

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

DISTANT GUN AND MORTAR FIRE

Muffled by the wet green forest.

The very earth seems to tremble.

A RABBIT

Darts out of a log, lifts itself on its hind legs and sniffs the air.

A LOBBED GRENADE EXPLODES

VOICES and SHOUTS, closer now, mix with the rumbling WAR SOUNDS in a veritable symphony of violence and confusion.

A DEAD AMERICAN GI lays splayed out, careless in death.

A pair of SOLDIERS flash among the trees, running hunched over and low, and disappear into the gray blooms of SMOKE.

For a moment the forest takes a breath.

Nothing but trembling leaves. Then -

The RATTLE of a Jeep

Coming closer in fits and starts, GRINDING through low gears.

A Willys MB appears, CRASHING through the undergrowth.

It's driven by Private First Class KELLY ERNSWILER. Eighteen, if that. Not much meat on him. His insignias indicate he's in the 29th Infantry.

His face might be attractive, under other conditions.

He pauses and pulls a map from the pocket of his M41 standard-issue field jacket.

KELLY

Where the hell are those Krauts?

To give himself courage, he SINGS Tommy Dorsey's "I'll Be Seeing You [in all the old familiar places]" while maneuvering the Jeep through the bushes and rocks.

He drives straight for a fallen LOG, GUNS the engine and tries to go over it.

The Jeep's FRONT WHEELS catch on the log.

The BACK TIRES spin.

Kelly gets out. Takes off his M1 combat helmet and wipes his face. Assesses the situation.

He grabs a BRANCH. Jams it under the wheel, trying to lever the Jeep free. When --

The STUTTER of a nearby MACHINE GUN startles him.

The branch SNAPS against Kelly's weight. He slips and falls in the mud.

KELLY

Shit.

Determined, he grabs his pack and carbine and sets off on foot through the forest.

EXT. CLEARING

Kelly strides purposefully out of the woods. Pauses against a split-rail fence beneath the innocent sun.

Across the clearing stands a seemingly abandoned BARN.

But not for long, as TWO GERMAN INFANTRYMEN appear around the corner of it.

Kelly moves behind a tree to assess the situation.

Unaware, the Germans smoke and talk. Kelly's too far away to hear them but he watches their every move.

They're relaxed, not as on guard as they should be. Their Karabiners rest slung across their backs.

KELLY

Bingo.

AGAINST THE TREE

Kelly focuses himself.

Then he shoulders his carbine.

Pulls out his dog tags and kisses them grimly.

KELLY

"And so they buried Hector,
breaker of horses."

He takes his Smith & Wesson 1917 PISTOL from his pistol
belt and steps out into the SUNLIGHT FIELD

In plain sight of the guards.

Surely he knows they can see him. He must want them to see
him.

But they don't. Too busy passing nudie wallet photos.

Halfway across the open grass, Kelly raises the pistol but
does not aim it.

Just strides steadily closer, arms spread out, making
himself an easy target.

Crazy as it seems, Private Kelly Ernswiler is trying to get
himself killed.

EXT. BARN

Kelly pauses not twenty feet from the Germans, FIRES into
the air and waves --

-- when from behind him comes a voice.

GERMAN OFFICER

(O.S.)

Eine maus findet den kase.

Kelly whips around to face a third German, the OFFICER.

His pistol points right into the Officer's shocked pink
young face. Point blank range.

Only - Kelly doesn't fire.

He just lowers the pistol.

The German smiles.

KELLY
Kill me Adolf.

GERMAN OFFICER
Mien Prisoner!

The Infantrymen have recovered from their idle and come running.

One of them yanks Kelly's hands behind his back and pushes him into the barn roughly.

Kelly doesn't struggle.

KELLY
Hey, Siegfried and Roy. What are you waiting for? Kill me.

INT. BARN

Kelly sits slumped in a chair, legs tied up. One of the Germans shines a flashlight in his face. Kelly squints.

KELLY
Come on you pussies. Let's get this over with.

The German Officer produces a piece of paper and a fountain pen.

GERMAN OFFICER
(German accent)
You will write your mother. Tell her how you will die now.

Kelly takes the pen and examines it.

KELLY
Genuine Third Reich issue, no less. Nice work.

The Officer pokes the paper.

GERMAN OFFICER
You will write. How you die alone.

KELLY

My mother and I don't have that
kind of relationship.

GERMAN OFFICER

(hisses)

Write.

Kelly thinks about it for a minute - should he or shouldn't
he - but sighs and begins writing. After a few lines, the
Officer snatches the paper away and passes it to an
Infantryman.

GERMAN OFFICER

Enough. Now you will beg for your
life.

KELLY

What don't you understand?

INFANTRYMAN

(interrupts sheepishly in
German accent)

The protocol says we should -

The Officer wheels around and scowls at the speaker. He
seems to be getting a bit hysterical.

GERMAN OFFICER

I am the fucking protocol.
(to Kelly)

Beg!

He and Kelly glare at each other.

The Officer FIRES his Luger into the rafters.

GERMAN OFFICER

Beg - for - your - life!

KELLY

You got to be kidding me.

The Officer grabs his throat.

GERMAN OFFICER

Silence. Now I have a little fun.

Kelly laughs. The officer slaps him. Kelly jerks away.

KELLY

Now that's against the rules.

GERMAN OFFICER

(sneers)

There are no rules in war.

Suddenly another AMERICAN GI appears behind the German in the shadows.

Only Kelly can see him. The GI motions to Kelly "keep talking" while he gets into a better position with his M-1 rifle.

KELLY

(to Officer)

You've never killed anyone before,
have you?

GERMAN OFFICER

I shower in the blood of my
victims --

The GI shoots the two infantrymen who fall in exaggerated pain and commence death throes.

Quick as a flash, the GI's Colt 1911 PISTOL is at the German Officer's neck, his M-1 in his other hand.

GI

No wonder you smell so bad.

GERMAN OFFICER

Don't shoot, please.

The GI's eyes widen. He looks at Kelly.

GI

Will you look at the manners on
this guy?

(to German)

Remember to thank me when I kill
you.

GERMAN OFFICER

No, really, not in the neck -

But the GI does anyway.

The Officer SHRIEKS, grabs at his neck, and falls.

GI
(to Kelly)
You all right?

KELLY
Yeah. My elaborate death scene
wasn't going anywhere anyway.

GI
You want me to give you a minute?

KELLY
That's okay. They'll get me
eventually. If you can't get
killed in a war, when can you?

GI
That's right. Look on the bright
side.

The GI holds out his hand.

GI
Bart. Bart Bowland.

Kelly takes the hand of the grinning all-American type guy.
About his own age, but BART takes up more space.

KELLY
Kelly. Kelly Ernswiler.

BART
Kelly?

KELLY
(mimics)
Bart?

BART
I mean - that's Irish, right?

GERMAN OFFICER

(from the floor, now with
a decidedly American
accent)

Wow man, this is a really
beautiful scene and all, but I
have to interrupt.

(to Bart)

Why the fuck did you have to shoot
that cap so close to my neck? You
gave me a powder burn.

KELLY

Listen you wienerschnitzel. You
should talk. You slapped me. I'm
not your bitch.

The Officer gets up and dusts off his uniform.

GERMAN OFFICER

Well, what was that whole creepy
death wish thing about?

KELLY

Well it didn't work, now did it?

GERMAN OFFICER

(shrugs)

Sometimes I get so caught up in
the moment.

KELLY

And what was that ridiculous shit
about making me write to my
mother?

The Officer grins.

GERMAN OFFICER

Inspired, wasn't it?

BART

Dude, you made him write to his
mother? Who are you, Dr. Phil?

INFANTRYMAN

(also with American
accent)

Can we get up now?

Bart helps him up and checks his regulation-issue Timex.

BART
Might as well. There's only an
hour left anyway.

The German Officer crosses his arms.

GERMAN OFFICER
(to Kelly)
Admit it. You were scared.

KELLY
(snorts)
Right.

Kelly gets up from the chair and falls over. His legs are still tied.

EXT. FOREST

The DEAD GI gets up and walks off with the GERMANS and some other SOLDIERS, done for the day.

Bart and Kelly walk back to the stranded Jeep.

BART
That Willys yours?

KELLY
Yup. Just got her. Three summers
packing out at Shop Rite.

Bart unfolds an entrenching tool from his belt and digs under the back wheels, building up dirt.

Then he goes around to the front and puts his shoulder against the hood. Bart rocks the Jeep while Kelly pumps the gas.

The Jeep finally pulls free and SPRAYS Bart with mud.

KELLY
My bad. Thanks though.

Kelly looks over his shoulder and starts backing away.

KELLY
See you.

Bart stands there, dripping with mud, shocked.

About a hundred feet away Kelly stops.

KELLY

Well, come on.

Bart walks towards the Jeep. Kelly backs it up again.

KELLY

I couldn't resist.

Bart climbs in.

BART

Real funny, Ernswiler. You might still get your chance to die today.

INT. DINER - DAY

The customers are all REENACTORS. Some Yanks, some Germans, a few Scottish and North African irregulars. "Boogie-Woogie Bugle Boy" plays on the jukebox.

Bart and Kelly sit in a booth together. Bart has an easy, confident manner and expansive gestures. Kelly eats hunched over, like someone might try and steal his food.

BART

Character building? Those crazy guys from Ann Arbor tied them to a dock.

KELLY

(shrugs)

That's what you get for invading Wisconsin.

BART

D-Day at Kenosha was nothing. At Guadalcanal Chillicothe there was a guy who actually injected himself with malaria.

KELLY

That's crazy.

They both eat for a minute.

BART

Where do you live, anyway?

KELLY

Shaker Heights.

BART

That explains the death wish. Me too. What street?

KELLY

Penn Place.

BART

(chewing)

Hmm, don't know it.

KELLY

It's not technically in Shaker Heights - but I go to Shaker Heights High.

Pause. Kelly looks at Bart.

BART

Langely Prep.

KELLY

Sorry to hear that.

BART

Well, I got kicked out of Shaker Heights High because my birdhouse came unglued in honors woodshop.

KELLY

Of course. I would have gone to Langely myself only my polo pony had the fits.

Bart throws his napkin on his plate.

BART

No matter.

(raises his voice to
address the room)

We're all soldiers here.

CROWD

That's right./Here, here./
Whooping, cheers, etc.

EXT. BOWLAND HOUSE - DAY

Kelly pulls up into the circular gravel drive. Bart's house is fancy. A nice yard and a pool. Bart hops out.

BART

You should come over some time.
Service our lawnmower.

KELLY

I would, but then I might soil my
croquet whites. You understand.

BART

How bourgeois. Cheerio then.

Kelly watches Bart go into his house and smiles in spite of himself.

EXT. ERNSWILER HOUSE - DUSK

Kelly's house is a also pretty nice, nothing to be ashamed of. It is smaller and weirder. The flowers and bushes are overgrown and strange sculptures dot the yard, some leaning at precarious angles.

Kelly washes his Jeep in the driveway.

EXT. ERNSWILER HOUSE - NIGHT

Kelly buffs the headlamps with a chamois. The Jeep looks good as new. He pulls a canvas cover over it.

KELLY

Sleep tight Hot Lips.

INT. ERNSWILER HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelly walks in on his dad ABE making sandwiches. A great big pile of cheese and PB&J.

ABE

Sergeant Keller! How was the war?
Did we win?

Kelly doesn't smile at this. He looks at the sandwiches and puts his finger to his chin in a gesture so facetious it's downright angry.

KELLY

Let me guess. Happy Meals for the wavy gravy wellness center?

Abe grabs two pieces of bread from a loaf. He looks kind. A bit ill-used by life. The phrase "rode hard and put away wet" comes to mind.

ABE

As usual, your cynicism is refreshing.

He finishes that sandwich and adds it to the pile.

Kelly pauses while opening the refrigerator. His back tightens. He slams the door with his foot.

KELLY

As usual, your cheerful optimism makes me ill.

Abe pauses over a slice of bread only briefly. The hostility is nothing new.

ABE

(lightly)

You should get that checked.

Kelly walks through the kitchen and out the back door.

KELLY

(O.S.)

Sure thing, doc. Say hello to Leif Garrett for me.

INT. ERNSWILER GARAGE - NIGHT

Kelly opens the screen door and pokes his head in.

A family of Chinese immigrants, the Lings, paints canvases at long worktables. There's a MOTHER, father MAO, grandmother XIOU-XIOU, SON and DAUGHTER.

Finished canvases hang from the walls and lean in piles against it. All of them are portraits of animals. Some have on hats or clothes.

Kelly's mom EVE shows grandmother XIOU-XIOU a few strokes with a paintbrush.

Eve wears jeans. She's one of those young-looking mothers Kelly's friends would have crushes on. If he had any friends.

MAO
(to Kelly)
Son of Eve. You are very dirty.

KELLY
(awkward)
A rough charge. You know.

EVE
(to Kelly)
Don't touch anything. We have to
get ready for the Starving Artist
show.
(to Xiou-Xiou)
Now Nana, the gold has to be
feathery, not gloppy - see?

Eve demonstrates on the painting - a pair of monkeys in French court dress. Kelly looks over his mom's shoulder.

EVE
Now you try.

Grandmother Xiou-Xiou dabs at the painting.

EVE
(to Kelly)
She loves the gold. Always
overuses it. And usually her touch
is so light.

XIOU-XIOU
Gold is the color of the sun.

Eve moves along the row, stopping to look at the paintings in progress.

KELLY
You know why we never have
anything to eat in this house?

But Eve has stopped behind Mao's painting. She's not paying attention to Kelly.

EVE

Mao, what did we say about the eyes?

She gestures at the image of a horse done Santa Fe style, lots of pastels, very abstract.

Mao looks at her quizzically.

MAO

More - empathy?

EVE

That's right. And didn't I tell you to put in more cacti?

MAO

(shakes head)

No, no more cacti. Too busy. Simplicity is best.

His family nods in support of this rash aesthetic statement.

Eve rolls her eyes.

EVE

Oh boy. I'm not having this battle with you again.

Kelly breaks in.

KELLY

Because your husband takes food from his own family to feed every loser druggie in Cleveland.

Eve moves down the line.

EVE

Well, you can always chip in here. We're ordering pizza later.

At this the family nods and smiles to each other, pleased with the news.

KELLY

No.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

Some people have to work later.
(casual)

Will you drop something off at the
dry cleaners for me tomorrow?

Eve looks up at him for the first time. Takes in his filthy uniform.

EVE

Sweetie, you know what we said
about paying for the war things.
Nothing's changed.

KELLY

It's the only thing I ever ask you
for --

EVE

Don't be dramatic.

KELLY

But it's important to me.

Eve stops at Mother Ling's painting.

EVE

You're just going to have to find
a way to pay for it yourself then,
I guess.

(to Mother Ling)

No - not that way - the sky should
be stormier. Angry clouds.

Mother Ling looks up at Kelly, who's scowling. She smiles
and nods, understanding.

KELLY

Why do I bother?

Kelly leaves. Eve's busy talking.

EVE

More brown, less blue.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kelly comes back in a grabs a sandwich off the pile.

ABE

Now Keller, who needs that sandwich more - you or the daughter of a crack addict trying to make a new life?

Kelly looks at him and bites into the sandwich.

KELLY

How about the son of a heroin addict trying to get ready for work?

Kelly leaves with the sandwich. Abe sighs and picks up more bread.

ABE

That went well.

INT. KELLY'S ROOM - NIGHT

On the walls a poster for the Civil War miniseries next to one of Led Zeppelin. Some maps. A globe. Models of fighter planes and a set of old tin soldiers.

Oh yeah, and his mom's ORIGINAL PAINTING, the one that started it all, this one signed by her - a very intense-looking pink rabbit glaring out of the canvas with huge eyes.

He sits on the edge of the bed for a minute staring into space before he peels off his muddy uniform piece by piece.

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Ah, the graveyard shift. Musak Steely Dan.

Kelly unpacks cat food.

Thousands and thousands of little cans of it. It's hard to keep the rows straight on the shelves.

SARAH, the night cashier, stands at her register. She's plain-looking now but she'll be beautiful later when she figures out who she is.

Not another soul in the store. Sarah wanders over to Kelly's aisle as if pulled by a magnet.

SARAH

So how'd your battle go today? I still don't understand how you could reenact the Battle of the Bulge in seventy-two degree weather.

(plays with hair)

Didn't all those guys freeze to death?

Kelly doesn't stop working. He's got a system.

KELLY

Well, a Port-a-John fell over on a couple of guys.

SARAH

That's gross.

KELLY

War is hell.

Kelly grabs another handful of cans.

SARAH

Then why do you do it?

Kelly pauses. He puts two cans on the shelf very deliberately.

KELLY

You're never more alive then when facing simulated death.

SARAH

Really? Maybe I should try it.

Kelly looks at her, thinks about this, and stands up.

KELLY

You are William J. Stone of the 101st Airborne, pinned down in Noville. The Germans have the high ground and they're shelling your position heavily.

(starts throwing cans)

You're holed up in a stone barn.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

Sustaining heavy casualties.
Running low on ammo. The cries of
wounded men fill the air like the
cries of hungry babies.

Sarah covers her head, huddled behind the boxes of cat
food, dodging cans.

KELLY

Your commanding officer gets hit
in the face, dies. At 1 p.m. you
lose radio contact with
headquarters. If you withdraw, the
Germans will flank the entire
Allied forces arrayed along
Bastogne and break the front.
What do you do? What do you do?

SARAH

Stop it!

Kelly goes back to stocking, satisfied.

KELLY

Battle of Bulge, the Southern
Shoulder, December '44.

SARAH

Sorry I asked.

Sarah stands up and starts to wander away but Kelly makes a
peace offering.

KELLY

Hey. Want a snack? We got a whole
shipment in of busted Oreo's.

Sarah looks at her feet, considering whether or not to
accept it.

SARAH

I'll accidentally drop a couple
pints of milk and meet you over
there.

INT. DAIRY BACKROOM

Sarah and Kelly sit on milk crates, pass the cookies back
and forth and get philosophical.

SARAH

The frozen food woman came in with her kids. They must eat out of those little cardboard trays every night. One of the kids looked like cardboard.

KELLY

Do you know we stock more flavors of cat food than we do baby food?

SARAH

No.

KELLY

Sixteen flavors of baby food including the toddler meals-in-a-jar, thirty-one flavors of cat food.

He fishes for a cookie.

KELLY

Next time you should tell that woman to buy her kid some cat food.

An ANGRY WOMAN pushes open the swinging door of the backroom with her loaded shopping cart.

WOMAN

Is this store open? I've been waiting up front. If the store's closed, it shouldn't have a sign that says twenty-four hours.

Sarah gets up. Kelly stays right where he is, finishing a cookie.

SARAH

Sorry about that.

WOMAN

I have a lot of coupons and I don't want to be here when they expire.

KELLY

(to Sarah)

Charge her double for everything.

Sarah smiles and hurries away.

INT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - DAY

Kelly walks down the hall with his army-issue BACKPACK slung over one shoulder. Besides a serious case of bed-head, he looks normal.

No one says hi to him as he makes his way to his locker.

As he twirls the combination and opens it, he notices LANCE -- short and wide, built like a tank, prematurely balding, and his girlfriend BRIDGET embracing a few lockers down.

They kiss raunchily, their tongues darting in and out of each other's mouths.

Lance sees Kelly looking and stops kissing.

LANCE

What the fuck are you looking at,
GI Jane?

Kelly shakes his head and gets a book out of his locker.

LANCE

No really, what makes you think
you can look at me?

KELLY

I honestly didn't know it was you.
I thought it was a free preview of
the Spice Channel.

LANCE

That's pretty funny. You got
dental insurance?

Kelly closes his locker and walks away.

Bridget wipes her mouth guiltily.

Lance shakes his head and pulls Bridget to him, grinding his pelvis against hers.

BRIDGET

Stop it.

She walks away.

LANCE

What? What?

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

The lights are off in history class.

The teacher MR. NORMAN shows slides on the Civil War. The more we see the clearer it becomes that they are his own photos from a vacation spent visiting the memorials.

Mr. Norman smiles out at his class in shot after shot.

He clicks the remote and a photo of his WIFE, crouched over and wearing shorts, drinking from a garden hose appears on screen.

MR. NORMAN

Whoops!

He hurries through to the next slide.

It doesn't matter anyway. Everyone is almost asleep.

Except Kelly, who becomes increasingly irritated the more Mr. Norman talks.

MR. NORMAN

And here, at Gettysburg, the ranks
of Union soldiers fought bravely
on. They were willing to give
their lives so that others might
be free.

Kelly shifts in his seat.

MR. NORMAN

Is there a problem Mr. Ernswiler?

KELLY

No.

But Mr. Norman doesn't start talking again.

He waits, looking at Kelly, smiling blandly. Until the silence becomes uncomfortable. And Kelly gets mad.

KELLY

Come on.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

Isn't this analysis a tad
simplistic? I mean, maybe for a
second grade history class, sure -
but to insist on still
characterizing the Civil War as
some moral struggle? The soldiers
were drafted - the only ones who
had to fight were the ones who
couldn't afford to pay their way
out.

(losing it)

Why don't you talk about the Draft
Riots? Where are your slides for
that?

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Fresh flowers and a crocheted tissue box hoodie make the
place cozy.

Kelly sits across the desk from PRINCIPAL HOLMSTEAD, a
well-groomed woman with a gentle talk show host demeanor.

HOLMSTEAD

What gives you the idea that you
can or ought to question the
curriculum?

Kelly doesn't move. He's not into this.

HOLMSTEAD

Or question your teacher?

KELLY

I know. I mean, who ever heard of
a classroom dialog? Not Socrates.

Ms. Holmstead is exasperated, but she likes him in spite of
herself. He's a smart cookie. She's got to change her
strategy.

She leans back in her chair.

HOLMSTEAD

Kelly, you're a very bright boy.
But you're making some serious
mistakes.

KELLY

I don't need to. Everyone else
makes them for me.

Her chair SQUEAKS as she leans forward and looks at Kelly
intently.

HOLMSTEAD

This anger must be masking a lot
of hurt.

KELLY

I was wondering what the tissues
were for.

Holmstead tries again. She looks down at his file.

HOLMSTEAD

I see you're not going to college
next year. What are your plans?

Kelly shrugs. Holmstead searches his face for any clues.

HOLMSTEAD

How do I get through to you?

KELLY

Advertisers use status and sex to
appeal to my demographic.

She shakes her head and swings her chair towards the window
and gazes out at the front walkway of the school. Her face
clears. Something's clicked.

HOLMSTEAD

I think we can come up with a
punishment which might actually be
more of an opportunity for you to
realize your true potential.

EXT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - DAY

School's been out for a while. The first rush had already
left.

Kelly comes down the front steps and starts across the
parking lot to his Jeep.

Lance steps out from behind an SUV and intercepts him.

LANCE
You upset Bridget.

Kelly hardly stops walking.

KELLY
Give me a break.

LANCE
You need to apologize.

KELLY
What are you going to do, make out
with me?

Lance runs and grabs Kelly's backpack.

LANCE
Why are you fucking with me? You
little fucker. Want to play,
fuckface?

KELLY
You just used fuck as a verb,
noun, and adjective. Impressive.

Kelly tries to start walking again but Lance has hold of him.

LANCE
Let's see what Beetle Bailey's got
in his knapsack.

Lance grabs Kelly's arm and yanks it back. Kelly still seems unconcerned.

Suddenly he pulls away, but Lance keeps hold of his backpack.

Lance holds the backpack up next to his head and points at it, gleeful.

Lance walks away towards his car. Kelly runs after him.

Lance holds Kelly off easily with one hand and throws the backpack into his SUV. They STRUGGLE for a minute, until Lance pushes Kelly away, gets in the car.

Kelly runs next to the car and pounds on the window as Lance drives off.

Finally, Kelly gives up. Lance turns out of the parking lot and HONKS the horn.

Kelly shakes his head.

KELLY

Rim job.

INT. ARMY NAVY STORE - DAY

Kelly sifts through a pile of backpacks looking for a replacement. From his post behind the counter, Bart sees him and comes over.

BART

Kelly. Hey.

KELLY

You work here?

BART

Just a couple days a month, to get a heads-up on the latest stuff. What are you doing?

KELLY

Looking for a backpack.

BART

Is that all? Don't bother. I have a couple extras at home. I could give you one if you want.

KELLY

(beat)

Sure, I guess.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, DAD'S LIBRARY - DAY

Kelly stands a bit awkwardly waiting for Bart to get the key from the desk to open the door in the corner. The door finally swings open.

INT. STOREROOM

Bart and Kelly stand between shelves piled high with war memorabilia. Uniforms in vacu-pac sealed bags, weapons in shoeboxes, cannonballs and tattered and gunsmoke-darkened flags.

KELLY

Very impressive.

BART

My dad's real into hoarding.

Kelly holds up a flask in a leather case.

KELLY

What's this?

BART

Grant's field flask.

KELLY

Wow. Your dad should meet my history teacher. He sent me to the principal's office today for questioning his G-rated interpretation of the Civil War.

BART

Forget him.

KELLY

I would, but now the principal's making me give a speech on the Civil War at an assembly.

BART

(laughing in sympathy and amusement)
What is he, some kind of sadist?

KELLY

She thinks she's doing me a favor.

BART

Jesus, she must think you're really screwed up. Are you?

KELLY

Depends on who you ask. Everyone's got an opinion.

BART

(grabs box)
Take this. That'll shut them up.

Bart opens the long box. Nestled inside is a leg bone with a foot attached to it.

BART
Stonewall Jackson's.

KELLY
Yeah right.

BART
Can you imagine that? Losing your leg and getting back up on your horse? Unbelievable. What balls.

Kelly nods. That is balls.

BART
He's got so much crap crammed in here he doesn't even notice when it's missing. I saw a backpack in here somewhere.

Bart puts down the box carelessly and paws through the piles.

INT. BOWLAND KITCHEN

Bart and Kelly sit at the kitchen table drinking sodas, waiting for MINNIE, the housekeeper, to finish making them dinner.

BART
I thought he had a couple.

KELLY
I'd feel weird taking one out of the tomb of Tutenkamen anyway.

BART
Trust me, you shouldn't.
(burps)
Where'd your old one go?

KELLY
I lost it.

BART
How?

A pause. Kelly decides to tell him.

KELLY

Someone took it.

BART

You let someone take it?

KELLY

I didn't let him. I told off some idiot --

BART

Sounds like your mouth gets you into trouble a lot.

KELLY

I'm telling you, it's not me, it's the world.

TABBY, Bart's older sister comes in.

She's older. Definitely in college, if not out. And totally shockingly beautiful. Otherworldly.

BART

Tabby, this is Kelly.

TABBY

(to Kelly)

Don't give him any money, whatever you do.

BART

Shut up.

TABBY

All these little old ladies are looking for him in Arizona. He took their retirement money and bought defective bazookas with it.

Kelly laughs. And looks at Tabby more closely.

BART

Very funny. We're paying attention to you, are you happy now?

TABBY

Finally, my life is complete. Fait accompli.

BART

(to Tabby)

Minnie's making sloppy joes. Want one?

TABBY

Sloppy joe? Sloppy no.

She opens the fridge and gets a yogurt.

TABBY

I have to go take a shower. Will you call me when Miner gets here?

Tabby leaves. Kelly's distracted.

KELLY

Who's Miner?

BART

The fiancé.

Bart rolls his eyes, indicating what he thinks of good old Miner.

Kelly nods, doesn't say anything.

BART

Listen, I'm going to the flea market on Saturday. I have a line on a couple dealers. You could get a backpack there.

Kelly glances at the door Tabby left from.

KELLY

Oh yeah? Flea market, land of bargains.

BART

Especially if you know who to talk to.

Kelly looks at Lance with suspicion -- and respect.

EXT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - MORNING

Kelly hops out of his Jeep and walks towards the front of the school.

Lance is there, hanging out with Bridget and some of his Cro-Magnon FRIENDS.

He wears a WW II CAP, overseas airborne style, obviously Kelly's.

LANCE

Hey fuckface. Like my new hat? I
just joined the Boy Scouts.

The Cro-Magnons grunt approvingly at this witty repartee.

KELLY

If you stay in it long enough,
maybe you'll get your fudgepacker
badge.

Ooh. The Cro-Magnons laugh at Lance and EGG him on - "You gonna take that?"/"He just called you a fag", etc.

Lance frowns and grabs Kelly.

LANCE

You're a regular Howie Mandel.

Still holding on to him with one arm, he SLAPS Kelly hard across the face with the other.

Kelly's knees give a bit. Lance holds him up.

BRIDGET

Lance!

Lance looks over at her and releases Kelly.

LANCE

Okay babe.
(to Kelly)
One day you and me will be alone.
And won't that be nice?

Kelly is hurt but covering.

KELLY

Too bad my mom won't let me date yet.

Kelly frowns and adjusts his clothes. Tries to re-wet the dry inside of his mouth with his tongue.

He turns slowly and trudges up the stairs.

Sarah has been watching the whole thing from the door.

SARAH

Why do you mess with him?

KELLY

You're right. I should give him a break.

INT. ERNSWILER HOUSE - DAY

Kelly watches TV in the living room. His cheek has a nice bruise on it. Eve enters.

EVE

Oh, Kelly, you're home. Good. I need you to go to the art supply store for me.

Kelly looks at the TV.

KELLY

Get Abe to do it.

Eve goes to her purse and rifles through it to find her wallet.

EVE

He was going to but he had to go lead a meeting at Care House.

KELLY

What a surprise.

EVE

I'll make it up to you.

KELLY

Where have I heard that before?

Eve sighs.

EVE

When are you going to give me a break?

Kelly jabs at the remote.

KELLY

Let me think - maybe when I finally forget every single word of The Little Mermaid soundtrack I'd listen to in the car waiting for him to score. No, probably when I don't prepare myself before I go into the bathroom, expecting to find him passed out on the floor.

Eve waits through this.

KELLY

Actually, you know what? I know I'll be able to put it all behind me when I go away to college.

(slaps his forehead,
pretend remembering)

Only, I can't go because someone spent my college fund on Mexican Black Tar. So looks like I'll have to try to forget at Shop Rite, where I'll be working for the rest of my life.

EVE

You're right. You have every reason to crawl into the corner and give up. But please just get me some paints first.

Eve comes over to Kelly. He sighs and puts his hand out.

KELLY

What do you need?

She gives him the money.

EVE

We need burnt sienna, cadmium red, and midnight blue.

(MORE)

EVE (CONT'D)

Two tubes of blue.

(looks at him)

What happened to your face?

She puts her hand up but he moves away from it.

KELLY

Forget it.

INT. ART SUPPLY STORE - DAY

Kelly looks through the paints, picking out tubes. He looks up and sees Tabby browsing the paintbrushes.

He's suddenly nervous. He knocks over a few cans of thinner. Almost leaves.

Instead, he gathers his courage, goes to the display opposite hers and waits to catch her eye.

KELLY

They're having a sale on glitter.

It takes Tabby a second to recognize him.

TABBY

Oh, hello. What happened to you?

KELLY

(shrugs)

Tennis injury.

Tabby looks at him suspiciously like she's not sure whether to believe him.

Tabby finishes with the mediums and moves onto the paints. Kelly follows her, staying in the opposite aisle.

TABBY

You paint?

KELLY

Well, you see... that's a difficult question.

TABBY

How so?

KELLY

I don't really feel comfortable calling anything done since the Renaissance "painting." We might have a more experimental interaction with the picture plane, but our skills have suffered from it.

In spite of herself, Tabby laughs at this. This gives Kelly more confidence. He leans over the aisle to see what she's looking at.

KELLY

You're working with acrylic. Why? Oil's much - richer.

TABBY

Oh you're not one of those oil snobs are you?

KELLY

Of course not.

Kelly comes around and leans nonchalantly against the shelves, knocks more things over and fumbles to replace them.

KELLY

It's just - isn't acrylic a bit - jejune?

TABBY

Jejune? You're jejune. How old are you anyway?

KELLY

Older than my years.

Tabby walks to the counter with her brushes.

TABBY

And you paint?

Kelly looks down and partially confesses.

KELLY

Well, you know, my mother's kind of an artist, so -

TABBY

That explains it.

Tabby signs the slip and takes the bag. She walks out, Kelly with her, matches her pace, talking.

KELLY

That explains nothing. Doesn't anyone believe in innate knowledge anymore? Michelangelo was fifteen when he painted the Infanta.

TABBY

Infantas are Spanish. Michelangelo was Italian.

Tabby gets into her car. Kelly leans into her window.

KELLY

Exactly. One world, one people. Just like Jesse Jackson envisioned.

Tabby tries to conceal her smile and starts her car.

TABBY

Well - Kelly. Nice talking to you.

She drives away. Kelly stands there watching. Then he winces.

KELLY

What the hell did you just say?

EXT. ERNSWILER HOUSE - DAY

Kelly pulls up in his Jeep. He turns off the engine but doesn't get out. Just sits there. He doesn't want to go in.

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

Colored plastic flags droop in the sun.

MILITARY STALL

Bart sweeps his eye over everything. A SKINNY GUY wearing a wife beater has some not half-bad stuff.

Kelly, bruise faded to yellow and green, examines a glass mason jar of what seems to be dirt.

SKINNY GUY

(to Kelly)

That there's actual sand from Iwo Jima.

BART

Or your sister's sandbox.

The guy shrugs.

SKINNY GUY

Well, it don't come with no certificate of authenticity.

(considers)

I could write one up for you, I suppose. Get it notarized.

BART

No, that's quite all right. Actually, I'm in the market for medals.

SKINNY GUY

Sure. I got a couple purple hearts. A Silver Star. DSC. Can't sell them to you though. They were gramp's. (wink)

Bart acts casual, hands clasped behind his back.

BART

Are you sure?

SKINNY

They have a lot of sentimental value -

BART

Yeah. How much?

SKINNY GUY

A lot.

Bart pulls out a paper bag and offers it to the skinny guy, who looks inside.

SKINNY GUY

What's this?

BART

General Ulysses S. Grant's field
flask, my friend.

Kelly is shocked. The skinny guy looks at his suspiciously.

BART

Throw in one of those backpacks
and we'll call it even.

The skinny guy looks at Bart, and in the bag again. He goes
to get the backpack. Kelly's impressed by this smooth
exchange.

FLEA MARKET - BETWEEN ROWS

Kelly and Bart weave through the maze of stands. Kelly now
holds the backpack.

KELLY

Buying and selling US service
medals is illegal.

BART

Exactly. That's why the resale
value is so high.

KELLY

Is that what they teach you at
Langely?

BART

Don't be so naïve. We all have our
skeletons. Some of them just pay
more than others.

KELLY

And I'm not even going to ask
about the flask.

BART

Don't ask, don't tell. The army
gets everything right, don't they?

CAMPAIGN PIN STALL

A frowsy WOMAN in a muumuu sits fanning herself in front of an extensive display of pins and buttons.

WOMAN

You boys look like Goldwater fans.

KELLY

I've never been accused of that before.

WOMAN

Well jeez, you don't have to be insulted.

BART

Anything military?

The woman considers this, her fan working back and forth lazily.

WOMAN

Fish around in that cigar box.

Bart paws through the box. Acts casual.

BART

What do you want for the box?

WOMAN

Twenty dollars.

BART

Fifteen.

WOMAN

Don't be so hasty.

(fanning)

I got a few Geraldine Ferraro pins
I'm looking to unload.

FLEA MARKET FOOD COURT

Kelly and Bart, now wearing the smiling black & white face of Geraldine Ferraro, eat disgusting yet delicious flea market food and watch a slow-motion bingo game.

KELLY

Goldwater fan. I think that's some kind of insult.

BART

Not at Dartmouth. Where are you going to go to school?

KELLY

I'm not.

BART

Ah, you have that luxury.

KELLY

You don't?

BART

(shrugs)

I didn't have much say in the matter. Everything has been decided for me since birth. I'm not whining about it. Play the hand you're dealt, right?

KELLY

Easy for you to say. You got a royal flush.

BART

Are you crazy? My life sucks. Everyone's always telling me what to do. You can't fight it. Go with the flow.

They eat for a minute to the soothing sounds of the BINGO CALLER: TWENTY-ONE, THIRTEEN, FOUR, SEVENTY-EIGHT.

KELLY

What about Tabby?

BART

She got to go where she wanted. Sarah Lawrence. Six years. She's almost done with grad school. Yale.

KELLY

I didn't think people actually went to Yale.

BART

(thinking)

I don't know. I mean, she drives off in her car in September. For all we know, she could just pull her car over in Albany and sleep there until May.

KELLY

What do you mean?

BART

It was a joke. Joke?

Bart does some fake sign language to help Kelly out.

KELLY

Oh. Is that what one of those sounds like? Somehow, I always imagined they would be funnier.

Bart pushes Kelly, who grabs his arm like it got hurt.

KELLY

Sarah Lawrence? Isn't that for lesbians?

Bart shrugs.

BART

What happened to your face?

KELLY

Remember the backpack incident?

BART

Same guy?

KELLY

The one with mad cow-diseased hamburger meat for brains? That would be the one.

Interested, Bart leans forward.

BART

What are you going to do about it?

KELLY

I'm not going to lower myself to his level.

BART

Of course not. But there are alternatives...

KELLY

Alternatives?

BART

Haven't you ever heard of the 193rd Special Operations Wing?

Kelly shakes his head.

BART

Well do you want to get this guy or what?

KELLY

Yes.

BART

All right. Let's get the fuck out of here, then.

Bart tosses his wrapper at the trashcan. Kelly watches it hit the rim and go in.

BART

(on the move)

I have some things to show you.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bart and Kelly sit amidst a spread of books, papers, and electronic equipment.

BART

Once we've gathered the intelligence, the plan will reveal itself.

KELLY

We don't plan first?

Bart opens a pad.

BART

No, it limits our scope - what's the objective?

KELLY

Humiliation. Rage. Despair.

BART

Easy enough. 'Nam's probably our go-to war for that sort of thing. I have the declassified briefs from the Phoenix Project around here somewhere.

Bart grabs a book and starts flipping through pages.

Tabby enters with an armful of art supplies.

TABBY

Hey. I have some stretcher bars out in the car. Can somebody help me bring them in?

BART

Of course we'll drop what we're doing because what you're doing must be more important.

Bart doesn't look up. He grabs another book.

KELLY

Sure. I mean, I'll help.

Bart raises his eyebrow. Kelly shrugs off the look.

BART

I'll find those reports.

INT. TABBY'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Tabby drops the canvas and points at the table. Kelly dumps the bars and stands there looking around.

At the wood floors and skylights. Couch covered with a sheet.

Painting, serious ones, with layers of paint and mysterious objects stuck to them lay against the walls. They all seem faded, like a vacation photo that's been through the wash.

Kelly moves to the PAINTING on the easel.

Very yellow and pink. Kind of looks like castles.

KELLY

Gold. The color of the sun.

Tabby wrestles with the bolt of canvas.

TABBY

That's the Cleveland waterfront.

KELLY

As the viewer, I get to decide
what it is, I'm afraid. And it
doesn't look a thing like it.

TABBY

It's the light. I was playing with
diffusion.

KELLY

Well make sure you put it away
when you're done with it.

TABBY

Very funny, wiseass.

Kelly resumes his tour of the room.

KELLY

It must be nice to have a place
like this to get away to.

TABBY

It is.

KELLY

What about Farmer?

TABBY

Farmer?

Tabby unrolls the canvas and measures lengths.

KELLY

The boyfriend.

TABBY

(laughs)

Miner? What about him?

KELLY

Is he an artist, too?

TABBY

No. Definitely not. Thank god.

Kelly is silent for a while, fiddling with a clamp light.

TABBY

You said your mom was a painter?

KELLY

She was, well - is I guess.

Tabby cuts the canvas.

TABBY

What do you mean?

KELLY

She used to be. But then my dad -
wasn't working anymore so she
turned it into a business. She has
a family of Chinese immigrants in
the garage making them for her.

TABBY

Like Andy Warhol's Factory.

KELLY

More like Andy Warhol's tool shed.
It was nice before, though. My
playpen used to be in her studio.

TABBY

Wow. So you really grew up with
it. What does, did, your dad do?

KELLY

He's a VH-1 documentary without
the music.

TABBY

"Tragedy struck?"

Kelly nods.

KELLY

"And then, things took a turn for the worse."

TABBY

Well, just wait. Those burnout types always have a triumphant comeback tour.

KELLY

I already changed the channel.

Tabby sits back on her heels and looks at him.

Bart's head appears in the open door.

BART

Christ Kelly, I let you go out on a little supply line assist and you're gone for days. Come on.

TABBY

Have fun, boys.

KELLY

If only it were fun. War's deadly serious, ma'am.

TABBY

(to Bart)

And I used to think you were the only crazy one.

BART

Enough with the mind pollution, Hanoi Hannah.

Bart leaves. Kelly stands by the door. This is his only chance.

KELLY

I'm worried about you playing with diffusion unsupervised.

TABBY

Are you?

KELLY

Yes. I might have to come by and show you the proper safety procedures. Some time in the presence of an art prodigy would do you good.

TABBY

I don't think I have room for a playpen in here.

KELLY

Ouch.

Tabby smiles. Kelly leaves.

EXT. BOWLAND YARD - NIGHT

Bart and Kelly walk across the yard.

BART

So, you have a thing for my sister?

KELLY

What? No, no.

BART

Everybody does.

They skirt around the pool.

KELLY

We just have a few things in common.

BART

Oh really, like what?

KELLY

I can't tell you. It's my feminine side.

BART

You don't wear women's clothes when you're alone, do you?

INT. ERNSWILER HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelly comes out of the kitchen with a glass of water in pajama bottoms and a T-shirt. The TV's on static. He sees a FIGURE sleeping on the couch and starts to walk through the room.

Then he stops, sighs, and backtracks. He turns off the TV. Then he sees the empty bottle of wine next to the couch.

KELLY

Dad.

The figure doesn't move. Kelly doesn't know what to do.

KELLY

(louder)

Dad?

Kelly looks around, worried. In this house an unresponsive dad isn't necessarily sleeping. Should he wake up his mom?

He shakes the figure slightly. It rolls over, only it's not his dad. It's some scabby ADDICT. Kelly yanks his hand away.

ADDICT

Wha?

A moment.

KELLY

Sorry.

EXT. ERNSWILER HOUSE, BACK YARD - NIGHT

Abe sits on a lawn chair.

Kelly comes out, unfolds another chair and sits next to his dad - a good distance away.

They both look up at the sky.

ABE

Keller. There's a meteor shower.

Kelly frowns.

KELLY

A funny thing just happened. A little trip down memory lane. I thought you were on our couch, dead.

Abe laughs.

ABE

Oh, you mean Emmett? They didn't have an empty bed for him at Care House.

Kelly nods, considering this.

KELLY

Well that's one of your more brilliant ideas.

(anger rising)

Have you thought about the fact that it might be dangerous? That he might steal something, or go into cardiac arrest? Drink all our cooking wine? Which he seems to have done.

ABE

He just needs a place to sleep for the night.

KELLY

You're right. Besides, having him here makes it feel like home.

Abe slams his hands down on the arms of his chair.

ABE

I've been straight for four years, almost five. A third of your life.

Kelly claps slowly.

KELLY

Big whoop. I've been straight the whole time.

Abe closes his eyes.

ABE

I hate to tell you this, but I'm
not your problem anymore.

Kelly gets up.

KELLY

No. That's the one thing I get to
decide.

Abe looks at Kelly.

ABE

Let me know. I can wait.

They look at each other. Kelly shakes his head and goes
inside. Abe looks up at the sky.

ABE

(to himself)

Keller, there's a meteor shower.

EXT. LANCE'S HOUSE - DAY

In a backyard tree house next door sit Kelly and Bart,
Kelly looking through a pair of M3 field glasses.

KELLY

I have the target in sight.

BINOCULAR MATTE

Through the twin circles Lance gets into his car in front
of his house.

KELLY

I think he's leaving.

BART

Let me see. Don't be a farb, give
them up.

Kelly hands the glasses over. Bart looks through them. Then
he puts them down.

BART

The coast is clear.

The boys looks at each other.

BART

Let me prepare to deploy.

Bart opens up a duffel bag and pulls out a yellow jumpsuit which he puts on. Kelly looks through the binoculars.

KELLY

Is this going to work?

BART

We've planned for every contingency using the tried and true techniques of the last great world power.

KELLY

Save it for the press conference.

THE LAWN

The boys climb down out of the tree house.

Bart is dressed in an official-looking yellow jumpsuit with telephone repairmen's tool hanging from his belt and a hard hat on. Kelly carries a toolbox.

BART

Stay low. On my signal.

He looks at Kelly. Then he holds up one finger and gestures "go."

They sneak hunched over towards the fence. A LITTLE GIRL comes out of the house and stops when she sees them.

Bart and Kelly look at each other. Bart takes the toolbox and gestures to Kelly by pointing at the girl and covering his mouth.

Kelly peels off towards the girl while Bart continues across the lawn.

The girl starts to SCREAM. Kelly swoops up and covers her mouth with his hand. He tucks her under his arm and runs towards the opposite side of the house.

He puts the girl down, still covering her mouth.

KELLY

We're the good guys. If you
scream, the bad guys are going to
come and burn down your house.
Okay? So stay here and be quiet.

The girl nods. Kelly takes his hand off her mouth and
starts to sneak away.

GIRL

My dad has a gun.

Kelly runs across the street to get a view of the front
door.

IN FRONT OF LANCE'S HOUSE

Bart turns up the driveway and RINGS the doorbell.

LANCE'S MOTHER opens the door. Bart confers with her
briefly and steps inside. The door closes behind him.

Kelly stares so hard at the door he doesn't see the
NEIGHBOR come up behind him.

NEIGHBOR

Can I help you, young man?

Kelly starts and turns.

KELLY

I was just inspecting your lawn.

Kelly grabs a few blades of grass.

KELLY

Have you thought about Astroturf?
It takes a lot less water to keep
green. I mean, no water,
technically.

NEIGHBOR

I'm not interested.

KELLY

Oh. I see. Okay then.

Kelly gets up and starts to walk down the street, only -
Lance PULLS UP in his SUV.

Kelly darts behind a parked car and watches Lance go into the house.

KELLY

Oh shit.

Lance comes right back out. He forgot something in his car.

KELLY

Oh, shit.

Kelly moves around the car, trying to keep it between him and Lance.

Bart comes down the front walk whistling and eating a cookie. He smiles at Lance, now coming back up the walk.

LANCE

Smile worker bee. I'll be your boss some day.

Bart nods and tips his HARD HAT.

Kelly follows him on the other side of the row of cars until Lance's house is out of sight.

Then he gets in step beside Bart.

BART

What an asshole. His mom gave me cookies, though.

KELLY

Did you get it done?

BART

Don't ask stupid questions. Let's go home and listen.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, BART'S ROOM - DAY

The boys sit around an FM receiver/recorder.

BART

It was a five-watt FM bug, so we should be in range -

Bart FLIPS the ON switch and Lance's Mom's voice fills the room.

The boys smile with delight.

LANCE'S MOM

(O.S.)

So then I told her, "Harriet, with potato salad like that it's no wonder Ray-Ray's cheating on you.

WOMAN

(O.S.)

You didn't.

LANCE'S MOM

You're right. But I was thinking it. Instead I just told her to add more vinegar next time, and -

Kelly shakes his head as the women natter away.

KELLY

I don't think we can use any of this.

BART

Be patient. It's voice activated, so we'll get everything. Trust me. It's going to be great.

KELLY

All right, then.

Kelly gets up to leave while Bart fiddles with the knobs.

BART

We reconnoiter tomorrow at nineteen hundred hours.

INT. ERNSWILER HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Abe and Eve have dinner together.

EVE

-- And if we don't sell them there, we'll set up on the corner of Stevens and Lane, by the gas station. That's a good location.

Eve looks at her husband and sees he's not paying attention. He seems a little out of it. He's pushing his food around on his plate.

EVE

Are you listening to me?

ABE

Did you make this with more chili pepper than usual?

EVE

The same as always.

Kelly comes in, walks through the kitchen and up the stairs.

EVE

Kelly. Want dinner?

KELLY

(o.s.)

I ate.

His parents eat for a minute in silence. Abe winces and puts down his fork. Eve smiles tenderly at him.

EVE

One day, we're all going to be happy.

Abe puts his hand over hers.

ABE

That sounds nice.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, BART'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bart moves around the room excitedly.

BART

It's really too perfect, actually.

KELLY

What? What?

BART

I can't describe. Just hit play. It's all cued up.

Kelly hits a button. The tape clicks ON. From the speakers comes:

BRIDGET

(recorded)

I told you, that makes me nervous.
Me no likey.

LANCE

But baby, my birthday's coming up.

BRIDGET

Still. That's not a good enough
reason.

LANCE

Come on. A little action. A little
prime time action.

BRIDGET

But people might see us.

LANCE

That's the point. That's what
makes it sexxy. Dangerous.

Kelly stops the tape.

KELLY

Dangerous.

BART

Exactly.

Bart and Kelly share a look. Kelly grins.

KELLY

Let's draw up the plans.

BART

I have a few notes jotted down.
All we have to do is fill in the
details and let Operation Deadmeat
begin.

INT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - DAY

Bridget primps at her locker while Kelly watches nervously
from his.

When she starts to close the locker door, Kelly rushes towards her and BUMPS into her. Her books and papers spill to the floor.

KELLY

Oh Jesus, I'm so sorry -

He starts picking them up.

BRIDGET

Oh, it's okay -

She looks around. If Lance showed up it wouldn't be good for either of them.

Kelly hands her the rest of her stuff. They part ways.

Kelly shoves a piece of paper into his pocket.

Principal Holmstead CLICKS down the hall in her heels and Kelly DUCKS into a doorway just in time. He turns and pretends to look at a posted announcement as she passes.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, BART'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bart inspects Bridget's book report with a jeweler's loop.

He swings over to a piece of stationary Kelly's working on.

BART

She dots her I's with hearts. And her L's are loopier. The L is very important.

KELLY

I'm working on it.

They both crouch over the paper.

KELLY

I feel kind of bad for her. She's a nice girl.

BART

Sometimes collateral damage can't be avoided.

KELLY

Stop it.

He pushes back from the table.

KELLY
How does that look?

BART
(inspecting)
Pretty good. I think we're ready
to manufacture a document.

Kelly takes out a fresh sheet of paper.

BART
(clears his throat)
Begin. "Hey Daddy. It's your
birthday and you've been a very
bad boy. But so has the baby. Both
baby and Daddy have to get
punished, only this time -

INT. LANCE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lance, shirtless, reads aloud from the letter.

LANCE
(Cont.) - baby makes the rules.
Await further instructions at
school tomorrow --

EXT. STREET - DAY

Bart wears his school uniform and sits in the passenger
seat next to Kelly.

LANCE
(V.O. cont'd)
-- Baby will be waiting where
Daddy least expects her. Love,
Bridgie." Yes!

BART
Do you have everything?

Kelly just looks at him. Bart's already asked this
question.

BART
We can't afford any errors.

KELLY

You don't need to tell me. It's my
ass on the line.

Kelly pulls up in front of Bart's school.

Bart turns to him and puts a hand on his shoulder.

BART

I wish I could be there to see it.

KELLY

You'll get the de-brief.

BART

It's a day that will live in
infamy.

KELLY

You couldn't do any better than
that?

BART

I don't hear you coming up with
anything.

Bart hops out and salutes Kelly, who give him the thumbs up
in response and pulls away.

INT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - DAY

Lance can't keep his hands off Bridget.

BRIDGET

What's gotten into you?

LANCE

Nothing, you bad girl.

Lance cackles.

BRIDGET

Did you drink a bottle of
Robitussin before school again?

The bell RINGS.

LANCE

See you soon, my naughty baby.

Bridget looks a little scared.

INT. HISTORY CLASS

Lance slouches into a seat next to Kelly, who drops another STATIONARY NOTE into Lance's open backpack.

Kelly watches as Lance grabs his book, sees the note, opens it, and leers.

LANCE

It's my birthday! I'm going to get
a present.

Kelly looks down at his desk and smiles.

LANCE

Damn it, fuckface. What're you
smiling about? You wish you were
me.

Lance raises his hand.

LANCE

Mr. Palmer? May I be excused?

Lance leaves like a house afire.

KELLY

(to himself)
Eine maus findet den kase.

INT. HALL

Lance sneaks down the hall towards the STORAGE CLOSET and
whispers into the door.

LANCE

Daddy's here for the Easter egg
hunt.

He pulls open the door. Nothing.

INT. STORAGE CLOSET

Lance turns on the light. No one there.

But propped up on the shelf next to a vase with a rose in
it is another note.

LANCE

Ooh, push my buttons.

He snatches the note. His eyes widen as he reads.

LANCE

Oh yeah. Oh yeah. You little minx.

INT. LANGELY PREP, BATHROOM - DAY

Bart crouches in the stall, looking at his watch.

When the second hand sweeps past the twelve, he opens his cell phone and punches in a number.

BART

(serious grownup voice)

Yes, I need to get a message to
Bridget Shumann. This is MENSA.

INT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH, CAFETERIA/GYM - DAY

Lunchtime. Typical bedlam. KIDS mill around.

At one end of the cafeteria/gym is a small stage, the kind pep rallies are held on.

Lance edges his way through the crowd, making a beeline for the STAGE DOOR.

INT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH, MAIN OFFICE

A confused Bridget stands at the SECRETARY'S desk.

BRIDGET

But I just got this note last
period.

SECRETARY

Well I don't have anything here
for you - let me look again. Oh
yes, the MENSA called.

The secretary hands Bridget the message. She looks at it.

BRIDGET

Cool.

(MORE)

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

They want me to be an honorary member.

(pause)

Is that like a sorority or something?

INT. BACKSTAGE

Lance looks around eagerly.

He peeks through the curtains at all the kids and can barely contain his excitement.

LANCE

Bridgie? Come on, daddy's sick. He needs his medicine.

He spots a WOMAN in the shadows.

It must be Bridget.

He unbuckles his pants and lets them drop to his knees.

LANCE

I brought our friend along. He's happy to see you.

He rips off his shirt and shuffles across the dark stage toward her.

INT. LIGHTING BOOTH

Kelly looks at his watch.

INT. LARGELY PREP CLASSROOM

Bart looks at his watch in anticipation.

INT. LIGHTING BOOTH

Kelly flicks a switch and presses a button.

INT. CAFETERIA

The crowd falls silent and turns towards the mechanical sound of the STAGE CURTAIN OPENING.

They squint from the BRIGHT STAGE LIGHTS.

SHOCK ripples through the crowd as they take in the tableau revealed to them:

A frozen half-naked Lance on his knees before a BLOW-UP DOLL tied to a chair.

LANCE

What the fuck are you all looking at?

Bridget, standing in the doorway, covers her mouth in horror.

STUDENT 1

Look, he's got a hard on.

STUDENT 2

Eeeeeew.

Lance stumbles off stage to HOOTS and CATCALLS, but mostly hysterical LAUGHTER.

INT. LIGHTING BOOTH

Kelly smiles, laughs and claps his hands with delight. Then he returns to military precision. He turns all the switches back to how they were and uses his shirtsleeve to cover the doorknob so as not to leave fingerprints.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, DAD'S LIBRARY - NIGHT

Bart pours them two glasses of his dad's scotch. He's overjoyed.

BART

You're kidding me.

KELLY

Yup. There it was. The whole school saw it. Wasn't too impressive either.

They raise their glasses to each other.

BART

To Operation Mincemeat.

KELLY

To the 193rd.

They both take swallows of scotch. Kelly retches.

BART
How does it feel to give better
than you get?

Kelly finishes his scotch.

KELLY
Good. Real good.

BART
You want some more?

KELLY
(croaking)
Don't mind if I do.

BART
That's my boy.

The drink again. Kelly's feet are up. For the first time,
he looks comfortable.

INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

Sarah stands at her register, flipping through a magazine.

Kelly pulls up on the ELECTRO-SHOPPER with field goggles
on.

KELLY
You know what this is?

He puts his foot down like a kickstand.

KELLY
Eighteen volts of pure freedom.

SARAH
Sounds dangerous.

KELLY
Oh, it is. Unless you know how to
handle it.

Kelly runs his hand lovingly along the frame. Then he looks
up at Sarah.

KELLY

You ever seen the freshly waxed
floor in the produce section
glistening under full florescence?
It's breathtaking.

Sarah gets on behind him.

KELLY

Hold on tight.

He puts his foot up and kicks it into gear.

The Electro-shopper takes off - barely. Kelly takes the
corner too sharp and clips the edge of an END CAP DISPLAY
of cereal boxes -- they fall to the floor.

The Electro-shopper inches forward.

KELLY

Close call.

SARAH

Have you been drinking?

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Kelly looks in at his parents, checking to make sure
they're still asleep.

When he leaves ABE opens his eyes and listens to the door
CLOSE downstairs.

INT. EVE'S STUDIO

Kelly throws some paints and brushes into his backpack.

EXT. BOWLAND HOUSE - DAY

Kelly stands awkwardly on the front stoop with his
backpack. Minnie opens the door.

MINNIE

Kelly? Bart's not here, he -

KELLY

Oh, that's all right. Actually,
I'm here to see Tabby. Just to do
a little painting with her.

MINNIE

She's out back in her studio.

KELLY

Thanks.

INT. TABBY'S STUDIO

Tabby stands barefoot in the sunlight, a palette knife in her hand.

Music's playing. Jeff Buckley. She looks over as the door opens, surprised.

TABBY

Kelly?

KELLY

Hey. I warned you I'd come.

TABBY

You did.

She goes back to painting. Kelly stands there for a minute, waiting for her to say something else, give him an invitation.

She doesn't. Until she looks up and sees him standing in the same place.

KELLY

Maybe I should go --

TABBY

Well you're here now. Go ahead.
Set your canvas up. Use one of the
ones in the corner.

Kelly looks through them and picks one.

TABBY

Brushes are in the jar. Paint's in
the drawer.

KELLY

I brought my own.

He takes off his backpack and opens it.

TABBY

Well then.

Kelly busies himself pulling out paints and other supplies.

He can't help but look at her. The light hits her hair and she glows. She catches him looking.

KELLY

Does it mess up your
concentration? Me being here?

TABBY

No.

She turns back to her painting.

KELLY

Oh. That's good.

Kelly sets up his canvas.

TABBY

Just don't talk.

KELLY

Why would I?

TABBY

(pause)
I'm kidding.

KELLY

Right. Irony. I like that.

Kelly feels the tubes of paint. Nervous. Squirts some color out. Looks over his shoulder at her.

He's trying to get his act together, to be cool about being there, in the studio, alone with her. Trying to figure out how to play it.

MINER

(O.S.)

Hey! Hey babe.

Miner opens the door. See Kelly. Smiles like the stockbroker he is and crosses to him.

MINER

Miner Webber.

Miner holds out his hand for a good old-fashioned shake.
Kelly takes it.

KELLY

Webber Miner.

Miner looks confused.

TABBY

Kelly. This is Kelly -

KELLY

Kelly Ernswiler. Sorry. I -

MINER

Quite all right.
(smiles as an
afterthought)
So, what do we have here, a little
painting class?

TABBY

Kelly's a friend of Bart's. He
paints.

MINER

Oh? What's your real job?

Kelly smiles eagerly at Miner over the edge of his canvas.

KELLY

That would be stock boy at the
Shop Rite. But, as President Don
Kaminsky says, every employee is
part owner. So you could say I'm a
captain-of-industry in training.
Kind of capitalist larva.

MINER

That's quite an image.

KELLY

Only if you see the most magical
part. Do you see?

MINER

What?

Kelly spreads his arms out and flaps them a little.

KELLY

One day I'll be a beautiful butterfly. First I'll have to be a pupa though. I figure I won't be going out much then. Pupa: the awkward adolescence of the insect world.

Miner stares at Kelly. He can't tell what he might be making fun of, or if it might be him.

MINER

Whatever it takes to get you through the day.

Kelly rolls his eyes at this uninspired response, though Miner doesn't see it. He grabs Tabby's paintbrush and pulls her to him.

MINER

I have the afternoon off. Come away with me.

TABBY

I'm not at a good stopping point.

MINER

Oh, come on. They'll still be here.

(to Kelly)

I know you'll still be here.

Kelly smiles his most idiotic energetic smile and slaps paint on his canvas in exaggerated strokes.

TABBY

I really shouldn't.

MINER

But everyone will be coming soon. And it will get all crazy, and we won't have any time to ourselves.

TABBY

We will. I promise.

Tabby kisses Miner. He realizes there's no convincing her and sighs.

MINER

Like tonight? We can practice
honeymoon suite.

TABBY

Maybe. Probably.

Miner looks at Kelly, who looks away.

Then he puts his hands in his pockets and leaves.

Tabby and Kelly paint in silence for a while. Kelly moves around to look at his canvas from different angles, like he's copying what he thinks a painter would do.

KELLY

Is he always like that?

TABBY

Like what?

KELLY

Overbearing.

Tabby stops and puts down her brush.

TABBY

Just because he didn't want to
picture you as a pupa?

KELLY

Oh, he will - later. When he's
alone. Whether he wants to or not.

Kelly paints.

KELLY

Not that though. How he wanted you
to stop.

TABBY

He wants to be with me. What's so
bad about that?

KELLY

Just because some one wants to be
with you doesn't mean they're good
for you.

Kelly is suddenly very involved with his painting. He has a
hard time making eye contact with Tabby.

KELLY

No one should ever ask you to
stop. If you stop, you might not
be able to start again. Or you
might start again, only things
will be different.

TABBY

Well, that's sweet -

KELLY

It's not sweet, actually. It's
just the truth.

TABBY

Hey, I can take care of myself.

She picks up her brush.

KELLY

When's the wedding?

TABBY

At the end of the month. But don't
ask me about it. It makes me
nervous.

Kelly looks at her seriously.

KELLY

Why? Is something wrong?

TABBY

No.

Awkward silence.

TABBY

What are you painting?

Kelly stops and sighs, now back in serious artist mode.

KELLY

Really, there are so many layers of - imagistic symbolism - that I really don't feel comfortable summing it up, but, well - it's a recurring dream image. A mermaid riding a rocket ship.

Tabby stops painting.

TABBY

How?

KELLY

What do you mean, "how?"
Sidesaddle. She's riding it sidesaddle. She's got a fish tail, for chrissake. I haven't decided yet if she's got scuba gear on or not.

TABBY

Do you have any idea what you're talking about?

Kelly puts up his thumb in an approximation of an artist's gesture.

KELLY

Does that matter?

TABBY

Well, some people actually say what they really think.

KELLY

What if they don't know what they really think?

TABBY

It doesn't matter. It's called being yourself.

KELLY

Sounds boring.

TABBY

Not boring. Scary and wonderful and exciting.

Kelly stops squeezing paint onto his palette. His gestures slow down. He's taking this in. Then he shakes it off.

KELLY

Hey. I'm trying to create here.
Stop distracting me.

INT. EVE'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Kelly comes in to return the art supplies.

Xiou-Xiou's alone working. She looks up and smiles at Kelly.

KELLY

Mom's got you working late?

XIOU-XIOU

No.

Kelly walks over and sees what she's working on. A beautiful spare Chinese landscape.

KELLY

Wow. You're really good. Why do
you make those stupid animals for
mom?

XIOU-XIOU

Each painting is a lesson. Here -

She gets out a piece of paper for him.

KELLY

I'm making a lot of art these
days. I guess that means a lot of
lessons.

XIOU-XIOU

Each line has a whole drawing
contained in it. Each drawing has
a whole life contained in it.

KELLY

Oh, that's all?

Kelly watches her for a minute, the delicate whoop and swirl of her strokes.

He dips a brush into the ink and watches Xiou-Xiou's restrained and confident movements.

Eve leans against the doorframe.

EVE

Hey you two. I'll try not to act surprised. It might spoil the moment.

Kelly puts down the paintbrush.

KELLY

I can't do this. I have to go.

EVE

Keller, I think I'm missing some art supplies. Have you seen them around the house?

Kelly avoids her eyes as he leaves.

KELLY

No, I haven't.

EVE

I don't know what to do with him.

XIOU-XIOU

Your son is not yet cooked. Give him time.

Eve looks over Xiou-Xiou's shoulder.

EVE

When are you going to let me give you your own show? We could do it for real.

XIOU-XIOU

No problem. When you offer me an eighty-twenty split.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Kelly eats with the Bowlands - Bart's mom, MATHILDA, his dad HARRISON, and Tabby and Bart.

The Bowlands dress up a bit for dinner, like any good Wasp family.

BART

(to Harrison)

-- But I told you I want to take
German --

HARRISON

German's a Cold War language. You
can't get any kind of State
Department position without more
diverse linguistic training than
that. You'll take Chinese.

Bart frowns.

HARRISON

Are we on the same page?

BART

(mutters)

Same page.

Everyone eats in silence.

MATHILDA

(to Tabby)

So darling, when are you going to
bite the bullet and do the seating
arrangement?

Tabby puts down her fork.

TABBY

I can't deal with that stuff, ma.
I don't care who sits next to
whom. I should have eloped.

KELLY

After all, Mrs. Bowland, sometimes
when you bite the bullet, it
explodes in your mouth.

Mathilda looks surprised. This could go either way.

MATHILDA

(tentatively)

Why, I've never thought about it
before but that is a rather
strange expression, isn't it?

(MORE)

MATHILDA (CONT'D)

You wouldn't say, "Sooner or later you've got to put the grenade in your pants," would you?

HARRISON

But have you ever noticed how in movies they always bite the grenade before they throw it?

KELLY

Yeah, but they never take a bite out of their pants.

Everyone but Bart LAUGHS.

Tabby throws Kelly a grateful glance, for getting her out of a conversation she didn't want to have.

MATHILDA

What an unusual conversation! Do you have similar discussions at the dinner table with your family, Kelly?

KELLY

Basically. I ask why all the furniture is missing and my Dad reminisces about dropping acid and watching Neil Armstrong walk on the moon.

All but Bart LAUGHS again.

TABBY

He talks about art.

BART/MATHILDA

You do?

Kelly looks down at his plate.

KELLY

My mother's kind of an artist, so
-

HARRISON

You come from a creative family, do you?

Mathilda salts her food.

MATHILDA

I wish my boys would talk to me about my passions. I can't get them anywhere near the subject of my garden.

KELLY

I noticed your magnolias. Very fine specimens.

MATHILDA

They are fine, aren't they?

Mathilda beams.

BART

(ironic)

Is there nothing you can't discuss?

If anyone notices the slight edge to Bart's voice, they ignore it.

HARRISON

Here, Kelly, try a bit of these leeks. Minnie has a way with the white sauce.

INT. BART'S ROOM

Kelly and Bart play PlayStation II "Medal of Honor" in Bart's bedroom. Bart is sulking, almost imperceptibly.

BART

My dad has this friend who's a director. He's shooting a documentary for the History Channel.

KELLY

Cool.

BART

He needs some guys to do a reenactment of some European theater battles for him.

Kelly stops playing and looks at Bart.

KELLY

We're going to be on the History Channel?

Bart's eyes stay on the screen.

BART

I haven't asked you yet.

KELLY

Oh, come on.

Kelly jabs at his controller.

BART

Well, if you want to. Next weekend. But you have to take it seriously.

Kelly gives Bart a derisive glance.

KELLY

What do you mean? Of course I will.

The flickering TV light illuminates Bart's pinched look.

BART

From what I've seen, you play fast and loose with your characterizations. This has got to be straight up.

This annoys Kelly.

KELLY

I'm not "fast and loose." I play the emotional truth. I make it real.

Bart glances at him.

BART

Like back in the dining room?

KELLY

What does that have to do with it?

Bart shakes his head.

BART

(mimics)

"I noticed your magnolias. Very fine specimens." That was real?

Kelly's video game character dies. He drops the controller.

KELLY

What is this about?

BART

(shrugs)

You just seem to have your own agenda, that's all.

Bart plays on. He's keeping a lid on everything while Kelly gets more and more agitated.

KELLY

My own agenda? What other reason is there to do anything?

BART

I'm just saying. I know the difference between fantasy and reality.

Kelly looks at Bart in disbelief.

KELLY

Are you saying I don't?

Bart won't meet his eyes.

BART

I don't know.

Bart pauses the game.

BART

Why didn't you tell me your dad was a burn-out?

Kelly gets up and grabs his jacket.

KELLY

Why do you steal from yours?

He leaves. Bart un-pauses the game and continues playing.

INT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - DAY

Kelly drinks from the fountain and wipes his mouth on his sleeve.

Principal Holmstead's smiling face greets him when he straightens up.

PRINCIPAL

Kelly! I told some of your
teachers about your presentation.
We're all really looking forward
to it.

Kelly frowns at the Principal's back as she CLICKS away.

Sarah appears. They walk down the hall together.

SARAH

What presentation?

KELLY

I don't want to talk about it. As
a matter of fact, do me a favor
and pretend you never heard
anything about it.

SARAH

Okay. Um.

KELLY

What, Sarah?

SARAH

It's nothing. I -

Kelly starts to pull ahead.

SARAH

I have an extra ticket to
Aerosmith this weekend.

KELLY

Aw Sarah, that's really great, I
mean. It's just that - I'm busy.

SARAH

Oh. Yeah, I figured. Okay.
I'll see you in the dairy section,
though.

KELLY

Right.

She stands there looking lost.

EXT. BOWLAND HOUSE - DAY

Kelly smooths the cover over his Jeep. Bart pulls up to
the curb in his BMW.

KELLY

What are you doing here?

BART

I tracked you down. There's
someone I'd like you to meet.

INT. OLD SOLDIERS' HOME - DAY

A few OLD SOLDIERS sit sunning in chairs in the industrial-
feeling living-room.

Bart and Kelly sit across from CHARLIE HAYES, an old black
guy, playing dominos.

CHARLIE

(to Kelly)

Are you one too?

KELLY

Yup.

CHARLIE

And what do you see in that?

KELLY

Living, dying, camaraderie,
bravery - the big stuff. Things we
don't have anymore.

CHARLIE

I see.

Charlie sorts his tiles and scowls. He leans in to Kelly's
face, giving him the eye.

CHARLIE

And do you think it's brave
getting trench foot and syphilis,
eating another ration of spoiled
frank and beans out of a dented
can?

Kelly is taken aback by this.

KELLY

Well, no -

Charlie leans back and nods, thinking about Kelly's
response. He no longer seems angry.

CHARLIE

Yeah, that wouldn't be much fun,
would it?

KELLY

No, sir.

Charlie sets down a tile and pulls at his chin.

CHARLIE

Parts of it were kind of fun
though. I got separated from my
platoon and lived for two weeks in
the forest of the Ardennes living
off what I could kill.

(pause)

I felt very close to the land.

Bart gives Kelly a significant look. Kelly doesn't notice.
He's looking closely at Charlie.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Kelly sits in the car. Bart pumps gas. They talk through
the window.

BART

I met him when my mom made me go
around caroling with the Youth
Group.

KELLY

You don't really believe that
stuff about Berlin? And Hitler's
compound?

BART
Does it matter?

KELLY
Of course it matters. Doesn't the
truth matter?

Bart grins.

BART
I don't know. You tell me.

Kelly avoids this by getting out of the car.

KELLY
I want a drink. Let me borrow a
couple bucks.

BART
I told you not to play him for
money.

KELLY
I was trying to be nice. He's your
friend.

Bart returns the pump and screws in the gas cap.

BART
Exactly. You should know better.
What do you want.

KELLY
Mountain Dew -

Just then he glances towards the gas station and sees EVE,
set up in the adjacent abandoned lot. She's got the van
parked there with the sliding door open and paintings
propped around on display.

KELLY
-- Oh shit.

But Eve has seen him. She shields her eyes with her hand
and calls to him.

EVE
Kelly!

Kelly backtracks towards the car.

BART

That woman's calling you.

Eve walks over to them. Kelly can't get out of it.

KELLY

(low)

Bart. Meet my mom.

Eve smiles brightly.

EVE

What a nice surprise. It's so nice
to finally meet you.

Bart is surprised but recovers his manners quickly, just
like he's been taught to.

BART

Likewise. So, doing a little
business?

EVE

A little is right. But I work it
as much as I can.

Eve laughs.

Kelly shifts his weight from foot to foot. Eve looks at
both of them.

EVE

So, what have you boys been up to?

KELLY

Bart took me to meet his friend
Charlie at the Old Soldiers' Home.

EVE

Charlie at the Old Soldiers' Home?

KELLY

You don't know him.

EVE

You boys should swing by Care
House. There are some Vets there.

KELLY

We can't.

EVE

Oh. Well - okay.

Eve watches a car pull into the lot next to the van.

EVE

I should go. But you boys should
come over to our house some time.

(to Bart)

I know your family must get tired
of him.

Kelly visibly bristles at the thought of his parents
entertaining Bart.

BART

Not at all. But I'd love to,
anyway.

Eve looks at Kelly. Then she runs back over to the van.

KELLY

There you go. Now you know
everything.

BART

What's your problem? She's pretty
cute.

Kelly rolls his eyes and gets back in the car.

BART

Don't you want your soda?

KELLY

Forget it.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, BART'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kelly watches Bart pick through parts of his uniform.

After the encounter with mom, he's retreated into himself.

BART

So filming's on Saturday. Can you
make it?

KELLY

Are you kidding?

BART

Good. It's gonna be really cool.
He's got an explosives expert
coming.

Kelly doesn't say anything.

BART

What's up?

Kelly runs his hand through his hair. He can't bring
himself to say what's really on his mind.

KELLY

Remember that stupid speech?

Kelly picks up Bart's Colt and sights with it. Bart frowns.
He knows Kelly's avoiding the real stuff.

KELLY

I'm supposed to give it next week.

Bart polishes his combat boots.

BART

Maybe you should talk to my dad
about it.

KELLY

You think he'd go for that?

Bart keeps his head down, polishes intently.

BART

Of course. He loves you. He was
talking the other day about
helping you out.

(ironic)

Want to go to Dartmouth?

KELLY

Are you serious?

BART

He was. If you applied for Spring Semester, he could "pull some strings."

KELLY

(shakes his head slowly)
I don't think that would work for me. Considering -- my background.

BART

Yeah, probably not.

KELLY

I'm not properly socialized. I wouldn't fit in.

Bart checks his bandoleer and cartridges.

BART

That's bullshit.

KELLY

No, it's not.

BART

Tell that to my family. They're like your fucking fan club.

Bart pauses, darts his eyes at Kelly.

BART

Even Tabby likes you.

KELLY

So much she ratted me out to you.

BART

Well, she's inviting you to the wedding.

KELLY

Oh.

Bart watches Kelly's face.

BART

But you probably won't enjoy that much, will you?

KELLY

I don't know what you're talking about. Weddings? I love weddings. I always get drunk and make out with someone's cousin.

Bart throws his olive drab socks at Kelly's head.

BART

Good, I'll call mom's nephew Fletcher and tell him to expect a little action.

KELLY

Fletcher, eh?

BART

He's twelve. Let me give some advice. He's very into sharks at the moment.

EXT. BOWLAND HOUSE - NIGHT

Kelly waves to Minnie and goes out the front door.

There he pauses, trying to decide what to do. Then he scowls.

He goes around the corner. Towards Tabby's studio.

INT. TABBY'S STUDIO

Tabby sits on the couch facing away from the door. Kelly enters.

KELLY

Why did you tell --

Tabby turns toward him. She's crying.

KELLY

What? Oh, I'm sorry.

He knows he should leave, but Kelly just stands there.

Kelly runs his hand along his pants in a nervous gesture. Tabby dabs at her face.

TABBY

Miner and I broke up.

Beat.

KELLY

I'm sorry.

TABBY

Yeah.

KELLY

Honestly? I didn't think you two were right for each other.

TABBY

You did, huh?

Kelly walks over to her painting.

KELLY

Like this painting. Stare at it too long and you can't see it anymore. But if someone else sees it for the first time, they can tell exactly what it is.

TABBY

I don't need any more bullshit right now.

Kelly stops, taken aback. He walks away from the painting.

KELLY

He could never understand you.

TABBY

I'm not as complicated as you think.

Kelly walks to the window and looks out.

KELLY

I never said you were complicated.

Tabby laughs/cries at this.

TABBY

Oh.

KELLY

He just wasn't the right one.

Tabby nods. She's starting to calm down a little.

TABBY

There's more to it than that.

Tabby looks at her shredded tissue. Kelly sits down on the couch next to her.

KELLY

I'm really sorry. I really am.

TABBY

Thanks.

Kelly pats her knee awkwardly.

KELLY

Don't cry.

Tabby turns her face to Kelly's.

TABBY

You like me, don't you?

KELLY

Of course.

Tabby closes her eyes.

TABBY

No, I mean -- you like me.

Kelly looks scared. He wants to retreat. But he calms himself down.

KELLY

Yeah. I think you're amazing.

TABBY

Well, do something.

Long pause. Then -- Kelly kisses her. She kisses back and they fall against the couch together.

EXT. BOWLAND HOUSE - NIGHT

BART

(O.S.)

All right, all right. I'm going.

Bart comes out in his pajamas to turn off the sprinkler. He looks up and freezes.

Kelly comes out of Tabby's studio. He shuts the door carefully and walks around the pool.

Kelly doesn't see Bart.

Bart doesn't say anything. He just watches Kelly go.

INT. ERNSWILER HOUSE - DAY

Kelly throws parts of his soldier's kit onto his bed from corners of the room. The canteen underhand. The Jeep cap as a free throw. This is the best day of his life.

Until he finds his uniform crumpled up behind the door, still crusted with mud.

KELLY

Damn it. Damn it.

He flops on his bed. But he can't help it. Soon he's smiling again. He gets up, gathers up the uniform, and tears out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN

Kelly comes down the stairs two at a time, singing.

Eve and Abe watch surprised from the table. Abe looks pale.

KELLY

What?

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, BART'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bart sits in his desk chair, frowning.

Mathilda knocks and opens the door.

MATHILDA

Minnie's starting dinner. Is Kelly coming over?

BART

Not tonight, ma.

Mathilda pauses and looks at her son.

MATHILDA

Okay, then.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - DAY

An ASSISTANT DIRECTOR and CAMERAMAN unload equipment from a van.

The DIRECTOR looks off into the distance, trying to visualize.

Kelly pulls up next to the van. He wears a spotlessly clean uniform.

DIRECTOR

Are you with the 101st or the 82nd?

KELLY

Well, 82nd today. It's not my usual division. Technically, my patches indicate -

DIRECTOR

Whatever. Make yourself comfortable. We'll be a while setting up. Some of the other boys are over by craft service.

KELLY

Oh?

Kelly doesn't go anywhere.

DIRECTOR

The snack table. It's over there. Someone will come get you when we're ready.

KELLY

Right. Is Bart Bowland here yet?

DIRECTOR

Bart? Oh, Harrison's son. I don't know.

KELLY

Ok. Thanks.

CRAFT SERVICE

Kelly and a half dozen other SOLDIERS stand or sit in the grass around the table. They talk and rest on their backpacks.

A MAKEUP ARTIST makes the rounds.

MAKEUP ARTIST

(to Kelly)

And you are?

KELLY

Kelly Ernswiler, private first class.

MAKEUP ARTIST

All right, Kelly. Let's take a look at you.

She gets out some pomade and runs a comb through his hair, slicking it back.

MAKEUP ARTIST

That's it, handsome.

Kelly grins. When she walks away he messes up his hair again.

He scans the crowd. No Bart.

The A.D. walks over.

A.D.

Okay, everyone. We're going to start positioning. Then we'll go through a few rehearsals.

(points at soldiers)

You, you and you - go over there by that tree. You and you guys, behind the hill.

(looks at clipboard)

Okay, who's got the Jeep?

KELLY

That MG? She's mine.

A.D.

Great. We'd like to use it. Can you drive it beyond the hill over there?

Kelly tries to act casual.

KELLY

Sure. I don't think that would be a problem.

He walks towards his Jeep and pauses.

KELLY

Have you seen Bart Bowland? Has he checked in?

A.D.

Don't know. We've got enough people. It doesn't matter.

Kelly nods, wondering a bit. But it's soon forgotten.

KELLY

(to Jeep)

Hot Lips, old girl, you're going to be famous.

A.D.

(yells)

Okay people. Listen to my voice. From now on, you do whatever this voice says. Take your place.

BEHIND THE HILL

Kelly waits with his rifle next to his Jeep, bored.

He sees a FIGURE in the shadows of the trees.

He raises his rifle and points it at the figure.

KELLY

Password.

Bart steps out of the barn.

KELLY

Hey! Where the hell have you been?

BART

No where.

KELLY

They put you over here with me?
That's great. I think we'll get
some close-ups. They want me to
drive old Lippy. Isn't that
awesome?

Bart doesn't say anything.

KELLY

What the hell's your problem?

BART

I ought to fucking kill you.

KELLY

What?

BART

You had to do it.

Kelly shakes his head, avoiding Bart's eyes, trying to keep
it normal.

KELLY

What are you talking about?

BART

You just do whatever the fuck you
want. And consequences don't
matter, do they?

KELLY

Are you out of your mind?

Bart looks at Kelly. Sees nothing but a kid in an old Army
uniform.

BART

What the fuck do you think she's
going to do, run off with you?

The blood rises to Kelly's face.

But he still won't look at Bart.

BART

You're a seventeen-year-old bag boy. She's a Yale grad student. Talk about living in a fucking fantasy world.

Kelly's hands turn white around the rifle.

KELLY

No. You'd rather have me be miserable like you are.

Bart comes closer. Uncomfortably close.

BART

(biting sarcasm)

Once again, you've displayed your uncanny ability to nail the truth of a character.

Kelly finally raises his head.

And looks Bart right in the eyes.

KELLY

Stop talking out your dad's mouth and use your own for once.

Bart lunges at Kelly.

EXT. FILM SHOOT

The camera's set up.

The groups are in position.

The A.D. stands by the cameraman.

A.D.

Standby for rehearsal. Cue the explosion.

A GRAY CLOUD EXPLODES

In the field. Soldiers leap out of trenches.

A.D.

Cue the Jeep.

Nothing happens.

A.D.
 Cue the Jeep. Cue the fucking
 Jeep!

The A.D. shakes his head.

BEHIND THE BARN

The A.D. comes around the corner followed by the cameraman.
 Bart and Kelly roll around on the ground.

A.D.
 What the H. Christ is going on
 over here?

Bart and Kelly continue to fight.

A.D.
 (to cameraman)
 Hey, roll this. Get this. Are you
 getting this?

The cameraman puts his camera up to his eye and films.

Kelly finally pushes Bart off him, gets in his Jeep and
 drives away.

A.D.
 (to cameraman)
 Follow him. Are you getting it?

Bart sits on the ground, out of breath.

A.D.
 We can use this. We'll cut it
 together.

The A.D. directs the camera at Bart.

A.D.
 Get close on him.

Bart pushes the camera away.

INT. ERNSWILER HOUSE, KELLY'S ROOM - DAY

Kelly lays in bed staring at the ceiling. There's a cut
 across his eyebrow.

Eve comes in carrying her car keys and sits on the bed.

KELLY

I don't want to talk about it.

EVE

Well, you're going to have to. You father's at the hospital.

KELLY

Which one of his loser friends ended up there?

Eve plays with her keys. Then she stops.

EVE

They think he has stomach cancer.

Kelly feels the sensation of falling, like a dream.

Then he snorts and rolls over, away from his mom.

KELLY

Oh this is just perfect.

Eve looks at the back of Kelly's head. She's tired but still trying to deal.

EVE

Why would you say something like that?

KELLY

Because it seems to fit.

EVE

"Seems to fit." Do you understand what I just said?

Kelly gets up. Puts his feet on the floor. His shoulders are slumped.

KELLY

Why, do you want to say it again?

EVE

Kelly -

KELLY

I have to go to work.

He gets up and holds the door open for her. Eve looks at him, heart heavy. She leaves.

Kelly sits on the bed. Then he looks at the rabbit painting.

He grabs it off the wall and SLAMS it backwards against the floor so he doesn't have to look at it.

The painting falls back against the bayonet fixed to Kelly's rifle and TEARS.

He KICKS it.

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Kelly angrily wrestles with giant boxes of paper towels.

He RIPS open the box and they roll everywhere.

Sarah watches from checkout. She comes over to help him pick them up.

SARAH

I forgot to tell you this box was
booby-trapped.

Kelly doesn't say anything.

SARAH

The concert was lame. The opening
act singer ripped his leather
pants during a stupid dance
routine and stormed off stage.
(pause, looks at his cut)
Are you okay?

KELLY

No.

SARAH

Lance?

KELLY

No.

Kelly gathers an armful of paper towels.

KELLY
Listen, I'm busy.

SARAH
Sure. I understand.

KELLY
I doubt it.

Sarah puts a couple of rolls on the shelf.

SARAH
Um, I don't have a perfect life,
if that's what you're asking.

Kelly stops what he's doing.

KELLY
No, Sarah, actually, I'm not
asking. I never ask you anything
but you just talk anyway. Have you
ever noticed that?

Sarah drops the rolls she had in her hands.

SARAH
Fuck you.

She leaves. Kelly shakes his head.

INT. TABBY'S STUDIO - MORNING

Kelly, still in his work clothes, comes in without
knocking.

KELLY
Hey, I hoped you were up -

He stops when he sees Tabby and Miner sleeping together on
the couch.

Tabby opens her eyes.

TABBY
Kelly?

Kelly goes and takes his painting off the easel.

KELLY
I just came to get this.

Kelly leaves.

EXT. BOWLAND YARD

Tabby follows Kelly across the yard.

TABBY

Hey.

Kelly stops and turns around.

KELLY

I guess the wedding's back on.

TABBY

We talked.

Tabby smiles sadly.

TABBY

I'm really sorry.

KELLY

Don't be.

They stand there in the yard. Tabby wraps her arms around herself.

KELLY

My dad's got cancer.

Tabby looks at Kelly, pained.

TABBY

Oh, Kelly.

She takes a step towards him. He backs up.

KELLY

I guess we all get what we
deserve.

Kelly looks at Tabby for a second, then turns and walks away.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

Kelly drives along an open stretch of road. He throws the painting out of the Jeep.

He comes to a turn and takes it much too fast.

The Jeep SKIDS, teeters on two wheels, and goes over the embankment.

BOTTOM OF DITCH

Steam trails up from the Jeep's radiator. The front end is completely smashed.

Kelly bangs his fist against the steering wheel.

KELLY

Stupid bitch.

Then he calm himself, gets out, and starts walking.

EXT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - DAY

Kelly rides an old bike up to the bike rack and locks it.

INT. HISTORY CLASS

Kelly comes in late.

MR. NORMAN

Kelly! There you are. I was just telling the class about our special treat today. Mr. Ernswiler is going to be giving the three first-period history classes a little talk about the Civil War.

Kelly closes his eyes. He had forgotten - or tried to forget.

MR. NORMAN

Let's all make our way in an orderly fashion down to the auditorium, shall we?

The class bolts for the door.

MR. NORMAN

Orderly, I said orderly.

Mr. Norman looks at Kelly pleasantly.

MR. NORMAN

Well, what are we waiting for? I'm
so looking forward to hearing your
views.

INT. AUDITORIUM

Kelly sits in a chair on the stage next to Mr. Norman.

A scattering of KIDS sit out in the auditorium.

Principal Holmstead stands at the podium.

HOLMSTEAD

For those of you who haven't had
the chance to get to know Kelly,
you should know he has a very
interesting hobby. He takes part
in reenactments of World War II
battles right here in Ohio.

AUDIENCE KID

I did that too. When I was seven.

Scattered LAUGHTER. Kelly frowns.

HOLMSTEAD

He has an unusual first-hand
knowledge of history. We recently
discovered that this extends
beyond World War II to the Civil
War, which he is going to discuss
with you today. Kelly?

Kelly rises to scant applause. He stands at the podium,
looking out at the crowd.

He looks down and thinks. He looks back up. The silence
stretches. Kids start giggling.

Finally he leans into the microphone.

KELLY

I'm sorry.

He walks off stage.

HOLMSTEAD

(to Mr. Norman)

Well, go after him.

EXT. SHAKER HEIGHTS HIGH - DAY

On his knees Kelly fumbles with his bike lock, getting madder and madder. Just as he's about to get it undone --

Lance appears.

LANCE

What, they re-assign you to the bicycle brigade?

Kelly frowns at the lock.

KELLY

I'm busy.

LANCE

Too bad, cause I'm not. Remember that little show I put on for the school?

KELLY

I don't know what you're talking about.

LANCE

Oh, come on. Pants down? Doll? Hard on?

Kelly looks up at Lance.

KELLY

Oh that. I heard about it.

LANCE

And did you hear me and Bridget aren't going out anymore because of it?

KELLY

I haven't been following the story.

LANCE

Yeah well, let's get this over with.

KELLY

It is over.

Lance pushes Kelly away from his bike. Kelly falls back on his hands.

He squints up at Lance and moves back towards his bike.

Lance KICKS him back with his foot and looks at him.

KELLY

Just let me go home.

LANCE

Did you call me a homo?

Lance KICKS him again. Kelly breathes hard.

KELLY

This isn't a good time for me.
Let's re-schedule.

LANCE

No time like the present.

Lance picks Kelly up and SLAPS him hard on the face.

KELLY

First you should probably get me
to write home to my mother.

Lance PUNCHES Kelly and he reels. Then Kelly lunges for him and they fall to the ground. Kelly swings wildly but Lance pins him down and gives him a few good ones.

Then Mr. Norman comes out.

MR. NORMAN

Stop it!

Mr. Norman rushes over to them.

Kelly scrambles up and rips at his bike lock, gets on his bike and rides away.

Mr. Norman tries to take a panting Lance by the arm but Lance shakes him off.

LANCE

Get off me.

EXT. ERNSWILER HOUSE - DAY

Kelly rides by his house and keeps going.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Kelly stops and looks up at the hospital but can't bring himself to go in. He pedals on.

EXT. CLEVELAND WATERFRONT - DAY

Kelly sits on the loading dock of an abandoned factory.

He watches the rusty barges glitter on the water. The wind ruffles his sweaty hair.

EXT. BOWLAND HOUSE - DAY

Kelly's at the front door.

MINNIE

Bart's not here. Sorry.

She closes the door. Kelly wheels his bike down the driveway.

He sees Bart sitting out by the pool with a couple of LANGELY BOYS.

Bart sees Kelly and ignores him, laughs at something one of the guys says.

INT. ERNSWILER HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Kelly sits on the toilet, putting a bandage on a red scrape down his arm.

Eve appears in the doorway.

EVE

Oh Kelly. What happened?

Kelly looks up at her. He's still got the cut eyebrow, which has split back open, and some dried blood under his nose.

KELLY

Nothing.

EVE

Jesus. Let me see that.

Eve comes over and tilts Kelly's head back to look at the cut. This is the first time she's touched him.

She gets some antiseptic and ointment from under the sink along with Band-Aids and goes to work.

KELLY

Ow.

Kelly lets her dab at his face. He closes his eyes.

EVE

I'm going over to see dad.

Kelly opens his eyes and pulls away.

KELLY

Oh.

Eve puts a butterfly bandage across Kelly's eyebrow.

EVE

And you need to come.

Kelly pulls his head away.

KELLY

I don't want to.

EVE

At this point that's not an option.

KELLY

Now's not a good time, ma.

Eve looks at Kelly sadly.

EVE

It's never a good time.

KELLY

You can't make me.

Eve shakes her head.

EVE

(voice rising)

It's not about you anymore --

KELLY

Don't you get it? It was never about me.

Eve rises to her feet. He's just sent her over the edge.

EVE

(yelling)

What is wrong with you? When are you going to stop blaming us, blaming him? I'm sick of you being angry. I want to be angry! They just took out half of your father's stomach -

KELLY

Enough.

EVE

(screaming and crying)

You will not tell me what's enough. You don't know about anything. All you do is fight fake battles, in the woods, on the playground. But this, right here, us - this is the real one, the only one worth anything.

She stops and breaks down.

EVE

The man I love is dying.

KELLY

That's between you and him.

Eve looks at her son. Her face looks older.

EVE

If I made a mistake, if you felt left out, I'm sorry. But I can only deal with one thing at a time.

Eve leaves. Kelly sits on the toilet, lost.

INT. KELLY'S ROOM - MORNING

The sun shines in through Kelly's window.

He's laying in bed awake - has been for a while.

He gets up and starts dressing slowly and deliberately. He puts on his best shirt and tie, sensing trouble when the tie's too short.

He pulls the suit out of his closet.

The jacket doesn't fit. The sleeves don't even go down to his wrists.

And he can hardly button the pants. He rips off the jacket.

He pulls everything out of his closet. Nothing there.

He sits on the edge of his bed with his head in his hands.

He looks at his DRESS UNIFORM, hanging on the back of the closet in its dry-cleaning bag, right where his mom left it.

He shakes his head. No, he couldn't do that.

Then he sighs.

EXT. EPISCOPAL CHURCH - DAY

It's decorated for a wedding. Flower garlands trail up the banisters.

GUESTS trickle in.

Harrison, dressed in a suit with a boutonniere on his lapel, talks to an USHER.

HARRISON

Don't sit any of Mathilda's
sisters next to me if you can help
it.

(to guest)

Oh, hello. So nice to see you.
Thank you for coming.

Bart comes outside, also dressed as an usher.

HARRISON

(to Bart)

Where's the priest?

BART

He should be here any minute. Calm down.

Bart walks down the steps and looks down the street.

Kelly's walking towards him. IN HIS DRESS UNIFORM.

Bart walks down the street to meet him.

BART

What the fuck are you doing?

Kelly looks down. He can't meet Bart's eyes.

KELLY

I was invited.

BART

I uninvited you.

KELLY

It's not your wedding.

Bart looks at Kelly and shakes his head.

BART

Why are you wearing that?

Kelly doesn't answer.

BART

(softening)

I can't let you come in.

KELLY

Why?

BART

Because you know why. Just go home.

Kelly finally looks up at Bart and nods.

A Town Car pulls up.

Tabby gets out in her wedding dress. Has there even been a more glorious woman? Will there ever be again?

Her MAID OF HONOR leads her around to the side of the church.

Kelly watches every step.

KELLY

She looks beautiful. Tell her -
give her my congratulations.

Kelly walks off.

Bart watches him go.

INT. BOWLAND HOUSE, KELLY'S ROOM - DAY

Kelly sits on the edge of the bed, head in hands.

He sees the torn rabbit painting. After a minute, he picks
it up and looks at it.

INT. EVE'S STUDIO

Xiou-Xiou sits painting. Kelly enters with the rabbit.

XIOU-XIOU

Oh! Son of Eve. You startled me.

KELLY

Grandma Ling. Can you fix this?

She examines it and takes out a wet sponge. She wipes it
across the back of the canvas.

XIOU-XIOU

Your mom made it for you. I can
fix it.

She works silently for a minute. Kelly watches her. She
cuts a small piece of canvas to repair the hole.

KELLY

Did you come here to work on your
own stuff? Don't waste your time
on this.

XIOU-XIOU

I never waste time.

She turns the painting over and gets out some paints to
touch it up.

XIOU-XIOU

See. Everything can be mended.

KELLY
You're trying to tell me
something, aren't you?

XIOU-XIOU
Oh no. I could not tell you
anything.

INT. HOSPITAL, ABE'S ROOM - DAY

Eve sleeps in a chair next to Abe, in bed sleeping. He
looks pale but otherwise fine.

Kelly stands in the doorway, still in his uniform.

Abe comes to and sees him standing there.

ABE
Hey. Kelly.

KELLY
Hey dad. How you feeling?

ABE
Not bad.

KELLY
They gave me some stitches
downstairs.
(points to eyebrow)
Three.

ABE
Did you get punched?

KELLY
A couple times, actually.

ABE
I know the feeling. Come on in and
watch some television. Don't
worry, this one's bolted to the
wall. As you can see, my
reputation precedes me.

Kelly comes into the room and sits in a chair.

ABE
Any battles this weekend?

KELLY

A few.

ABE

Busy, busy.

Abe and Kelly look up at the television in the corner.

ABE

Answer me this: how come no one
ever reenacts the Vietnam War?

KELLY

It'd be pretty depressing,
wouldn't it?

ABE

I guess it would.

Both continue to look up at the television.

KELLY

Plus that, you'd have to have
protesters and stuff.

ABE

Folks dressed up like your mom and
me. People reenacting fleeing to
Canada, burning draft cards. I
guess that would ruin the spirit
of the thing, now wouldn't it?

KELLY

I could make it work.

Abe looks at Kelly.

ABE

I bet you could.

Kelly nods. Eve wakes up.

EVE

Kelly, is that you?

KELLY

You were expecting some one else?

HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Kelly and Eve get snacks from the vending machine.

KELLY

He looks good.

Eve looks at Kelly, her face full of love and sadness.

EVE

He looks just like you.

Kelly nods slowly, taking this in. And it is finally too much.

He breaks down and cries. For the fear and the misplaced rage, the fights and the stubbornness.

But finally, relief.

They walk back down the hall together. Eve reaches out and puts her hand on Kelly's neck.

EXT. BOWLAND HOUSE - DAY

Kelly rides his bike past the house and stops when he sees the car packed up in front.

Bart comes out with a box of stuff.

BART

Hey.

KELLY

Hey. You going away already?

BART

Yeah. The have this intensive summer orientation thing.

KELLY

Is that good?

Bart puts the box in the car.

BART

Well, it's optional, but dad thinks it would be "a good way to meet people."

KELLY
He's probably right.

BART
He usually is.

They stand there.

KELLY
Well, go Big Green.

Kelly gives him a little ra-ra with one hand. Bart smiles.
Kelly's been doing his research.

BART
Thanks.

Kelly lifts his foot up to the pedal of his bike.

KELLY
Have fun. And get laid, will ya?

Bart laughs a little and shakes his head. Kelly is gone.
Harrison comes out.

HARRISON
Is that everything?

BART
Everything you'd let me bring.

Harrison checks the ties on the roof.

HARRISON
Give me a break.

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Kelly stocks shelves.

There's a NEW GIRL working the register.

Kelly sees SARAH come in. He follows her to the bakery.

KELLY
Hey.

SARAH
Hey.

Sarah picks some bagels.

KELLY

How come you don't work here anymore? The Electro-shopper's getting rusty.

SARAH

I've got a summer internship at an ad agency.

KELLY

Fancy.

SARAH

It's all right, I guess.

KELLY

No, it's great.

Kelly moves around to her other side, closer.

KELLY

Hey -

Sarah moves away. Once bitten twice shy and all that.

SARAH

When are you going to get a real job?

KELLY

I don't know. Probably when I figure out something better to do.

SARAH

You can't be a stock boy your whole life.

Sarah walks to the front of the store. Kelly walks with her.

KELLY

Yeah I can. I mean, I probably won't, but I could.

Sarah turns to him at the checkout aisle.

SARAH
Well, it was good seeing you.

KELLY
Um.

SARAH
What?

KELLY
Remember that presentation I told
you never to ask me about again?

INT. OLD SOLDIERS' HOME - DAY

Kelly stands in the front of the room, pointing to a battle
plan with large arrows drawn on it.

Charlie, Mr. Norman, Principal Holmstead, Eve and Sarah sit
among other OLD SOLDIERS.

KELLY
Lee arrayed his defenses over
here. Only this time, Grant was
ready for him.

Kelly keeps talking. Many of the OLD SOLDIERS sleep.

OLD SOLDIER 1
(to old soldier 2)
This is boring.

OLD SOLDIER 2
Yeah. Let's see that slide of the
wife again.

DOMINO TABLE

Sarah, Kelly, and Eve play dominos with Charlie and Mr.
Norman.

MR. NORMAN
(to Charlie)
Remarkable, remarkable. And they
never knew?

CHARLIE
The real kicker was moving those
cutouts of tanks around.
(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

The thought we had a whole regiment over there, but it was just a couple of us and those Hollywood props.

EVE

That's amazing. Art playing a part in war.

CHARLIE

You're damned right. We practically won the thing right there.

(eyeing Sarah and Eve
with approval)

Now this is more like it. Anyone care to place a wager on the table?

Kelly tries to gesture to Sarah "no."

SARAH

If you think it would be more fun.

MR. NORMAN

I can't imagine having more fun that I am now.

Mr. Norman smiles at the group.

CHARLIE

You're never been to a French whorehouse, I take it.

EVE

I have.

MR. NORMAN

Oh, my.

EXT. OLD SOLDIERS' HOME - DAY

Eve waits while Kelly and Sarah walk out to Sarah's car. Kelly helps Sarah into it and closes the door for her.

KELLY

I still don't understand how you
did that.

SARAH

I spent my summers with my grandma
in the Catskills. She didn't give
me any spending money.

(shrugs)

So I played the bones for ice
cream.

She pulls away. He watches her go.

KELLY

Hot damn.

FADE OUT