

CAMPFIRE

By

D.W. Lichtenberg
&
John McMinn

Really Big Explosion Productions
norgon@gmail.com

August 28, 2015

© Really Big Explosion Productions

EXT. UPSTATE NEW YORK - BACKROADS - SHADY AFTERNOON

An late-autumn day. Green gives way to orange, and the sun casts its final golden rays before the onset of winter.

CAMERA glides through the heavily wooded back roads of Upstate New York. The exact time period is purposely obscured, but appears to be sometime in the 1940s.

CREDITS BEGIN TO ROLL

The foliage becomes thicker. The road begins to wind through the overgrown woods, as the roads become bumpier and less well-paved.

CAMERA stops at two SIGNS, side by side.

One reads "BRYCE SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN" the other "WINSTON SCHOOL FOR YOUNG LADIES". Two all-white private boarding schools.

Next to each sign are separate, perfectly-paved ROADS, contrasting with the rugged back roads. They split into opposite directions, both curving around a LAKE that separates the schools' grounds.

CAMERA follows the path to BRYCE SCHOOL.

At the end of the road is a large, Ivy League-type MANSION. Similar smaller buildings are scattered about the campus.

The CAMERA glides through the main DOORS and into the building.

CAMERA travels through the empty hallway of the school. Immaculate hardwood FLOORS, lush RUGS, and expensive FURNISHINGS make it clear that this is an institution for the privileged.

Adorning one of the walls are senior class photos from years past. The boys in the photos wear school uniforms, but in each photo one boy wears a red blazer and one boy wears a yellow blazer which have been hand-colored in the photo.

END CREDITS

The CAMERA glides down the hall and into a classroom.

INT. ENGLISH CLASSROOM – CONTINUOUS

The classroom is old but well-maintained.

High School STUDENTS, Caucasian senior boys, fill the seats, looking nearly identical in their school UNIFORMS.

They hunch over DESKS taking an exam. They use identical #2 PENCILS.

MR. KLINE, a small man with WIRY HAIR and GLASSES, prowls the classroom.

One student stands out from the rest: LARRY, unkempt hair, too skinny, pasty, wears a slightly pink shirt (laundry accident).

He breaks his pencil tip. He looks around, stands, walks to a manual SHARPENER fastened to the wall.

The sharpener lets out a SCRATCHING noise as he operates, much to the irritation of his classmates.

Some look up from their desks, including JOEY, tall, handsome, Hispanic, but can easily pass for white. Joey's brow is damp.

His eyes shift, he scratches his hair with his pencil. He is the only left-handed student in a room full of righties.

CUT TO:

INT. ENGLISH CLASSROOM – LATER

The Bell RINGS. Students pack up their books and exit the classroom.

Joey is the last to hand in his exam. He places it on the pile on Mr. Kline's desk. A MUG is on the desk.

KLINE

Joey, stay a moment.

Joey looks up.

KLINE (CONT'D)

Listen, I know English isn't your favorite subject.

Beat.

KLINE (CONT'D)
I don't want to see you lose
your scholarship because of a
"B" in my class.

Joey looks back, blank.

 KLINE (CONT'D)
Joey, you have to study. You
can't sleep through my class
like the others. It won't take
much to bring this grade up.
You just have try a little
harder.

Beat.

 KLINE (CONT'D)
All right, get going.

 JOEY
Thanks, Mr. Kline. See you
tomorrow.

Joey exits. Kline grabs Joey's exam from the pile and
begins grading.

TED, a mustachioed and pudgy teacher, ambles in, pipe in
hand.

 TED
Busy morning, Kline?

Kline looks up.

 KLINE
Oh, hi Ted.

Beat. He goes back to grading the exam, paying cursory
attention to the Ted.

 KLINE
I have a stack of exams here
to mark, and I'm anticipating
a thesis paper soon, so I'd say
so.

 TED
You ought to ease up on the
kids a bit, Kline. There's no
use being a slave driver with
them at this point.

(MORE)

TED (CONT'D.)

They've all been accepted to university. Why not make it easy for everyone?

KLINE

That's not what I get paid for, Ted.

TED

You get paid to make parents happy. Good grades at an elite boarding school, legacy admittance into one of the Ivies, maybe an endowment if necessary.

Beat.

TED (CONT'D.)

Thirty years from now, these kids are going to be paying your salary. Make it easy for yourself.

KLINE

Thanks for the advice, Ted. But I don't tell you how to run your Latin class. I'd appreciate the same courtesy.

TED

Fair enough.

Beat.

TED (CONT'D.)

I'll bet you'll be happy to spend Christmas with your family.

Kline looks up.

MR. KLINE

If you'll recall, Ted, I am of the Jewish faith.

The Teacher is not embarrassed by his gaffe.

TED

That's right, Kline. I forget.

Ted heads toward the door.

TED (CONT'D.)
See you around.

INT. STUDENT LOUNGE — NIGHT

Large ARMCHAIRS and a LOVE SEAT in front of a FIREPLACE.

Joey, Larry and TWO FRIENDS sit. They wear less formal clothes, SLACKS and BUTTON DOWNS. No blazers, no ties.

SPENCER, a bit chubby, discusses the exam.

SPENCER
...but I got stuck on that
Chaucer question. I thought the
test was only gonna be text
analysis.

CHARLES, glasses, average, chimes in.

CHARLES
Yeah. How am I supposed to
remember what dialect he wrote
in or what form of meter he
used.

Charles looks to Joey.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
What did you think, Joey?

Joey hesitates.

JOEY
Oh, well it was harder than I
expected, but I got an "A-minus"
at least. For sure.

TANNER, smaller, enters the room.

TANNER
Hey Gang, so guess what?

SPENCER
You were accepted to Colgate?

TANNER
I was accepted to Colgate!

CHARLES
It's about time.

Joey stands up, shakes Tanner's hand.

JOEY
Congrats. That's really great.

SPENCER
And convenient. Considering
that tonight is tonight.

CHARLES
Looks like the only one waiting
on an acceptance letter is Mr.
Colón here.

Joey is a bit embarrassed, but brushes it off.

JOEY
Well, I was a little late
sending out my applications.
It'll probably take some extra
time to process.

SPENCER
Colón? How did you get that spic
name anyway, Joey?

JOEY
My great-great-great-grandfather
was a Spanish noble. So he left
me with this goofy name.

TANNER
Who was he, Don Quixote?

CHARLES
Yeah, well my people came over on
the Mayflower. I'm a red, white,
and blue slice of apple pie.

As the boys LAUGH, DENNY, athletic, tall, and MURRAY,
short, slim, walk by, dressed in similar attire.

LARRY
Hey Denny. Hey Murray.

Denny and Murray stop. They look at Larry, then at the
others.

DENNY
Hey Joey.

Larry ignores the insult. He continues.

LARRY

Are you coming to Christmas
dinner at my place, Denny?

MURRAY

Uh, we were just on our way to
somewhere. We're going to go
now.

DENNY

See you tonight Joey, right?

JOEY

Yep. We'll all be there.

Joey looks around at his friends.

Denny and Murray exit.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - LATER

A large CAMPFIRE burns in the middle of a cleared area of
forest. All the SENIORS sit around, seated
hierarchically. There are about fifty total.

At the head are Denny and HUGH, James Dean-like cool.
Next to Denny is Murray. Next to Hugh is ARTIE, a shadow
version of Hugh.

Next to Murray is the rest of the JOCK POPULAR CROWD.
Next to Artie is the rest of the NON-JOCK POPULAR CROWD,
including WILLIAM and EDWARD.

Across the fire sits JOEY and his MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD-
CROWD. Others are scattered throughout, forming a circle.

HUGH

Tonight we continue a tradition
that has existed at Bryce since
the year of our Lord, eighteen-
hundred-forty-seven. Bryce alumni
that have excelled in this
competition include the governor
of this great state, two congressmen,
a senator, one former President of
the United States, and countless
other men of esteem.

The students listen to Hugh in silence.

HUGH (CONT'D)

The rules of this game are simple. You must edge out your fellows by having the most frequent and unusual sexual encounters of your peers.

Seniors peer around the fire a bit, eyeing their fellow competitors.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Points are assigned on a case-by-case basis, by a select group of judges.

Hugh looks to Denny and a few others next to them, indicating they are the JUDGES.

HUGH (CONT'D)

This point system requires each person to recount his story in front of everyone, explicitly and in its totality. No skimping on the details.

Denny jumps in.

DENNY

As is also the tradition, the man to beat, the all-time record holder, is still one Alexander Hamilton, descendent of the great Federalist. His reign as record holder is closing in on half a century. Perhaps someone sitting at the fire tonight will be the first to top his achievement.

WHISPERS.

Denny removes a HANDCOMB from his pocket. It's made of ivory. He combs his hair back.

HUGH

Custom also dictates that the leader of the pack wear the red jacket.

Artie lifts a BAG from behind him to Hugh. Hugh removes a MAROON JACKET, a blazer, from the bag.

HUGH (CONT'D)

With this jacket comes certain... ritual benefits. And the good fellow that's fallen behind must wear the yellow jacket, which has its own set of implications, as you all know from past years.

Hugh removes a YELLOW JACKET from the bag.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Now, I will be the first to declare my candidacy and therefore be the first to receive my gift from the judges.

He puts both blazers back in the bag.

Hugh stands up, walks into the inner circle near the fire. He pulls down his pants and boxer shorts and leans over, bare-assed.

Denny grabs a large, wooden PADDLE from behind him. He stands, grips it like a baseball bat, and runs at Hugh.

Denny paddles Hugh. Hugh stumbles forward, clearly hurting but giving no indication of pain.

MONTAGE

Denny is paddled. Artie is paddled. William is paddled. Edward is paddled. Joey is paddled. RANDAL is paddled. A few other SENIORS are paddled. Murray is paddled.

Murray adjusts his belt. He walks back to his seat, stiffly.

END MONTAGE

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS

Hugh, who holds the paddle, looks around.

There is blood on the paddle.

HUGH

Well. Who's next?

Nobody comes forward.

Joey, sitting awkwardly, turns to Larry, who sits next to him. Joey speaks quietly.

JOEY

Hey, I thought you were gonna go in for it too.

Larry looks at Joey, nervous. No answer.

Hugh continues to look around.

Randal, now sitting near Joey and Larry, speaks up.

RANDAL

Larry said he's in for it!

All eyes on Larry.

LARRY

Well, um, I was considering it, but--

RANDAL

But what? You're a queer is what.

LAUGHTER. Larry is embarrassed.

He stands up. Looks around.

LARRY

I'm in for it.

Larry walks to the center of the fire, in front of Hugh. Drops his pants.

Hugh paddles Larry. Larry winces in pain.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS — LATER

The seniors get up to leave. There is an energy of excitement amongst the students.

Edward, Tanner, Charles, and Spencer are among them.

SPENCER

So what did this Alexander guy do to earn so many points in the first place?

TANNER

I heard one time he went into the city and paid three girls to--

CHARLES

I heard he slept with his sister. And his mom.

LAUGHTER.

EDWARD

Whatever he did, he's the reason the winner of this thing gets a star next to his name in the Yearly.

TANNER

I didn't think they even had Yearlies back then. Wasn't that before the printing press was invented?

LAUGHS.

EDWARD

And they even put "The Great" in between his name.

SPENCER

That's right. Alexander the Great.

CHARLES

If he's the guy to beat, then I'm the guy to do it.

EDWARD

Hey, not as long as I'm in this thing.

CUT TO:

INT. JOEY'S BEDROOM - LATER

The room is ordinary but tasteful. Joey sits at his DESK, which has a COMPOSITION BOOK on it and a tin CUP filled with PENCILS.

Near Joey's desk is another DESK with the same setup and a TWIN BED. Larry sits on the bed. On the other side of the room is another TWIN BED.

JOEY

So why'd they choose Alexander the Great as a nickname, anyhow? He was related to the real Alexander Hamilton. Doesn't get much greater than that.

LARRY

Supposedly he had this friend of his that was obsessed with Greek history. Thucydides and Herodotus; all those guys. They called him Ptolemy and supposedly this Ptolemy guy was Alexander's strategist.

Murray enters the room. He glowers at Larry.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Supposedly this guy knew the ins and outs of getting into all the girls' pants across the lake. He'd go in and scout the territory. Legend has it that Alexander the Great slept with every other girl in the Winston senior dorm. You know, the other girls being the roommates.

Joey CHUCKLES.

MURRAY

Move off my bed, Larry.

Larry looks up. He gets off and sits on Joey's bed across the room.

LARRY

My name's Lawrence, by the way.

Murray lays on his bed, pulls a baseball MITT and BALL from under his pillow, and tosses the ball into the air, catches, repeats.

JOEY

(to Larry)

If this Ptolemy guy was such a great strategist and all, why didn't he win the competition?

LARRY

I think he was a, well, y'know...

Larry and Joey make eye contact.

Murray SMIRKS.

JOEY
So are you really in for it?

LARRY
I'll give it a go. You?

JOEY
Sure why not. It's tradition,
right?

Murray stops throwing his ball.

MURRAY
Hey Larry, you mind scrambling?
I'm gonna hit the hay.

Larry looks at Murray. Murray doesn't look back.

Larry stands.

LARRY
All right, see you in class Joey.

JOEY
See you in class.

Larry exits, looking at Murray.

Beat.

Murray starts throwing his ball again when Larry's gone.

JOEY
Guy's got it bad enough already,
you know?

Murray doesn't respond.

INT. LARRY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Identical to Joey's room. Larry reclines in bed reading a
TEXTBOOK.

William, Larry's roommate, sits on the opposite side of
the room. He turns on a RADIO and tunes it until he finds
a FOOTBALL GAME. He listens to it at a moderate volume.

Joey KNOCKS on the open door, then lets himself in.

Larry looks up from his studies.

LARRY

Hey Joey.

JOEY

Hey Larry. I was wondering if I could borrow your notes on "Beowulf" from Kline's class. Mine are pretty much unintelligible.

Larry puts down his book.

LARRY

Sure thing. Let me dig them out.

Larry gets off the bed and starts rummaging through a pile of notebooks.

Joey takes a few steps toward William.

JOEY

Hey William.

Beat. William does not respond immediately.

WILLIAM

Hi, Joey. Sorry, I was wrapped up in the ball game.

JOEY

Who's playing?

WILLIAM

Yale and Brown. My brother Albert is a Yalie. Plays tight end.

Beat.

WILLIAM (CONT'D.)

I'll be joining him in New Haven next year.

JOEY

You must be thrilled.

WILLIAM

My old man sure is.

LARRY

Here it is!

Joey walks back over to Larry. Larry hands him a stack of LOOSELEAF PAPER.

JOEY

Thanks.

LARRY

It's in there somewhere.

Beat.

JOEY

Hey, there's something I wanted to ask you about Lizzy.

LARRY

Yeah?

Long beat. Joey hesitates.

JOEY

Actually, it can wait.

LARRY

Oh. Okay...

Joey heads to the door.

JOEY

Thanks again.

EXT. BRYCE SPORTS LAWN — DAY

A grassy field with white lines painted on it and FIELD GOALS at both ends.

Hugh's gang of non-jocks play rugby against Denny's gang of jocks. The all wear NAVY BLUE SWEATSHIRTS.

Joey walks by with Larry. Hugh sees Joey and calls to him.

HUGH

JOEY! Hey JOEY!

Hugh runs to Joey.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Hey, we're down a man against these animals. You wanna play wing for our squad?

Joey hesitates.

 JOEY
I dunno, Hugh. Stickball's my
game.

Hugh LAUGHS.

 JOEY (CONT'D)
You're gonna have to give me a
little instruction.

 HUGH
Yeah sure, I'll give you a
private lesson later tonight.

Joey LAUGHS.

 HUGH (CONT'D.)
C'mon. You'll figure out the
game as we play.

Hugh waves his arm, signaling Joey to follow. Joey shrugs
and runs after him.

MONTAGE

The squads play rugby.

Tosses.

Tackles.

Scores.

The game gets more intense.

Joey loses a ball. Denny grabs it and completes a play
that leads to a score.

Denny taunts Joey.

Joey tries to tackle Murray, but fails.

Murray tosses to Denny. Denny scores.

Joey again messes up a play by tossing the ball to the
wrong player.

His teammates kick the ground, hold their heads in frustration as the jocks score again.

END MONTAGE

INT. DORM BATHROOM - NIGHT

A communal bathroom with many SINKS, MIRRORS, SHOWERS, STALLS.

Joey stands, shirtless, in front of a mirror. He has a small BRUISE on his face, and a few on his body.

He SHAVES with an unprotected full RAZOR BLADE.

EXT. BOATHOUSE - LATER

ESTABLISHING SHOT. The boathouse lies at the midpoint of the LAKE between Bryce and Winston schools.

A wooden PIER is just outside the doors of the boathouse, and leads into the water.

INT. BOATHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Good condition, ROW BOATS, KAYAKS, OARS, PRESERVERS on wall.

Larry, Joey, and ELIZABETH (16), nerdy, unflattering figure, glasses, but still charming, plain DRESS, hang out.

ELIZABETH

She's the most obnoxious thing I ever laid eyes on. It takes her two hours to get ready every morning, which means her alarm is blaring in my ear about five-fifteen. And she makes the most awful noises all night.

JOEY

What, she snores?

ELIZABETH

If you can call it snoring. It sounds like she's about to swallow her uvula.

LARRY

You're being too hard on her, Lizzy. I know Betsy. She's an all right girl. You're always deciding on people before you give them a chance. Before they even open their mouths.

Elizabeth responds sarcastically.

ELIZABETH

All I need is one look to know everything I need to know about a person. Betsy is a total drip.

JOEY

Yeah? What'd you think when you got a look at me?

ELIZABETH

Wouldn't you like to know?

They smile at each other. Larry is oblivious.

JOEY

I've been trying to figure out my roommate all semester. Sometimes he's an okay guy, but most of the time he's real sour. I've been trying to find something to like about him all year. Still trying.

LARRY

My roommate's aces. He helps me with my trigonometry. We're not good friends or anything but he treats me decent. He's real good looking too, like he could be in the movies.

Beat.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Tonight we were talking about Alexander the Great, and he said that when the competition is over, we'll all be calling him "William the Conqueror."

Joey glares at Larry - he's strangling him with his eyes.

ELIZABETH

Competition?

LARRY

Yeah...

Beat.

LARRY (CONT'D.)

The, uh, polo season I mean. You know, the one that's coming up this spring. He's good with his stick.

Beat. Larry changes subjects.

LARRY (CONT'D.)

How about that Winter Ball, huh? How great's that gonna be?

No response.

LARRY (CONT'D.)

Am I the only one looking forward to it?

ELIZABETH

Yes, Larry, you are the only one looking forward to it. What's it all about, anyway?

JOEY

It's just a big get together. People dance. Show off their fancy clothes. Spike the punch.

LARRY

It's an all right time.

JOEY

Are you going, Lizzy?

ELIZABETH

Well, I don't like any of the boys, and I'd rather gouge my left eye out than be seen in public with the other Winston girls. But I have nothing better to do, right?

Beat.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D.)

Guess that means I'll have to buy a nice dress and find a way to make myself look pretty.

JOEY
Shouldn't be hard.

ELIZABETH
Are you going?

JOEY
I was thinking about it. If I
can find the right girl to go
with.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOATHOUSE — LATER

Larry and Joey walk in an opposite direction from
Elizabeth.

Joey looks over his shoulder for a bit as he walks,
watching Elizabeth disappear into the distance.

Larry looks back over his shoulder, making sure Elizabeth
is out of earshot.

LARRY
You know, I just can't get the
idea out of my head. It just
bothers me. I don't know if I
want Lizzy going to the Winter
Ball. She's new and doesn't know
that every senior's going to be
trying to get into her pants.

JOEY
She'll be all right, Larry. She's
a smart girl.

LARRY
I know she is. But she's my kid
cousin, and guys like Denny are
just so...I don't know, insistent.

JOEY
Really, Larry. Don't worry about
her. She can take care of herself.

LARRY
I guess so.

Beat. They continue toward Bryce.

LARRY (CONT'D.)
Oh yeah, what is it you wanted to
ask me about her?

JOEY
Huh? Oh. Nothing really.

INT. STUDENT LOUNGE — AFTERNOON

STUDENTS and PARENTS exit periodically, carrying
SUITCASES.

LARRY stands in the middle of the room with MR. and MRS.
WILLIAMS (50s), wearing respectable and simple OUTFITS.

LARRY
So you know. Before I was
accepted by university, I didn't
really have time. But thankfully
it's easy riding from here and I
am looking forward to seeing girls
again.

MRS. DUPONT (O.S.)
Lawrence darling!

Larry turns from the Williams to MR. and MRS. DUPONT
(50s), old money wealthy, elegant, simple OUTFITS.
Larry turns back to Mr. and Mrs. Williams.

LARRY
Those are my parents. It was
really nice meeting you, Mr.
Williams. Mrs. Williams.

Larry walks to his parents.

He hugs his mom and shakes his dad's hand.

MRS. DUPONT
Lawrence, how are you?

MR. DUPONT
Hello, Larry.

Mr. Dupont is looking elsewhere, disinterested.

INT. JOEY'S ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Joey packs a SUITCASE. Another BAG lies on Murray's bed.

Larry enters.

LARRY
Hey, I'm just stopping by to
wish you a great Christmas
holiday.

Joey looks up.

JOEY
Thanks. You too, pal.

LARRY
I know you didn't make it home
for Thanksgiving, so I'm sure
you'll be glad to see your family.

Joey smiles.

JOEY
Sure will. Can't wait to see the
family.

Larry looks out the door.

LARRY
I'll be right back. I want to
make sure my parents don't leave
without me.

Joey CHUCKLES.

LARRY (CONT'D)
One time they forgot me. Took
them twenty minutes driving to
realize.

Joey LAUGHS, forced.

Larry exits.

Joey continues packing.

Moments later, LORETTA (40s), Puerto Rican, attractive,
messy, knocks and enters.

Joey looks up.

LORETTA
(Spanish)
Surprise! I'm early. I thought
you could use a hand with your
bags.

Joey looks around. Looks at Murray's bag, looks towards the hall.

JOEY

What are you doing here? I told you when you got here to just wait for me at the station. Wasn't your train set to get in at six?

Joey looks out the door again.

LORETTA

(Spanish)

I took the early one because I thought it would be nice to spend some time with you at school. You still haven't shown me around the campus like you promised.

Beat.

LORETTA (CONT'D)

(Spanish)

It's a long trip to the city.

JOEY

Listen mom, get out of here. Wait for me at the station. I've got some things to take care of. I'll pack quick and rush over there, okay?

Loretta is confused.

Joey continues packing, ignoring Loretta.

Mr. Kline appears at the door, unbeknownst to Joey. He holds a BOOK.

LORETTA

(Spanish)

Bye then, Jose. I'll see you at the train station.

Loretta exits, ashamed to make eye contact with Kline.

KLINE

Say, Joey.

Joey, recognizing the voice, stops packing but hesitates to look.

KLINE (CONT'D.)
Mind if I come in?

Joey relaxes a little.

 JOEY
Sure, Mr. Kline. You're always
welcome.

 KLINE
I don't want you to think I was
coming down on you too hard the
other day. I just really want you
to succeed and I know you can go
places if you apply yourself.

 JOEY
I understand. No hard feelings.

 KLINE
It's not easy for guys like us,
Joey.

Beat.

 KLINE (CONT'D.)
I have something for you.

Kline hands Joey an old, beaten hardcover book.

Joey accepts and opens the book to its title page. It
reads "PARALLEL LIVES BY PLUTARCH".

 KLINE (CONT'D.)
There's some very interesting
material in this book. I know you
have a penchant for history.
Particularly interesting is the
biography of Alexander the Great.

The reference to Alexander piques Joey's attention.

He avoids making eye contact with Kline.

 KLINE (CONT'D.)
You know, by the time he was
thirty-two years old he had
conquered all of the known world.
He was a Macedonian by birth,
never really accepted by the
elite of his day because he
wasn't a "noble Athenian", but
he more than proved himself in
combat. He was proud of his

heritage, but he was eager to adopt the customs of the foreign lands he conquered. In a way, he was an outsider in his own kingdom.

Joey flips through the book. Kline has earmarked "THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER".

 KLINE (CONT'D.)
I'll let you pack. Have a good holiday.

 JOEY
You too. Thanks again.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN STATION — EVENING

Typical small town train station with only one TRACK, going one way, ending at the station.

The station HOUSE is old, proper, well kept. Station/town name is not revealed.

Loretta sits at the only BENCH on the platform. She stares straight ahead.

Joey enters frame, sits on the bench, a full body's width from Loretta.

Loretta does not look up.

INT. TRAIN — LATER

Old fashioned SEATS, plush red. Mostly empty.

Joey and Loretta sit next to each other. Joey looks out the window. Loretta looks straight ahead, wearing the same expression she had on the bench.

INT. LORETTA'S APARTMENT — NIGHT

Apartment is dark, sparsely furnished. A small COUCH, a couple of simple wooden CHAIRS, an old COFFEE TABLE.

A Mother Mary PAINTING hangs crooked on the wall. White CANDLES with the images of Saints rest in windowsills.

City light streams in through the window.

Loretta and Joey enter, Joey carrying his BAG.

Joey drops his bag on the couch and walks to the bathroom.

A CROSS with Christ engraved on it hangs above the sink. Joey wets his face.

Loretta passes the bathroom.

LORETTA
(Spanish)
Goodnight, Jose.

Joey doesn't look up from sink.

CUT TO:

EXT. LORETTA'S APARTMENT BUILDING — DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT of Loretta's building and neighborhood.

The city is alive on an unusually warm December day. Christmas TREES can be seen through windows. Silver, green, red TASSEL wraps around fire escapes.

Off-screen two little BOYS run around, YELLING.

INT. LORETTA'S APARTMENT KITCHEN — DAY

A bit messy, bare furnishings. CARLOS (11), wearing slacks and button down that fit awkwardly, holds JUAN (9), similar outfit, in a head-lock.

Juan SCREAMS.

Loretta enters.

LORETTA
(Spanish)
We're going to be late. Come here Carlos, let me put on your tie. And you're next, Juan.

The boys look up. They dread ties.

Carlos lets go of Juan.

They both run through the apartment, SHOUTING. They pass Joey's room.

INT. JOEY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Very basic decoration. Twin BED, small DESK, wooden CHAIR, BOOKS stacked on the floor.

Joey, wearing SLACKS, TIE, brown dress SHOES, lies on his bed. He reads the old hardcover copy of Plutarch.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH - DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT of Episcopal church.

Gothic pointed ARCHES, stained glass WINDOWS, impressive PILLARS. Pristine condition.

Beautiful, sunny weather.

INT. COUNTRY CHURCH - LATER

Ornate, bright, clean. The CONGREGATION is spread out, but fills the church. There is a sense of luxury and token devotion.

CLERGYMEN stand at the front wearing elaborate ALBS, STOLES, and other Anglican-specific ROBES.

Larry, full SUIT and TIE, sits next to Elizabeth, formal DRESS.

Behind Larry is Denny, full SUIT and TIE. He keeps an eye on Elizabeth.

The rest of the three FAMILIES sits around them: Mr. and Mrs. Dupont; DEE (early 40s), Elizabeth's mom; WALT (early 40s), Elizabeth's dad; Elizabeth's two LITTLE BROTHERS (11 and 13); FRANKLIN (14), Larry's brother; MR. WEATHERS (50s), Denny's dad; all DRESSED plain but wealthy, timeless.

CUT TO:

INT. CITY CHURCH – SIMULTANEOUS

Old, dingy, crowded, yet sprawling and ornate.

CONGREGATION is mostly Hispanic, lower class, devout, except for LITTLE KIDS.

Everyone wears SUNDAY BEST OUTFITS. They are squished and hot. Some have hand FANS. One or two of the kids use Bibles as fans.

The Catholic PRIESTS are old, some white, some Hispanic. They perform MASS in Latin.

Light comes in through stained-glass windows in pools. DUST is visible.

Carlos and Juan, in TIES, FIGHT in their seats when Loretta isn't looking.

Loretta tries to remain respectful. She turns to them.

LORETTA
(Spanish, quietly)
Stop that right now. You're
embarrassing me.

Carlos and Juan stop. Then begin again when Loretta has turned away.

Joey is apathetic.

EXT. CITY CHURCH – LATER

ESTABLISHING SHOT of Catholic church. Impressive and old, but on a dirty street corner. There are no cars on the street.

The CONGREGATION streams out. Some socialize in groups on the sidewalk.

Loretta and Joey exit the church.

Loretta stops to chat with a WOMAN.

Joey stands off to the side, hands in pockets. MRS. TORRES, and elderly Hispanic woman, totters over to him.

MRS. TORRES
(Spanish)
It's so nice to see you, Jose!

Joey smiles and nods politely.

MRS. TORRES (CONT'D)
(Spanish)
Are you doing well in school?

Loretta comes over.

JOEY
(Spanish)
Pretty well.

Mrs. Torres pats Joey's arm.

MRS. TORRES
(Spanish)
You're making us all proud, Jose.

JOEY
(Spanish)
Thanks, Mrs. Torres.

Carlos and Juan run past.

CARLOS
(Spanish)
Come on mom, let's open presents!

JUAN
(Spanish)
Yeah! Come take my tie off, mom.
I don't want to wear it anymore.

CARLOS
(Spanish)
Me neither!

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH — SIMULTANEOUS

The CONGREGATION exits the church. Elizabeth and Larry stand off to the side.

LARRY
Yeah, I don't know if you had anything like it at your last school, but it's really what all the students look forward to every--

Dee walks by them.

DEE
Come on, Elizabeth. Your father is
waiting for you.

LARRY
(to Dee)
One second, Aunt Dee. I was just
about to tell Lizzy something about
the Winter Ball.

DEE
You can tell her at dinner.

Elizabeth smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. LORETTA'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

A plainly decorated Christmas TREE is near the window.
Solid-colored wrapping PAPER and BOWS lie strewn about.

Juan and Carlos throw a BASEBALL back and forth. They
wear new MITTS.

Joey and Loretta sit at opposite ends of the dining
TABLE, which is squished into the living room.

Joey and Loretta EAT. They are silent.

Loretta looks to Joey.

LORETTA
(Spanish)
Your cousins said they're going
to come for Easter this year.

Beat.

LORETTA (CONT'D)
(Spanish)
They're really looking forward
to seeing you.

Joey looks up, surprised.

JOEY
I'm not coming home for Easter.

Loretta looks down to her plate.

They continue eating in silence.

INT. DUPONT ESTATE — AFTERNOON

An old money estate in the tradition of a French Chateau.

Mr. Dupont opens the door. Mr. Weathers and Denny stand at the door. Mr. Weathers holds a BOTTLE of fancy wine.

MR. DUPONT

Gentlemen. So happy you made it.

MR. WEATHERS

Sorry to put a dent in your family dinner. Ever since Linda passed and my two eldest moved out...

Beat.

MR. WEATHERS (CONT'D)

You know. A family dinner for two is a bit too intimate.

MR. DUPONT

My Harvard lacrosse captain is always welcome at my table. And Denny is like a son to me, you know that.

(quietly)

More so than Larry.

LAUGHS. Dupont winks at Denny.

INT. DUPONT LIVING ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Fancy, well decorated, timeless.

Denny enters and sits next to Franklin, holding a PIGSKIN FOOTBALL on a couch. Larry sits in a big, comfy CHAIR.

FRANKLIN

Hey Denny, take a look at my new pigskin. We should have a match later on.

DENNY

Of course. The annual Christmas match. Battle of the families.

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Normally it would be the oldest as quarterback. But since that's Larry in your family, I guess you get the title. And since my brothers aren't here, well, maybe we ought to just pick teams.

FRANKLIN

As long as I'm not stuck with Larry.

LARRY

Hey guys, I'm right here, you know?

INT. DUPONT DINING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

A beautiful dining room with elaborate decorations.

French DOORS at one wall lead to the well-groomed, large back yard.

The FAMILIES sit at the table. Mr. and Mrs. Dupont at the ends. Dee next to Walt. Elizabeth next to Larry. Denny next to Franklin. Little brothers. Mr. Weathers.

Eating. CHATTER.

An AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAID, in full UNIFORM, enters with two large SERVING DISHES.

Mrs. Dupont stands up and takes the larger dish. Removes the top, revealing TURKEY, cut.

Elizabeth and Larry talk.

ELIZABETH

So what was it Joey's up to for Christmas again? Was it at an uncle's in Cape May?

Maid puts the other dish on the table and exits.

Mrs. Dupont forks slices onto plates.

LARRY

I thought his uncle lived in Cape Cod. I'm not sure really.

(MORE)

LARRY (CONT'D.)
He didn't mention anything
specific. Just that he was seeing
some family.

Mrs. Dupont lifts turkey to Elizabeth's plate.

ELIZABETH
(to Mrs. Dupont)
Oh, no thank you.

Mrs. Dupont pulls back the turkey, letting it hang in the
air. Mrs. Dupont responds, disdainful.

MRS. DUPONT
Oh that's right. You're a, um,
a vegetarian.

Beat.

Mrs. Dupont lifts turkey to platter, moves on to Larry's
plate. He accepts.

LARRY
Thanks, mother.

Larry turns to Elizabeth.

LARRY
I think the Spring semester is
going to be much better for me.
Now that I've been accepted to
university, I'll have much more
time to socialize.

Dee clears her throat.

DEE
(to Larry)
So what was it, Lawrence, that
was so important for Elizabeth
to know about this Winter Ball?

DENNY
He probably wants to know if
she's got a date.

Franklin and Denny laugh under their breaths.

LARRY
(sincerely)
Of course not, Denny. I mean,
she's my cousin. You know that.

Larry rolls his eyes.

DENNY

Oh. Oh, right.

(to Elizabeth)

By the way, Lizzy, I'm still available.

Denny winks. Franklin CHUCKLES.

Elizabeth grimaces.

ELIZABETH

Well, I'll tell you right now, I'm either going alone or not at all. If the boys are all like you, that is.

Denny smirks and goes back to his turkey.

The diners talk amongst themselves. Mr. Dupont turns to Mr. Weathers.

MR. DUPONT

Dennis, I recently acquired a very fine oak-aged single malt that you ought to try.

At the other end of the table Elizabeth leans in close to Larry. WHISPERING.

ELIZABETH

Hey Larry, do you have Joey's phone number.

LARRY

I think so.

ELIZABETH

Well, will you give it to me?

LARRY

Why do you want it?

ELIZABETH

So I can call him, you dummy.

LARRY

Gee, I probably shouldn't give it out.

ELIZABETH
C'mon, Lawrence. I want to
surprise him.

CUT TO:

INT. JOEY'S BEDROOM — AFTERNOON

Joey lies on his bed, reading his copy of Plutarch.

Loretta opens the door, enters.

LORETTA
(Spanish)
Marcos and Jorge are at the
door. They want to say hello
before you leave for school.

Joey doesn't look up.

JOEY
Tell them I'm not here.

LORETTA
(Spanish)
They haven't seen you since
last summer.

JOEY
I'm busy packing.

Loretta exits.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Close the door please!

CUT TO:

EXT. DUPONT BACK YARD — LATE AFTERNOON

The yard is enormous and surrounded by thick forest. The sun is close to setting. The men and boys of the families play football.

MONTAGE

Mr. Dupont hikes to Franklin, who plays QB. Denny catches.

Mr. Weathers catches. Denny 'tags' Mr. Weathers.

Larry misses a catch.

Franklin throws an interception to Walt.

Dupont hikes to Franklin. Franklin searches. Weathers charges Franklin. Franklin throws at the last second, getting 'tagged'.

Denny catches one-handed, with only Larry between him and the end zone.

Denny makes a move as Larry LUNGES with his hands.

Denny TRIPS Larry with his leg on purpose as Denny JETS by.

Denny SCORES.

Larry lies on the ground, surprised.

END MONTAGE

Larry makes his way up, hurting.

LARRY

Hey, I thought this was a no contact match.

Denny looks at Franklin. Weathers looks at Dupont. They all smirk.

INT. DUPONT LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

While the men play football, the women sit drinking tea and CHATTING. Elizabeth sneaks off to use the phone.

She dials the number that Larry gave her, hoping to speak to Joey.

A Spanish voice answers.

LORETTA

Hola?

Elizabeth is surprised. She hangs up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. BRYCE SCHOOL HALLS - DAY

The halls are empty except for Joey, who walks through with his BAG.

INT. ENGLISH CLASSROOM - DAY

Mr. Kline lectures his students.

Joey is bored, impatient.

Mr. Kline writes "M-I-L-T-O-N" on the blackboard.

KLINE

Why is 'Paradise Lost' one of the most acclaimed and enduring works ever written? Anyone?

Classroom shuffles.

KLINE (CONT'D)

Joey? Any thoughts?

JOEY

Um. Because... writing a sequel to the most popular book of all-time is a surefire way to write a bestseller?

LAUGHS.

KLINE

Very funny. Now, this section won't be easy. Some students have great difficulty with Milton. But what would our friend Milton say? "The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

ARTIE

Sounds like a lot of applesauce to me.

Lots of LAUGHS.

KLINE

Okay, settle down. Who knew that Milton was blind when he wrote this?

A few raise their hands, some GROAN.

KLINE (CONT'D.)

It was initially published in ten books but was later re-divided into twelve. Anyone want to posit a guess as to why?

No one answers, no one cares.

KLINE (CONT'D.)

Well, he wanted to mirror Vergil's 'Aeneid', which at the time was considered the greatest classical work, superior even to Homer.

Joey takes NOTES, slightly annoyed.

KLINE (CONT'D.)

Milton fuses Biblical and classical mythology. We'll be examining how the classical allusions complement the Biblical story.

Joey struggles to keep up with his notes.

KLINE (CONT'D.)

One thing that has made 'Paradise Lost' such an enduring work is that Satan is the protagonist.

Kline looks around.

KLINE (CONT'D.)

He is portrayed sympathetically, as a frustrated angel who rebels against the omnipotent God. He rallies his followers with the famous line "Better to reign in Hell, than serve in heaven."

Something about this strikes a chord with Joey. He mouths the quote as he copies it down.

INT. BOATHOUSE - NIGHT

Elizabeth, Joey, and Larry hang out.

JOEY

Who knows, maybe I'll get there and decide Rutgers isn't for me.

(MORE)

JOEY (CONT'D.)

But after all these years at Bryce, I think I'd like to be around some people who aren't stuck in the clouds.

ELIZABETH

Yeah. I'm pretty sure some of the girls at Winston are from Neptune.

Elizabeth and Joey lock eyes.

Larry has a stern look on his face.

LARRY

Oh, they're all right up here. You know, they can't help it. If you give a Bryce boy a dollar, he'll ask you where the rest of it is, so the saying goes.

Joey and Elizabeth don't pay much attention to Larry. His joke falls flat.

LARRY (CONT'D)

You know, once they get out there, you know, way out there, it will catch on. They'll grow up.

Joey doesn't turn from Elizabeth.

JOEY

When I visited Harvard and Yale and Columbia, it sure didn't seem that way.

LARRY

Well. Well, sometimes personal feelings prevent you from seeing the good. I was just reading on King Saul for Western Lit. David takes down Goliath in the game of the century. Saul resents David's success, but finally gives him a chance years later as his son's dying wish. And we all know what happens next.

JOEY

I don't think either of us knows what happens next, Lawrence.

(MORE)

JOEY (CONT'D.)

(to Larry)

But if I recall, isn't part of the reason Saul doesn't like David because Saul's son Jon is having unspecified relations with Dave?

Elizabeth LAUGHS.

Larry is uncertain. He looks at his watch.

LARRY

Well, we all better head out.
Lights out in fifteen.

EXT. BOATHOUSE - LATER

The three friends are on the PIER.

Larry makes towards Bryce. Elizabeth makes towards Winston.

Joey watches Elizabeth. He turns to Larry.

JOEY

Hey, I forgot my coat on the pier.

Larry turns.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Don't wait up for me.

Larry keeps walking toward Bryce.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Hey Lizzy.

She turns.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Want to walk me to my coat?

ELIZABETH

Sure.

She smiles a little, joins Joey.

They walk on the pier.

Joey wants to say something. They walk.

Finally he does.

JOEY

Do you want to go to the Winter Ball with me? I mean, if nobody's asked you already.

They reach the end of the pier.

ELIZABETH

No, nobody has asked me yet.

Pause.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Or course I'll go with you.

She looks around.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Say, I don't see your coat anywhere.

JOEY

Huh. Guess I wasn't wearing it.

He smirks.

INT. DORM HALLWAY LOUNGE - NIGHT

Another student lounge, fancy ARMCHAIRS, COUCH.

There are two telephone BOOTHS. Each has a SEAT and is enclosed by three walls, no door. The TELEPHONES resemble a standard 1930s desk phone.

Joey talks on the phone.

JOEY

(Spanish)

No, I really think I'll be too busy. That's right when midterm exams are.

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D.)

(Spanish)

Why didn't Uncle Louie come up for Christmas?

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)

(Spanish)

Well, anyway, I wanted to ask, do you think I can have a little extra money? I need some new shoes for the Winter Ball.

Joey watches another STUDENT get into the booth next-door.

JOEY (CONT'D)

(English, quietly)

Those don't fit. Uncle Manuel was a giant.

Beat. Joey is angry.

JOEY (CONT'D)

(English)

Fine... All right!

The student next door looks through the window at Joey.

Joey HANGS UP.

He sees the student looking at him.

Joey leaves the room.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - NIGHT

The seniors gather around the FIRE.

Hugh and Denny are at the head, and the rest are sitting in positions similar to where we saw them during the first campfire scene.

HUGH

Tonight is the official start of the ninety-eighth year of the games. In playing these games, we cannot forget the respect and honor of our forefathers who established this great tradition. We are proud to continue with the legacy we have inherited from them.

Beat.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Don't forget this competition is grounded in the honor system. All stories may be disputed or cross-checked for legitimacy.

Beat.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Let it also be known that all that's discussed inside this circle will be kept inside this circle. By being here you agree to a strict vow of silence, under all circumstances. Anyone who breaks this vow will be punished at the discretion of the committee.

DENNY

On a lighter note, this weekend is the annual Winter Ball.

A few CHEERS.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Co-hosted with our sister school Winston, this is traditionally one of the most active nights of the competition. The kick-off event, if you will.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM BATHROOM — NIGHT

Communal bathroom.

STUDENTS line the bathroom sinks. They wear white UNDERSHIRTS and boxer SHORTS.

Murray FLOSSES. Denny and Joey COMB their hair. Artie GELS his hair. Other students shower, brush, use the toilet, etc.

ARTIE

Goddamn, that Kline's really killing me. Most teachers take it easy on seniors this time of year, but Kline just keeps laying it on thicker and thicker.

DENNY
You can't make Milton chic.

Hugh walks by the sinks.

HUGH
The guy's almost as eggheaded
as Shakespeare.

ARTIE
Milton or Kline?

Small LAUGHS.

HUGH
I don't know, but either way
I'm going to be doing some
major necking etcetera tonight.
Some canonized necking etcetera.

Bigger LAUGHS.

HUGH (CONT'D)
And to hell with Kline if I
don't quote a little Shakespeare
while I'm at it.

He suavely slicks back his hair, then rubs Joey's freshly
combed hair. Joey covers his head.

JOEY
The real event's tomorrow when
we hear which play you pulled it
from.

Hugh shoots Joey a stern look.

HUGH
Hey. Never leaves the fire, buddy.

CUT TO:

EXT. WINSTON GYMNASIUM - LATER

ESTABLISHING SHOT. A fancy converted barn-like structure.

A wooden sign hangs at the entrance reading "THE 83rd
WINSTON LAKE WINTER BALL" carved in wood.

INT. WINSTON GYM – CONTINUOUS

A gymnasium has been converted into a plush carpet dance hall with a full string and brass BAND playing standards.

A BAR with BARTEND is at the side, serving punch and other non-alcoholic beverages. TABLES and CHAIRS on one side of the gym.

CATERERS carry food on TRAYS.

Students DANCE, CHAT, SIT, EAT, DRINK. They wear TUXEDOS and nice DRESSES.

Joey, black secondhand SUIT, BOWTIE, noticeably large scuffed SHOES, enters with Elizabeth, who is surprisingly beautiful in an elegant DRESS.

Trailing behind is Larry in a TUXEDO. He nervously shifts his hands in his pockets.

LARRY

Hey you know, I'm glad we all decided to come together.

William and Edward (friends of Hugh) spot Joey.

WILLIAM

Hey Joey. Sharp looking shoes.

William chuckles.

JOEY

Thanks, they were my dad's. The Mayor of New York gave them to him ages ago. He was wearing them in Atlantic City when he won twelve grand.

EDWARD

Ah, want that luck on your side tonight, eh Joe?

Joey winks at him.

William spots Larry.

WILLIAM

Hey Lar. Sharp looking date.

The two LAUGH at Larry.

Larry looks around. He notices Joey holding Elizabeth's hand.

Larry is flustered.

LARRY

Well. Yeah, you know, I'm not
one to limit my opportunities.
If you know what I mean.

CAMERA floats through the room, stopping at Hugh and Artie and their DATES.

Hugh and Artie make eye contact. Artie nods towards Hugh's date. Hugh smirks and nods.

Elsewhere Murray and Denny are with DATES.

Spencer, Charles, and Tanner (friends of Joey) dance with their DATES.

Larry sits alone off to the side.

He shuffles. Rearranges. Stands up, gets some punch.

He looks off, sees Joey dancing with Elizabeth.

Larry is angry. He walks toward them.

He pauses.

Sits.

Taps fingers on table.

The song ends. Joey and Elizabeth walk toward the bar to get some punch.

Larry stands. He grabs Joey's arm.

Larry leads Joey away from the table to the other side of the room.

LARRY

What do you think you're doing
out there?

JOEY

Look, I know what you're going to
say--

LARRY

WHAT am I going to say?

Joey looks off to the side.

LARRY (CONT'D)

You know what tonight is. You think I'd be okay knowing what you're going to do to my kid cousin tonight? Are you kidding? I--

Joey interrupts.

JOEY

Larry. I'm your best friend. In all the time we've known each other, have I ever disrespected you? Have I ever disrespected her?

Larry's face is stone.

Joey gets emotional. Turns it on like a switch.

JOEY (CONT'D)

And you know something, Larry?

Pause.

JOEY (CONT'D)

To me, Lizzy is not just some girl.

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Come on, Larry. Come on, let's have some punch and enjoy this dopey Winter Ball.

Joey guides Larry to the table. Larry pushes Joey's hand off.

LARRY

My name is Lawrence. And if you'd ever paid attention to me, you'd know that. And if I really thought you cared enough about Lizzy, I wouldn't be having this conversation with you.

Larry is SHOUTING. People take notice.

JOEY

All right, Lawrence buddy, take it easy. People can hear you.

Larry SHOUTS. The music has stopped with a song change.

LARRY

I don't care!

Everyone hears this. They turn. Murray and Denny watch from a table with their dates.

JOEY

Listen, let's go outside, talk this over.

LARRY

I'm not going anywhere with you. Just stay away from her.

Larry storms off.

Joey looks around at everyone. He shrugs.

Another SONG starts. People turn away.

Denny and Murray watch Joey walk back to Elizabeth.

DENNY

Larry's mad 'cause Joey's gonna stick it to his little cousin. Poor baby.

MURRAY

Larry's cousin is a lot more of a broad than you made her out to be.

DENNY

She doesn't normally look that good.

MURRAY

How many points you think Larry's kid cousin is worth?

DENNY

Better question: how many points is Joey gonna get for Larry's kid cousin?

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)

We need to get creative.

They turn toward their dates.

EXT. WINSTON GYM - LATER

COUPLES exit periodically.

Joey and Elizabeth exit together. The look on Joey's face is one of concern. Elizabeth notices.

ELIZABETH
What's the matter?

JOEY
I feel bad.

ELIZABETH
Because of Larry?

JOEY
Yeah. Maybe we shouldn't be doing this. I don't want to hurt my best friend.

They continue down the path.

ELIZABETH
That's just Larry being Larry. He'll get over it.

JOEY
Yeah. I guess you're right.

They halt at a fork in the path.

ELIZABETH
I think maybe I'm going to head back now.

Joey is disappointed.

JOEY
Okay. Well, let me walk you home then.

ELIZABETH
No that's fine. I can make it alone.

She smiles.

JOEY
I'm really sorry about all that stuff back in there. Maybe we should just--

Elizabeth interrupts him with a KISS on the cheek.

She quickly walks off. Joey stares after her.

She calls back to him.

ELIZABETH

Goodnight. I had a swell time!

JOEY

Night...

Joey walks off.

Behind him William and LACEY (17), attractive, exit the gymnasium.

They walk down the path in the direction Elizabeth took.

William tells her a JOKE, unheard. She LAUGHS.

CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - LATER

A plain hallway in a cheap roadside hotel.

William fumbles with the KEY as Lacey waits, chomping on a wad of BUBBLEGUM. She blows a bubble. POP.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - NIGHT

The Seniors sit around the campfire.

Out of the dark, William appears, a bit out of breath. Hugh looks up, interrupted by William.

HUGH

Now that everyone seems to be here, why don't we kick it off with the latecomer. Assuming you've got a story, William.

WILLIAM

You know it.

HUGH

Then make your way to the inside of the circle. And don't have a seat. All storytellers must stand.

William does so.

He opens his mouth.

INT. HOTEL ROOM – NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A nondescript hotel room.

William and Lacey sit on the plain BED. Lacey chews gum.

Awkward silence.

WILLIAM

You seem tense, Lacey.

He puts his hand on her shoulder.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

He MASSAGES her shoulders with his hands. He scoots in.

He nibbles her neck.

He makes his way to her mouth, they KISS.

They MAKE OUT. He scoots in more.

He moves his hand down her thigh. He leans into her, towards the bed.

She pulls her head away.

LACEY

Wait.

William is dazed.

LACEY (CONT'D)

William, I know what you're thinking.
But we can't.

Beat.

LACEY (CONT'D)

I'm a virgin.

WILLIAM

So? Don't want to be a virgin
forever, do you?

LACEY

You don't understand. I'm saving
myself for marriage.

William kisses her on the mouth.

She pulls back again.

LACEY (CONT'D)
Honest. I can't. I don't think
it's right.

William HUFFS.

WILLIAM
Then why are we even here?

Beat.

LACEY
Well. I mean, there are things
you can do and still be a virgin.

Lacey opens her mouth and removes the wad of bubblegum.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

Some seniors LAUGH, a few HOOT and WHISTLE.

Silence.

HUGH
Is that where your story ends?

WILLIAM
Um. What else is there to know?

ARTIE
What do you mean what else? You
didn't mention the most important
thing.

Pause.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Did she swallow?

WILLIAM
Oh.

Beat.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
No, she didn't.

SENIORS
Ohhh.

Some LAUGHTER.

Hugh turns in and huddles with Artie, Denny, Murray, and a few other Judges.

They discuss, WHISPERING.

As the seniors wait, they CHITTER-CHAT.

The Judges turn to the fire. The seniors are silent.

HUGH
Well. This is a good first effort.
And a good old way to start the
competition. We of course had to
subtract some points due to the
circumstance.

William frowns.

HUGH (CONT'D)
But you still got a real nice pick
of points.
(to Denny)
Mark him down.

Denny pulls out an old fashioned reporter's NOTEPAD, brown leather, fancy and old.

WILLIAM
Now wait a minute. This broad was
a virgin. Or weren't you paying
attention? She doesn't even believe
in sex before--

Hugh interrupts.

HUGH
Enough. You may step down.

William opens his mouth to say something.

William closes his mouth.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - LATER

RAYMOND, a non-jock popular, stands where William was before.

RAYMOND

I borrowed some money from my old man and took her to a hotel in the city, a real swank place on the West Side. We were on the top floor, overlooking the Hudson. She was going on about the view, the view, what a magnificent view.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Raymond and LUCY, attractive, perfectly-coiffed blond hair, stand in a hotel room looking out the window.

RAYMOND (V.O.)

And I kept thinking that New Jersey isn't much to look at, but at least I don't have to stare out the window at Brooklyn all night. Anyway, she was impressed so it wasn't long before we were necking on the bed.

Raymond leads her to the bed and sits her down. He sits down next to her and begins KISSING her on the neck.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - NIGHT (PRESENT)

The FIRE has dwindled.

Artie stands in the circle.

He is silent, smirking, looking back at Hugh.

HUGH

If there are no objections to Artie's story, you can have a seat.

Artie sits. The seniors are silent.

Murray looks around.

MURRAY
Is there anybody else?

Murray scans the crowd. His eyes land on Joey.

MURRAY (CONT'D)
Joey? I saw you with a real
beauty.

Larry looks at Joey.

MURRAY (CONT'D)
Larry's cousin, wasn't it?

Joey stares back at Murray.

JOEY
There's nothing to tell.

Someone from the crowd, Edward, calls out.

EDWARD
What about Larry!

LAUGHS.

Larry looks around, embarrassed.

Larry meets the eyes of Edward. His eyes narrow.

HUGH
All right then. If I recall,
that would leave our man William
with the red jacket. Correct,
Denny?

DENNY
Correct.

HUGH
And who does that leave with the
yellow?

Denny leafs through the notepad.

DENNY
Well. That leaves quite a tie.
Joey has nothing on the boards
yet. Larry. Edward. Randal. And...
that appears to be it.

HUGH

With a tie, a jacket is to be rotated amongst participants. The first to get the privilege of the yellow jacket, let's say, is Larry.

LAUGHS.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Then onto Larry's good friend, Joey. And so on.

INT. BOAT HOUSE - NIGHT

Elizabeth and Joey sit on a storage BENCH. They're not too close, not too far.

ELIZABETH

Don't worry about it. Larry just gets real emotional about things. He cools off after a while.

JOEY

Yeah, I hope you're right.

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)

But I just don't understand why he's so steamed. What did I do that was so wrong?

Elizabeth hops off her bench. She walks to Joey.

ELIZABETH

You didn't do anything wrong. He still thinks I'm a little kid and he gets protective.

She KISSES his forehead.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

I've really got to get back now.

She turns and exits.

Joey sits, silent.

INT. BRYCE SCHOOL HALL - DAY

Students hurry down the hall. Larry, sporting a YELLOW JACKET that's too big for him, cautiously walks, looking behind him every so often.

Artie sneaks up on Larry from behind and SMACKS him in the back of the head. Larry holds his head. He is in pain. He begrudgingly addresses Artie.

LARRY

Thank you, kind sir.

Further down the hall, Larry turns to see Murray and Denny. Denny's hand is about to come down on Larry's head.

Denny stops abruptly when Larry spots him.

DENNY

Well played, yellow.

Denny and Murray continue down the hall. Larry looks around, nervously expecting another senior to hit him.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY

A cold afternoon in the school courtyard. Students still choose to sit outside and eat.

Students convene in groups separated by year, popularity, and interest.

William, in RED JACKET, walks through the yard.

Joey and his friends (minus LARRY) hang out. Spencer, Charles, and Tanner.

Charles holds a cigarette paper. He takes a pinch of tobacco out of a pouch and sprinkles it onto the paper.

TANNER

Can I borrow a pinch?

(pause)

Also, a paper?

CHARLES

Suppose I should roll it for you too?

TANNER

Hey, what a pal!

Tanner pats him on the shoulder mockingly.

Spencer, sitting nearby, smokes a pipe.

SPENCER

You guys should try smoking
a pipe. My old man says it's
better for the lungs.

William passes the group, looks at them. On cue, the boys
stand at attention.

BOYS

Well done, red.

William passes.

The boys are at ease.

TANNER

Seems to me like Artie's gonna
come out with it. He's got the
slick walk, the looks, and
supposedly he's working with
Hugh.

SPENCER

The Ptolemy strategy.

Joey is uninterested. He looks off to the side to Larry.

Larry sits on a bench alone, in the YELLOW JACKET,
SMOKING.

JOEY

Hey, I'll be right back.

Joey walks to Larry.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Hey Lawrence. You don't smoke.

Larry looks up.

LARRY

If you're here to slap me, do it
now and get it over with.

JOEY

Listen, Larry. I never meant to
hurt you. We didn't do anything.
We're not going to do anything
either. I like her.

Larry ignores him.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I wouldn't hurt someone I like.
And I wouldn't have done anything
if I knew it would hurt you.
We've been friends too long to
let something like this get
between us.

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)

That's all I wanted to say.

Joey walks off.

Larry steals a glance at Joey walking off.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - OTHER SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Away from Joey and his group are Denny, Murray, and other
jock popular students. Some toss a FOOTBALL. Murray
SMOKES a cigarette.

Murray walks to Denny, who is on a bench, and sits next
to him.

MURRAY

So is there any way you can help
me out on this?

Denny looks up from his daydream.

DENNY

What, you mean with Lizzy?

MURRAY

Yeah. Lizzy is Larry's cousin's
name, right?

DENNY

Yeah.

MURRAY

I'd kind of like to meet her.
Get to know her. If you get my
swag.

DENNY

Well. Hmm. I think Larry and Joey sometimes hang out with her at night.

MURRAY

Oh yeah?

Beat.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Now that you mention it, I've seen Joey sneak out past curfew a load of times. You think he's been going off to hang out with them?

DENNY

Seems about right.

MURRAY

You know where?

DENNY

Nope.

MURRAY

You think you could get Larry to squeal?

Denny looks at Murray.

DENNY

I'll see what I can do.

MURRAY

By the way, you seem a little far behind. You got something up your sleeve?

DENNY

I've got a good seven or eight points I'm taking ice-skating this weekend.

Murray smiles, puffs his cigarette. Denny stands.

Denny WALKS to other side of yard, towards Larry.

On his way, he passes the non-jock popular students: Hugh, Artie, William, Edward, others. Most of them SMOKE. They have classy leather JACKETS. Done up HAIR.

They look at Denny. He gets close to William, in the RED JACKET, and snaps to attention.

DENNY
Not bad, red.

Denny stands at ease and continues. He takes out his pocket COMB and combs his hair.

Denny makes it to Larry and sits on bench next to him.

Silence.

Denny begins casually.

DENNY (CONT'D)
Hey Lawrence, what's happening?
When'd you start smoking?

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)
So how'd ya like Winter Ball?

Larry doesn't respond.

DENNY (CONT'D)
I take it you and Joey aren't on
top terms these days.

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)
Your family is coming for Easter,
right? And that cousin of yours
too, I guess.

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)
You know, it's a shame what
they've been doing behind your
back and all.

Larry turns.

LARRY
What? What do you mean "behind
my back"?

DENNY
Oh. You didn't hear?

Beat.

LARRY

No.

DENNY

Murray says Joey's been sneaking out past curfew practically every night to get some private time with Lizzy.

Larry shifts.

DENNY (CONT'D)

I'm surprised you didn't know about it.

LARRY

I knew about it. Except you got it wrong. They don't go to the boathouse alone. I go with them. And it's just to hang out. Since we're friends. Or we were friends.

DENNY

Fair enough.

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)

I guess our sources differ.

Denny pats Larry on the back.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Listen Larry, I gotta split.

Denny gets up, WALKS past the same students, to Murray.

Denny and Murray exchange unheard WORDS.

The schoolyard's activities continue.

EXT. WINSTON LAKE — MORNING

Lakeside on a dirt path that lines the lake, weaving between trees.

The GYM TEACHER holds a brass STOPWATCH. A PISTOL. Seniors are gathered in a pack.

William wears a RED SWEATSHIRT. Joey wears an ill-fitting YELLOW SWEATSHIRT. The others wear navy blue.

Gym teacher FIRES the pistol in the air. The boys take off.

After moments, all the boys have intentionally fallen behind William.

They elbow Joey to the back, where he is forced to remain.

The seniors run laps around the lake.

INT. DORM BATHROOM – NIGHT

Joey shaves his face, shirtless, at the sink.

After he removes all the CREAM, he rinses the BLADE.

He picks up his WRISTWATCH and looks at the time.

He gathers his toiletries and rushes out of the bathroom.

INT. JOEY'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Joey rushes in, throws his TOILETRIES on his bed.

Joey looks to Murray's bed, empty.

Joey throws on a SWEATER, grabs his KEYS, puts on the YELLOW JACKET.

He sneaks out the WINDOW.

INT. BOATHOUSE – SIMULTANEOUS

Elizabeth walks into the boathouse.

A CIGARETTE burns in the darkness.

ELIZABETH

Hello? Joey? You smoking in here?

Murray walks into the moonlight.

MURRAY

Oh, sorry. I guess I'm not supposed to be here. Just sneaking a smoke.

Beat.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

You meeting Joey here or something? He's my roommate, you know. I don't think we've met yet. My name's Murray.

Elizabeth doesn't respond.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

You're Larry's cousin, right? I saw you at the Winter Ball, but never got your name.

Elizabeth is suspicious.

Murray takes a few steps closer.

Elizabeth takes a small step back.

ELIZABETH

It's Elizabeth.

Silence. Murray offers his hand. She shakes it.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

You shouldn't be smoking in the boathouse. Could start a fire.

Murray puts a hand in his pocket. Pulls out a PACK of cigarettes. Knocks one halfway out of the pack, trying to impress her.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

I don't smoke.

He shrugs. He still holds out the pack.

She hesitates, grabs the protruding cigarette.

EXT. BOATHOUSE — CONTINUOUS

Joey, in YELLOW JACKET, walks quickly toward the boathouse. He stops abruptly at the window.

A MATCH lights inside. Joey watches.

Joey continues standing at the window.

EXT. BOATHOUSE — LATER

Joey waits in the bushes for Murray and Elizabeth to

emerge from the boathouse. Soon he sees the door open and Murray comes out.

Shortly after, Elizabeth comes out. Joey waits a moment for Murray to make some distance between himself and Elizabeth, then he hustles down toward Lizzy.

He grabs her by the shoulder. She stops and turns around.

JOEY

Hey Lizzy!

ELIZABETH

Joey!

Beat.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D.)

Nice jacket.

JOEY

Yeah, well I'm going for a new look.

ELIZABETH

You know I tried calling you on Christmas. I got your number from Larry. Some Spanish lady answered so I thought I had the wrong number.

JOEY

Huh. Must've been our maid.

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D.)

Listen, what are you doing?

ELIZABETH

Just getting some fresh air.

JOEY

Yeah but what were you doing in there?

ELIZABETH

Oh, I met your roommate Murray. He seemed nice.

JOEY

He isn't nice. He's a creep. Stay away from him.

ELIZABETH

I'll see who I want to see, Joey.
You haven't been around lately.
Larry hasn't been around. Who am
I supposed to talk to?

Elizabeth turns to walk away.

ELIZABETH

It's late. I'm going back to
my dorm.

Joey watches her walk away, scowling.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS — NIGHT

Seniors around the CAMPFIRE as usual. William is in the
RED JACKET.

Randal, wearing the YELLOW JACKET, from the jock popular
crowd, is standing in campfire center.

RANDAL

I got it three times this weekend.

He smiles, smug. His arms are crossed.

Spencer calls out from crowd.

SPENCER

Don't you have a girlfriend?

Randal is dismissive.

RANDAL

Yes.

Tanner calls out.

TANNER

So you cheated on her?

Some CHEERS. Randal responds quietly.

RANDAL

No, um, it was my girlfriend
that I was getting it with.

Silence. LAUGHTER.

BOOING.

HUGH
Please have a seat, Randal.

RANDAL
But—

HUGH
Please have a seat, Randal.

Randal sits.

HUGH (CONT'D)
Denny, subtract about ten points.
The amount he would've got.

Denny seems distracted. He doesn't hear Hugh. Hugh turns to him.

Murray elbows Denny.

DENNY
What? Oh, sorry I wasn't paying attention.

HUGH
Negative ten points for Randal.

Denny takes the NOTEPAD and a PENCIL from his pocket.

He writes the score.

HUGH
As for the rest of you, don't bother wasting our time with stories like that. You're only hurting yourself in the end.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS — LATER

Artie stands at campfire center. The FIRE has dwindled some.

ARTIE
So I took this gal to a play in the city. Kinda a sad play, a real tear-jerker. You know.

Artie looks around.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
The kinda play you take a girl
to when you want to screw her.

INT. TRAIN CAR — NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

ARTIE sits on the train.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

ARTIE
Afterwards, since it was pretty
warm out, I asked her if she wanted
to walk around town.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS — NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Fifth Avenue uptown, along the park. Residential. An
uncharacteristically quiet night.

Artie walks arm in arm with DENISE, attractive.

ARTIE (V.O.)
I figured the park would be a
pretty class act place. So I
steered us that-a way.

They turn into the park.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

Artie is in the spotlight.

ARTIE
Next thing is, we're both sitting
on this bench, right.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK — LATER (FLASHBACK)

Mostly dark, moonlight, city light.

Artie and Denise sit next to each other on a park BENCH.

ARTIE (V.O.)
She was telling me about how
her dog had just died of some
disease, some goddamned heart-
breaking thing.

Beat.

ARTIE (V.O. CONT'D.)
I don't know, I wasn't listening.

Denise talks but her words are unheard.

ARTIE (V.O. CONT'D)
And then, get this, I say...

Artie can now be heard in the flashback.

ARTIE
Baby, I can make you feel better.

Artie leans into her neck.

Denise GIGGLES, moves away.

Artie moves closer, into her ear. He WHISPERS.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
You know, I'm going to be honest,
I've never liked someone this
much before. I know it's our
first date, but I think I'm in
love.

Denise smiles. Artie kisses her neck.

Denise stops smiling. She nudges him away.

Artie resumes a normal sitting position.

He slowly moves his hand towards her leg.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
So what'd you think of the show?

DENISE
Well I thought the cast was a
little--

Artie's hand reaches her leg. She grabs it, places it
back on his lap.

DENISE (CONT'D)
Please Arthur, stop it.

Pause.

DENISE (CONT'D)
I'm not that kind of girl.

ARTHUR (V.O.)
If anyone is "that kind of girl",
it's this broad.

Artie moves to his original position, defeated.

ARTIE
Come on baby.

He stares at her. She avoids his stare.

Eventually, she can't avoid it, and meets his eyes.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

Artie in the spotlight.

ARTIE
It was only a matter of time.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Denise is bent over, her dress lifted up. Artie's pants are half-down. Artie screws her from behind.

Seniors CHEER and HOOT off screen.

A tear drops from Denise's face, smearing her mascara.

ARTIE (V.O.)
Oh, and I was using a condom I'd
stole from my dad ages ago.

Off screen LAUGHS.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

Artie still stands in front of the fire. Denny writes in the NOTEPAD. Hugh watches Denny write.

HUGH

All right, unless there's an objection, have a seat my boy.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - LATER

The FIRE has been smothered. Seniors head back toward their dorms.

Artie puts on the RED JACKET and shifts around in it. Randal still wears the YELLOW JACKET.

CUT TO:

EXT. FIELD NEAR LAKE - EVENING

Tanner, Spencer, and a few other BOYS kick around a soccer ball.

Someone makes a bad kick and the ball rolls to the edge of the lake. Spencer and Tanner run over to retrieve the ball.

Murray and Elizabeth sit in a rowboat in the lake in the distance.

TANNER

Look at the love-birds out on the water.

SPENCER

Isn't that Murray? With Larry's cousin?

TANNER

Looks like it.

Murray puts his jacket around Elizabeth.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS — NIGHT

PAUL, a non-jock popular, stands in the spotlight. The seniors listen.

PAUL

Mine is quick. More of a follow-up, really. Remember that girl I got lucky with at Winter Ball?

Beat.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Well, she just missed her period. Guess the old pull-out isn't as reliable as pops always claimed.

LAUGHTER. APPLAUSE.

Hugh and the other Judges DISCUSS.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS — LATER

Joey is in the spotlight. The FIRE has burned down some.

Murray whispers to Denny.

MURRAY

This should be good.

HUGH

This is a first time up, isn't it Joey?

ARTIE

Looks like we've finally got some outside competition.

JOEY

I screwed Larry's cousin.

A few seniors CLAP. Then everyone APPLAUDS.

Edward slaps Larry on the back, LAUGHING. Larry shoves him, gets up, and STORMS OFF.

Joey doesn't notice. He takes a seat.

Hugh watches Joey sit.

HUGH

What do you think you're doing?

Joey looks at Hugh. Denny is distant.

HUGH (CONT'D)
Nobody gets away without the
details.

ARTIE
Even if it is Larry's cousin.

LAUGHS.

Joey gets up, steps into the spotlight again.

JOEY
All right, here's how it happened.
Nothing special. Me and her at a
fancy restaurant. It was in the
city. We got a bottle of champagne.
My dad was buddies with the owner.
Next thing I knew, we were in a
hotel room.

Murray stares at Joey.

JOEY (CONT'D)
She's not exactly one to hold
her liquor, so let's say it wasn't
too hard convincing her.

Murray is angry.

Someone from the crowd shouts.

SENIOR
What position?

JOEY
Just normal, everyday sex.
Except--

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)
With Larry's cousin.

LAUGHS.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - LATER

The FIRE is almost gone. The Judges are huddled, counting
scores.

The Judges turn to the seniors.

HUGH
Our top contenders right now
are as follows:

Pause.

HUGH (CONT'D)
Joey, Artie, Raymond, William,
Paul, Hugh, Murray, Denny, Noel,
and Wilson. And still in the
negative is Randal.

CHEERS throughout. A lot for Hugh and Denny, peppered for
the rest. LAUGHS for Randal.

HUGH (CONT'D)
Last call.

MURRAY
Anybody out there that hasn't
come forth yet?

Murray looks at Joey.

HUGH
All right, I guess that means
Joey has the privilege of wearing
the red jacket this week. Have
I got that right, Denny?

Denny whips his head to Hugh.

DENNY
Wait, I haven't gone yet.

Someone calls out.

SENIOR
If anyone can top Larry's cousin,
it's Denny.

The seniors HOOT and HOLLER as Denny makes his way into
the spotlight. He looks around, nervous.

Joey is annoyed.

Denny sweats. He hesitates.

DENNY

So I had a date with this real beauty. The most perfect looking girl you'd ever seen. Legs from here to tomorrow. Perfect tits. Great behind. We went ice skating, which I hate, but I got an inside word she kills for that type of thing.

Denny is uncomfortable but becomes more at ease as he narrates.

EXT. ICE SKATING RINK - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Outdoor ice skating rink, basic, no perimeter walls.

KIDS, PARENTS, and DATES skate.

Denny ice skates. He is mediocre. SARAH (20), gorgeous but innocent, skates in front of Denny. Denny stares at her butt.

DENNY (V.O.)

So we did the little ice skate thing.

EXT. ICE SKATING RINK - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Denny and Sarah sit at a wooden PICNIC TABLE to the side of the rink. They hold HOT COCOAS.

DENNY (V.O. CONT'D)

We did the hot cocoa thing...

Denny scoots into Sarah.

DENNY (V.O. CONT'D)

The snuggle thing.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Nice campus, Greek buildings. A few STUDENTS walk and talk.

Denny walks with Sarah, arms locked.

DENNY (V.O. CONT'D)

Afterward we walked around her campus some. She goes to Upstate College. Not exactly the most elite education, but like I said, perfect tits.

Denny and Sarah reach the entrance to Sarah's dorm. Sarah turns to Denny.

SARAH

Well, it was real nice of you to take me skating and all. Maybe we can do it again some time.

DENNY

Hey, maybe I can come up for a few? I was just getting to the good part of the story.

SARAH

No boys allowed. Sorry.

DENNY

Come on, we can just talk another few minutes.

Denny looks around.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Besides, I'm freezing out here.

Beat.

SARAH

Well, okay but just a few minutes until you warm up.

They enter the building.

DENNY (V.O.)

She didn't take much convincing.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

The FIRE is nearly gone now. Its final, dwindling flames cast a sinister glow on Denny's face.

INTERCUT WITH FLASHBACKS AS NEEDED.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Her roommate was away for the weekend. Luckily. So we started talking about college, and I told her how I was going to Harvard in the fall. And sure I'd love her to visit me some time and sure I'll show her around campus. I'm telling her everything she wants to hear, you know?

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)

So before long I make my move. We're looking at some dopey Yearly with all her classmates in it. Showing me a picture of her old boyfriend for Christ's sake. I'm kinda bored and I put my arm around her, and I bring my finger down on one of the other pictures, some dopey looking guy, and say, 'Hey, hey I know that guy. That's Teddy, that's old Teddy. He sometimes swings with the Bryce crowd. Man he's a nut.' And of course this is bull. Total raw baloney. And she said something about seeing him around campus before, yadda yadda, and I kinda give her a squeeze. And pretty soon I'm giving her the old neck routine. And she's enjoying it. I mean, the thing about it is, I swear she was all for it. She really wanted it. You know. Kept egging me on for more.

His audience hangs on his every word.

DENNY (CONT'D)

I don't know what got into her, but get this. Out of nowhere right before we really get down to business, she starts shoving me away.

Denny brushes his hair back with his hand.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Telling me I'm acting like an animal.

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)

I don't act like any kinda animal.
I'm a class act. I can't believe
she's telling me this stuff. And
so I told her, you know, she would
like it. She wanted it, kept egging
me on all that time, I wasn't gonna
just stop.

The seniors watch.

Some anticipate. Some are confused. Some worried.

DENNY (CONT'D)

But then she started yelling
at me. And she said she was
gonna start screaming. And you
know, I didn't want anybody to
get the wrong idea, you know. I
told her to shut up. I got
scared and I made sure she was
quiet. Then I went on and did it.
And I mean she kinda acted like
she didn't want it, but I could
tell she did. And get this.

Beat.

DENNY (CONT'D)

She starts crying after it's
over and she can't stop. And
she says--

Denny removes his COMB from his pocket and brushes his
hair with it.

INT. SARAH'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT (FLAHSBACK)

Normal, old fashioned dorm room.

Denny holds his hand over Sarah's mouth. She is bent,
lying on her bed. Denny rapes her.

DENNY (V.O. CONT'D)

And she says I raped her.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

Only MOONLIGHT lights the scene. The FIRE has gone out, reduced to glowing embers.

DENNY (CONT'D)
But I didn't and I tell her so.

Denny's voice strains.

DENNY (CONT'D)
I tell her I didn't. I tell her if she tells anybody I did, it'd be a lie because she wanted it, and if she tells anybody, I'd have to tear her head off or something, you know. I'm Dennis Weathers the Third, for God's sake. I'm four generations deep in Harvard. I'm a Freemason. I'm a star player. So I mean I guess she didn't want to and all, but you know I've got a level of respect to keep up. So I finally convinced her to shut her mouth about it.

Denny takes a breath.

Long silence.

Seniors look at Denny, some in disbelief, some confused.

The Judges turn inward.

They WHISPER.

Hugh and the other Judges slowly turn back to Denny.

HUGH
And nobody knows about this?

DENNY
No. No nobody knows.

HUGH
And she didn't tell anyone? She won't tell anyone?

DENNY
No. Definitely no.

Hugh looks around the fire. He hesitates.

HUGH

Well, what we have here is a real true test of our honor code. This does not leave the campfire. Not even to people who couldn't make it tonight for whatever reason.

Hugh looks at Denny.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Nothing like this has happened since the days of Alexander the Great. Denny, you got away with rape.

Seniors look on.

HUGH (CONT'D)

That's pretty much the ultimate win. It's the trump card. I can really only think of one thing that would be more of a feat.

Some seniors nod in uncertain agreement.

CUT TO BLACK

EXT. FOREST - LATER

The forest outside the campfire. Joey walks through the trees, alone.

Out of the dark appears Larry. He PUNCHES Joey in the face. Joey falls to the ground.

Joey launches himself up at Larry.

Joey WRESTLES Larry to the ground.

He PINS Larry there.

JOEY

What's wrong with you? You...

Pause.

JOEY (CONT'D)

You freak.

Joey stands up. His mouth is BLEEDING. He wipes off the blood. Looks at it on his hand. Smirks.

He walks off.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY — DAY

Crowded with STUDENTS in UNIFORM, carrying BOOKS. Talking.

Mr. Kline walks down the hall.

Two JUNIORS talk in a corner, their backs to Mr. Kline.

JUNIOR 1 whispers.

JUNIOR 1

Did you hear about that? I still can't believe he raped her.

Mr. Kline stops walking. He looks at the juniors.

Junior 1 catches Mr. Kline from the corner of his eye.

JUNIOR 1

Yeah. It was one hell of a play. Uh, I'm surprised they had that in the curriculum.

Mr. Kline continues walking.

The juniors watch him go, relieved.

INT. DORM HALLWAY LOUNGE — EVENING

Joey talks in a telephone booth.

JOEY

(in Spanish)

Well, it's no big thing, mom. I'm already accepted at Rutgers and they're not going to take away my scholarship. My average is still an "A-minus".

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)

(Spanish)

No. No, I can't go for Easter.
I already told you that. I'm
going to need all the time I can
to study.

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)

(Spanish)

Well, I mean, yeah I'm not
worried about my grades. But
that's assuming I keep that
"A-minus" average. If I just
stop studying altogether--

Joey stops talking, interrupted by the other end.

JOEY (CONT'D)

(in English)

Don't you say that name. I am
nothing like him. I am not
abandoning anyone. You're the one
who put me in this school. I didn't
ask you to. You wanted me to get
a good education so that's what
I'm doing.

Joey listens to the response on the other end.

Joey SLAMS the phone on the hook.

INT. JOEY'S DORM ROOM - LATER

Joey sits on his bed. He rests his elbows on his knees,
his arms hanging down. He flexes his hands, into and out
of fists.

An UNDERCLASSMAN walks into Joey's room.

UNDERCLASSMAN

Hey Joey, phone.

Joey responds without looking up.

JOEY

Who is it?

UNDERCLASSMAN

Some lady. She sounded kind of
Spanish.

Joey stands.

The underclassman walks off.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Joey walks down the hall, down the stairs.

INT. STUDENT LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Joey enters the telephone booth, picks up the phone that's off the hook.

SLAMS it back onto the receiver.

He walks back towards his room.

On his way, he meets Denny, who wears the RED JACKET. Joey fails to yield before him.

Denny grabs Joey and SLAMS him up against the wall.

JOEY

Get your mitts off me!

DENNY

You see this red jacket? That means you show me some respect! You understand?

JOEY

Yeah, sure. Sorry.

Denny lets him go. He stares at Joey for a moment, gives him a small shove, and continues on down the hallway.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - NIGHT

Joey is on all fours, his pants and underwear down.

Denny stands behind him with the wooden initiation PADDLE.

Denny SMASHES the paddle into Joey's backside. Joey winces.

Denny hits him several times, each hit more powerful than the last.

Denny hands the paddle to HUGH.

One by one, each Judge paddles Joey.

INT. ENGLISH CLASSROOM – DAY

Mr. Kline hands EXAMS to his STUDENTS. He walks up and down the aisles.

KLINE

These grades are, for the most part, a total disappointment.

Beat.

KLINE (CONT'D)

I don't know if you think you can get away with it now that you're all going to university, or maybe your minds are on other things. Like a competition of some sort.

Mr. Kline looks around.

Some students tense up.

KLINE (CONT'D)

I've heard a few passing rumors, yes. And frankly I'm worried. Worried about this competition you kids have going on.

Mr. Kline scans the students.

KLINE (CONT'D)

Traditions sometimes go too far. And if that ends up being the case, I hope someone will come forth. Someone will do something.

Mr. Kline places Joey's exam on his desk, face-up. A "B-" is circled in red at the top. Joey is annoyed.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA – AFTERNOON

A large cafeteria with many long, wooden tables.

The FRESHMEN and SOPHOMORES stand at attention in front of their plates as the JUNIORS enter, making their way to the tables reserved for juniors. The juniors remain

standing for the SENIORS.

The seniors enter.

Larry, wearing the YELLOW JACKET, leads the way.

Joey is among them, still sore from the paddling.

Last to enter is Denny, in the RED JACKET.

All students BANG their fists on the tabletops as Denny makes his way to his seat.

After he is seated, everyone else stops banging and sits.

Joey glares at Denny, sitting close by.

The scene turns to SLOW MOTION and "WAR DRUMS" are heard, reminiscent of the fists banging on the tables.

CUT TO:

INT. MR. KLINE'S OFFICE - LATER

An old, fancy office. Brown leather SEATS, large redwood DESK, brass HANDLES and KNOBS. BOOKSHELF lined with scores of old first edition BOOKS.

"WAR DRUMS" continue to sound. SLOW MOTION.

Mr. Kline sits at his desk, messy with books and papers. He writes on a sheet of paper with a FOUNTAIN PEN.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

The "WAR DRUMS" cut out. SLOW MOTION stops.

Joey enters.

KLINE

Joey. Glad to see you.

JOEY

Hey, Mr. Kline. Can I sit?

KLINE

Of course.

Joey sits.

KLINE (CONT'D)
I assume this is about your
grade on the exam.

JOEY
No actually. It's...

Pause.

JOEY (CONT'D)
It's about something else.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - LATER

Grander than Kline's office. A little over the top.

DEAN BURROUGHS (60s), Ben Franklin-like, sits behind his
enormous DESK.

Mr. Kline enters after KNOCKING.

The Dean looks up from a game of SOLITAIRE.

DEAN
Kline.

The Dean continues playing solitaire.

DEAN (CONT'D)
What can I do for you?

KLINE
Dean Burroughs. We've got a huge
dilemma. Huge.

The Dean stops playing cards. Looks up.

DEAN
I sort of figured that when
you'd walked into the room.
You've always been a man on a
mission, Kline. What do you have
in mind?

KLINE
I have from a very trusted source
that one of our students raped a
girl.

The Dean gathers up his cards.

KLINE (CONT'D)

It's related to that sick game all the seniors play.

DEAN

Well I'll... Well this just doesn't sound good at all. Going to have to call the legal folks in. Going to have to open a full-fledged investigation into these allegations.

The Dean is angry.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Going to be up all night, aren't we?

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Joey walks with Elizabeth.

They are in a heated discussion.

JOEY

Well, that's just absurd. I mean. Well I'd almost say "How dare you" to that. Do you really think I'd spread that kinda rumor?

Elizabeth looks to the ground.

JOEY (CONT'D)

In fact maybe the only person who would even start that kinda rumor would be somebody like my roommate, Murray.

Elizabeth is hurt.

JOEY (CONT'D)

In fact I saw you and Murray hanging out one night at the boathouse. And, hey, how come you haven't wanted to hang out much recently?

(MORE)

JOEY (CONT'D.)

I bet it's because you've been
spending all your time with Murray.
If I had to bet.

Joey stops walking. Elizabeth stops on cue.

Joey puts his hands in his pockets, looks at Elizabeth.

She avoids his glance.

Silence.

INT. BRYCE SCHOOL BOARDROOM - AFTERNOON

The room looks like a small courtroom. Light streams in
from the windows.

ADMINISTRATORS and TEACHERS, including Ted, sit. Mr.
Kline is there, at the leftmost seat. The Dean is front
center.

The scene is reminiscent of a "Red Scare" courtroom, but
without the press coverage.

Denny, wearing the RED JACKET, enters the room. He walks
the long walk from the door to the court pit.

The administrators are silent.

Denny stands in front of them. The Dean speaks.

DEAN

Sit.

Denny sits on the simple CHAIR in the middle of the pit.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Dennis, we've heard some very...
disturbing rumors.

Mr. Kline stares at Denny, serious.

DEAN (CONT'D)

I stayed up into the late hours
with the Bryce legal team last
night.

Beat.

DEAN (CONT'D)

I don't know if you know this about me, but I've always had enormous trouble getting enough sleep at night and normally I can't afford to let any matters, let alone Bryce matters, keep me from my bed.

Denny shifts uncomfortably.

DEAN (CONT'D.)

In all my years as dean of this fine institution, I've never allowed anyone to put a blot on the reputation of this shining beacon of education. Or to sully the name of our esteemed founder, Charles Wallace Bryce. And I don't intend to allow that to happen now. I've always held my students and faculty to the strictest moral code. Why, I don't know if you heard about this, but I refused to accept donations from one of our oldest benefactors when allegations of his infidelities were made public. So now you'll know where I'm coming from when you hear what you're about to hear.

Denny can't bear to look him in the eye.

DEAN (CONT'D)

We contacted some people at Upstate. We did some prodding with various students earlier in the day. Our legal team did an all out investigation, to be frank. And I'm not very happy about how much money and trouble you've cost me.

Denny looks terrible. Mr. Kline is ready to cuff Denny.

DEAN (CONT'D)

This is a grave charge, you realize. Allegations of rape should never be taken lightly. But we're not here to speculate over what is and is not true.

(MORE)

DEAN (CONT'D.)

What is certain though, is that we don't want to ruin the future of Bryce's star student and athlete. And we're assuming you don't want that either.

Mr. Kline turns to look at the Dean, surprised. Denny hides his relief.

DENNY

No, sir.

DEAN

Good. Now don't let me hear anything more about you. Except your great successes at Harvard in the fall.

The Dean winks.

Silence.

Mr. Kline looks between the Dean and the administration and Denny.

Denny gains confidence, even manages a smile.

DENNY

Yes, sir.

DEAN

Now get back to class.

Denny stands up and nods at Dean Burroughs graciously.

As he walks toward the door, he passes a large painted portrait of Dean Burroughs wearing the RED JACKET.

The teachers and administrators file out of the room - except for Kline. He sits silently, unmoving.

As Dean Burroughs walks by Kline, he notices that he remains sitting. The Dean stops.

DEAN

Is something wrong, Mr. Kline?
Do you have a problem with my
decision?

KLINE

I can't believe what I've seen in this room today. This must be a joke, or a bad dream.

DEAN

It's no joke, Kline.

KLINE

You're letting him walk, with barely a warning.

DEAN

What do you expect? Do you want me to hang him from the gallows?

KLINE

We need to get the police involved. There's no way around it. I have to call the authorities. A lawyer. Somebody. This can't be legal.

DEAN

Think about what's best for the boy.

Beat.

DEAN

Think about what's best for yourself, Kline.

Dean Burroughs squeezes Kline's shoulder and walks out of the room. Kline stares straight ahead in silence, stone-faced.

INT. DORM BATHROOM - DAY

Joey shaves.

Hugh walks into the bathroom. He holds the RED JACKET.

Hugh hangs the jacket up on a hook next to the sink Joey's using.

HUGH

Congratulations, red.

Hugh exits.

EXT. BRYCE SPORTS FIELD — LATER

The seniors play rugby, jocks against non-jocks and Joey, who wears a RED SWEATSHIRT.

MONTAGE

Tosses, tackles, scores. Both teams are doing well.

Joey excels. It's obvious he has improved.

END MONTAGE

Joey makes an aggressive tackle on Denny. This lands Denny on the ground with a busted nose.

DENNY

What was that junk?

Denny leaps to his feet.

The seniors are tense. They watch.

JOEY

Was just a tackle.

DENNY

The hell it was.

Denny slowly wipes blood from his nose. He looks at it, he smiles, shows it to Joey.

JOEY

I didn't mean it.

Denny balls his other hand into a fist and PUNCHES Joey in the gut.

Joey crumbles, stumbles back.

Denny LAUGHS.

The boys form a circle around the fight. They HOOT and HOLLER and make all sorts of noise, some rooting for Denny, others for Joey.

Denny CHARGES Joey. Joey sidesteps Denny and PUNCHES him in the side.

Denny is surprised. Then delighted, LAUGHING.

Joey CHARGES Denny. Denny embraces the charge.
They WRESTLE. Denny gets Joey to the ground. Pins him.
Denny PUNCHES Joey in the face.
Punches AGAIN.
AGAIN.
Joey's cheek opens, blood leaks.
Denny looks at his bloody fist. Smiles.
Denny punches AGAIN.
Some of the seniors forming the circle SHOUT for Denny to stop.
Denny stops. He stands up.
He grabs Joey's hand and pulls him to his feet.
Both boys are bloodied, but Joey looks awful. Denny smiles. Joey is in pain.
Denny sticks his hand out. Joey shakes it.

DENNY
Congratulations, red.

CUT TO:

INT. JOEY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Murray sits at his desk doing homework. Joey lies in bed reading Mr. Kline's copy of Plutarch.

Murray suddenly stands up.

MURRAY
I'm going out for a smoke.

He grabs his jacket. Joey lowers his book and watches Murray leave the room.

Joey waits a moment, then gets up, grabs the RED JACKET, and follows Murray out the door.

EXT. BOATHOUSE — NIGHT

Joey follows Murray down to the boathouse. When Murray is getting close to the building, Joey hustles to catch up to him.

Joey grabs him.

Murray pushes Joey off of him.

MURRAY

Let go of me!

JOEY

What are you doing?

MURRAY

Having a smoke in the boathouse.

JOEY

Don't get too cozy. You'll be leaving soon.

MURRAY

What are you talking about?

JOEY

Lizzy's in there. You're going to see Lizzy.

MURRAY

So?

JOEY

I don't like it when some creep tries to swoop in on my girl.

MURRAY

Your girl? Maybe I should tell her about all those other girls. Think she wants to hear about that?

JOEY

Maybe I should do the same about you.

Murray turns away and walks even closer to the boathouse. Joey follows.

JOEY

Just stay away from her!

Now that they're closer to the boathouse, Elizabeth can hear them. She comes out.

ELIZABETH

Joey? Why are you here? What do you want?

JOEY

Nothing. I was just leaving.

Joey turns to walk away.

ELIZABETH

You look better in yellow, by the way.

Joey slows down for a beat, but continues walking without looking back.

INT. DENNY'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Identical to the other dorm rooms. Denny packs a SUITCASE that lies on his bed. His nose is a bit BRUISED and he has a couple of small CUTS, but otherwise it looks like the fight had little effect on him.

MURRAY sits at Denny's desk.

MURRAY

Denny, he's lying.

Denny is overly happy.

DENNY

Maybe she doesn't like you after all, buddy. Or maybe you're just upset that he beat you to it. Maybe now that I'm out of the competition you're angry because Joey's got the red jacket, and it woulda been you if you were the one necking Larry's cousin.

MURRAY

No. He's lying.

DENNY

Ask Lizzy.

MURRAY

I did.

DENNY

And?

MURRAY

And now she won't even talk
to me.

INT. DORM HALLWAY - LATER

Murray walks down the hallway, storming into his and
Joey's bedroom.

INT. JOEY'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Joey packs an OVERNIGHT BAG. He has a GASH in his cheek.
The RED JACKET hangs over his chair.

Murray enters.

Joey looks up. Murray gives Joey a dirty look, grabs a
coat, and walks out.

Joey watches Murray exit.

Mr. Kline appears at the open door. He holds an old
hardcover BOOK. He KNOCKS.

Joey looks up from his packing.

KLINE

Mind if I come in, Joey?

JOEY

Sure.

KLINE

Just dropped by to pick up my
copy of Plutarch. That is, if
you've finished it.

Kline looks suspiciously at Joey's wound.

JOEY

I have.

Joey walks over to his desk and picks up the book.

KLINE

Did you enjoy it?

JOEY

I did.

Joey hands Kline the book.

JOEY (CONT'D.)

I think I know why you gave it to me.

KLINE

Pretty obvious, huh?

Mr. Kline sits on the edge Joey's desk.

JOEY

You know, what I found really interesting about Alexander is that he died of natural causes. And he was only thirty-two. I guess when you've conquered the entire world, there's just not much worth sticking around for.

There is an awkward silence. Joey whispers.

JOEY (CONT'D)

What's going on with Denny?

Joey eyes the RED JACKET. Kline doesn't notice it.

KLINE

You haven't heard?

Kline gets up and closes the door. He talks quietly.

KLINE (CONT'D.)

The Dean let him off with a warning.

JOEY

I don't believe it.

Beat.

KLINE

Alexander brought down the greatest empire the world had ever known. We can't all do that. Sometimes we just have to content ourselves knowing we did the right thing.

Kline perks up.

KLINE (CONT'D.)
I brought another book for you!

Kline hands Joey the book.

KLINE (CONT'D.)
It's the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius. He wrote, "Never regard something as doing you good if it makes you betray a trust or lose your sense of shame."

Beat.

JOEY
Thanks, Mr. Kline. Can't wait to give it a read.

INT. TRAIN CAR - LATER

Joey sits on train, alone, with OVERNIGHT BAG.

INT. DIVE BAR - LATER

Joey sits at a dark, smoky dive bar. It's crowded with PATRONS, mostly in their 30s.

Joey makes eye contact with BECCA (26), makeup, not too attractive.

INT. WINSTON GIRLS' DORM - SIMULTANEOUS

Similar to the Bryce dorm, except more feminine.

Murray KNOCKS on a door in the hall.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT (FLASHFORWARD)

Someone unseen runs through the forest.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Joey sits next to Becca. He says something unheard, she LAUGHS.

INT. WINSTON GIRLS' DORM — SIMULTANEOUS

Elizabeth opens the door. Murray stands in the hall.

MURRAY

Listen, Lizzy. I don't know
what's going on between you and
Joey. But, but I just thought I'd
tell you that I really like you.

INT. DIVE BAR — SIMULTANEOUS

Joey sits in a booth in a dark corner with Becca. They
MAKE OUT.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST — NIGHT

Someone unseen runs through forest, a continuation of the
previous "flashforward" scene.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS — CONTINUOUS

The unseen person approaches the FIRE.

Joey, wearing the RED JACKET, is in the spotlight,
standing, talking.

The Judges and seniors listen on. Denny is missing from
his normal spot. Murray sits in that spot with the
NOTEPAD.

JOEY

She was 26, by the way. She
thought I was older. I said I
was visiting a friend in college
in the city, so she said we could
go back to her place.

Larry, the unseen person running through forest, is
revealed by the firelight.

He stops in the center of the circle, panting, looking
around wildly.

Joey stops his story abruptly.

Everyone looks at Larry.

LARRY

She's...

Larry catches his breath.

LARRY (CONT'D)

She's dead. It was an accident.

Everyone is astonished. Mouths drop.

INT. FANCY BAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Four Seasons-type bar. Larry sits at a lounge table with JACQUELYN (late 30s), mildly attractive, chubby, rich.

LARRY (V.O. CONT'D)

I asked her...

INT. FANCY HOTEL ROOM - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Suite room with king-size BED, all the fancy FURNISHINGS imaginable.

Larry and Jacquelyn make out, sitting on the bed. Jacquelyn is aggressive.

LARRY (V.O. CONT'D)

Well, I asked her what had she always wanted to do but never tried.

Jacquelyn unbuttons Larry's shirt. She caresses his hairless chest. Larry is rigid, motionless.

JACQUELYN

You're nervous.

LARRY

I guess I've never really done it with a woman before.

She smiles at him.

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

Larry narrates, on the verge of tears.

Joey no longer stands next to him, but has taken a seat.

Joey is sour.

LARRY (CONT'D)

She said she'd tried it before,
but only once. And I figured, you
know, it would get me a lot of
points. A boatload of points.

Beat.

LARRY (CONT'D)

She said she'd tell me when to
stop. But she never told me to
stop.

INT. FANCY HOTEL ROOM - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Larry's on top, having sex with Jacquelyn, who is on the
bed. Larry's hands are around Jacquelyn's neck. She
enjoys it.

JACQUELYN

More.

Larry closes his eyes and squeezes harder. Jacquelyn
MOANS.

JACQUELYN

More! More!

Larry squeezes even harder.

JACQUELYN

HARDER!

Too hard.

Jacquelyn stops moving.

Larry quickly lifts his hands from her neck when he
notices her face is starting to turn blue.

LARRY

Jacquelyn?

He shakes her.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Jacquelyn?

BACK TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS (PRESENT)

LARRY

She said she'd tell me when
to stop.

The seniors are silent. The Judges are silent.

Larry CRIES quietly. He sits down at a vacant spot
nearby, right next to Joey, and looks to the ground.

Hugh WHISPERS something into Artie's ear. The circle of
Judges lean inwards. They discuss quietly.

The Judges turn outwards.

HUGH

Well.

Beat.

HUGH (CONT'D)

It appears we have a new leader
in the competition.

Silence.

Someone CLAPS.

Larry looks up from the ground, tears on his face.

All the seniors CLAP, WHISTLE, CHEER.

Larry wipes his wet face, confused.

Joey stares at Larry. He APPLAUDS begrudgingly.

Joey removes the RED JACKET and hands it to Larry.

INT. LARRY'S DORM ROOM - LATER

Larry, wearing the ill-fitting RED JACKET, sits at his
desk, stares into space, quietly CRYING.

INT. JOEY'S DORM ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Joey and Murray both sit at their desks, doing homework,
writing with pencils.

Joey quickly looks over his shoulder at Murray, then goes back to work.

A moment later, Murray steals a glance at Joey, then goes back to work.

EXT. DORM ENTRANCE – SIMULTANEOUS

A STAIRCASE stoop that leads inside the dorm. PILLARS frame the entrance.

Hugh, Artie, Edward, and William all sit on the stoop. They smoke and stare off into space.

INT. MR. KLINE'S OFFICE – SIMULTANEOUS

Mr. Kline writes furiously.

He stuffs a letter in an envelope. The envelope is addressed to "BRYCE BOARD OF TRUSTEES."

EXT. ALLEY – NIGHT

Red lights, city noises, mostly dark, an unlabeled DOOR at one end.

Joey walks into the alley. He goes to the door, puts his hand on the knob, pauses, then turns around and walks toward where he came from.

He stops, breathes heavily.

He turns back again, walks to the unlabeled door, enters.

INT. FLOPHOUSE BEDROOM – LATER

Seedy. A lone crucifix is the only decoration in the barren room.

MARIE (30s) wears a simple black DRESS and too much MAKEUP. She's attractive but looks tired.

She sits on a plain CHAIR. She stares at her red NAILS.

Joey stands near the BED, unbuttoning his shirt.

MARIE
So what d'you like?

JOEY
I like it from behind. You can
just, you can just lean down and
take your pants off.

MARIE
I'm not wearing any.

Marie stands up from the chair.

JOEY
Well, yeah I meant your under-
wear.

MARIE
I'm not wearing any underwear
either.

She hikes up her dress. She leans over, resting her hands
on the bed.

Joey removes his shirt.

Marie talks, her face away from Joey.

MARIE (CONT'D)
I'm ready when you are, sport.

Joey walks towards her, putting his hand in his pants
pocket.

He pulls out his RAZOR BLADE, the same one he uses for
shaving.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS - NIGHT

Joey stands in the spotlight, a neutral expression on his
face.

JOEY
So I did it right as I was about
to finish.

The seniors' jaws drop, astonished.

Silence. The Judges turn, whisper.

The Judges turn back to the fire.

Hugh looks at Joey.

HUGH

Well, we certainly appreciate the effort. Didn't expect anyone to even come close to our leader. But it was a hooker.

Joey's expression changes from cool to wide-eyed.

HUGH (CONT'D)

The consequences simply aren't as steep. Down the line. Nobody's gonna go looking for a hooker, right?

JOEY

What do you mean? It was pre-meditated. This was murder, this was no accident. I nailed this broad then cut her goddamn throat.

Silence. WHISPERS. Astonishment.

HUGH

Yeah it takes some cunning to pull off a stunt like that. Not to mention some huge balls. But you're not under any heat. Nobody's gonna come looking for you. She was a second rate citizen. Practically not even a person, you know?

Joey stands there, blank faced.

The Judges appear uncomfortable.

Joey continues to stand there.

HUGH (CONT'D.)

Don't get me wrong. A gag like this is worth a mess of points, but not enough to oust Larry.

Joey looks Hugh square in the eye.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Seniors walk through the woods, back toward Bryce.

Joey turns in another direction from the rest. He circles back to the campfire, which has been smothered. Smoke rises.

Joey walks around on the perimeter of the circle that the sitting seniors had formed.

Joey walks around the circle again.

Again.

Joey stops.

He looks around like he doesn't know where he is.

JOEY
Live with the gods.

Beat.

CUT TO:

EXT. WINSTON DORM — NIGHT

Outside the dorm buildings Joey hides behind a tree.

Soon Elizabeth approaches him.

ELIZABETH
Where's your new jacket?

JOEY
I'm not wearing that anymore.

ELIZABETH
That's good. Red's not your color.

Beat.

ELIZABETH
What do you want?

JOEY
I know I've been sort of a jerk lately.

ELIZABETH
Sort of?

JOEY
I've been a jerk lately. I just want to say that. I'm sorry for that. I'm sorry for lots of things, but I really don't like

the way things have been between us recently. I want to make up. And I was hoping that you'd meet me at the boathouse at midnight. Larry's going to be there too. I'm hoping we can all talk things over and make up.

ELIZABETH

Well, I don't know.

She thinks long and hard.

ELIZABETH

Okay. I'll be there.

EXT. BOAT HOUSE - NIGHT

Joey and Larry stand on the pier in front of the boathouse together.

Joey begins walking down the pier towards the end of it. Larry follows.

JOEY

Larry, thanks so much for coming here to talk. I really... I just don't know what to do. I feel so guilty about this. I didn't mean it to go so far. I wasn't thinking straight.

They're halfway down the pier. A small ROWBOAT floats in the water at the end of the pier. Joey turns directly to Larry.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Larry, I think we should turn ourselves in.

Larry meets Joey's stare. Larry opens his mouth to talk.

Joey interrupts.

JOEY (CONT'D)

They'll understand, right? They won't take away my scholarship, do you think?

They continue walking.

JOEY (CONT'D)

I mean, I know it's just a state school and it's not fancy like the schools that everybody else got in to. But let's face it. I'm not everybody else. I'm me.

Beat.

JOEY (CONT'D)

You know, it's about time. It's just about goddamned time that I admitted it. My name is Jose Garcia Colón. My mother's parents emigrated here from San Juan. My father flew the coop before I even spoke English. I spoke only Spanish until I was at least five or six. Hell. Hell, I'm not one of you. All you guys are built out of nothing. You're all built out of nothing. And the nothing could collapse any time. Any time at all.

Joey is out of breath.

Beat.

LARRY

I don't know. I really think it would be better if we didn't tell anyone. If we just, you know, promised never to tell anyone and forget about it. To move on.

They reach the end of the pier.

LARRY (CONT'D)

I think they'd take away your scholarship, I really do. I think we'd both end up in jail, Joey.

They look at each other.

JOEY

I'm sorry, Larry.

He holds out his arms. Larry hesitates, then hugs Joey.

They embrace.

Joey SOBS.

He removes one of his arms from Larry.

Joey PUNCHES Larry in the side.

Larry stumbles back, surprised.

Joey PUSHES Larry off the side of the pier, into the boat below.

Larry lands wrong on his arm. He YELLS.

Joey jumps in after him.

They WRESTLE.

Joey manages to hold Larry's face down.

Joey drags Larry to the edge of the boat and STICKS Larry's head under the water.

Joey holds Larry's head underneath the water. Larry kicks and squirms, trying to free himself from Joey's grasp.

Larry's arms flail as he tries to HIT and PUNCH Joey.

Larry DROWNS.

Joey pushes the body into the water.

He climbs up a LADDER connected to the pier.

Joey looks down at the floating body beneath the pier. He brushes himself off.

Joey looks up and sees Elizabeth at the other end of the pier.

JOEY

Lizzy...

He approaches her. He looks at his watch.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Well now, you're way early.

He gets closer. She turns and RUNS.

Joey sprints after her. He pulls out a RAZOR BLADE from his pocket, the same one he used to kill the prostitute, the same one he uses to shave.

Elizabeth makes towards Winston.

Joey catches up to her after only a few seconds.

He JUMPS on her. He sticks the blade in her shoulder. She SCREAMS. They FALL to the ground.

Elizabeth KICKS Joey in the face.

She escapes his hold, gets up and runs.

He runs after her again.

He catches her and this time he POUNDS his fist into the back of her head.

She FALLS.

He pins her to the ground.

Joey takes the blade out of her shoulder and JAMS it into the back of her skull.

EXT. PIER — LATER

Joey drags Elizabeth's body down the pier, to the end, and dumps it into the water.

Joey jumps into the boat he fought Larry in. He kneels beside the water. He washes the blood off the razor, tries to scrub the fingerprints off the handle.

Larry's body has begun to drift away. Joey grabs an oar and uses it to guide Larry's body back toward the boat. He plants the knife in Larry's pocket.

Joey climbs out of the boat and walks off. There is still some blood on his clothes.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOWERS — LATER

Shared, open showers.

JOEY washes himself in a shower. He removes bits of dry blood from his skin.

His CLOTHES are spread out in the sinks, soaking.

The bathroom is otherwise empty.

EXT. CAMPFIRE IN WOODS — NIGHT

The seniors sit at the campfire a final time.

The Judges sit in their usual spots.

Joey sits directly across from Hugh. They barely see each other through the flames.

Hugh speaks to everyone.

HUGH

As far as I know, there's never
been a year as...

Murray, sitting next to Hugh, looks at Joey.

Hugh continues, choking on his words.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Never been a year as competitive
as this one. I am in fact proud
to have been the presiding member
to bear witness to such feats.

Joey looks back at Murray.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Due to the untimely, um, suicide
of our leader, the runner up
will be crowned champion by
default. Joey, congratulations.
You've won.

Murray and Joey lock in a stare.

The seniors APPLAUD mechanically.

Several pat Joey on the back, on the back of the RED
JACKET he wears.

Joey basks in the glory of victory.

CUT TO BLACK