

**REVOLUTIONARY ROAD**

Written by

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**EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT, 1947. FLASHBACK.**

City lights. The soaring bridges and glowing windows of New York City. The SOUNDS of a cocktail party.

**INT. GREENWICH VILLAGE APARTMENT - NIGHT, 1947. FLASHBACK.**

canvases  
couple  
A party of bohemian types in the village. Artist's  
propped up against the walls. A narrow hallway with  
couples talking intimately. Two rooms crammed with young people  
smoking and drinking.

A man and a woman in their 20's stand alone in a corner...

FRANK WHEELER, intelligent good-looks, and APRIL JOHNSON, a patrician beauty, a woman amongst girls. He's been making her laugh.

**FRANK**

So, what do you do?

**APRIL**

I'm studying to be an actress.  
You?

**FRANK**

I'm a longshoreman.

**APRIL**

(smiles)  
No, I mean really.

**FRANK**

I mean really too. Starting Monday, though, I'm doing something a little more glamorous. Night cashier at a cafeteria.

**APRIL**

(smiles)

I don't mean how you make money. I mean what are you interested in?

**FRANK**

Honey - if I had the answer to that one, I bet I'd bore us both to death in half an hour.

2.

She laughs. He smiles, revelling in her attention.

**INT. GREENWICH VILLAGE APARTMENT - NIGHT, 1947, LATER.**

Later, Frank and April dance. They move well, in sync, looking into each other's eyes. He slides his hand down the silk of April's dress until it rests in the small of her back.

Close on their hands. Their fingers slowly entwine as they lose themselves in each other...

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT, PRESENT.**

Close on Frank's face, seven years later, full of doubt and tension as he watches his wife, April, on stage and as we hear the hollow VOICES of a very bad amateur play...

Finally, mercifully, the curtain falls. Nothing. Then vigorous, relieved applause.

Frank hears a voice from behind, through the applause:

**WOMAN**

Thank God that's over...

April takes the final bow. She's fighting not to cry. Frank applauds her loudly. Looks around to see who else is joining him. But there is no noticeable crescendo in the applause.

Then Frank hears the voice again:

**WOMAN (CONT'D)**

...And she was very disappointing.

He can't argue.

**INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT, MOMENTS LATER.**

Frank now moves against the crowd of exiting audience members towards the stage. He keeps his head lowered, avoiding eye-contact, until he feels a hand on his sleeve.

3.

MR. AND MRS. GIVINGS, an older couple, are standing in his way.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Frank! Very nice Frank!

**FRANK**

Thanks, Mrs. Givings.

Frank steps around her.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

I can't tell you how much we enjoyed it. You have a very talented wife.

Frank forces a smile as he goes.

**FRANK**

I'll pass it along!

**INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT.**

April sits alone at her dressing table crying.

**INT. BACK STAGE - NIGHT.**

The CAST mills backstage. The mood is subdued, but some have decided to make light of the disaster.

Frank moves through the crowd. Across the room, he sees -

MILLY CAMPBELL, 30's, determinedly bright, up on her tip-toes. Her husband SHEP, 30's, heavy-set, is still in costume, shell-shocked and pebbled with sweat.

**MILLY**

Frank!

**FRANK**

Hi!

**MILLY**

She's through there...!

(points)

You `bout ready for that drink?

4.

**FRANK**

Couple of minutes!

**INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT.**

Frank enters. The chair in front of the mirror is empty. A cigarette burns in the ashtray. Frank glances at a standing screen in the corner. April's costume is draped over the top. He goes towards it, deciding what to say.

**FRANK**

(heartfelt)

April, sweetheart. You were great.  
I mean it.

The door to the bathroom opens. April enters in street clothes. Frank's been talking to an empty room.

**APRIL**

Hi. You about ready to leave?  
I've just got to get this makeup  
off, then we can go.

She sits in front of the mirror, too embarrassed to look at him. FRANK can see that her face is blotchy from crying. He puts his hand on her shoulder.

**FRANK**

Well... I guess it wasn't a triumph  
or anything, was it?

APRIL looks at him in the mirror. She holds his look just a second. And from her expression, he knows he said exactly the wrong thing.

**APRIL**

I guess not. I'll be ready in a minute.

**FRANK**

Take your time.

He removes his hands and lights a cigarette. APRIL  
begins to take off her makeup.

5.

**APRIL**

Will you do me a favor? Milly and Shep wanted us to go out with them afterwards. Will you say we can't? Say it's because of the baby sitter or something?

**FRANK**

Well, the thing is, I already said that we could. I mean, I just saw them out there and I said we would.

**APRIL**

(tense)

Oh. Then would you mind going out again and saying you were mistaken? That should be simple enough.

**FRANK**

Don't you think that's a little bit rude, April?

**APRIL**

Well I'll tell them myself.

**FRANK**

Okay. Okay. Take it easy. I'll tell them.

He backs to the door.

**INT. HIGH-SCHOOL CORRIDOR - NIGHT.**

past April and Frank walk down a long empty echoing corridor,  
school lockers, booster club posters and silent classrooms.

They don't touch. They don't speak. The tension between them is palpable.

**INT. WHEELER CAR - NIGHT.**

Frank drives. April stares ahead. Their faces are lit by the dashboard. After a while...

6.

**FRANK**

I mean it, baby. You were the only person in that play.

**APRIL**

Thank you.

He looks over at her.

**FRANK**

We just never should've let you get mixed up in the damned thing.

**APRIL**

All right.

**FRANK**

You've studied for Christ's sake.

**APRIL**

Could we sort of stop talking about it now?

**FRANK**

Sure. I just don't want you feeling bad about it, that's all. Because it's not worth it. I mean, it's bad enough having to live out here among these damn people - what'd you say?

**APRIL**

I said yes. All right, Frank. Could you just stop talking now, before you drive me crazy, please?

Frank clenches his jaw and flips on the indicator.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

What are you doing? Why are we

stopping?

**EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT.**

The car comes to a stop at the side of the road.

7.

**INT. WHEELER CAR - NIGHT.**

Frank turns off the ignition. He slides towards her.

**APRIL**

No, Frank, please don't...

He puts his arms around her.

**FRANK**

Baby, it's okay...

**APRIL**

Please don't touch me.

**FRANK**

April...

**APRIL**

Why can't you...just... LEAVE ME  
**ALONE!**

Frank slides back behind the wheel. Beat.

**FRANK**

It strikes me, that there's a considerable amount of bullshit going on here.... And there's one or two things I'd like to clear up. Number one, it's not my fault the play was lousy. Number two, it's sure as hell not my fault you didn't turn out to be an actress, and the sooner you get over that little piece of soap opera the better off we'll both be. Number three, I don't happen to fit the role of dumb, insensitive suburban husband; you've been trying to hang that one on me ever since we moved here. Number four -

the She opens the door and is out of the car, flashing across headlights. Frank struggles with his door.

8.

**EXT. HIGHWAY SHOULDER - NIGHT.**

April stands in the dark 30 yards from the road looking over an expansive countryside. There's only a few lights in the distance. This is still farmland.

Frank comes up behind her, careful to keep his distance.

**FRANK**

What the hell are you doing? Come  
back to the car.

**APRIL**

No. Just let me stand here a  
second.

He Frank raises his arms in exasperation. A car approaches.  
puts a hand in his pocket and tries to look casual. The car's headlights light up April's back, then pass.

**FRANK**

April?

She doesn't move.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Look, can't we sit in the car and  
talk about it, instead of running  
all over Route Twelve?

**APRIL**

Haven't I made it clear I don't  
particularly want to talk about it?

**FRANK**

Okay. Jesus, I'm trying to be nice  
about this thing.

**APRIL**

How kind of you. How terribly,  
terribly kind of you.

**FRANK**

Wait a minute. I don't deserve this.

9.

**APRIL**

You're always so wonderfully definite, aren't you, on the subject of what you do and don't deserve?

She turns and walks past him back towards the car.

**FRANK**

Wait a minute!

He stumbles after her. Other cars whizz by, but he's past caring.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Wait a minute, God damn it!

She leans against the car and folds her arms.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

You listen to me. This is one time you're not going to get away with twisting everything I say.

**APRIL**

Christ, I wish you'd stayed home tonight!

**FRANK**

You know what you are when you're like this? You're sick. I really mean that. You're sick!

**APRIL**

And you know what you are?  
(eyes raking him)  
You're disgusting.

**FRANK**

Oh, yeah?

**APRIL**

Just because you've got me safely in this little trap, you think you can bully me into feeling whatever you want!

10.

**FRANK**

You in a trap! You in a trap!  
Jesus, don't make me laugh!

**APRIL**

Yes, me.

(clutching at her chest)

Me! Me! Me! Oh, you poor, pathetic  
little boy Look at you! Look at  
you, and tell me how by any stretch  
of the imagination you can call  
yourself a man!

He raises his fist, she flinches away, and BONG! BONG! BONG!  
BONG! He punches the hood of the car. Then, silence. The  
look April gives him is probably the worst look he's ever  
received: a look of pitying boredom.

**FRANK**

Don't look at me like that, April.

**APRIL**

Could we please go home now?

She calmly walks around and gets in the car. After a  
moment,  
Frank follows...

**INT. CAR - NIGHT.**

They sit silently in the car in the darkness.

**TITLE CARD: REVOLUTIONARY ROAD**

**EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - MORNING.**

A small, attractive suburban house in the morning sunshine.  
Frank walks out to the car, stops and looks back at the  
house.

**INT. WHEELER LIVING ROOM - MORNING.**

April stands at the window. The SOUND of the car pulling  
away.

**EXT. REVOLUTIONARY ROAD TRAIN STATION - MORNING.**

Frank stands on a grey platform, amongst a crowd of commuters. The morning commuter train eases into the station.

**INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - MORNING.**

Frank sits against the train window holding a "New Yorker." Around him, the train is crowded with men reading newspapers.

**INT. GRAND CENTRAL PLATFORM - MORNING.**

In one swift movement, all the doors of the commuter train swing open as a hundred feet step down onto the platform.

**INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - MORNING.**

An empty stairwell in Grand Central: a tide of grim, determined commuters rise into view. A mass of suits and hats. Frank is amongst them.

**EXT. MIDTOWN STREET - MORNING.**

Knox Headquarters -- a squat, formidable structure. Thick HONKING traffic. Crowded sidewalks.

Frank walks with the crowd past a display window: bright cardboard images of fashionable women grin and point their pencils at a list of product benefits - "SPEED, ACCURACY, **CONTROL.**"

500  
Man's  
Pride of place at the center of the display is a new Knox Electronic Computer with a sign that reads: "Performs A Lifetime of Work in Just 30 Minutes!"

**INT. KNOX BUILDING ELEVATOR - MORNING.**

Frank rides crushed against the wall in a crowded elevator. He glances over at -

MAUREEN GRUBE, 23, ripe, a little obvious, but undeniably sexy. She meets his look. And looks away.

12.

**INT. KNOX 15TH FLOOR, FRANK'S CUBICLE - MORNING.**

Frank opens the bottom right drawer of his desk, props up his feet and lights a cigarette.

**JACK (O.S.)**

I'm going to need your help this morning, Old Scout.

Seated beside Frank, JACK ORDWAY, 40's, tall and effete with greying hair, appears to be hard at work, hunched over a file. He is, in fact, propping up his head with his hand while shielding his eyes.

**JACK (CONT'D)**

For the next few hours, you're to warn me of Bandy's every approach and you may have to screen me from public view in the likely event I that I throw up. It's that bad.

**FRANK**

Good morning, Jack.

**JACK**

Nothing good about it, I assure you.

**EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - DAY.**

April drags two overflowing garbage cans to the curb. She stops and looks down the empty road. Not a single human being in sight.

Close on April's face.

**INT. MRS. GIVINGS' CAR - DAY, 1948. FLASHBACK.**

Mrs. Givings sits behind the wheel, driving slowly along a suburban street talking at high speed.

the Frank sits beside her wearing sunglasses. April sits in  
back.

We don't yet see what Mrs. Givings is describing, only as it  
plays on their faces.

13.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Of course, I knew the moment you  
came off the train what you were  
looking for... A small remodeled  
barn, or a carriage house And I  
just hate to be the one to tell you  
that sort of thing just isn't  
available anymore... But I don't  
want you to despair. There is one  
place down here I want to show  
you... Now of course it isn't very  
desirable at this end.

(gestures)

As you see, Crawford Road is mostly  
these little cinder-blocky, pick-up  
trucky places plumbers,  
carpenters, little local people of  
that sort.

Frank turns around to April, lowers his glasses. April  
stifles a giggle.

**MRS. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

But eventually...

(she points, her arm fully  
extended)

Eventually it leads up to  
Revolutionary Road, which is much  
nicer. Now, the place I want to  
show you, is a sweet little house  
and a sweet little setting.  
Simple, clean lines, good lawns,  
marvelous for children. It's right  
around this next curve... Now,  
you'll see it there.

They all look.

**MRS. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

See the little white one? Sweet  
isn't it? The perky way it sits  
there on its little slope?

Charming, isn't it?

April smiles. A smile full of promise.

14.

**APRIL**

Oh, yes.

**INT. BANDY'S OFFICE - DAY. PRESENT.**

Frank's FIST raps against the door of an office...

well-  
TED BANDY, 46, tight and precise, looks up from behind a  
organized desk.

**FRANK**

You wanted to see me?

Bandy holds out an envelope from behind his desk.

**BANDY**

Came for you from Toledo this  
morning.

Frank reaches for it, but Bandy moves it out of reach.

**BANDY (CONT'D)**

This is the third one this month.

**FRANK**

Oh, right, sorry. I thought I'd  
taken care of that...

Frank reaches again, but Bandy moves it. A little man  
enjoying his power.

**BANDY**

I'm not prepared to have this  
conversation again, Frank. You  
understand?

**FRANK**

...Absolutely, yes.

**BANDY**

These folks in the provinces look  
up to us, Frank. We need to be

efficient. We can't have this kind of back and forth, and so forth. It's just not efficient. Am I right?

15.

**FRANK**

...Absolutely, yes, yes...

Bandy finally hands over the envelope.

**INT. KNOX 15TH FLOOR, FRANK'S CUBICLE - DAY.**

Frank sits at his desk.

**JACK**

What was that about?

**FRANK**

Toledo. Branch manager wants a revised brochure for the conference on "The Knox 500."

(impersonating Bandy)

"It's just not efficient."

**JACK**

(sharp inhale)

Sounds like a real goodie.

**FRANK**

I don't even know what the Knox 500 does... Do you?

**JACK**

Don't insult me.

Frank drops it in his In Box. Then, looking up, he sees Maureen across the office. Thinks.

**INT. KNOX 15TH FLOOR, MAUREEN'S DESK - DAY.**

Frank stands over Maureen at her desk. The envelope from Toledo lies in front of her.

**FRANK**

Now, if you'll look in the inactive file under SP-1109 you'll find

copies of all the stuff we sent to the agency... and that way we can trace the thing back to its original sources.

16.

She nods, jotting down a note.

For the first time, Frank allows himself to take in her profile, her cleavage, her lips.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

I hope you weren't planning on an early lunch.

**MAUREEN**

I'm not really hungry.

**FRANK**

Good. I'll check on you later.

**INT. ALGONQUIN HOTEL RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON.**

Maureen and Frank sit in a secluded corner. Maureen sips  
a martini. She's already a little drunk.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

You know something? You're lucky you met me.

**MAUREEN**

Oh? How's that?

**FRANK**

I can show you the ropes. There's an art to survival at Knox. Let me show you what I mean.

He waves over the waiter.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Bring me the telephone would you? And two more martinis.

Maureen looks daunted at her empty glass.

**MAUREEN**

Wow.

The waiter brings over the phone. Frank dials. He holds his finger to his lips. He uses an authoritative tone.

17.

**FRANK**

Hello Mrs. Jorgensen. Frank Wheeler here. Just wanted to let you know that I've had to send Maureen Grube down to Visual Aides for me. I'll probably need her the rest of the day... Okay? Fine. You too.

Frank hangs up and smiles at Maureen.

**MAUREEN**

I never even heard of Visual Aides.

**FRANK**

That's because it doesn't exist.

Maureen smiles.

**INT. WHEELER HALLWAY - DAY.**

Now we're moving behind April as she moves through the  
silent house. She carries a basket of dirty laundry on her hip. She pulls the bedding off the couch. The distant SOUND of children playing.

**MRS. GIVINGS (O.S.)**

Yoo-hoo!

She turns to see Mrs. Givings at the screen door.

April manages a friendly smile.

**APRIL**

Hi Helen.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

I can't stay a minute... My, don't you look comfy! I just wanted to bring this sedum for that messy patch in the front yard.

She puts it on the table.

18.

**MRS. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

All it wants is just a tiny dollop  
of water for the first few days,  
and you'll find it absolutely  
thrives.

**APRIL**

Well, thank you... You want some  
coffee?

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Only if you're having some.

Helen sits down. With the end of her finger, she pushes a  
dirty dish out of her way.

**APRIL**

Is there something I can do for  
you, Helen?

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh... yes, I almost forgot. I do  
have a small favor I'd like to  
ask...

(quiver of anxiety )

It's about my son, John. He's been  
in the hospital.

**APRIL**

I'm sorry to hear that.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Well, actually, just for the  
present, he's in Pleasant Brook...  
Psychiatric.

April's face. She knows what it means.

**APRIL**

...I'm so sorry.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh... Nothing serious. He just  
got a little run down. Things can  
just get the better of us  
sometimes. Don't you think?

**APRIL**

Yes. Of course.

Mrs. Givings smiles. Then, pretending to read the titles on a stack of books on the table...

**MRS. GIVINGS**

It really is a marvellous facility and the treatments seem to be doing him wonders... Anyway, they said getting out for an afternoon might do him some good.

She pauses on Sartre's 'Nausea', looks at it vaguely.

**MRS. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

I think he finds my friends a little conventional, frankly. I mean, he's travelled. He has a PhD in mathematics. I suppose you could say he's an intellectual. It would do him a world of good to meet a young couple like you.

**APRIL**

We'd love to Helen.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

So, I thought perhaps if you had some time...

**APRIL**

We'd love to.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

(flushed with relief)  
Thank you, dear... Thank you.

April smiles generously.

**MRS. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

I remember when you first came off the train. You weren't like most of my clients. You were different, somehow.

April's face. She's listening.

**MRS. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

Well, you looked simply ravishing  
and I just knew Frank did something  
terribly brilliant in town. You  
just seemed... special... Of  
course you still are.

April takes this in.

**INT. WHEELER HOUSE - AFTERNOON.**

April watches from the picture window as Mrs. Givings walks  
down the drive towards her car. Her face is reflected in the  
glass. Something is taking shape in her mind.

**INT. ALGONQUIN RESTAURANT BAR - AFTERNOON, LATER.**

The dining room is now almost empty. Waiters and busboys  
eat  
in the corner.

Frank cuts a solitary figure. He lights his last  
cigarette  
and crumples the pack.

**MAUREEN (O.S.)**

I guess you got me a little drunk.

Maureen slides into the booth. She stares at the table,  
trying to focus.

**FRANK**

You know what today is?

**MAUREEN**

...Monday?

**FRANK**

It's my birthday. I'm thirty years  
old today.

**MAUREEN**

Happy birthday!

Maureen raises her glass, then sways drunkenly.

**MAUREEN (CONT'D)**

What was the name of the department  
you made up again?

**FRANK**

Visual Aides.

**MAUREEN**

...What-a-joke.

He sips his drink.

**FRANK**

Want to hear a real joke...?

She looks up at him.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

My old man worked at Knox.

**MAUREEN**

Yeah?

**FRANK**

He was a salesman in Yonkers. Once  
a year he used to take me into the  
city for lunch. It was supposed to  
be a special, life-advice sort of  
occasion.

**MAUREEN**

Nice.

**FRANK**

Not really... I used to sit there  
and think, 'I hope to Christ I  
don't end up like you.'

Frank grins as if it's supposed to be very funny.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

And here I am, a thirty year old  
Knox man. Can you beat that?

**MAUREEN**

I think I kind of lost you... Your  
father worked for Knox...?

**(MORE)**

22.

**MAUREEN (CONT'D)**

I'm sorry, but everything's kinda going out of focus.

Frank takes her arm to steady her. She meets his eye.

**FRANK**

How `bout some air?

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - DAY.**

Close on a hand opening an old cigar box.

April is sitting with the box at the kitchen table. It contains various sentimental knickknacks from her past, including photos of the kids, of her and Frank in New York with friends, and a photograph of Frank in uniform beneath the Eifel tower on liberation day... She studies it.

**INT. BETHUNE STREET APARTMENT - DAWN, 1947. FLASHBACK**

Frank fixes coffee in the tiny kitchen.

April is sitting up in bed in the first blue light of day wearing Frank's T-shirt. She holds a curled collection of black and white photographs in her lap. She stops on the same picture of Frank and the Eifel Tower.

Frank comes over with the coffee, and two cigarettes. He lights them both, and gives her one.

**FRANK**

You ever been to Paris?

**APRIL**

I've never really been anywhere.

**FRANK**

Maybe I'll take you with me.

He lies down with his cigarette between his teeth.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

I'm going back first chance I get.  
People are alive there.

He stares up at the ceiling. She studies him.  
Appraising.

23.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

All I know now is that I want to  
feel things. Really feel them.  
How's that for an ambition...?

**APRIL**

Frank Wheeler?

**FRANK**

Mm?

**APRIL**

I think you're the most interesting  
person I've ever met.

He looks at her, overwhelmed by her face in the light.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

I mean it.

**INT. MAUREEN'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON**

Frank stands at the mantle tying his tie.

**FRANK**

Well, I guess this wasn't what you  
had in mind when you went to work  
this morning?

Maureen covers herself with the sheets.

**MAUREEN**

No. It certainly wasn't.

Frank inspects the contents of the mantle: photos of Maureen  
at the prom; Maureen with her parents.

Maureen tentatively fingers her hair that has now gone to  
frizz. The sheet slips down. She grabs at it. Then wills  
herself to calm down and act sophisticated.

**MAUREEN (CONT'D)**

Do you have a cigarette, Frank?

He turns and smiles at her.

24.

**FRANK**

Sure, here.

He comes over and gives her one. Lights it with his Zippo. She exhales, slowly gaining confidence.

Frank gets up and pulls on his jacket.

**MAUREEN**

Can I get you a drink or anything?

**FRANK**

No thanks, Maureen. Actually, I guess I'd better be cutting out, it's getting kind of late.

**MAUREEN**

Gee, that's right. Have you missed your train?

**FRANK**

It's all right, I'll get the next one.

He comes over to her. Bends down, kisses her gently on the lips.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Listen: you were swell. Take care now.

**INT. FRANK'S STATION CAR/WHEELER HOUSE - NIGHT.**

Frank's station car turns into the driveway. He sits there a moment in the darkness.

**EXT. WHEELER FRONT DOOR - NIGHT.**

Frank approaches the door with his key. He takes a moment to gather himself, but before he can, the door opens.

April is dressed in a black cocktail dress. She looks wonderful. She smiles. She steps forward and takes his face in her hands. She kisses him.

25.

**APRIL**

Frank...

**FRANK**

Why are you all dressed up?

She hands him a glass of whiskey and closes his fingers around it.

**APRIL**

First of all, I missed you all day and I want to say I'm sorry. I'm sorry for the way I've been since that stupid play. I'm sorry for everything and... And I love you... Now wait here till I call you. Okay?

She goes, leaving Frank in stunned silence. He takes a large drink.

From inside the house, the sound of the children's voices. Whispering, giggling. Then April's voice:

**APRIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)**

Alright Frank! You can come in now!

**INT. WHEELER LIVING AND DINING ROOMS - NIGHT.**

Frank enters the house. Walks through the darkened living room towards the light. Enters the dining room.

The room is lit by the candles burning on a birthday cake.

JENNIFER, 7, MICHAEL, 5, and April sit around the table wearing paper birthday crowns.

They sing Happy Birthday.

**INT. SHOWER - NIGHT.**

Frank scrubs his skin, his scalp, his face: trying to wash away Maureen.

26.

He turns off the water. He stands there in the silence, regaining control.

**INT. FRANK AND APRIL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.**

Frank steps out of the bathroom. April turns from the mirror wearing the silk negligee and comes towards him with two glasses.

**APRIL**

Frank. I have had the most wonderful idea. I've been thinking about it all day.

**FRANK**

What's all this about?

**APRIL**

You know how much money we have saved...?

She hands Frank a glass of brandy.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Enough to live on for six months without you earning another dime. And with the money we could get from the house and the car, longer than that.

**FRANK**

What we get for the house...What are you talking about? Where are we going to live?

**APRIL**

...Paris.

Frank stares.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

You always said it was the only place you'd ever been that was worth living. So why don't we go there?

**FRANK**

You're serious?

**APRIL**

Yes. What's stopping us?

**FRANK**

What's stopping us? Well, I can think of a lot of things. For instance, what kind of a job could I possibly get?

**APRIL**

You won't be getting any kind of job, because I will.

Frank laughs.

**FRANK**

Oh, right.

**APRIL**

Don't laugh -- listen a minute! Have you any idea what they pay for secretarial positions in the government agencies in Europe? Embassies and those things.

Frank laughs again.

**FRANK**

No, I don't.

**APRIL**

I'm serious about this Frank. Do you think I'm kidding or something?

**FRANK**

No, I know, I know. I just have a couple of questions, is all. For one thing, do you mind telling me what exactly I'm supposed to be doing while you're out earning all this money?

She draws back, shocked that he doesn't get it.

**APRIL**

Don't you see that's the whole idea? You'll be doing what you should've been allowed to do seven years ago. You'll have time, Frank. You'll have time to find out what it is that you actually want to do, and when you figure it out you'll have the time and the freedom to start doing it.

**FRANK**

Sweetheart, it's just not very realistic, is all.

**APRIL**

Well, I happen to think this is unrealistic. I think it's unrealistic for a man with a fine mind to go on working like a dog year after year at a job he can't stand, coming home to a place he can't stand, to a wife who's equally unable to stand the same things.

Frank is silent. How could anyone possibly argue with her?

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

You want to know the worst part? Our whole existence here is based on this great premise that we're somehow very special and superior to the whole thing, and you know what I've realized...? We're not! We're just like everyone else. Look at us! We've bought into the same ridiculous delusion. This idea that you have to resign from life and settle down the moment you have children. And we've been punishing each other for it.

**FRANK**

Listen: we decided to move out here. No one ever forced me to take the job at Knox.

**(MORE)**

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

I mean who ever said I was supposed to be a big deal, anyway?

**APRIL**

When I first met you, there was nothing in the world you couldn't do or be.

**FRANK**

I was a little wise guy with a big mouth, that's all.

**APRIL**

You were not! How can you even say that?

**FRANK**

...All right... So, I'll have time. And God knows that's appealing. It's very appealing. And I mean, everything you say might make a certain amount of sense, if I had some definite talent maybe. If I were an artist or a writer.

**APRIL**

But Frank, listen to me: It's what you are that's being stifled here. It's what you are that's being denied and denied and denied in this kind of life.

**FRANK**

And what's that?

**APRIL**

Don't you know...?

He looks at her. She gazes back at him.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

You're the most valuable and wonderful thing in the world... You're a man.

Frank looks at her. In that moment, he loves her more than ever before. He kisses her.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

This is our chance, Frank. This is our one chance.

Beat.

**FRANK**

Okay.

**APRIL**

Okay?

**FRANK**

Why not...? Why the hell not?

April throws her arms around him.

**INT. KNOX 15TH FLOOR, ELEVATOR BAY - MORNING.**

DING. The elevator doors slide open. Frank steps onto the fifteenth floor, full of energy.

**INT. KNOX 15TH FLOOR, FRANK'S CUBICLE - MORNING.**

Frank arrives at his desk. Casually tosses his briefcase down. Lights a cigarette.

Jack stands nearby making idle chat with office co-workers, ED SMALL, 36 and VINCE LATHROP, 33 - a pair of overgrown children.

**JACK**

Ah, Franklin. Good to see your shining face. What's the news?

**FRANK**

I'm moving to Paris.

**JACK**

Right. And I'm moving to Tangiers.

Frank shrugs, smiles, picks up the Toledo file, scans it.

31.

He reaches for his Dictaphone and clears his throat.

**FRANK**

...Intra-company letter to Toledo... Attention B.F. Chalmers, branch manager... With regard to recent and repeated correspondence, this is to advise that the matter has been... very satisfactorily taken in hand, period, paragraph.

He takes out a cigarette.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

We wholly agree that the existing brochure is unsuitable. To this end we have developed...

He lights the cigarette with a SNAP of his Zippo.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

"Speaking of Production Control..."

It's  
Smiles. He's making it up as he goes, and enjoying it.  
all meaningless now!

**INT. AMERICAN EXPRESS OFFICE - DAY.**

April sits in the American Express office.

**CLERK (O.S.)**

Here you are Mrs. Wheeler:

A handsome CLERK smilingly hands her a stack of documents.

**CLERK (CONT'D)**

Here's the travellers checks you asked for... and your steamer reservations... and these I'll pass on to the embassy for you.

**APRIL**

Thank you.

She looks at them in her hands: it's real.

32.

**CLERK**

Good luck.

April smiles.

**INT. MIDTOWN RESTAURANT - DAY.**

Jack, Frank, Ed and Vince sit crammed in a booth in a tiny, crowded Midtown Luncheonette.

Frank looks pleased with himself. The rest sit in stunned silence.

**JACK**

And when does this noble experiment commence?

**FRANK**

September. October at the outside.

Jack and Vince exchange a look.

Frank's enjoying the effect.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

I just happen to think people are better off doing some kind of work they actually like.

**ED**

(vague)  
Right, yes.

**VINCE**

(mumbled)  
Absolutely, absolutely.

**JACK**

But... I mean, assuming there is a true vocation waiting for you. Wouldn't you be just as likely to discover it here as there?

A waitress puts the check on the table.

33.

**FRANK**

No... I don't think it's possible to discover anything on the fifteenth floor of the Knox building, and I don't think any of

you do either.

The men are silent. Frank picks up the check.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

This one's on me.

**EXT GRAND CENTRAL STATION - AFTERNOON**

Frank is standing leaning against a coffee bar in Grand Central Station. He is finishing a beer.

only It is rush hour, and amidst the sea of people, he is the one not moving.

He is watching all the people walking by with an air of detached amusement. As if he were now above them all.

**EXT. SPACE BETWEEN TRAIN CARS - AFTERNOON.**

Frank rides between train cars. The wind whips his hair. He takes a deep pull from a pinched cigarette - then flicks it straight as a bullet into the passing countryside.

He feels alive.

**EXT. REVOLUTIONARY ROAD TRAIN STATION - AFTERNOON.**

The commuter train slows into the station. A door swings open. And Frank leaps from the still moving train onto the platform. He slows to a walk.

**EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON.**

The kids dance back and forth through the sprinkler, shrieking with pleasure.

April sits on the steps in front of the house reading some material from the American Express office.

34.

She looks up as Frank's car pulls into the drive. He steps out of the car and comes towards her. She looks up and smiles. He drops his brief case on the ground and walks

towards her. She meets him in the middle of the lawn, and they embrace.

**INT. FRANK AND APRIL'S BEDROOM - EVENING.**

CLOSE UP - two fingers walk the journey from New York to Paris across the page of an atlas.

Michael and Jennifer, dressed for bed, sit sandwiched  
between  
April and Frank under the bedclothes.

**APRIL**

...All the way to... here.

A pause as the two kids stare at the Atlas.

**JENNIFER**

But why?

**APRIL**

Well, sweetheart. It's a big world out there and we thought maybe we should go see a little bit of it.

**MICHAEL**

How far is it?

**APRIL**

A long way. We have to take a boat ride over the sea to get there.

**JENNIFER**

I won't know anyone there.

**APRIL**

I know. And neither will I. But remember when you started school? And now look how many friends you have...

Frank senses that they are a little concerned. April and Frank look to one another.

35.

**FRANK**

You'll never guess what they eat in

Paris. You'll never guess...

**JENNIFER**

What?

**FRANK**

Snails.

**JENNIFER/MICHAEL**

Snails?!

**APRIL**

And frog's legs!

The children dissolve into disgusted laughter. April and Frank laugh with them.

**INT. CAMPBELL FRONT HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON.**

At the bottom of the stairs, Shep hums a big band number as he vigorously shines his shoes.

**SHEP**

Buddappa banh! Banh! Banh!

He takes a swig of beer and lets out a satisfied belch.

**INT. MILLY AND SHEP'S BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON.**

Milly sits at a vanity table doing her face. She wears a floral dress and her hair's been done. She looks at Shep in the mirror.

**MILLY**

You better get changed, they'll be here soon.

**SHEP**

That what you're wearing?

**MILLY**

(panic)  
Don't you like it?

36.

**SHEP**

...No... No. You look great,

doll. Guess I better haul ass.

He walks into the bathroom. Milly looks back at her reflection.

**INT. CAMPBELL KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON.**

The small explosion of a beer can opening.

Shep watches the golden liquid fill his glass.

**INT. CAMPBELL FAMILY ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON.**

Shep walks through the living room with his glass of beer. He's halfway across the room, before he notices -

His four SONS dressed in matching pajamas, propped up on their elbows chewing gum at the television screen.

**SHEP**

Hiya gang.

They don't even look up.

**EXT. CAMPBELL HOUSE - EVENING.**

Shep walks across the grass to the edge of his property. He drinks and looks down over Revolutionary Road. He can see the Wheeler house. He takes a drink of beer, his eyes focused on the house.

**MILLY (O.S.)**

Shep?

Shep wheels around. April and Frank are standing there with Milly. April wears a new indigo silk dress. Her hair moves in the warm breeze. She's never looked better.

**INT. CAMPBELL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.**

Shep mixes drinks with his back to the room.

37.

Milly walks in and places two heaping trays of hors d'ouvres on the coffee table.

**APRIL**

Oh those look great. I'm starving!

April helps herself.

**MILLY**

April, I can't get over it - you look like the cat who ate the canary! Do you have something to tell us? A little bit of news?

**SHEP**

(disapproving)  
Not to pry or anything.

**MILLY**

(suddenly unsure)  
I'm not prying. Am I prying? I didn't mean to.

**FRANK**

Actually, we have got some pretty important news.

Shep and Milly look up expectantly.

He smiles conspiratorially at April.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

You want to tell `em?

April smiles back at him.

**APRIL**

We're going to Europe. To Paris...  
To live.

Milly's face drops. Shep is frozen.

Overlapping:

**MILLY**

What?

**SHEP**

When?

**MILLY**

Why?

**FRANK**

September.

Beat. Then:

**MILLY**

But what for?

**FRANK**

What for? Because we've always wanted to. Because the kids are still young. Because it's beautiful. Shep, you tell her.

**SHEP**

...It's a great city.

Milly glances nervously at Shep.

**MILLY**

When did you make this decision?

**APRIL**

Oh... about a week ago... its hard to remember. We just suddenly decided to go, that's all.

**MILLY**

About a week ago, and you tell us now!

**APRIL**

We had to get used to the idea.

Shep forces himself across the room and hands the Wheelers their drinks.

**SHEP**

So, what's the deal, Frank? You get a job over there, or what?

39.

**FRANK**

(smiles)

No. Not exactly.

**SHEP**

What do you mean, `not exactly?'

**APRIL**

Frank won't be doing any kind of a job, because I will.

**SHEP**

(to Frank)  
And what are you going to do?

**FRANK**

I'm going to study... and I'm going to read and... I suppose I'm going to finally figure out what I want to do with my life.

**SHEP**

...While she supports you?

Beat.

**FRANK**

Yes. While she supports me... At least in the beginning.

**APRIL**

You wouldn't believe what they pay for secretarial work in government agencies over there. NATO and E.C.A. and those places.

**FRANK**

The cost of living is dirt cheap compared to here, so we should be all right.

Beat.

**APRIL**

The truth is we just need something different.

**(MORE)**

40.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

We're not getting any younger and we don't want life to just pass us by.

**MILLY**

Gee, it sounds wonderful, kids. I mean it; it really sounds wonderful. We'll certainly miss

you, though - won't we, sweetie?  
Golly.

**SHEP**

Sure.

**MILLY**

Paris. Wow.

A silence. Shep's face.

**INT. MILLY AND SHEP'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.**

Milly sits on the edge of the bed in her night gown. She  
is brushing her hair.

Shep stands in the open doorway to the bathroom, doing up  
his pyjamas. After a beat...

**SHEP**

You know what I think?

Milly looks up.

**SHEP (CONT'D)**

I think this whole plan sounds a  
little immature.

Milly's face brightens.

**MILLY**

Oh God, I'm so relieved. Me too...  
I was thinking that the whole time.

**SHEP**

What kind of man is going to sit  
around in his bathrobe picking his  
nose while his wife works all day?

**41.**

**MILLY**

I don't know, Shep. I just don't  
know.

Milly is crying.

**SHEP**

What is it?

**MILLY**

Nothing. I'm just so relieved.

He sits down beside her. She falls into his arms.

**SHEP**

Come on. Don't cry. Please. It's all right. It's going to be all right.

A kid's shout from somewhere in the house. Milly sits up.

**SHEP (CONT'D)**

I'll go.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT.**

Frank and April burst into the kitchen, laughing.

**FRANK**

Jesus, their faces! You'd think we'd told them that we were swimming up the Yangtzee river or something.

Laughing, April hands Frank a drink.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

You know what this is like, April? Talking like this? The whole idea of taking off to Europe this way? It's like the way I felt going up to the line the first time, in the war. I was probably just as scared as everyone else, but inside I never felt better. I felt alive. I felt full of blood.

**(MORE)**

42.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

And everything looked more real. The guys in their uniforms. The snow on the fields, the trees. And

all of us just... walking. I mean  
I was scared of course. But I kept  
thinking: this is it. This is the  
truth.

**APRIL**

I felt that way once too.

He looks at her. And there's something in her eyes.

**FRANK**

When?

**APRIL**

The first time you made love to me.

He walks over to her and kisses her passionately.

And they make love that way, face to face, with the lights  
on, looking into each other's eyes, fully clothed, until he  
comes inside her.

As he comes, she makes a sound, almost inaudible, but it  
sounds like...

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

...No

He holds her, breathing heavily. She strokes his head.

**INT. KNOX 15TH FLOOR - DAY.**

Frank walks across the 15th floor, the atmosphere unusually  
abuzz.

He arrives in his cubicle. Jack, Ed and Vance are talking in  
hushed tones.

**FRANK**

What's up?

**ED**

Bart Pollock is here.

43.

**VINCE**

He's in Bandy's office.

**FRANK**

(unimpressed)

Yeah?

A small signal light illuminates on Frank's desk.

**ED**

Looks like he wants to talk to you.

Frank looks around. They're all looking at him. He looks over in the direction of Bandy's office.

**JACK**

Hey. Keep my name out of it.

**INT. KNOX 15TH FLOOR, BANDY'S OFFICE - DAY**

Bandy looks up from his desk. An uncharacteristic smile.

**BANDY**

(warm)

Frank. How are you? You know Bart Pollock?

**FRANK**

Well, we've never met, but -

A massive MAN in tan gaberdine rises up from a chair.

**BART POLLOCK**

Glad to know you Frank.

He holds a file in his enormous hand.

**BART POLLOCK (CONT'D)**

Speaking of production control?

Frank looks away, ready for a dressing down.

**BART POLLOCK (CONT'D)**

Frank... This is a crackerjack. They're just tickled to death in Toledo.

**44.**

He slaps the file on the desk. Frank can't believe it.

**INT. WHEELER LIVING ROOM - DAY.**

Close of a book: "Brighter French."

Frank sits on the couch, flipping absently.

**FRANK**

You wouldn't have believed this  
guy.

April enters carrying a plate of sandwiches.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

He's perfect Presidential material  
in the worst sense. A million  
dollar smile and about three pounds  
of muscle between his ears.

(mimicking Pollock's  
booming voice)

"Frank, this is a crackerjack."

April looks around to be sure everything's in place.

**APRIL**

Wish I saw his face when you told  
him you were leaving.

Frank looks away.

**FRANK**

...Horse's ass.

TOOT of a car horn. April goes to the window.

**APRIL**

I think this is them.

**INT./EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - DAY.**

Through the picture window, we see the Givings' car is  
parked  
in the driveway.

Mrs. Givings gets out of the car holding a tinfoil covered  
baking pan. Mr. Givings opens the backseat.

**45.**

Out steps JOHN, 30's, an institutional haircut and ill-

fitting suit. He looks around the sunny neighborhood.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - DAY.**

The kitchen is suddenly crowded with the Givings, Frank and April.

Overlapping:

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Sorry to be late.

**APRIL**

You're not late.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

The traffic was terrible.

**MR. GIVINGS**

Good to see you.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Wasn't it terrible, Howard?

**MR. GIVINGS**

Route 12.

Hands are shook, the baking dish exchanged.

**APRIL**

You didn't have to do that.

**FRANK**

The time they finish that stretch of road, they'll have to start all over again.

John stands by himself closest to the door.

**APRIL**

And you must be John?

Silence settles over the room.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Say hello, John.

**JOHN**

Nice to meetcha. Heard a lot  
aboutcha.

John smiles, exposing a mouthful of deeply-stained yellow  
teeth and high, eroded gums.

**INT. WHEELER LIVING ROOM - DAY.**

Mrs. Givings leads the group into the living room.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Where are your darling children?

**APRIL**

They're at a birthday party. Sorry  
they couldn't be here.

John walks around the room, stiff-legged, examining the book  
shelves, the paintings.

**JOHN**

Don't worry. If I had a certified  
lunatic coming around the house,  
I'd probably get the kids out of  
the way too.

April and Frank exchange a quick glance.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh, look at all this food! You  
didn't have to go to any trouble  
for us.

**APRIL**

It's just some sandwiches.

April lifts the plate and offers it to John.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

John, would you like a sandwich?

He avoids her look, but he takes four.

**JOHN**

Helen's been talking it up about  
you people for months.

**(MORE)**

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

The nice young Wheelers on  
Revolutionary Road, the nice young  
Revolutionaries on Wheeler road.

Polite laughter.

**FRANK**

Who'd like some sherry?

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Please, don't bother Frank.

**JOHN**

I'd like some sherry. And I'll  
drink Helen's if she doesn't beat  
me to it.

April can't suppress a smile.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

(suddenly serious)

But, hey... Listen, though. You  
got a high-ball glass...? Put a  
couple-three ice cubes in it, pour  
it up to the brim. That's the way  
I like it.

**FRANK**

I think I can do that.

Mr. Givings eats his sandwich, watching his son.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh, this is the most wonderful egg  
salad, April. You must tell me how  
you fix it.

Frank hands John his high-ball glass.

**JOHN**

You a lawyer Frank?

**FRANK**

No, I'm not.

**JOHN**

I could use a lawyer.

48.

**MR. GIVINGS**

John, let's not get started again about the lawyer.

**JOHN**

Pop, couldn't you just sit there and eat your wonderful egg salad, and quit horning in?

Mr. Givings gives his son a level, warning look.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

See, I've got a good many questions to ask and I'm willing to pay for the answers... Now, I don't need to be told that a man who goes after his mother with a coffee table is putting himself in a weak position legally; that's obvious.

Frank and April exchange a look.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

John, come and have a look out this fabulous picture window.

Mrs. Givings gets up and goes to the window.

**JOHN**

If he hits her with it and kills her, that's a criminal case.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh, look, the sun's coming out!

**JOHN**

If all he does is break the coffee table and give her a certain amount of aggravation and she decides to go to court over it, that's a civil case.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Maybe we'll see a rainbow! John, come have a look.

49.

**JOHN**

Ma, how about doing everybody a favor? How about shutting up!

April's face. She's not smiling now.

**MR. GIVINGS**

Steady down, now.

With her back to the room, Mrs. Givings closes her eyes.

**FRANK**

I can look into it. Maybe  
recommend someone.

John stares at Frank for any sign of condescension.

**JOHN**

So, what do you do, Frank?

**FRANK**

I work for Knox Business Machines.

**JOHN**

You design the machines?

**FRANK**

Nope.

**JOHN**

Make `em, sell `em, repair `em?

**MRS. GIVINGS**

All these questions.

**FRANK**

I sort of help sell them, I guess.  
I work in the office. Actually,  
it's sort of a stupid job. I mean  
there's nothing you know,  
interesting about it or anything.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh, Frank...

**JOHN**

Whaddya do it for then?

50.

**MR. GIVINGS**

Maybe Frank doesn't want to be  
questioned like this, son.

**JOHN**

Okay, okay, okay I know it's none of my business. And besides, I know the answer. You want to play house, you got to have a job. You want to play very nice house, very sweet house, then you got to have a job you don't like. Anyone comes along and asks "Whaddya do it for?" he's probably on a four-hour pass from the State funny farm. All agreed...? Ma?

Frank laughs.

John smiles his yellow grin.

**MR. GIVINGS**

Sorry, Frank.

**FRANK**

Don't be. I agree with everything you said, John. We both do. That's why I'm quitting the job in the fall and we're taking off.

**APRIL**

We're moving to Paris.

John looks over at his mother.

**JOHN**

Did you know about this, Ma...? Wow. How do you feel about that, Ma? The nice young Wheelers are taking off!

John bursts into a painful braying laugh. It goes on and on.

Mrs. Givings brings a hand to her brow - she's on the verge of tears.

51.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

...John, please.

**MR. GIVINGS**

Steady down, son.

April looks at Frank - the whole thing is in danger of going off the rails.

**FRANK**

How about some fresh air, John?

John stops laughing abruptly. He looks to his parents.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

If that's all right with you?

**MRS. GIVINGS**

I don't know if it's a good idea.

**MR. GIVINGS**

...If John wants to, I don't see the harm.

**EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY.**

Frank, April and John walk through the woods.

The ground is freshly rained on and damp. The sun is bright.

John buttons up his top button and pulls his sleeves down over his hands.

**APRIL**

I hear you're a mathematician.

**JOHN**

You hear wrong. It's all gone now.

**APRIL**

All gone?

**JOHN**

You know what electrical shock treatments are?

52.

**APRIL**

Yes. Yes I do.

**JOHN**

I've had thirty-seven.

He pushes his hat back and turns his head at April.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

See?

There are scars on his forehead. April can see them.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Supposed to jolt out the `Emotional Problems.' Just jolted out the mathematics.

**APRIL**

How awful.

**JOHN**

(mimicking)

`How awful...' Why, because mathematics is so `interesting?'

**APRIL**

No. Because the shocks must be awful and... well, because it's awful not to be able to do what it is you want to do. I think mathematics are dull.

John stares at April. He smiles.

**JOHN**

I like your girl, Frank.

**FRANK**

Me too.

**JOHN**

So, what do a couple of people like you have to run away from?

**FRANK**

We're not running.

53.

John comes to a stop.

**JOHN**

And what's in Paris?

**APRIL**

A different way of life.

**FRANK**

So maybe we are running... We're running from the hopeless emptiness of the whole life here.

**JOHN**

The hopeless emptiness? Now, you've said it. Plenty of people are on to the emptiness, but it takes real guts to see the hopelessness... Wow.

John continues walking. Frank and April watch him go.

**INT. WHEELER LIVING ROOM - DUSK.**

Frank and April at the kitchen table.

**APRIL**

You know, he's the first person who seemed to know what we were talking about.

**FRANK**

That's true. Maybe we are just as crazy as he is.

**APRIL**

If being crazy means living life as if it matters then I don't care if we are completely insane.

(beat)

Do you?

**FRANK**

No.

**APRIL**

I love you so much.

54.

**EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - DAY**

The small, attractive house bathed in sunlight.

**INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON.**

Frank follows Bart Pollock as he cuts a swathe through an impressive midtown eatery. A small MAITRE D' scuttles in front of them. Bart nods, points at well-wishers, and makes a politician's show of knowing the staff.

**BART POLLOCK**

Tell you something, Frank. I'm a little sore at Bandy for the way he's kept you under a bushel all these years. This place okay, for you?

Frank smirks at the performance.

**FRANK**

This is just fine, sir. Fine.

**INT. MIDTOWN HOTEL RESTAURANT - LATER.**

Bart Pollock sits across an expanse of white tablecloth gripping a martini glass in one of his enormous paws.

**BART POLLOCK**

One thing interests me, Frank, and one thing only: selling the electronic computer to the American businessman...

**BART POLLOCK (CONT'D)**

That's why I'm assembling a team. Men like you, not your average salesmen... It'll mean more money, and I got to be honest, maybe more of a time commitment. But you'll be part of something exciting, Wheeler... Computers.

**FRANK**

Well, sir, it sounds exciting.

55.

**BART POLLOCK**

Bart!

**FRANK**

Bart...

Frank looks down at his plate. He can't help himself.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Do you happen to remember an Earl  
Wheeler?

Bart looks at him blankly.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Out of Yonkers?

**BART POLLOCK**

Can't say that I do. Relation of  
yours?

**FRANK**

My father. He worked at Knox  
almost twenty years.

**BART POLLOCK**

(thinking)  
Earl Wheeler... Earl Wheeler...

**FRANK**

No reason you would have heard of  
him.

**BART POLLOCK**

Well, I'm sure he was a good man.

Frank smiles. Looks down.

**FRANK**

There's something I should have  
mentioned earlier... I'm leaving  
the firm. In the fall.

**BART POLLOCK**

Another outfit?

**FRANK**

No, it's not another outfit --

56.

Bart holds up his hands.

**BART POLLOCK**

Now look, Frank. Is it a question of money? Because if it is, there's no reason we can't get together on a satisfactory

**FRANK**

I appreciate that, but it's not money. It's more of a personal thing.

**BART POLLOCK**

A personal thing? I see.  
(looks down, clearly disapproving)  
Frank... Let me tell you something my father told me... A man only gets a couple chances in life. If he doesn't grab `em by the balls, it won't be long before he finds himself sitting around wondering how he got to be second rate.

Frank's face.

**FRANK**

I guess so.

Bart lets it hang.

**BART POLLOCK**

So, do me a favor... Sleep on it. Discuss it with your wife. Because let's face it: where the hell would any of us be without our wives, anyway?

On Frank's face.

**BART POLLOCK (CONT'D)**

And Frank, in all sincerity, if you do decide to join us, I believe it'll be a thing you'll never regret.

**(MORE)**

57.

**BART POLLOCK (CONT'D)**

And I believe something else, too. I believe it'd be a fine memorial to your Dad.

Frank finds himself surprised by his welling up of emotion.

**INT. KNOX BUILDING - EVENING.**

It's late. Frank is sitting in his cubicle over his Dictaphone. Jack is long gone.

**FRANK**

Knowing what you've got, comma,  
knowing what you need, comma,  
Knowing what you can do without,  
dash. That's inventory control.

He stubs out a cigarette in an overflowing ashtray.

Close on his face.

Maureen stops by Frank's cubicle. She pretends to be surprised to see him.

**MAUREEN**

Oh, hi Frank. Working late?

**FRANK**

I got to dig myself out here.

**MAUREEN**

I heard you were getting promoted.

Frank shrugs, no big deal.

**MAUREEN (CONT'D)**

Big shot. I guess your Dad would  
have been real proud, huh?

**FRANK**

(surprised she remembered)  
Huh. Yeah, I guess so...

**MAUREEN**

(smiles sweetly)  
So...

**(MORE)**

58.

**MAUREEN (CONT'D)**

maybe I should buy you a drink or  
something? You know...?

Celebrate.

Frank's face. We don't know which way he'll go. He smiles.

**FRANK**

Yeah. Maybe.

She smiles. She can't quite believe it.

**MAUREEN**

I'll just get my coat.

Frank sits there a moment longer, thinking. Then he follows.

**INT. WHEELER FAMILY ROOM - DAY.**

On a television. Elmer Fudd points a gun at Bugs Bunny, and pulls the trigger.

Frank frowns into his French phrase book. Mike is watching the TV.

April works a sewing machine with a cigarette burning beside her. Jennifer stands beside her holding a stuffed Giraffe and a list, which she reads.

**JENNIFER**

I'm going to take my doll carriage and my bear and my three Easter rabbits and my giraffe and all my dolls and my doll house.

**APRIL**

I thought maybe we'd give the doll house to Madeline.

**JENNIFER**

No! I don't want to give it to Madeline.

April has to stop to re-thread and she's losing patience.

59.

**APRIL**

I already explained to you, the big things are going to be hard to pack.

Frank lowers the book. He recognizes her tone.

**JENNIFER**

But Madeline can have my bear and  
my Easter rabbits -

**APRIL**

No! Just the big things. Look.  
Wouldn't you rather go outside and  
play with Michael.

**JENNIFER**

I don't feel like it.

**APRIL**

You've been inside all day.

**JENNIFER**

I don't feel like it!

**APRIL**

Well, I don't feel like explaining  
everything fifteen times to  
somebody who's too bored and silly  
to listen!

Jennifer turns and runs up the stairs, upset.

April lets out a defeated sigh. She turns to the kitchen to  
see to the supper. Steam rises from the vegetables.

Frank stands in the entrance silently watching for a moment.

**FRANK**

What's the matter?

**APRIL**

Nothing.

She carries a pot of steaming, overcooked vegetables to the  
sink, slops them into a colander.

60.

**FRANK**

I don't believe you. Did something  
happen today or what?

**APRIL**

Nothing happened today that I

haven't known about for days and days.

**FRANK**

What?

**APRIL**

Oh God, Frank, please don't look so dense. Do you mean you haven't guessed or anything?

**FRANK**

What are you talking about?

She finally stops and looks at him.

**APRIL**

I'm pregnant, that's all.

Beat as he absorbs it. He's totally blind-sided.

**FRANK**

What...? Jesus.

She comes over to him.

**APRIL**

Oh, Frank, I meant to wait until dinner to tell you, but I just - well, I've been pretty sure all week and today I went to the Doctor and now I can't even pretend it's not true.

**FRANK**

(still stunned)  
Jesus... How long?

**APRIL**

Ten weeks.

61.

**FRANK**

You didn't say anything.

**APRIL**

I thought... Oh, I don't know what I thought.

He stares, still unsure how he feels.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

I'm sorry, Frank. I'm so sorry.

**FRANK**

I know you are.

She looks at him, with slight desperation.

**APRIL**

We don't have to let this stop us.  
There are things we can do.  
Remember that girl at school I told  
you about...? As long as you do it  
before 12 weeks, it's fine.

He just looks at her and his silence makes her desperate.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

We've got to be together in this,  
Frank. Otherwise nothing's going  
to make any sense.

**FRANK**

Okay. We'll figure it out.

He takes her in his arms.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

12 weeks. So we have time.

On Frank's face... Slowly, he smiles.

**APRIL**

I love you Frank.

**FRANK**

...I love you too.

62.

**EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND BEACH - AFTERNOON.**

A baking hot day. The sky is electric blue. Radios PLAY,  
children CRY, dogs BARK. Sunbathers cover almost every inch  
of sand.

We find Shep, Milly, Frank and April with beach chairs,  
coolers and umbrellas.

A child wrapped in a towel sleeps on Milly's lap.

April wears a pair of dark glasses, behind which she is thinking, thinking.

**SHEP**

So, Frank, how's work? They gonna survive without you?

**FRANK**

Actually... Something kinda funny happened the other day. I did some dumb little piece of work to get myself off the hook with Bandy, and suddenly I'm The Bright Young Man.

**SHEP**

(laughs)

That's always the way, isn't it?

**FRANK**

It's incredible. I knocked this thing off in a couple of minutes and now they want me to join their team of `specialist' salesmen.

**SHEP**

Morons.

**FRANK**

It'd be funny, if they weren't talking about so much damn money.

April turns and looks at Frank. Long and hard. If he can feel her look, he doesn't show it.

63.

**SHEP**

(stealing a glance at April)

So, you tempted?

**FRANK**

(shrugs)

Well, it's kind of ironic, don't you think?

April suddenly stands up. Frank and Shep watch her walk down

to the water's edge.

**SHEP**

She okay?

Frank stares after her.

**EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND BEACH, WATER'S EDGE - AFTERNOON.**

April stands in the water staring out over the sea. The waves break against her ankles. Whether it occurs to her or not, she's staring in the direction of Europe.

Frank comes up beside her.

**APRIL**

I thought you turned the job down?

**FRANK**

(shrugs)

Not yet... It's just an option, that's all. With the money they're talking, things could be different for us here. We could get a better place. Travel.

April shakes her head and drags on her cigarette.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Look, the point is - we could be happy here. At least for a while.

She stares out at the sea.

64.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

It is possible that Parisians aren't the only ones who know how to lead interesting lives, April.

She turns to him.

**APRIL**

So you've made up your mind?

**FRANK**

No. Like I said, it's an option.

**APRIL**

...And supposing you're right. You make all this money and we have this interesting life here. Won't you still be wasting your life toiling away at a job you find ridiculous? Just like your father.

**FRANK**

(sharp)  
Maybe we let that be my business.

**APRIL**

(incredulous)  
Your business?

**FRANK**

(exhales)  
It's too hot for this. I'm going to get wet.

She just looks at him. He walks into the ocean. She stands on the shore, watching him swim away from her.

**INT. WHEELER FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT.**

April paces the family room. Her hair is a defiant mess. She still wears her bathing suit under her clothes.

Frank sits on the couch.

The windows are open, and most of the lights are off. It's a very hot night.

65.

**APRIL**

You don't want to go, do you?

**FRANK**

Come on, April. Of course I do.

**APRIL**

You don't! Because you've never tried at anything. And if you don't try at anything you can't fail.

**FRANK**

What the hell do you mean I don't try? I support you, don't I? I

pay for this house. I work ten  
hours a day at a job I can't stand.

**APRIL**

You don't have to!

**FRANK**

Bullshit! I'm not happy about it.  
But I have the backbone not to run  
away from my responsibilities!

**APRIL**

It takes backbone to lead the life  
you want, Frank.

He shakes his head and gets up.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Where are you going?

**FRANK**

Is it alright with you if I go to  
the bathroom?

She disgustedly twists out her cigarette, and immediately  
lights another.

**INT. WHEELER BATHROOM - NIGHT.**

Frank splashes water on his face like a boxer between  
rounds.

He looks up at his reflection.

**66.**

He reaches for a towel, but there isn't one. He turns to the  
shelf behind him and pulls down a fresh towel. Something  
catches his eye.

He reaches to the back and retrieves a small brown paper  
package.

He opens it, his face slowly registering what it means...

**INT. WHEELER FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT.**

April wheels around as -

Frank storms in, a rubber syringe in his hand.

**FRANK**

What the hell are you going to do with this?

**APRIL**

And what do you think you're going to do? You're going to stop me?

**FRANK**

You're damn right!

**APRIL**

Go ahead and try!

He comes at her across the room with the syringe in his hand.

She moves away.

**FRANK**

Listen. Listen to me. You do this - you do this and I swear to God I'll -

**APRIL**

You'll what? You'll leave me? Is that a threat, or a promise?

He shakes it in her face.

**FRANK**

When did you buy this, April? I want to know!

67.

**APRIL**

You know you really are being melodramatic about the whole thing. As long as it's done in the first twelve weeks, it's perfectly safe.

**FRANK**

That's now April! Don't I get a say?

**APRIL**

Of course you do! It would be for you, Frank, don't you see? So you can have time. Like we talked

about.

**FRANK**

How can it be for me if the thought makes my stomach turn over?

**APRIL**

Then it's for me... Tell me we can have the baby in Paris, Frank. But don't make me stay here. Please.

**FRANK**

We can't have the baby in Paris.

**APRIL**

Why not? I don't need everything we have here. I don't care where we live! I mean who made these rules, anyway? The only reason we moved out here was because I got pregnant. Then we had another child to prove the first one wasn't a mistake. I mean how long does it go on?

He turns away.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Frank. Do you actually want another child? Well, do you?

He won't answer.

68.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Come on, tell me. Tell me the truth, Frank. Remember that? We used to live by it. You know what's so good about the truth? Everyone knows what it is, however long they've lived without it. No one forgets the truth, Frank, they just get better at lying. So tell me: do you really want another child?

Frank turns towards her.

**FRANK**

All I know is what I feel. And anyone else in their right mind

would feel the same way.

**APRIL**

(quiet)

But I've had two children. Doesn't  
that count in my favor?

**FRANK**

Christ! The fact that you even put  
it that way! You make it sound  
like having children is a  
punishment.

**APRIL**

I love my children.

**FRANK**

And you're sure about that?

**APRIL**

What the hell is that supposed to  
mean?

**FRANK**

April, you just said our daughter  
was mistake. How do I know you  
didn't try to get rid of her, or  
Michael for that matter? How do I  
know you didn't try to flush our  
entire fucking family down the  
toilet?

69.

**APRIL**

No that's not true. Of course I  
didn't.

**FRANK**

But how do I know April?

**APRIL**

Stop. Please just stop, Frank.

**FRANK**

April, a normal woman, a normal  
sane mother doesn't buy herself a  
piece of rubber tubing to give  
herself an abortion so she can, go  
live out some God damn fantasy.

April's face.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

(sober)

All I'm saying is you don't seem entirely rational about this thing... And maybe we should get someone to help you think about it.

**APRIL**

...And the new job's going to pay for that too?

**FRANK**

April if you need a shrink, it'll be paid for. Obviously.

April turns to the book shelves. Her back to him.

Frank waits, his heart beating quickly.

**APRIL**

...Okay. I guess there isn't much more to say, then, is there?

Her eyes are bright with tears.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

So I guess Paris was a pretty childish idea, huh?

70.

Everything hangs on Frank's answer...

**FRANK**

I guess maybe it was.

April closes her eyes. Tears run down her cheeks. He walks over to her, but he doesn't touch her.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

We can be happy here April... I can make you happy here.

She cries quietly.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

We've had a great few months. It doesn't have to end...

She turns to face him.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

We're going to be okay.

**APRIL**

I hope so Frank. I really hope so.

**INT. WHEELER LIVING ROOM - MORNING.**

Frank stands at the picture window watching...

April approach the children. She squats on the ground so she can be at their height and talks to them. Michael tries to get into her arms. Jennifer turns away and walks sulkily across the grass.

Frank looks into his coffee cup. He doesn't look like a  
man  
who won an argument.

**INT. KNOX WAITING ROOM - DAY.**

Frank sits smoking nervously in an oak-paneled waiting room. The door opens behind him. He gets to his feet.

**RECEPTIONIST**

Thank you for waiting. Mr. Pollock  
can see you now.

71.

He follows her through the door. The door closes behind  
her.

We see the scene in dumb-show through the glass door. Bart looks up as Frank enters. An "I knew it all along" smile spreads across Pollock's face. He offers his hand to Frank. Frank smiles thinly. They shake.

**JACK (O.S)**

Foiled by faulty contraception.

**INT. MIDTOWN RESTAURANT - DAY.**

Frank, Ed, Vince and Jack sit in the same booth in the same crowded luncheonette.

Frank stares out the window. The others can't contain themselves.

**ED**

I can't say I'm sorry.

**VINCE**

Wouldn't have been the same without you.

**JACK**

You'd have been sorely missed in the old cubicle, I can tell you that.

He raises his glass, drinks alone.

**JACK (CONT'D)**

Besides which...

Frank looks away from the window.

**FRANK**

What?

**JACK**

...Well, the plan always seemed a touch unrealistic, don't you think?

Frank glares with barely contained fury.

72.

**JACK (CONT'D)**

I suppose, it's none of my business, really.

**FRANK**

No. I suppose it isn't.

A beat.

**JACK**

Well, we won't be the only ones glad to hear the news. They'll be celebrating in the secretarial pool.

Ed and Vince chuckle. Frank's face.

**INT. VITO'S LOG CABIN - NIGHT.**

Two drumsticks spinning in a spotlight. They click out a rhythm, and crash into a number.

men  
Cut back to reveal a small, low-ceilinged joint. On-stage are the Steve Kovack quartet, four perspiring middle-aged with day jobs.

the  
YOUNGISH COUPLES, and the odd middle-aged COUPLE navigate dance floor.

A smattering of lost SINGLES line the bar.

The Wheelers and Campbells sit squashed into a booth on the side of the dance floor.

Several empty glasses have accumulated. Milly is beating the edge of the table with red drink straws. She's a few drinks ahead.

They have to SHOUT over the MUSIC.

**MILLY**

Hey! Remember the first time you brought us here? You said, it takes a special kind of taste to enjoy Vito's Log Cabin!

73.

**SHEP**

It's so awful it's kinda nice!

**MILLY**

That's right!

They laugh at the old joke. Then Milly begins to weep.

**MILLY (CONT'D)**

(dabs at her eyes)  
Look at me...! I'm just so happy.  
Our little gang's back together again!

She knocks her drink back. The number finishes.

**SHEP**

At least Europe's not going  
anywhere.

A April stares out at the dance floor. Frank looks at her.  
new number starts.

**FRANK**

Wanna dance?

**APRIL**

I don't really feel like it.

**MILLY**

I'll dance!

Milly takes him by the hand and pulls him away. Shep and  
April watch. Then Shep turns his attention to April.

**MILLY (CONT'D)**

(tipsy)

Guess April's pretty blue `bout  
Paris, huh?

**FRANK**

Think she'll be okay?

**MILLY**

Oh, sure. Give us girls a couple  
of days and we can get over  
anything!

74.

Frank turns his attention to Milly. He's a good dancer. His  
movements are fast and aggressive, his mind on April.

Milly is a little too drunk, and hurries to keep up,  
perspiring through her dress. He spins her around and  
around, back and forth into his arms. Milly begins to look  
slightly dizzy.

**MILLY (CONT'D)**

...Frank.

He doesn't hear her over the music, or he doesn't care.

**MILLY (CONT'D)**

Frank... I...

**FRANK**

(sudden remorse)  
You okay?

**MILLY**

Gee...I'm afraid I'm not very...

Her body spasms with the need to be sick. She turns and rushes for the lady's room.

**EXT. VITO'S LOG CABIN - NIGHT.**

Frank leads the way through the cars.

Shep supports Milly who is now falling down drunk.

April walks alone a few paces behind...

They reach Shep's car, which is trapped behind several other cars.

**SHEP**

Of all the inconsiderate...

A beat. Frank looks to April.

75.

**APRIL**

Look - why don't you take Milly home, then go home yourself and that would take care of both sitters. Then Shep can take me home later.

**SHEP**

All right with me.

**FRANK**

(to April)  
You'll be alright?

**APRIL**

Sure.

Frank holds April's look an instant, then walks away with car keys in hand.

**INT. VITO'S LOG CABIN - NIGHT.**

Steve Kovack performs an exhausting, sweat-drenched drum solo.

April and Shep now sit alone in the booth.

**SHEP**

I'm sorry you're not going away anymore. I know it was important to you.

April distantly nods her thanks.

**SHEP (CONT'D)**

Don't take this wrong; I've been there and...they don't have so much we don't have here.

**APRIL**

It didn't have to be Paris.

Shep sips his beer, trying to figure out how to connect with her...

**SHEP**

You just wanted out, huh?

76.

**APRIL**

I wanted in. I just wanted us to live again.

Shep nods, not entirely sure what she means.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

For years I thought we shared a secret...that we would be wonderful in the world. I didn't exactly know how, but just the possibility...kept me hoping.

She takes a long slug of her drink.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

How pathetic is that? To put all your hopes in a promise that was never made? See, Frank knows...he

knows what he wants. He's found his place. He's just fine. Married, two kids. It should be enough. It is for him. He's right; we were never special or destined or anything at all.

**SHEP**

Sure you are. You're The Wheelers. You're a terrific couple, everyone says so.

April doesn't hear, she's pursuing her thought...

**APRIL**

I saw a different life. I can't stop seeing it.

(beat)

Can't leave, can't stay.

(beat)

No damn use to anyone.

April turns and stares at him.

The band strikes up a new number.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Come on, let's do it.

77.

**INT. VITO'S LOG CABIN, DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT.**

April and Shep dance.

Shep can't dance well, but he's trying. April, on the other hand, is a wonderful dancer. She dances out as far as their joined hands allow and does a little twitching, hip-bobbing curtsies before twisting back, all seemingly effortless. It is joyous, released.

**INT. SHEP'S CAR - NIGHT.**

Shep slips behind the wheel and is immediately kissing her, groping.

**SHEP**

Let me take you somewhere.

**APRIL**

No. Please. Here. Now. In the  
back seat.

She climbs into the back seat. He pulls off his jacket and  
climbs in after her. He folds the jacket under her head for  
a pillow...

She remains perfectly still, allowing him to kiss her, to  
search under her clothing, to kiss her skin and finally, to  
lift her skirt and pull her clothing aside and make love to  
her against the vinyl seat cover...

As suddenly as it began, it's over. Shep collapses against  
her. April stares into the darkness.

**SHEP (CONT'D)**

April... This is what I've always  
wanted... I love you.

**APRIL**

Don't say that.

**SHEP**

I mean it, I love you.

**APRIL**

Please, just be quiet for a minute,  
then you can take me home.

78.

They begin to quietly assemble themselves.

**INT. FRANK AND APRIL'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

Frank stands at the mirror putting on a clean shirt.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON.**

April stands at the kitchen table chopping vegetables.

She

wears an unflattering floral dress.

Frank stands in the doorway watching.

**FRANK**

It's beautiful out.

**APRIL**

Yes; it's lovely.

He glances at the calendar.

**FRANK**

You know what today is?

She doesn't look at him.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

It's twelve weeks.

**APRIL**

That's right.

He walks over to her. He takes her in his arms. She stiffens.

**FRANK**

Look, this has been kind of a crazy summer. We've both been under a strain. I mean I know you're upset.

**APRIL**

You know I'm not sleeping with you and you want to know why?

79.

She looks him straight in the eye.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Well, I'm sorry Frank, but I don't really feel like talking about it.

She pulls herself free of his grasp. He watches as she adds the vegetables in the pot on the stove.

**FRANK**

Okay. What do you feel like talking about?

**APRIL**

Would it be all right if we didn't talk about anything? Can't we just take each day as it comes, and do the best we can, and not feel we

have to talk about everything all the time?

He smiles patiently.

**FRANK**

I don't think I suggested we talk about everything all the time. My point was, we've both been under a strain and we ought to be trying to help each other as much as we can right now.

She's utterly uninterested and it's making him nervous.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

I mean God knows my own behavior has been pretty weird lately... I mean, as it happens... there is actually something I'd like to tell you about...

She continues folding the napkins.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

I've been with a girl in the city a few times.

Finally, she stops moving. She looks at him.

80.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

A girl I hardly even know. It was nothing to me, but she got a little carried away. She's just a kid... Anyway, it's over now. It's really over. If I weren't sure of that I guess I could never have told you about it.

**APRIL**

Why did you?

**FRANK**

(relieved)

Baby, I don't know. I think it was a simple case of wanting to be a man again after all that abortion business. Some kind of neurotic, irrational need to prove something.

**APRIL**

No. I don't mean why did you have the girl; I mean why did you tell me about it?

He is suddenly unsure.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

I mean what's the point? Is it supposed to make me jealous, or something? Is it supposed to make me fall in love with you, or back into bed with you, or what? I mean what am I supposed to say?

He tries that same patient smile, but it's not convincing.

**FRANK**

Why don't you say what you feel?

**APRIL**

I don't feel anything.

**FRANK**

In other words you don't care what I do or who I fuck or anything?

81.

**APRIL**

No; I guess that's right; I don't.

She is frighteningly calm.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Fuck who you like.

His panic mounts.

**FRANK**

Don't you see...Don't you see, I want you to care.

**APRIL**

Oh, I know you do. And I suppose I would if I loved you. But you see I don't think I do anymore. And I only just figured that out. And that's why I'd just as soon not do any talking right now.

She goes back into the kitchen. Frank follows her.

**FRANK**

Oh, now don't give me this shit!  
You know God damn well you love me!

**APRIL**

You think so?!

**FRANK**

You know GOD DAMN WELL!

**MRS. GIVINGS (O.S.)**

Yoo-hoo! Any one home?

Frank and April stare at each other, breathless.

**INT. WHEELER DINING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON.**

Frank and the Givings' sit with cocktails. It's painfully awkward. Moving boxes are everywhere.

**APRIL**

I'm sorry dinner's late. Can I get  
anyone a refill?

82.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh, don't worry. It's nice just to  
sit for a bit and socialize...You  
really didn't need to go through  
all the trouble of cooking. I can  
see you have a lot to do with  
packing and what not.

Frank looks at April. She avoids his look.

**FRANK**

Actually, there's been a change of  
plans.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh?

John looks up.

Frank looks at April.

**FRANK**

I thought maybe it was obvious...  
April's pregnant.

April manages a forced smile.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh, April! I can't tell you how  
pleased I am. Oh, but I expect  
you'll be needing a bigger house,  
now, won't you?

**JOHN**

Hold it a second, Ma.

John gets to his feet.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

I don't get this.

He fixes Frank with the stare of a prosecuting attorney.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

What's so obvious about it? I mean  
okay, she's pregnant; so what?  
Don't people have babies in Europe?

83.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh John, really. I don't think we  
need to --

John holds up a hand.

**JOHN**

I'm asking the man a question. If  
he doesn't want to give me the  
answer, I'm assuming he'll have  
sense enough to tell me so.

**FRANK**

Suppose we just say that people  
anywhere aren't very well advised  
to have babies unless they can  
afford them.

**JOHN**

(nods slowly)  
Okay. Okay; it's a question of

money. Money's always a good reason...

John paces the room, with his hands behind his back like a detective at a murder scene.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

But it's hardly ever the real reason. What's the real reason? Wife talk you out of it, or what?

He turns the force of his smile on April.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Little woman decide she isn't quite ready to quit playing house?

Then She walks across the room and stabs out her cigarette. immediately lights another.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Nah, nah, that's not it. I can tell. She looks too tough. Tough and female and adequate as hell.

He swings around to face Frank.

84.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Okay, then; it must've been you.

Frank stares back defiantly. Rage bubbling.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

What happened?

**MRS. GIVINGS**

John, please, you're being very --

John holds up his hand.

**JOHN**

What happened, Frank? You get cold feet, or what? You decide you're better off here after all? You figure it's more comfy here in the old Hopeless Emptiness after all, or --

Frank's face.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Wow, that did it! Look at his  
face! What's the matter, Wheeler?  
Am I getting warm?

Frank stares at John, his rage increasing. Mr. Givings  
gets to his feet.

**MR. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

All right, son. I think we'd  
better be --

**JOHN**

Boy!

He lets out his braying laugh. April starts to laugh.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Boy! You know something? I  
wouldn't be surprised if you  
knocked her up on purpose just so  
you could spend the rest of your  
life hiding behind that maternity  
dress. That way you never have to  
find out what he's made of.

85.

**FRANK**

Now look, I think that's just about  
enough out of you. I mean, who the  
hell do you think you are? You  
come in here and say whatever crazy  
God damn thing comes into your head  
and I think it's about time someone  
told you to keep your God damn -

**MRS. GIVINGS**

He's not well, Frank.

**FRANK**

Not well, my ass! I don't give a  
damn if he's sick or well or dead  
or alive, he should keep his  
fucking opinions in the fucking  
insane asylum where they belong!

April stares at Frank.

**MR. GIVINGS**

Let's go, son.

Mr. Givings moves John towards the door. Mrs. Givings slowly stands. April is the only one left seated.

**JOHN**

Big man you got there, April.

He winks at April and puts his hat on.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Big family man, solid citizen. I feel sorry for you. Still, maybe you deserve each other.

April's face.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Matter of fact, the way you look right now, I'm beginning to feel sorry for him, too. I mean, you must give him a pretty bad time, if making babies is the only way he can prove he's got a pair of balls.

86.

**FRANK**

You... fucking..!

Frank lunges at John. Mr. Givings tries to hold Frank back. Mrs. Givings leaps between them. She's crying.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

He's not well, Frank!

Silence. Mr. Givings slowly releases Frank. He is breathing heavily.

**MR. GIVINGS**

All right, John. Let's get on out to the car now.

He guides him from the room.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

I'm sorry April, I'm so sorry...

**JOHN**

Right... Sorry, sorry, sorry!  
Okay Ma? Have I said `Sorry'  
enough times? I am sorry, too.  
Damn; I bet I'm just about the  
sorriest bastard I know. Course,  
get right down to it, I don't have  
a whole hell of a lot to be glad  
about, do I?

He takes another step towards the door, then stops and turns  
back, laughing again.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

Hey, but I'm glad about one thing,  
though.

He points a yellow-stained finger at April's stomach.

**JOHN (CONT'D)**

You know what I'm glad about? I'm  
glad I'm not gonna be that kid.

They go out.

Frank goes to the liquor cabinet, pours a whiskey and drinks  
it.

87.

April watches him from across the room.

**FRANK**

Okay, okay, don't tell me. Don't  
tell me; let me guess. I made a  
Disgusting Spectacle of Myself.  
Right?

**APRIL**

Right.

He turns to April.

**FRANK**

And everything that man said is  
True. Right? Isn't that what  
you're going to say?

**APRIL**

Apparently I don't have to.        You're  
saying it for me.

He comes towards her.

**FRANK**

But you're wrong.

**APRIL**

Why am I wrong?

**FRANK**

Because the man is insane. He's  
fucking insane! Do you know what  
the definition of insanity is?

**APRIL**

What is it, Frank?

**FRANK**

The inability to relate to another  
human being. It's the inability to  
love.

She looks at him. Then she begins to laugh.

**APRIL**

The in -- the in; the inabil; the  
inability to --

88.

She reels around the room, her laughter increasingly out of control.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Oh. -- Oh, Frank, you really are a  
wonderful talker! If black could  
be made into white by talking,  
you'd be the man for the job. So  
now I'm crazy because I don't love  
you -- right? Is that the point?

**FRANK**

No. Wrong. You're not crazy and  
you do love me; that's the point.

He takes a step towards her.

All the laughter goes out of her face. She backs away.

**APRIL**

But I don't. In fact I loathe the sight of you. You're just a boy who made me laugh at a party once and if you come any closer, if you touch me or anything I think I'll scream.

He takes her by the arms.

**FRANK**

Oh baby listen --

and She SCREAMS. High and shrill. Her eyes wide open, cold perfectly calm.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Fuck you, April. And fuck all your hateful, snotty little -

She slips past him.

He goes after her.

She pulls a chair into his path.

He SLINGS it against the wall.

89.

**APRIL**

What're you going to do now? Are you going to hit me? To show how much you love me?

**FRANK**

Oh, no, don't worry, I can't be bothered! You're not worth the trouble it'd take to hit you. You're not worth the powder it'd take to blow you up. You're an empty --

He begins to shake with anger.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

You're an empty, hollow fucking shell of a woman. What the hell are you living in my house for if you hate me so much? Huh? Will you answer me that? Why the hell

do you fuck me? What the hell are  
you carrying my child for?

He points at her belly.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Why the hell didn't you just get  
rid of it, when you had the chance?  
Because listen. Listen: I got news  
for you. I wish to God you had.

He strides out of the room.

**INT. FRANK AND APRIL'S BEDROOM - EVENING.**

Frank enters the bedroom and slams the door.

He paces, slowly calming.

He sits on the bed with his head in his hands... His mind  
racing. Then he's on his feet again. He rushes for the  
door.

90.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - EVENING.**

Frank enters, running, but the kitchen is empty. Frank  
runs out of the room into living room.

**INT. WHEELER LIVING ROOM - EVENING**

The living room is empty. He goes straight for the front  
door.

**EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - EVENING.**

Frank bursts out the front and comes to a stop.

She's across the street - climbing unsteadily into the  
woods...

Frank breaks into a sprint.

**EXT. WOODS - EVENING.**

April walks through the woods.

Frank runs up behind her, scrambling through the muddy bracken.

April wheels around.

**APRIL**

Don't come any closer.

**FRANK**

April, listen, I --

**APRIL**

Don't come any closer. Can't I even get away from you in the fucking woods?

He stops moving.

**FRANK**

April, listen, I didn't mean that. Honestly; I didn't mean what I said.

91.

**APRIL**

Are you still talking? Isn't there any way to stop your talking? I NEED to think. Can't you see that?

She backs up against a tree trunk, looking down at him.

**FRANK**

Please come back. What're you doing out here?

**APRIL**

Do you want me to scream again, Frank? Because I will, if you say another word! I mean it!

Frank has no choice - they're outside. The neighbors would hear and call the police. He reluctantly backs away, then turns back the way he came, glancing over his shoulder as he goes.

**INT. WHEELER FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT.**

Frank stands at the window watching the section of woods where he left April.

Then, he sees her come back across the street. She walks around the side of the house. He turns and runs into the kitchen.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - NIGHT.**

Frank goes to the window. He watches April walk up into the yard and stop against a tree.

Frank pours a drink and takes the bottle with him to the window. He looks out, drinking.

In the darkness, he can make out the glow of April's cigarette deep in the woods.

**INT. FRANK AND APRIL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT, LATER.**

Frank falls back on the bed.

92.

He's now very drunk.

His eyes close as he slips into unconsciousness.

**INT. FRANK AND APRIL'S BEDROOM - MORNING.**

Frank wakes alone. He looks around the room. His head is throbbing.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - MORNING.**

Frank stands in the doorway dressed for work. He stares...

The kitchen has been tidied and is bathed in sunlight. The table has been carefully set for two.

April stands at the stove wearing a fresh maternity dress. She seems serene.

April turns and looks at him.

**APRIL**

Good morning.

**FRANK**

Good morning.

He stands there frozen.

**APRIL**

Would you like scrambled eggs or fried?

**FRANK**

Oh. It doesn't really matter -  
Uh... scrambled, I guess, if it's easy.

**APRIL**

Fine. I'll have scrambled too.

Frank sits at the table.

93.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - MORNING, MOMENTS LATER.**

Frank and April sit across the kitchen table, eating. For several moments, only the sound of their cutlery.

**FRANK**

It's kinda nice having breakfast without the kids for a change.

April reaches out to pour him some orange juice. Her hands shake slightly.

**APRIL**

Yes. I thought you'd probably want a good breakfast today. I mean it's kind of an important day for you, isn't it? Isn't this the day you have your conference with Pollock?

**FRANK**

(surprised)  
Yes. That's right, yes.

He shrugs.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Big deal.

**APRIL**

I imagine it is a pretty big deal; for them, anyway. What exactly do you think you'll be doing? You never have told me much about it.

**FRANK**

Haven't I? Well... I think this whole thing is about Knox getting ready to buy up one of these really big computers, bigger than the '500'. Did I tell you about that?

**APRIL**

No, I don't believe you did.

94.

**FRANK**

Well, you know -- Basically it's just a...a big, fast adding machine. Only...

He takes a pencil from his inside pocket and delicately sketches the computer on the napkin.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Instead of mechanical parts, you see, it's got thousands of little individual vacuum tubes.

She picks up the drawing and looks at it. It's surprisingly delicate.

**APRIL**

Oh, I see. At least I think I see; yes. It's really sort of -- interesting, isn't it?

**FRANK**

Well, I don't know, it's -- yeah, I guess it is sort of interesting, in a way.

**APRIL**

You should value what you do Frank.  
You're obviously good at it.

He smiles, flattered and surprised. He slips the pencil  
into  
the inside pocket of his suit.

**FRANK**

Guess I'd better be getting  
started.

He stands. April stands up too, smoothing her skirt.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

Listen, though, April; this was  
really nice... I mean it was a  
swell breakfast. Really; I don't  
know when I've ever had a -- a  
nicer breakfast.

95.

**APRIL**

Thank you... I'm glad; I enjoyed it  
too.

They stand there gazing at one another across the table.  
Suddenly, inexplicably, his eyes are filled with tears.

He turns and walks to the door. He puts his hand on the  
handle and turns back once more.

**FRANK**

Then you don't -- You don't hate  
me, or anything?

**APRIL**

No; of course I don't.

She comes over to him.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Have a good day.

He leans down and kisses her tenderly. They look at one  
another a moment longer.

**FRANK**

Okay, then... So long.

He steps through the door. She catches the door before it shuts and watches him through the screen.

**EXT. WHEELER DRIVEWAY - MORNING.**

April walks out onto the driveway as the car reverses away down the drive.

**INT. WHEELER CAR - MORNING.**

Frank backs the car onto the road. He slides the car into drive and then catches sight of April in the driveway.

**EXT. WHEELER DRIVEWAY - MORNING.**

April sees Frank looking back at her. She waves. Frank waves from the car and drives off...

96.

Then April is alone. She shivers from the morning chill. She turns and looks back at the house.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - MORNING.**

April enters through the screen door and goes to the table. She looks down at Frank's diagram and carefully places it aside.

She carries the dishes to the sink and begins to wash them.

Suddenly, her body convulses as she tries to hold back from crying. And then there is no stopping the tears...

**INT. WHEELER HALLWAY - MORNING.**

April is standing by the phone, with her hand on the receiver, rehearsing. She is smoking. She dials.

**APRIL**

Hello... Milly? Everything all right? My voice sounds what...?

April uses both hands to grip the receiver.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Well, no, I'm afraid I'm not feeling any better... If it's not an inconvenience for you... This evening would be great. What...? Oh, well- no, not if they're outdoors playing. Don't call them in.

The cigarette shreds in April's hand.

**APRIL (CONT'D)**

Just give them - you know, give them each a kiss for me, and give them my love, and tell them - you know... All right, Milly. Thanks.

She hangs up and begins to cry again. Takes a breath.

97.

**INT. WHEELER HALLWAY - MORNING.**

**FOOTSTEPS...**

We move behind April as she walks through the silent house.

The distant SOUND of children playing outside.

Each room she passes is a pocket of silence.

**INT. FRANK AND APRIL'S BEDROOM - MORNING.**

April makes the bed.

She arranges her shoes on the floor of the closet.

April reaches onto a shelf behind some clothes. Pulls out the brown paper package.

**INT. WHEELER KITCHEN - MORNING.**

April stands at the stove over a pot of rolling, boiling water.

She removes the rubber syringe from its paper packaging and drops it into the pot. She checks her watch.

**INT. WHEELER HALLWAY - DAY.**

April carries the pot of boiling, sudsy water down the hall.

**INT. WHEELER BATHROOM - DAY.**

April places the pot into the tub. She lays towels across the floor. And closes the door...

**INT. WHEELER BATHROOM - DAY, MOMENTS LATER.**

face The SOUND of running water. The empty mirror. April's  
rises up into the reflection with a gasp.

98.

**INT. WHEELER HALLWAY - DAY.**

We move with April down the hallway, her face is pale.

**INT. WHEELER LIVING ROOM - DAY, LATER.**

Now April stands at the picture window. She is shaking.

A DROPLET of blood slides down her knee. She looks down.

On the floor, two droplets of blood appear between her bare feet...

her Now we see the bright maple leaf of blood seeping through  
skirt. She is shaking more.

She walks slowly out of the room, towards the kitchen.

**APRIL (O.S.)**

I think I need an ambulance....

Yes... One one five Revolutionary

Road.

**INT. CAMPBELL KITCHEN - DAY.**

Milly folds laundry. She looks up to see -

An ambulance turns into the Wheeler's driveway. Her face clouds with instinctual foreboding.

**INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - AFTERNOON.**

Shep steps out into a hospital hallway.

Frank paces, helpless in the waiting room, his face a mask of bewildered, childlike confusion. He looks up to see - Shep coming towards him.

**SHEP**

Frank? They tell you what happened?

99.

**FRANK**

Jesus, Shep. I couldn't even understand half the things he told me. He said the fetus was out before they got her here. He said they had to operate to take out the whatdycallit, the placenta and now she's still bleeding. He said she'd lost a lot of blood before the ambulance came, and now they're trying to stop it, and he said a whole lot of things I didn't get, about capillaries, and he said she's unconscious. Jesus.

**SHEP**

How about sitting down, Frank.

**FRANK**

What the hell do I want to sit down for!

**SHEP**

Okay. Take it easy.

**FRANK**

My God.

**SHEP**

Here, have a cigarette.

Shep offers the pack. Frank doesn't take one.

**FRANK**

She did it to herself, Shep.

Shep's face as he realizes what he's saying.

**FRANK (CONT'D)**

She did it to herself.

Shep takes a cigarette for himself. He lights it with trembling fingers.

**SHEP**

I'll get some coffee.

Frank looks over at Shep as if he'd forgotten him. He  
nods.

100.

Shep stands and walks down the hall.

**INT. HOSPITAL - COFFEE MACHINE - AFTERNOON.**

Shep stands at a coffee machine, gathering himself. He looks up. He begins to feed coins into the machine. His hands are trembling. He drops a coin. It rolls under the machine. He has to get down on his hands and knees to retrieve it...

**INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - AFTERNOON.**

Shep walks tentatively, holding a cup in each hand, slopping coffee onto the floor...

He rounds the corner and stops.

Frank is no longer in his chair at the end of the long echoing hallway. Shep looks around...

Then suddenly, the double doors are flung open and a number of nurses hurry out. Behind them, comes Frank, supported by two Doctors.

Shep runs to them as they move Frank over to a chair.  
He's  
in shock.

**FRANK**

No. No. No.

They try to make him sit, but he stays stubbornly on his feet, the chair skidding behind him.

**DOCTOR**

Try to sit down, Mr. Wheeler.

**SHEP**

Sit down Frank.

Frank looks at Shep - his face is a terrifying blank.

**EXT. REVOLUTIONARY ROAD - MAGIC HOUR.**

A toyland of white and pastel houses along the road. The crisp green lawns. The blue televisions flickering behind the glass.

101.

We hear the WHISK of running footsteps on the asphalt, the rush of a man's breath...

Frank is running down the middle of the street, tears streaming silently down his face...

**INT. CAMPBELL LIVING ROOM - EVENING, ONE YEAR LATER.**

Four high-ball glasses with glistening cubes of ice.

Shep puts the finishing touches on four drinks.

MR. and MRS. BRACE, a pleasant looking young couple fresh from the city sit on the couch.

**MILLY**

...It was the worst experience of my life. Such wonderful people. Weren't they Shep? Poor April.

Shep picks up the drinks and carries them across the room. He stands there beside the three of them, but he can't bring himself to sit down and join in.

**MILLY (CONT'D)**

Frank lives in the city now. Where

is it he works?

**SHEP**

Bart Pollock Associates.

**MR. BRACE**

Computers. Interesting firm.

Mr. Brace removes his pipe and looks at it.

**MRS. BRACE**

Have you seen him since?

**MILLY**

No. Too many memories, I think.  
Shep's seen him. In the city.

Shep nods.

102.

**MILLY (CONT'D)**

He's just dedicated to those kids.  
Every spare moment he has, he  
spends with them...

Shep turns and walks out of the room.

**EXT. CAMPBELL HOUSE - EVENING.**

Shep walks across the lawn to the edge of the property. He looks out over the suburban houses. At what was once the Wheeler house.

Shep's face, looking out. His eyes are filled with tears. Milly comes up behind him.

**MILLY**

You okay?

**SHEP**

Mm-hmm.

She takes his arm and holds him close.

**SHEP (CONT'D)**

I don't want to talk about The  
Wheeler's any more.

**MILLY**

Okay. We don't have to. We don't  
have to.

Shep and Milly look out over Revolutionary Road.

**EXT. CITY PARK - DAY.**

The same silence over a beautiful day in the city. And  
from the silence, the faint sound of wind through the leafy  
branches of trees.

Two children play in a playground in a small park.

Other It's Jennifer and Michael. They seem happy, engrossed.  
kids play around them.

**103.**

a Watching them from a bench is Frank. He is a little older,  
little thinner.

Close on Frank's face. The SOUND of his children playing.

**INT. GIVINGS' LIVING ROOM - DAY**

varnish Mrs. Givings crouches on a cotton work sheet painting  
onto a chair. Mr. Givings sits reading the paper.

A new puppy sleeps curled up on the rug nearby.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

I can't tell you how pleased I am  
about the little Revolutionary Road  
place, Howard. Remember how dreary  
it looked all winter? All cold and  
dark and -- well, spooky. Creepy-  
crawly. And now whenever I drive  
past, it gives me such a lift to  
see it all perked up and spanking  
clean again, with lights in the  
windows. And do you know, I was  
just thinking, I've loved that  
little house for years, and the  
Braces are the first really  
suitable people I've ever found for

it. Really nice, congenial people,  
I mean.

Mr. Givings fiddles with his hearing aid.

**MR. GIVINGS**

Well, except for the Wheelers, you  
mean.

**MRS. GIVINGS**

Oh, I was very fond of the Wheelers  
but they always were a bit -- a bit  
whimsical, for my taste. A bit  
neurotic. I may not have stressed  
it, but they were often very trying  
people to deal with, in many ways.

**(MORE)**

104.

**MRS. GIVINGS (CONT'D)**

Actually, the main reason the  
little house has been so hard to  
sell is that they let it depreciate  
so dreadfully. Warped window  
frames, wet cellar, crayon marks on  
the walls, filthy smudges around  
all the--

Mr. Givings reaches up to his ear and SUDDENLY... SILENCE...  
but for the faint sound of wind.

He gazes out the window as behind him Mrs. Givings continues  
to talk, but we can't hear a thing.

He has turned off his hearing aid.