

THE YOUNG FOLKS

Written by

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Based on the short story by J.D. Salinger

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CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM, HENDERSON HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT

The living room is filled with young adults of every single walk of life.

A clock nearby says that it is 11:00PM.

A young woman, LUCILLE HENDERSON (22), is standing off to the side -- looking around the party. Her eyes settle on a young man standing nearby.

The young man, JACK DELROY (23), gives Lucille a small smile before sipping some beer.

Lucille forces herself to glance away, looking over to a young woman sitting in a big red chair.

The young woman, EDNA PHILLIPS (22), is smoking what is probably not her first cigarette of the night and yodelling 'hellos' at people she recognizes.

Lucille sighs, knits her eyebrows together. She then begins to look around the party again.

After a moment she makes her way across the floor and takes a seat on a couch next to a young man, WILLIAM JAMESON, JUNIOR (21).

William is biting his fingernails and staring at a small blonde girl who is sitting on the floor with three young men.

LUCILLE
(to William)
Hello there.
(takes his arm)
Come on. There's someone I'd like
you to meet.

The two of them get up from the couch.

William has a slightly curious look upon his face.

WILLIAM
Who?

LUCILLE
This girl. She's dope.

William follows Lucille across the room while biting on the hangnail on his thumb.

LUCILLE (CONT'D)
Edna baby!

Lucille escorts William over to where Edna is sitting and moves slightly so William can be seen.

LUCILLE (CONT'D)
I'd love you to really know Bill Jameson. Bill -- Edna Phillips.
(dramatic pause)
Or have you two birds met already?

EDNA
No.
(looks William over)
I'm awfully glad to meet you.

WILLIAM
(smiles)
Gladda know ya.

LUCILLE
(matter of fact)
Bill's a very good friend of Jack Delroy's.

WILLIAM
I don't know him so good.

Lucille takes this as her que to scram.

LUCILLE
Well. I gotta beat it. See ya later, you two!

EDNA
(calls after Lucille)
Take it easy!
(to William)
Won't you sit down?

WILLIAM
(shrugs)
Well, I don't know...
(pause)
I been sitting down all night,
kinda.

EDNA
I didn't know you were a good friend of Jack Delroy's. He's a great person, don't you think?

WILLIAM

Yeah, he's alright, I guess.
(takes a seat nearby)
I don't know him so good. I never
went around with crowd much.

EDNA

(quirks a brow)
Oh, really? I thought I heard Lu
say you were a good friend of his.

WILLIAM

(nods a little)
Yeah, she did. Only I don't know
him so good. I oughtta be gettin'
home. I got this theme for Monday
I'm supposed to do. I wasn't really
gonna come home this weekend.

EDNA

(frowns)
Oh, but the party's young! The
shank of the evening!

WILLIAM

(confused)
The what?

EDNA

That shank of the evening! I mean
it's so early yet.

WILLIAM

Yeah. But I wasn't even gonna come
t'night. Accounta this theme.
Honest. I wasn't gonna come home
this weekend at 11.

EDNA

But it's so early I mean!

WILLIAM

Eh, yeah, I know, but--

Edna cuts William off:

EDNA

What's your theme on, anyway?

Suddenly -- from the other side of the room -- the small
blonde that was sitting with the three young men shrieks with
laughter.

The young men anxiously join her in her laughter.

WILLIAM

Oh, I don't know... about this
description of some cathedral. This
cathedral in Europe.

(shrugs)

I don't know.

EDNA

Well, I mean what do you have to
do?

WILLIAM

I don't know. I'm supposed to
criticize it, sort of. I got it
written down.

Again, the blonde and her circle go off in high laughter.

EDNA

Criticize it? Oh, then you've seen
it?

WILLIAM

(confused)

Seen what?

EDNA

This cathedral.

WILLIAM

Me? Hell no!

EDNA

Well, I mean how can you criticize
it if you've never seen it?

WILLIAM

Oh. Yeah. It's not me. It's this
guy that wrote it. I'm supposed to
criticize it from what he wrote,
kinda.

EDNA

Mmm. I see. That sounds *hard*.

WILLIAM

Wudga say?

EDNA

I say that sounds hard. I know.
I've wrestled with that stuff
puhlenty myself.

WILLIAM

Yeah.

EDNA

Who's the rat that wrote it?

Yet again, more laughter from the peanut gallery.

WILLIAM

(speaking over laughter)

What?

EDNA

I say who wrote it?

WILLIAM

I don't know. John Ruskin.

EDNA

(rolls eyes)

Oh, boy. You're in for it, fella.

WILLIAM

Wudga say?

EDNA

I say you're in for it. I mean that stuff's hard.

WILLIAM

Oh. Yeah. I guess so.

William looks off to the side away from Edna.

Edna catches this and stares at him for a moment.

EDNA

Who're ya looking at? I know most of the gang here tonight.

William returns to reality and looks over at Edna.

WILLIAM

Me? Nobody. I think maybe I'll get a drink.

EDNA

Hey! You took the words right out of my mouth.

Edna and William rise out of their seats at the same time.

Edna has a bag under her arm.

EDNA (CONT'D)

I think... there's some stuff out
on the terrace. Some kind of junk,
anyway. Not sure. We can try. Might
as well get a breath of fresh air.

WILLIAM

Alright.

The two of them make their way across the room and head out
to the terrace.

Edna brushes as her lap as she crouches slightly and moves
through the crowd.

William follows her, looking behind himself and gnawing on
his left index finger.

CUT TO:

EXT. TERRACE, HENDERSON HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The terrace of the Henderson household is an inadequately
light one.

Light charges through the screen door that leads outside as
Edna pulls William through its opening.

Hush vocal tones come from a darker vicinity of Edna's left.

Edna heads up to the railing before her, leaning on it
heavily as she takes a very deep breath. She then turns and
looks at William.

WILLIAM

I hear somebody talkin'.

He joins her at her side.

EDNA

Shhh... isn't it a gorgeous night?
Just take a deep breath.

WILLIAM

(looks around)

Yeah. Where's the stuff? The
scotch?

EDNA

Just a second. Take a deep breath.
Just once.

WILLIAM
Yeah, I did. Maybe that's it over there.

William leaves Edna's side and moves over to a table off to the side.

Edna turns and watches him.

William lifts and sets things on the table, looking around. He speaks up in disappointment:

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Nothing left!

EDNA
Shhh. Not so loud. C'mere a minute.

William makes his way back over to her, curious.

WILLIAM
What's the matter?

EDNA
Just look at that sky.

William turns his eyes up to the sky for a moment. But then he looks off to the side, listening to the distant chatter.

WILLIAM
Yeah. I can hear somebody talkin' over there, can't you?

EDNA
(slightly annoyed)
Yes, you *ninny*.

William shoots her a look and raises a brow.

WILLIAM
Wuddaya mean *ninny*?

EDNA
Some people wanna be alone.

The light bulb turns on in William's head.

WILLIAM
Oh. Yeah. I get it.

EDNA
Not so *loud*. How would you like if someone spoiled it for you?

WILLIAM

Yeah. Sure.

EDNA

I think I'd kill somebody, wouldn't you?

WILLIAM

I don't know. Yeah. I guess so.

EDNA

What do you do most of the time when you're home weekends, anyway?

WILLIAM

Me? I don't know.

EDNA

Sow the old wild oats, I guess, huh?

WILLIAM

I don't getcha.

EDNA

You know. Chase around. Joe College stuff.

WILLIAM

Naa. I don't know. Not much.

EDNA

(abruptly)

You knowing something... you remind me a lot of this boy I used to go around with last summer. I mean the way you look and all. And Barry was build almost exactly. You know.

WILLIAM

Yeah?

EDNA

Mhm. He was an artist. Oh, Lord!

WILLIAM

What's the matter?

EDNA

Nothing. Only I'll never forget this time he wanted to do a portrait of me.

(MORE)

EDNA (CONT'D)

He used to always say to me --
serious at the devil, too --
'Eddie, you're not beautiful
according to conventional
standards, but there's something in
your face I wanna catch.'

(shakes head)

Serious as the devil he'd say it, I
mean. Well. I only posed for him
this once.

William seems disinterested.

WILLIAM

Yeah. Hey, I could go in and bring
out some stuff--

EDNA

No. Let's just have a cigarette.
It's so grand out here. Amorous
voices and all, what?

William starts checking his person.

WILLIAM

I don't think I got anymore with
me. I got some in the other room, I
think.

EDNA

No, don't bother. I have some right
here.

She pulls the bag from beneath her arm and pulls out a small
rhinestone case. She opens it and offers a cigarettes to
William.

William takes one of the cigarettes.

WILLIAM

I *really* oughtta get going.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a lighter. He fires
up his cigarette before holding out the lighter for Edna.

Edna leans forward to light her cigarette.

EDNA

Oh, it'll be breaking up pretty
soon. Did you notice Doris Leggett,
by the way?

WILLIAM

Which one is she?

EDNA

Terribly short? Rather blonde? Used to go with Peter Ilesner? Oh, you must have seen her. She was sitting on the floor per usual, laughing at the top of her voice.

WILLIAM

That her? You know her?

EDNA

Well, sort of. We never went around much together. I really know her mostly by what Pete Ilesner used to tell me.

WILLIAM

Who's he?

EDNA

Petie Ilesner? Don't you know Petie? Oh, he's a *grand* guy. He went around with Doris Leggett for a while. And in my opinion she gave him a pretty raw deal. Simply rotten, *I think*.

WILLIAM

How? Wuddaya mean?

EDNA

Oh, let's drop it. You know me. I hate to put my two cents in when I'm not sure and all. Not anymore. Only I *don't* think Petie would lie to me though. After all, I mean.

WILLIAM

She's not bad. Doris Liggett?

EDNA

(corrects him)

Leggett. I guess Doris *is* attractive to men. I don't know. I think I really liked her better though -- her looks, I mean -- when her hair was natural.

(pause)

I mean bleached hair -- to me anyway -- always looks sort of artificial when you see it in the light or something.

(pause)

I don't know. I may be wrong.

(MORE)

EDNA (CONT'D)

Everybody does it, I guess. Lord!
I'll bet Dad would kill me if I
ever came home with my hair touched
up even a little! You don't know
Dad. He's terribly old fashioned.

Edna releases a dramatic sigh.

EDNA (CONT'D)

I honestly don't think I ever would
have it touched up, when you come
right down to it.

(shrugs)

But you know. Sometimes you do the
craziest things. Lord! Dad's not
the only one! I think *Barry* even
would kill me if I ever did!

William has zoned out during Edna's rant but he comes back to reality when he hears the name that was dropped suddenly.

WILLIAM

Who?

EDNA

Barry. The boy I told you about.

WILLIAM

(curious)

He here t'night?

EDNA

Barry? Lord, no! I can just picture
Barry at one of these things. You
don't know *Barry*.

WILLIAM

Go t'college?

EDNA

Barry? Mhm, he did. Princeton. I
think he got out two years ago. I
really haven't seen him since last
summer. Well... not to talk to.
Parties and stuff. I always managed
to look the other way when *he*
looked at *me*. Or ran out to the
bathroom or something.

WILLIAM

I thought you liked him, this guy.

EDNA

Mmm, I did. Up to a point.

WILLIAM

I don't getcha.

EDNA

Let it go. I'd rather not talk
about it. He just asked too much of
me; that's all.

WILLIAM

Oh.

Edna folded her arms over her chest, standing there quietly
for a moment. She looks out over the yard.

William stands there, jamming his hands into his pockets. He
doesn't even attempt to say anything else to her.

After the passing of an awkward silence, Edna was the one who
broke it:

EDNA

I'm not a prude or anything. I
don't know. Maybe I am. I just have
my own standards and in my funny
little way I try to live up to
them. The best I can, anyway.

William eyes the rail Edna leans against.

WILLIAM

Look, this railing is kinda shaky--

EDNA

(interrupt)

It isn't that I can't appreciate
how a boy feels after he dates you
all summer and spends money he
hasn't any right to spend on
theater tickets and night spots and
all...

(pause)

I mean, I can understand. He feels
you owe him something. Well, I'm
not that way. I guess I'm just not
built that way. It's gotta be the
real thing with me. Before, you
know. I mean, love and all.

William rolls his eyes before speaking up, getting in a word
edge-wise before Edna starts up again.

EDNA (CONT'D)

Yeah. Look, uh... I really oughtta
get goin'.

(MORE)

EDNA (CONT'D)

I got this theme for Monday. Hell,
I shoulda been home hours ago. So I
think I'll go in and get a drink
and get goin'.

Edna looks up at him, thinking on her words for a moment. She then looks back at the yard.

EDNA (CONT'D)

Yes, go on in.

William stays there, watching her for a moment.

WILLIAM

Aren'tcha coming?

Edna does not look at him.

EDNA

In a minute. Go ahead.

William shrugs and starts to turn away.

WILLIAM

Well. See ya.

William heads back inside.

Edna shifts her position against the terrace railing. She throws away the cigarette she had finished earlier and retrieves another one from cigarette case. She lights the final cigarette and takes a drag.

LUCILLE (O.S.)

Edna!

Edna looks over to see Lucille and A YOUNG MAN making their way over toward her.

EDNA

(to Lucille)

Hey, hey.

(to Harry)

Hello, Harry.

Harry nods to Edna and gives her a friendly smile.

HARRY

Wuttaya say.

LUCILLE

(to Edna)

Bill's inside.

(MORE)

LUCILLE (CONT'D)
(to Harry)
Get me a drink, willya, Harry?

HARRY
Sure.

Harry heads back inside, leaving the two girls alone.

Lucille is instantly at Edna's side, curious as all hell.

LUCILLE
What happened? Didn't you and Bill
hit it off?
(looks off to the side)
Is that Frances and Eddie over
there?

EDNA
(shrugs)
I don't know. He hadda leave. He
had a lot of work to do for Monday.

LUCILLE
Well... right now he's in there on
the floor with Dottie Leggett.
Delroy's putting peanuts down her
back.
(looks off to the side)
That is Frances and Eddie over
there.

Edna smirks.

EDNA
Your little Bill is quite a guy.

That catches Lucille's attention.

LUCILLE
Yeah? How? Wuttaya mean?

Edna fish-lips her mouth and ashes her cigarette.

EDNA
A trifle warm-blooded, shall I say?

Lucille shoots her a look, as if she can't comprehend what
she is saying to her.

LUCILLE
Bill Jameson?

EDNA

Well

(shrugs)

I'm still in one piece. Only keep
that guy away from me, willya?

LUCILLE

Hmm. Live and learn.

Lucille looks around and places her hands on her hips,
huffing.

LUCILLE (CONT'D)

(to self)

Where *is* that dope Harry?

(to Edna)

I'll see ya later, Ed.

Edna nods to Lucille, goes back to smoking her cigarette.

Lucille about faces and heads back inside.

It takes her a while but after finishing her cigarette Edna
heads back inside.

CUT TO:

INT. HENDERSON HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Edna moves quickly, heading up a pair of stairs and making
her way to an empty bedroom. She disappears into the bedroom,
closing the door behind her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM, HENDERSON HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT -- LATER

It is twenty minutes later and the party is starting to wind
down a little bit, but not all that much.

Edna walks back into the living room, looking around slowly.

William, a glass in his right hand and the fingers of his
left hand near his mouth, is sitting a few men away from the
small blonde girl, DORIS LEGGETT.

Edna makes her way over to the chair she was sitting in
earlier, relieved that no one had been sitting it for how
long she was gone. She takes a seat and opens her bag,
pulling out her cigarette case and extracting a new
cigarette. She taps the cigarette on the arm of the chair.

EDNA

Hey!

(looks around)

Hey, Lu! Bobby! See if you can't
get something better on the radio!
I mean *who* can dance to that stuff?

She sits back in the chair and fiddles around with the cigarette, not yet lighting. She looks around again before focusing on the cigarette again.

CUT TO BLACK.

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