Bud. I just
don't know what I'd do ...

CLOSE UP. DAVID.

He just nods. David glances down at the table next to him. He picks up one of the brightly painted shards of glass and just looks at it. It's orange and pink and yellow. David thinks for a second.

DAVID

Maybe I have an idea.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. DAWN.

The same paper boy who rode into the trash can, peddles down Main Street tossing his papers toward the curb. He throws right toward the post office, then left toward the hardware store, then right toward the bakery, then finally looks up.

CLOSER.

This time the boy slams into a lamp post. He tumbles off his bike and stares straight ahead in disbelief ...

HIS POV. TOWN HALL.

Two men sleep at the base of the wall next to a clutter of paint cans. Above them, however, is painted A VIVID ALMOST UTOPIAN MURAL OF THE TOWN OF PLEASANTVILLE in LIVING COLOR. Instead of being drab, the place literally gleams with life. The post office turns out to be a RICH RED BRICK. The sky shines in vibrant BLUE. It is a rendering of what the town could look like. David and Mr. Johnson sleep soundly next to their own signatures. David opens his eyes and sees the paperboy ...

ANGLE. PAPER BOY.

He turns around and rides away as fast as he can.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN HALL. LATER ...

A huge crowd has gathered. There is a loud buzz in the air. David and Mr. Johnson stand side by side in front of their work like they're presenting and guarding it at the same time.

REVERSE ANGLE. CROWD.

Most of the faces are black and white. A few near the back are in color. Big Bob moves through the back of the crowd, hurriedly buttoning his shirt. The buzz grows and the people part as he heads toward the front of the pack ...

ANGLE. FRONT OF CROWD.

When Bob emerges from the crowd, Mr. Johnson flinches slightly. David just looks him in the eye and tries to find as much courage as he can. "Big" Bob looks up at the color rendering of his town with absolute horror. His eye scans the green trees, the bright yellow gas station, the puffy pink clouds on the horizon.

BOB
(bellowing)
Did you do this?

DAVID
(quietly but clearly)
Yes I did.

Bob grabs a copy of the Code of Conduct and waves it at him.

BOB
Do you know that it's illegal?

DAVID
(thinks)
Yes I do.

Bob looks dumbfounded. He tries to process the whole thing but just looks more confused. Bob runs his hand through his hair, shaking his head.

BOB
BUD--WHY DID YOU DO THIS?

DAVID
Because anybody should be able to
paint in whatever color they want.

ANGLE. BACK OF CROWD.

Betty stands beside Margaret and Jennifer watching the spectacle. There are tears in her eyes and a great deal of love. Jennifer smiles with pride at her brother ...

SHOT. BOB.

BOB
You're not allowed to do this! I
could arrest you for this.

DAVID
Still doesn't make it right.

There is some clapping from the back of the crowd. Bob's eyes widen. His face goes flushed (darker gray). A vein bulges in his neck. He turns to the police chief.

BOB
Dan! Arrest them!

DAN (POLICE CHIEF)
(quietly)
Um ... I don't know how to do that,
Bob.

BOB
What do you mean!?

DAN
Well, I never had to do it before.

BOB
You put handcuffs on them and you
take them to the police station.

DAN
(thinks)
Oh. guess I could do that, then.

DAVID
(suddenly stronger)
C'mere, Dan. I'll help you.

David walks toward the police chief and sticks his hands out.

A louder murmur moves through the crowd as David actually helps him fasten on the cuffs. Mr. Johnson comes over to join them and the murmur starts to grow ...

CUT TO:

NIGHT TIME.

A bright full moon stands out against a jet black sky ...

EXT. MAIN STREET. NIGHT.

A group of "colored" kids hangs out on Main Street near the police station. They gaze off into the distance at the barred window of a jail cell. It is elevated half a story above the street. Everything is black and white except for the warm YELLOW LIGHT, that glows through the bars. They know in a glance who's inside.

INT. JAIL CELL. NIGHT.

David sits on his bunk staring at the ceiling. The place has never been used so there is still plastic wrapping on all the sheets and pillow cases. He can't help smiling.

INT. DIFFERENT JAIL CELL. WAY OFF DOWN THE HALL ...

Mr. Johnson crouches on his bunk, ignoring his food. He clutches a rusty nail and scratches at the plaster wall in true "inmate" fashion.

REVERSE ANGLE. WALL.

Rather than scratching the days or even the hours, Mr. Johnson has carved a huge pastoral landscape into the wall complete with lush forest and a running brook. He looks at his work and smiles.

SHOT. POLICE CHIEF.

He approaches David's cell from the other direction and knocks gently on the bars. David turns around.

DAN

There's someone to see you Bud.

DAVID.

David sits upright on his bunk trying to think who it could be. After a moment or two, a strange look of understanding crosses his face. He HEARS the sound of a KEY TURNING IN THE LOCK. David looks up at the doorway and smiles.

DAVID

I thought it might be you.

REVERSE ANGLE. DICK VAN DYKE.

He stands in the doorway, still dressed in his TV repairman's outfit. FOR THE FIRST TIME, HE IS COMPLETELY IN BLACK AND WHITE.

DICK VAN DYKE
Hope you're proud of yourself.

DAVID
I am actually ... Glad to see you've finally shown your true colors.

Dick Van Dyke gives a tight smile and shuts the door of the cell behind him.

DICK VAN DYKE
Okay, let's cut the shit and get right to it. Where's that remote control?

DAVID
Why?

DICK VAN DYKE
Because you're coming home.

DAVID
(smiles)
Why don't you just take me back without it?

DICK VAN DYKE
Oh. You're a smart little bastard aren't you?
(tightly)
It's kind of like a restricted ticket. You gotta leave the same way you came.

David just looks at him. He smiles, confidently. Leans back on the bunk ...

DAVID
So ... I guess as long as I'm here, all sorts of things could happen to this place. We could have pink lawns and blue trees ...

DICK VAN DYKE
Just gimme the damn remote!

DAVID
I'm sorry. I can't do that.

Dick Van Dyke takes a deep breath. He glances toward the barred window.

DICK VAN DYKE

I don't know what went wrong.
You answered every question. You
knew every detail. The senior
Prom ... McIntire's Department
Store. We had all the same warm
memories: Sock hops. The Church
Social ...

DAVID

They weren't my memories.
(beat)
I borrowed them. It's no good when
you borrow them.

Dick Van Dyke's eyes go wide and he literally starts to
tremble.

DICK VAN DYKE

(containing his rage)
How long do you think you've been
here?

DAVID

(warily)
I don't know ... Three, four weeks.

DICK VAN DYKE

Much less than that.
(checks his watch)
An hour and a half.

David looks at him uneasily. Dick Van Dyke flashes a broad
nasty smile.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

See--and this is really great--
the show was on for what--half an
hour a week? So that means for
every week that goes by in
Pleasantville, only half an hour
goes by in the real world.

The smile gets bigger. Dick Van Dyke moves closer to him.

DICK VAN DYKE (CONT)

Now Buddy, you're going on trial
tomorrow. And if they find you
guilty, you're gonna be stuck here
forever. Well, not forever--lemme
think ...

(calculates)

Five year sentence ... Carry the
three ... That comes out to ...
sixteen and a half centuries, and
that's rounding down.

DAVID
I'm going on trial tomorrow?

DICK VAN DYKE
This is TV pal. They don't fool
around.

David is rocked but tries not to show it.

DAVID
(stoicly)
There's worse places.

DICK VAN DYKE
Oh sure. For the first hundred
years. Then it starts to get a
little monotonous.
(beat)
Sleep well.

He taps on the bars for Dan who opens the lock and lets him out. The door CLANGS shut as the two of them disappear down the hall. The minute they are gone, the stoicism falls. David looks around his cell, truly afraid.

CLOSER.

He stares at the tiny cot ... The plain light bulb in the ceiling ... The single pillow with the plastic covering it ... Forever is starting to look like a long time. David crosses to the small window and looks out.

HIS POV. OUT THE WINDOW.

Across the town square he can see the side of the Town Hall complete with the newly painted mural. The "Utopian" view of Pleasantville is just as he left it with one notable exception: The edges of painting are starting to turn back to BLACK AND WHITE.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN HALL. DAY.

It is bathed in sunlight. Dozens of people stream through the front door for the first trial in Pleasantville's history. There is a weird carnival atmosphere in the air.

INT. TOWN HALL. DAY.

The place has been transformed from the Chamber of Commerce meeting hall to a small town courtroom, complete with pews and ceiling fans. The only carry over from its previous configuration is the huge CHAMBER OF COMMERCE banner draped across the back wall.

ANGLE. BENCH.

At the center of the courtroom where the podium used to be is a large, elevated judge's bench with a Rotary insignia on the front. Big Bob sits six or seven feet above the proceedings finally living up to his name. The whole thing is a strange combination of Franz Kafka and "Inherit the Wind." Big Bob bangs the gavel ...

CLOSER.

The undertone begins to quiet down. All of the faces in the pews are Black and White. There is a "colored" section in the back for standing room only.

ANGLE. JURORS BOX.

George is seated in the front row of the jury, despite his relationship to one of the defendants. He is dressed impeccably with his Rotary Pin still gleaming on his lapel. After a moment or two he sneaks a glance toward the back of the room ...

ANGLE. BETTY.

She stands in the back with the rest of the "colored" faces. Betty cranes her head to catch a glimpse of David or Mr. Johnson. All at once, a hush goes through the crowd.

ANGLE. DOORWAY.

It swings open and David and Mr. Johnson are led in wearing handcuffs. Dan, the Police Chief (now ballif), shows them to a table in the center of the room directly facing Big Bob. There is no lawyer present. There is also no prosecutor.

ANGLE. DAVID.

He glances around a little confused. (Weird courtroom.) Big Bob bangs the gavel.

BOB

Bud Parker and William Johnson,
you have been charged with
desecration of a public building
and the intentional use of
prohibited paint colors in
violation of the Pleasantville
Code of Conduct and laws of
common decency. Do you admit that
on the night of May 1, you did
consciously and willfully apply
the following FORBIDDEN colors to
the Pleasantville Town Hall:

(beat)

Red, Pink, Vermillion, Puce,
Chartreuse, Umber, Blue, Aqua, Ox
Blood, Green, Peach, Crimson,

Yellow, Olive and Magenta.

DAVID

Um ... Yes I do. Where's our lawyer?

BOB

We prefer to keep these proceedings as "pleasant" as possible. I don't think a lawyer will be necessary.

There is a murmur and a great deal of nodding amongst the black and white faces. Big Bob smiles to himself then proceeds.

BOB (CONT)

Do you further admit that this was done surreptitiously and under the cover of darkness?

DAVID

Well--it was dark out ...

BOB

Good. Do you further admit that this unnatural depiction occurred in full public view where it was accessible to, and in plain sight of, minor children?

DAVID

It was accessible to everyone.

BOB

Very well. Let the record show that the defendants have answered in the affirmative to all the charges.

He looks directly at them for the first time.

BOB (CONT)

Do you have anything to say in your defense?

SHOT. DEFENSE TABLE.

Mr. Johnson just looks at David, confused and terrified.

MR. JOHNSON

I didn't mean to hurt anybody. I just have to paint ... I need to.

He gropes for something else to say, but what else is there? David glances over and sees him sit slowly back in his seat.

David rises from his chair.

DAVID

I think I've got something to say.

BOB

Very well ...

David looks out over the audience. After a moment or two, he looks back at Big Bob.

DAVID

I think I know why you're doing this. I mean, I understand why you're doing this. I used to feel the same way. I used to want this place to stay just the way it was. I never wanted it to change ...

There is a loud MURMUR. Big Bob bangs the gavel.

DAVID (CONT)

(he smiles slightly)

But nothing stays the same. You get things, and you lose things, and that's the good part and the bad part--but you can't have a good part without a bad part.

He turns and sees his mother in the balcony. They lock eyes for a moment. David smiles slightly and continues.

DAVID (CONT)

It's like the basketball team.

BOB

(leaning forward)

The basketball team?

DAVID

Sure. Everybody's upset because they're not winning anymore--but just think how it would feel if all of a sudden they do win.

There's a murmur in the gallery.

DAVID (CONT)

Wouldn't it feel better than when they used to win all the time?

There is a LOUDER MURMUR. Big Bob looks concerned.

DAVID (CONT)

See, I know you want it to stay "Pleasant" but there are so many

things that are so much better:
like Silly ... or Sexy ... or
Dangerous ... or Wild ... or
Brief ...

(beat)

And every one of those things is
in you all the time if you just
have the guts to look for them.

(pointing to the "colored" section)

Look at those faces back there.
They're no different than you are.
They just happened to see
something inside themselves that
you don't want to ...

BOB

Okay--that's enough!

DAVID

I thought I was allowed to
defend myself.

BOB

You're not allowed to lie.

DAVID

I'm not lying ... Here I'll show
you.

He turns suddenly toward the jury box.

DAVID (CONT)

Mr. Simpson ...

MR. SIMPSON

Yes.

DAVID

What color is that hedge of yours?

MR. SIMPSON

Green.

DAVID

No, not that hedge. The other one.

MR. SIMPSON

The other one?

DAVID

The one in your mind. The one
that you see on a bright cold
morning. The one that you see
when you walk in front of your
house and you just stand there
and stare.

Mr. Simpson suddenly looks far away. He gets a kind of dreamy look in his eye.

DAVID (CONT)

What color is that hedge?

CLOSE UP. MR. SIMPSON.

SUDDENLY AND BEFORE OUR EYES, MR. SIMPSON TURNS TO LIVING COLOR. A huge MURMUR moves through the courtroom. Bob bangs the gavel.

BOB

I said, that's enough!

VARIOUS VOICES FROM
THE AUDIENCE

"No ... Let him finish ... Go on ..."

Big Bob lifts the gavel and is about to bang it when David suddenly turns toward George.

DAVID

Alright. Dad ...

DIFFERENT ANGLE.

There is a LOUDER MURMUR. Big Bob just looks at him frozen while David confronts his "father." George straightens up.

GEORGE

(solemn)

Yes Bud.

DAVID

(beat)

Don't you miss her?

CLOSE UP. GEORGE.

He looks at him stunned. Big Bob bangs the gavel but nobody listens. George just stares at him like he got shot.

DAVID

I mean, of course you do, but it isn't just the cooking or the cleaning that you miss--it's something else, isn't it ...

George swallows. The UNDERTONE in the room starts to grow as he glances toward the back of the room.

DAVID (CONT)

(softer whisper)

Maybe you can't even describe it. Maybe you only know it when it's gone. Maybe it's like there's a

whole piece of you that's missing too.

(shrugs)

You might even call it "love."

BIG BOB

(BANGING the gavel loudly)

Okay, that's IT!!!

DAVID

(motioning toward the back)

Now don't you think she looks just as pretty in color? Don't you think she looks just as pretty as she did the day you met her?

Slowly, almost imperceptibly George nods. A single tear rolls down his cheek. As it traces the side of his face it leaves a long trail of COLOR behind it.

DAVID (CONT)

Don't you wish you could tell her that?

He nods again and it all comes out. Betty smiles at him through her tears. Even Mr. Johnson smiles as well.

BOB

(POUNING the gavel)

YOU'RE OUT OF ORDER!

DAVID

Why am I out of order?

BOB

BECAUSE I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO TURN THIS COURTROOM INTO A CIRCUS!

DAVID

Well I don't think it's a circus. And I don't think they do either.

David motions behind him to the black and white section. There are now ten to fifteen "colored" faces.

BOB

THIS BEHAVIOR WILL STOP AT ONCE.

DAVID

But see that's just the point. It can't stop at once. Because it's in you. And you can't stop something that's in you.

BOB

(tightly)

It's not in ME.

DAVID

Oh sure it is.

BOB

No it isn't.

He crosses to the bench looking right up at Big Bob. He leans over the bench and gets right up in his face.

DAVID

(smug whisper)

What do you want to do to me
right now?

Big Bob starts to tremble. He shakes with rage as David moves closer.

DAVID (CONT)

C'mon. Everyone's turning colors.
Kids are making out in the street.
No one's getting their dinner--
hell, you could have a flood any
minute ... Pretty soon you could
have the women going off to work
while the men stayed home and
cooked ...

BIG BOB

That's not going to happen!

DAVID

But it could happen.

BIG BOB

No it couldn't!

Big Bob looks at David and starts to tremble. It starts around the base of his neck, spreads quickly up the rest of his head. After a moment or two, Big Bob has gone completely RED IN THE FACE.

WIDER.

A gasp goes through the courtroom. David looks at him and just smiles. The crowd reaction turns almost to a ROAR as Big Bob turns and catches his reflection in the window.

CLOSE UP. BIG BOB.

He sees the ruddy image staring back at him, then looks down at his hands. They have gone completely RED as well. Big Bob freezes for an instant then bolts from the bench in panic and flees the room--flinging open the doors to the courtroom.

ANGLE. DOORWAY.

As Big Bob flees, he reveals an amazing sight: the Town Square GLISTENS IN LIVING COLOR. The huge lawn is a rich deep green. The sky is a dense opaque blue. Dozens of spectators bolt from their seats and rush to the doorway as the crowd moves outside.

EXT. PLEASANTVILLE. (FULL COLOR!)

All the birds are really chirping. Red Brick, Yellow cars, Green hats ... The barber pole in front of Gus' has finally turned to red, white and blue--he can't help smiling. David walks out into the sunlight and stares in wonder at his creation. The whole town is washed in joy.

WIDER.

Margaret comes up and throws her arms around him. They meet in a rich passionate kiss (in direct defiance of the code of conduct). Several people around them actually clap, like spectators at a wedding. Jennifer moves up next to them and looks at her brother making out.

JENNIFER

Uch ... I am like gonna hurl ...

David turns and looks at her. Both of them laugh. David throws his arms around his sister as more and more people stream out of the courtroom into the sunlight ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET. DAY.

David and Jennifer stand together on the edge of town. She clutches a valise in her hand. He holds the remote control.

DAVID

Are you sure?

JENNIFER

I told you. I'm like positive.

DAVID

This thing works. We could go home right now.

JENNIFER

I'm not ready yet. I gotta do this for a little while.

WIDER.

They stand on the edge of town (which finally has an edge).

A large sign says: "Springfield 12 Miles" and for the first time, the end of Main Street is no longer the beginning. Jennifer is dressed in Mary Sue's clothes with a little bit

of style thrown in. Rich fields of wheat spread out in the distance.

JENNIFER

Besides. You think there's like a chance I'm gonna get into college back there?

DAVID

(thinks ...)

Honestly ... no.

They both smile.

DAVID (CONT)

You got the admissions letter.

JENNIFER

Right here.

DAVID

And you're sure about this?

JENNIFER

I've done the slut thing, David. It's really kinda old.

David nods.

DAVID

I'll come back and check on you in a month.

Jennifer nods and gives him a hug. She holds on tight for a couple of seconds.

JENNIFER

You're like the coolest brother in the world.

David smiles. Never been called cool before. They suddenly hear the SOUND of a motor and look to their left. A huge Greyhound bus lumbers up the highway, pulling to a halt at the sign. The doors open beckoning her in. Jennifer smiles at her brother, then turns toward the door ...

EXT. MARGARETS HOUSE. DAY.

She clutches her umbrella at her side. David holds a bag of oatmeal cookies. Each one clings on to the other one's clothing. Their faces are inches apart.

MARGARET

You're gonna forget about me.

DAVID

No I won't. I swear.

Margaret nods. She looks at him for a moment then wraps her arms around his neck. They meet in a long, rich, wet, soft kiss. The umbrella falls to the ground ...

MARGARET
(a whisper)
I like calling you David.

DAVID
I like it too.

INT. PARKER LIVING ROOM.

David stands in front of the television with Mr. Johnson at his side. He holds the remote control in his hand. Mr. Johnson seems pretty amazed at the whole idea.

MR. JOHNSON
Well how do you know it won't go
back to the way it was?

DAVID
You're gonna keep painting aren't
you?

Mr. Johnson nods.

DAVID (CONT)
Well ...

He nods again and thinks about it. They smile at each other one last time.

MR. JOHNSON
(remembering something)
Oh.
(reaching into his pocket)
I've got something for you.

He pulls out a folded piece of paper. Mr. Johnson extends it to David who unfolds it and instantly smiles.

INSERT. PAPER.

It is a small painted replica of their mural in the same vibrant colors. Everything is scaled perfectly, exactly like the one on the wall.

SHOT. DAVID.

DAVID
It's beautiful.

MR. JOHNSON
Just a little--You know.

David looks up at him and smiles. All at once he glances toward the door.

WIDER.

Betty is standing there holding a brown paper bag. A sweater is draped over her arm.

BETTY
(extending the bag)
I made you these for the trip.
They're marshmallow rice squares.

DAVID
Thanks. I thought you weren't
gonna ...

BETTY
(painful/
quieter)
I had to say goodbye.

She looks up at David and their eyes lock. Betty hands him the bag.

BETTY (CONT)
There's a meatloaf sandwich in
there too. Don't go skipping
dinner just 'cause you're not
here anymore.

DAVID
I won't.

BETTY
(voice quivering)
And ... wear this on the trip in
case it gets cold.

DAVID
(nodding)
... It's a pretty short trip.

She nods as well. Betty puts the sweater around his shoulders anyway and fusses with the collar for a second or two. Then she throws her arms around his neck.

BETTY
I'm so proud of you, Bud.

DAVID
Thanks ... I love you.

BETTY
I love you too.

She clings on tight for a second or two then lets go. Betty

flicks away a tear and draws a deep breath.

BETTY (CONT)

Well ...

She steps back and looks at him. David glances down at the remote.

DAVID

You better stand back a little.

Betty and Mr. Johnson cross toward the corner of the room. David points the remote at the TV ...

CUT TO:

EXT. MODERN HOUSING TRACT. DAY.

All the ersatz Spanish houses stretch out toward infinity. A WESTEC security patrol cruises by them at a crawl. A second or two later, all the sprinklers turn on in uniform synchronization.

INT. DAVID'S LIVING ROOM.

He stands in the middle of the living room looking at his new/old surroundings. Everything is the same as it was. The black onyx coffee table. The clean burbur rug. The big screen TV in its sleek black cabinet. David looks at it and smiles. The place is inadvertantly in black and white.

CLOSER.

He reaches forward and turns on the TV (by hand) flipping around the dial. Jerry Springer is berating a prostitute ... Tony Robbins hawks self-improvement in an infomercial ... Court TV is doing an O.J. recap. David unfolds Mr. Johnson's sketch and glances down at it. He smiles to himself. A different kind of nostalgia ...

END