

For The Love Of Football - 3rd Draft

By

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Actual Events

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INT. EARL ALLEN HOME - DAY

Earl Allen a still vigorous man in his late 70's wanders into his living room. Sad, he is a recently lost his best friend, his brother Frankie. He glances around the room almost lost. His eyes finally land on something familiar, a comforting memory.

An old football atop his mantle. He goes and picks it up. Holding it like a quarter back he pumps it in the air. Gripping it close, a huge smile comes across face.

EARL
Just you and me.

Remembering something, he kneels down and opens a cabinet pulling out a photo album. Old, tattered and scrawled across the cover in faded magic marker it reads "FOR THE LOVE OF FOOTBALL". He shakes his head chuckling.

He sits down on his throne an old easy chair. Gradually and carefully he opens the first page. There on the first page is an old black and white 8x10 print of a **HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM**.

Earl smiles as his eyes move across each boy's face, they are young and clowning around.

His eyes rest on a face in the center, it's him, 16 years old, young vital and full of excitement. He holds what appears to be the game ball.

EARL (V.O.)
In the evening of my days I
remember one perfect summer.
Although at the time it didn't seem
that way. It was June, just before
school let out when the adventure
began.

WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL ATLANTA 1948

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

A **FOOTBALL TEAM** in practice uniforms huddles up. They break and the offensive line forms. Quarterback **JOHNNY BISHOP** a Heisman trophy winner in the making, steps up to the center.

The Coaches on the sideline blow whistles, clap and shout.

LET'S GO!

COME ON JOHNNY!

(CONTINUED)

Johnny approaches the center and leans down.

JOHNNY

Ready set, Hut! Hut Hut!

The Center snaps the ball to him, the Tackles rush in.

Johnny pulls back and plants his right foot rearing back to throw. From the side, one of the tackles breaks through the line. Johnny doesn't see the steamroller coming for him.

The tackle jumps into the air catching Johnny on shoulders pushing him down. A **CRACK** Johnny's shin snaps in two.

Johnny cries in agony and crumples to the ground. The Coaches and medics rush forward to his aide.

The practice stops as players gather around their injured comrade.

LATER

INT. WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The last week of school is a buzz of activity. Students not really concerned with going to class, scurry about and gossip.

Moving amongst all this is a kid who looks to be a bit of a loner. **EARL ALLEN** (16) suffers from depression over the loss of his father and it wears on him. His best friend and twin brother **FRANKIE ALLEN** (16) joins him.

Frankie is more extroverted and it shows.

FRANKIE

Quit mopping around.

Earl is lost in thought and doesn't respond.

FRANKIE

Bishop broke his leg at practice.

EARL

So?

FRANKIE

This could be your shot.

Through the crowd a girl pops into view. Earl's face lights up, she is **KATIE STARNES** (16).

(CONTINUED)

She giggles and gossips with friends, excited about the summer. Earl stands there mesmerized at the sight. Frankie catches on.

FRANKIE

Ask her out man.

EARL

She doesn't know I exist.

FRANKIE

Why don't you join the team?

EARL

You're Kidding?

They continue to move up the hall towards the girls. We get that Earl hasn't exactly let Katie in on his feelings. She's Miss Popular. A football jock stops to talk to her.

FRANKIE

No, I'm not.

EARL

Mom won't go for it.

FRANKIE

Don't tell her.

Earl rolls his eyes and the class bell rings. Kids scatter, as they do Katie catches Earl's stare. She smiles at him. Frankie pounces on the moment.

FRANKIE

She'd notice you then.

Katie gives Earl a parting grin and heads into a nearby class room.

Exasperated he points out the obvious.

EARL

I'm a one hundred pound runt.

FRANKIE

(smiling)

But got a helluva arm!

Earl watches Katie disappear with the jock following her like a bloodhound, Earl puffs up.

(CONTINUED)

EARL
Okay I'll do it.
(pause, beat)
But don't say a word.

INT. COACHES OFFICE - DAY

Head Coach and English Teacher **LOUIS SEVILLE** (30's) goes over the roster with his assistant **Coach SPENCER TIBBETS** who is also in his thirties. They grew up here, and are as tight as two brothers.

Louis is the serious one, always sees a cup half empty. But at the same time quick to quote Shakespeare when things are rough. Spencer could care less. But today Louis is having a crises of conscience and it shows on his face.

LOUIS
It was my fault today.

SPENCER
Don't say that.

LOUIS
I should have told him not to plant his feet.

SPENCER
Boys are going to get hurt.

LOUIS
I'm tired of it happening on my watch.

SPENCER
Are you still blaming yourself for that?

LOUIS
Maybe its time to hang it up.

SPENCER
And do what?

LOUIS
The army maybe, I already sent in a request to pick up my commission.

SPENCER
We need you here.

Louis smiles at the confidence his friend has in him.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER
Now, what bout Tommy Boles?

LOUIS
No, he's too slow.

They go down the line calling out names.

LOUIS
Ronny?

SPENCER
No, color blind. Jacobson?

They both shake their heads in disagreement.

SPENCER
Well who then?

LOUIS
Maybe tryouts?

SPENCER
We have everybody that can play.

LOUIS
And none of them can throw a ball.

There is a slight knock on the door. Both men look up from the desk and see Earl and Frankie standing in the doorway.

Earl starts to speak but an anxious Frankie interrupts him.

FRANKIE
Need a quarterback?

SPENCER
Can you play?

FRANKIE
No, but Earl can.

A familiar friendly smile from Louis to Earl.

LOUIS
Hows your Mom doing?

EARL
She's fine.

Louis pauses in recompense.

LOUIS
Your Dad he was a good guy.

EARL
It's over. Coach I can play.

LOUIS
You could get hurt.

SPENCER
Wait a minute.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Louis, Spencer, Earl and Frankie walk out on the deserted field. It's getting late, school has already let out.

The boys are nervous. Spencer tosses Frankie the football. The two boys run to the opposite end of the field.

Frankie assumes a centers stance. Earl bends down as quarterback. He whispers to Frankie.

EARL
Run till I nod my head.

FRANKIE
Make it good.

Louis and Spencer watch apprehensively.

LOUIS
I can't have another member of that family on my conscience.

SPENCER
They may need it, ever think about that.

Earl positions himself.

EARL
Ready set Hut! Hut!

Frankie snaps the ball and takes off like a bullet. He flies past Louis and Spencer who are surprised at his speed.

They expect any moment Earl will release the ball, but he waits. Frankie is almost at the goal post.

Louis and Spencer lower their arms in amazement.

(CONTINUED)

Frankie glances over his shoulder and sees his brother just waiting. Frankie's legs are getting tired the end zone is only inches away.

Spencer chews his tobacco excited and nervous.

Finally Earl nods his head at Frankie. Then in a wide arc flips the ball with a powerful toss.

It is a thing of beauty, as the Football spirals perfectly in the air. It seems to float aloft carried on by angels wings.

Louis and Spencer's jaws drop at the near perfect throw. Frankie still running turns slightly and the ball glides into his arms as he crosses the goal line.

The boys are like two parts to a finely tuned machine. They both realize at the same time it was a good performance.

Louis looks relieved, but still concerned as the boys run up to them.

FRANKIE

How was that?

LOUIS

Great, But -

Spencer interrupts him.

SPENCER

That was outstanding!

LOUIS

You're kinda small.

FRANKIE

But he's real fast.

EARL

I can do it.

SPENCER

Give him a shot.

Louis looks in turmoil.

LOUIS

Ask your Mom first.

EARL

Yes Sir.

SPENCER

We need him and so do you.

LOUIS

Practice, tomorrow four o'clock,
and I'll see you in class Earl.

Louis turns to Spencer.

LOUIS

I hope your right?

SPENCER

You worry to much.

The boys hurry off. Louis shouts a reminder.

LOUIS

Shakespeare, King Lear.

SPENCER

Good grief.

LOUIS

You should read it sometime.

The boys disappear across the field. Approaching the field is a large New 1948 Cadillac. It toots it's horn at the two Coaches.

SPENCER

Oh God, look what's coming.

LOUIS

Crap! Is that Tillman?

SPENCER

Yep, in all his glory.

LOUIS

Daddy's money got him a new car.

SPENCER

What do you think he wants?

The car wheels to a stop in front of them, causing the dirt and dust to furl everywhere. I makes the men cough.

(CONTINUED)

In the car is **TILLMAN PEDANT** (30) son of a wealthy Atlanta businessman and ivy league-r. A Small town college football star that has ridden his Daddy's coattails all his life. Not able to make it in the big league he settled for being a big fish in s small pond.

Full of himself, he steps out of the vehicle wearing the latest fashion, which looks ridiculous on him.

Louis and Spencer chuckle at the sight. Tillman is clueless and tries to fluff it off putting on airs.

TILLMAN
Go ahead, laugh I have a new
position lined up.

SPENCER
Assistant Coach at the rich prep
school not enough?

LOUIS
What do you want Tillman?

TILLMAN
Heard you lost your star QB.
Your job is teetering on the edge.

SPENCER
We'll find another one.

TILLMAN
Oh bother.

LOUIS
What do you mean?

TILLMAN
Rumor is, you've lost it Louis.

SPENCER
Don't worry he'll find it again.

TILLMAN
Oh, I hope so for your sake.

Tillman gets back in his car, cranks it up and speeds off.

SPENCER
That son of a bitch.

LOUIS
He may be right.

INT. ALLEN HOME - NIGHT

SARAH ALLEN (31) she is busy with dinner. A working Mom, she still wears a wedding ring. In the living room on the mantle is a picture of a man in uniform.

She looks worried glancing at the clock, it's almost six.

EXT. ALLEN HOME - NIGHT

The boys quickly walk up their driveway. Suddenly Earl stops.

EARL

What are we going to tell her?

FRANKIE

We just got hung up at school.

EARL

We can't do that.

FRANKIE

You didn't want to say anything.

EARL

She'll find out.

FRANKIE

Better to ask forgiveness.

Sarah marches out onto the front porch wiping her hands on a dishcloth.

SARAH

The least you boys could do is be here when I get home.

She holds the door open, and the boys walk inside.

INT. ALLEN HOME - NIGHT

The family quietly sits around the table eating. The radio plays big band music in the background. Suddenly it is interrupted by a **NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT**.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Latest news, the Reds have successfully tested an Atomic device in the Ukraine. More at eleven.

(CONTINUED)

Sarah drops her fork, there is worry and anger all over her face.

SARAH

Dammit.

EARL

What Mom?

SARAH

Nothing, promise me one thing boys,
don't ever join the army.

FRANKIE

Sure Mom.

SARAH

How was school today?

EARL

I want to play on the football
team.

Sarah stares blankly at him. Frankie lolls his head back not believing his brother just said that. After an eternity, Sarah answers him.

SARAH

No, you'll get hurt.

FRANKIE

But Mom, you should have seen him.

SARAH

I said no, those boys are twice
your size.

EARL

I bet Dad would let me.

Sarah looks hurt, the grief is still close.

SARAH

Don't bring your father into this.

EARL

Yes Ma'am.

Sarah's appetite has drained from her. She gets up and walks to the kitchen. Frankie kicks Earl under the table.

FRANKIE
Way to go asshole.

INT. BOYS ROOM - NIGHT

The two boys lay in their twin beds. Earl has his hands crossed behind his head on the pillow in deep thought. Frankie is sound asleep.

In the other room Sarah is crying. Earl gets up to go check on her.

INT. HALL - NIGHT

Earl peeks into Sarah's room. The door is cracked, inside she is sitting on the bed holding a small framed photo. Earl bows his head. Tears come to his eyes and he returns to his room.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Tillman sits with his Dad **NORMAN PENDANT** (60) a heavy set, red faced man. He stares across the desk at **PRINCIPAL HOWARD JONES** (66), a tired but good human being.

NORMAN
Louis ain't had a good season in years.

PRINCIPAL
It's been hard since the war.

NORMAN
I appreciate that, but my Boy Tillman here has a fine record.

PRINCIPAL
Yes he's a good Assistant Coach.

NORMAN
Assistant. that's the key.

The Principal looks worried, wondering where is this going?

NORMAN
I think you need a change. Now I'm willing to pull some strings on the school Board to get those funds you need if you let my boy here take over as head Coach.

(CONTINUED)

PRINCIPAL

I can't just let Louis go like that?

TILLMAN

He's not a winner, I am.

NORMAN

You're not indispensable yourself Principal Jones.

PRINCIPAL

What do you mean?

NORMAN

I think you know what has to be done. It's for the best.

Norman and Tillman get up and leave.

EXT. SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Earl hurries across the school yard late for class. From his POV he sees a **SHINY CADILLAC** in front of the main building. It is parked outside the Principal's office.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The bell rings and students run into the room jockeying for their seats. Louis follows the crowd in and sets his books down on the table.

Earl is the last one to enter. He comes straight up to Louis.

EARL

I'm sorry, Mom just won't let me.

Louis looks a bit disappointed by the news.

LOUIS

Maybe you shouldn't.

EARL

Can you talk to her?

LOUIS

I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

EARL

Please.

LOUIS

(relenting)

I guess.

The gloominess on Earls face dissipates. Then he spots Katie, she smiles at him, as they sit down.

KATIE

You look happy.

EARL

Things are looking up.

Their little interlude is interrupted by a behemoth of a boy **TUCKER (TUCK) GREEN** (17). The monster growls at him.

TUCK

He bothering you baby?

KATIE

No silly.

Earl smiles.

TUCK

What you smiling at?

KATIE

I can talk to whoever I want.

Louis motions for everyone to settle down and he picks up a book.

LOUIS

Everybody take your seats. Tuck,
that means you too.

Tuck gives Earl the eye. Grudgingly he heads to the back of the room with all the other football jocks. Louis opens his book.

LOUIS

Okay, here we go, Shakespeare.

The whole room moans.

LOUIS

I know, Gloomy Guss.

He glances at Earl who has his attention on Katie.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
Mr. Allen would like to begin?

 EARL
Uh? What?

 LOUIS
Henry the V, start it off.

Earl stumbles to his feet and clears his throat. He regains his composure, then with a firm handle of the subject begins. He turns and looks straight at Katie.

 EARL
O! for a Muse of fire, that would
ascend, the brightest heaven of
invention!
A kingdom for a stage, princes to
act and monarchs to behold the
swelling scene.

Everyone is shocked at the recitation but not Louis. There is a knock on the class door and the **PRINCIPAL** enters. He stays quiet and motions for Louis to come outside. Louis softly indicates with his hand for Earl to keep going.

Louis and the Principal step into the hall.

INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY

The Principal has a kind face, but Louis gets from his demeanor that its not good news.

 PRINCIPAL
There is no easy way to say this,
so I'll just go on and say it. The
board has decided not to renew your
contract.

 LOUIS
I can't say I didn't see this
coming.

 PRINCIPAL
You just haven't had a good season.

Louis smiles remembering fondly.

 LOUIS
Before the war, we were number one.

(CONTINUED)

PRINCIPAL

That's just it, you've lost something.

LOUIS

Yes Sir and so did those boys, fathers and brothers. Keep the program going for their sake.

PRINCIPAL

We will,

(pause,beat)

Look I know you've played a big part in these kids lives and you mean a lot to them.

LOUIS

But I need to move on.

PRINCIPAL

Where will you go.

LOUIS

I thought about going back in the military.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Earl is finishing up the chorus of Henry the V. Katie is hanging on every word.

EARL

Now all the youth of England are on fire,
And silken dalliance in the wardrobe lies.
Now thrive the armorers,
and honor's thought
Reigns solely in the breast of every man.

Earl stops seeing Louis enter in a disheveled state. Louis catches the concerned look on Earl's face and bucks up. Louis begins another quote to relieve any fear.

LOUIS

As modest stillness and humility;
But when the blast of war blows in
our ears, then imitate the action
of the tiger. Stiffen the sinews,
conjure up the blood,Disguise fair
nature with hard-favored rage.

He stops and smiles at the class siting down at his desk.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

The last bell rings and students pour out of the front doors like water from a spigot.

Earl hangs around waiting for his brother. Katie comes up behind him and taps him on the shoulder.

KATIE

Hey.

EARL

Hi.

A tiny awkward moment. They both share a laugh.

KATIE

You were great today.

EARL

It was okay.

KATIE

No, I mean it.

From across the school yard a group of cheerleaders calls for Katie.

KATIE

I've got to go to practice. Hey, my girlfriend and I are going to a movie tonight, want to join us?

EARL

What about that beefcake boyfriend?

KATIE

Tuck? Don't worry about him.

EARL

Okay, can I bring Frankie?

KATIE

Sure. See ya later.

She smiles and runs off to her friends. But she is intercepted by jealous looking Tuck. Earl watches the little drama. Katie hauls off and slaps him.

Katie joins the other the girls they huddle and giggle then leave. Tuck senses someone is looking at him. He glances around and spies Earl, then storms away.

Frankie finally wanders out of the building.

(CONTINUED)

FRANKIE

She could be your girlfriend. But you had to promise Mom, I told you.

EARL

The coach said he'd talk to her.

FRANKIE

That's great!

EARL

We have a date.

Nodding his head towards Katie and smiling.

FRANKIE

What?

EARL

And you do too.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

A nervous Louis pulls up in front of Sarah's house. He is still in his coaching clothes, he grips the steering wheel for dear life.

He hesitates rehearsing what he is going to say.

LOUIS

Sarah It's about Earl.

(pause to himself)

No that's too serious. Sarah I would like to talk about My, I mean Earl's future.

(fumbling)

Fuck it.

He gets out of the car and walks to the front door.

EXT. ALLEN HOME - NIGHT

He steps up to the doorway and knocks. After a few moment's Sarah appears behind the screen.

She greets him with a pleasing expression and the look of a long lost friend.

SARAH

What a pleasant surprise.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
Hey Sarah, been a while.

SARAH
Not since the funeral, come in?

INT. ALLEN HOME - NIGHT

She holds the door for him and he takes off his hat. He wipes his feet then remembers he has cleats on.

LOUIS
Oh crap. I'll scratch up the floor.

She smiles.

SARAH
I have two boys you know.

Embarrassed, he removes them and leaves the shoes on the front stoop.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They head into the empty living room.

LOUIS
Where are the boys?

SARAH
They went to a movie.

Another awkward moment.

SARAH
Look I know why your here.

LOUIS
He needs this believe me.

SARAH
Why the sudden interest?

LOUIS
I have no quarterback.

SARAH
Your making excuses.

LOUIS
Come on, it will be good for him

SARAH
You too.

LOUIS
Yes, look he's got potential.

SARAH
Give me a real reason.

Louis backs up, his head goes down, its confession time.

LOUIS
I'm leaving Sarah, I've had enough.

SARAH
Oh, I didn't know.

LOUIS
How could you have. Earl is still
lost, you should have seen the
light in his eyes.

SARAH
It's been hard for them.

LOUIS
And you too.

SARAH
So there's more too this.

LOUIS
No! And you know it.

Louis gets up in a huff.

LOUIS
You are stubborn, you know that.
The world doesn't revolve around
you.

SARAH
Bastard.

LOUIS
Think of the boys.

SARAH
(backtracking)
I'm sorry, you remember what it was
like.

LOUIS
Jim would still be alive if it
wasn't for me.

SARAH
You can't keep blaming yourself.

LOUIS
They never would have taken him.

SARAH
He did that all on his own.

LOUIS
But he was in my command.

SARAH
It was war.

Sarah gets up and walks to the picture. Close on the picture
with Sarah's reflection in the glass intermingled with the
photo of her late husband.

SARAH
Promise me he won't get hurt.

LOUIS
It's football.

SARAH
I don't mean that. He looks up to
you.

LOUIS
I can't be there forever.

SARAH
Then start winning!

Sarah laughs probably the first time in years.

LOUIS
Lets pick up the boys. You eaten
yet?

SARAH
No, you stink.

LOUIS
My treat.

INT. MOVIE - NIGHT

Katie sits next to Earl and Frankie next to **BECKY** (16) Katie's friend. The movie **CASABLANCA** is coming up to its climax. The flickering light of the screen reflects across the kids faces.

Earl holds a Popcorn box on the seat handle. He reaches in to get some at the same time Katie does, their hands meet. Both smile at one another from the gentle touch. She snuggles close to his shoulder.

Earl sets the popcorn down and takes her hand. They lean back together, with their heads close and comfortable.

Frankie and Becky look over at them. There is a love scene on the screen, the hero **RICK** is talking to **ELSA**.

Close on Earl and Katie's face intensely drawn into the drama.

RICK (V.O)

Where I'm going you can't be any
part of -

They whisper, commenting on what they see.

KATIE

Do you think she knows he's going
to die?

EARL

I don't think he does himself.

KATIE

Then why go? He loves her.

EARL

Because he has to.

KATIE

I don't understand.

EARL

It's like something my Dad tried to
tell me.

(pause remembering)

Sometimes you do things to make
sure the people you love are safe,
even when you might get hurt. Its
as if their lives are more
important to you than their own.

(CONTINUED)

KATIE
You miss him don't you?

EARL
Yeah, everyday.

A tear starts to trickle down Earl's cheek. Katie takes her hand and turns his face to hers. Then softly she kisses him.

EARL
Why'd you do that?

KATIE
You looked like you needed it.

EXT. MOVIE - NIGHT

Louis and Sarah sit in the car waiting for the kids to come out. Their demeanor is amiable and more affectionate.

Sarah glances out at the brightly lit Marquis with the title CASABLANCA emblazoned across it.

SARAH
I saw this with Jim.

LOUIS
(remembering)
The year we left.

SARAH
He was a lot like Rick, not a hero
or villain just a guy doing what he
had to do.

LOUIS
We all did our duty.

SARAH
That's what everybody says.

LOUIS
Others would have died if he
hadn't.

SARAH
I don't care about the rest of the
world only my little part and he's
gone.

EXT. THEATER - NIGHT

The teenagers exit the building and are surprised to see Sarah and Louis in the car.

Earl looks especially anxious. He walks up to the car by himself. He leans in the window.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

EARL

Hey Mom, Coach, what's going on?

SARAH

We talked.

(hesitating)

If your determined, do your best.

FRANKIE

Don't worry Mom I'll be there.

Sarah and Louis give him a look.

FRANKIE

Team trainer, you need one right?

LOUIS

Sure. Why not?

Earl is all smiles. Katie runs up and hugs him. Frankie lets out a yell of satisfaction that would wake the dead. They all pile into the car.

Louis turns to the back seat.

LOUIS

Who wants chili dogs!

EXT. FOOTBALL PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

The first day of practice. All the boys are decked out in their football gear. Louis and Spencer are on the sideline going over plays. Spencer notices Louis apprehension.

SPENCER

Don't worry about it, he'll be fine.

LOUIS

I need to talk to you about something.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER

Later, lets see what happens.

Louis backs up and turns his attention to the team.

Most of the boys are monsters with Tuck the biggest of them all. Earl walks out on the field and he is immediately spotted. Frankie is right next to him in a team trainer outfit and carrying a small first aid kit.

Tuck makes a beeline for him.

FRANKIE

(to Earl)

Don't think about it.

Earl doesn't waiver he keeps walking to the line, not showing any fear. Frankie tries to stop him, but its no use.

Louis sees the impending drama and starts to intercede. Spencer catches him by the arm.

SPENCER

Hold on buddy, if he's gonna
quarterback, he's gotta lead.

LOUIS

Tuck will kill him.

SPENCER

The Boy is going to have to fight
his own battles.

Louis understands, but he can't bear to watch.

Tuck marches straight up to Earl, it is a David and Goliath stand off. Earl tenses up, but he's got to do this.

TUCK

Heard you went out with Katie.

EARL

Yeah, its a free country.

TUCK

She's my girl.

EARL

Tell her that, not me.

Tuck looks flustered starring down at this runt who is standing up to him.

The other boys run up to get in on the action.

(CONTINUED)

They form a circle around the spectacle, expecting blood any minute.

Earl looks Tuck right in the eyes.

EARL

Sure your bigger than me, that's
what your for. I'm the quarterback
you gotta protect me.

One of the boys **SANDY TODD** (16) the tight end he's fast as a rabbit, but not fast on the uptake, goads Tuck on.

SANDY

Hey Tuck, you gonna let that squirt
tell you what to do?

Louis can't stand it. He runs over to the gathering storm and bulls his way through the boys.

The rest of the team laughs. Tuck is getting more and more agitated. He shoves Earl to the ground.

Finally, Louis pushes the other team members out of the way breaking through to the two boys.

LOUIS

Al right that's enough. You two
call a truce.

Tuck eyes Earl and puts on his helmet. Spencer blows his whistle.

SPENCER

Okay offensive line form up.

Louis helps Earl up.

LOUIS

Football is all he cares about.
Show him what you can do, he'll
come around.

Earl approaches the **CENTER** nervous, but confident. He envisions Frankie at the end of the field. He bends down to receive the ball. Tuck from across the line growls at him.

TUCK

Your going down little-bit, your
Mama's going to have to come and
pick up the pieces.

(CONTINUED)

EARL

Ready set hut! hut! Hut!

The center releases the ball into Earl's hands. He pulls back and sees Sandy the **TAIL BACK** heading down field.

Earl quickly dodges Tuck, the huge monster tackle heading straight for him.

Louis and Spencer nervously watch the action, going to town chewing gum.

Earl scoots under Tuck who just grabs air. Earl continues to move through the line.

The Coaches eyes are wide with astonishment. The Whistle drops out of Spencer's mouth.

Earl sees Sandy's arms outstretched. Then with a leap and running throw Earl hurls the ball.

Tuck lands behind Earl, eating dirt. The football gently sails through air.

Everyone is mesmerized, all eyes are fixed on the ball as it flies through air.

It's caught by the Sandy in end zone. A 50 yard pass completion. Louis and Spencer jump up and down for joy, hugging one another.

Earl smiles, behind him he hears cheering. Earl turns and sees Sarah and Katie in the stands.

Tuck on the ground rolls and spits out dirt. Earl walks back to him and offers his hand to help him up. For a moment there is hesitation in Tuck's eyes then a reluctant grin. It looks painful for the big boy.

Tuck grasps his hand and Earl tugs hard to pull the heavier boy up.

TUCK

Damn good kid.

That's about all the apology Earl is gonna get, the threat from Tuck is gone just like that.

LATER:

MONTAGE BEGINS

Earl completing passes

(CONTINUED)

Boys working out in gym lifting weights

Earl on bench struggling with bench press Tuck spotting him.

Earl and Tuck forming a friendship

Earl building up muscles.

Team showing improvements.

MONTAGE ENDS

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

A week later, coming up on end of training. Earl is throwing the football starting to get into the groove.

Louis blows his whistle and walks onto the field.

LOUIS

Huddle up, everybody gather round.

The team forms up in circle around Louis and kneel on one knee.

LOUIS

Tomorrow's the last day of spring training. We've shown a lot of improvement.

Boys start patting and punching Earl on the shoulder with affection, Tuck ruffles Earl's hair

LOUIS

All right, now we are going to need this summer to really whip us up into shape for next season. Now you boys hunker down on the books and I'll see you back here in July.

Louis extends his hand and all the boys place theirs on his.

Group collectively - ONE TWO, OH RAW! and the Group breaks.

INT. LOUIS HOME - NIGHT

Louis enters the house smiling and stepping lively, sifting through his mail. Coming to Last letter he sees it's posted from the **DEPT. OF DEFENSE**. He opens the letter and begins to read.

(CONTINUED)

CLOSE UP OF PAPER:

Your request of March 1, 1948 has been accepted into the Reserves with rank. You are ordered to report in two weeks to Fort McPherson.

Sincerely Brig. General Mann

Louis picks up the phone and dials a number. On the other end we hear Spencer's voice answer.

SPENCER (V.O.)

Hello.

LOUIS

I got my orders today.

SPENCER (V.O.)

What do you mean?

LOUIS

I hate to tell you like this but the school board is not going to pick up my contract. The principal said he'd talk to them, but it doesn't look good.

SPENCER (V.O.)

So your just leaving?

LOUIS

I was offered a Captains position in the Reserves. It's part time right now but could become active later.

SPENCER (V.O.)

That means we'll have duty together.

LOUIS

God I forgot you were still in.

SPENCER (V.O.)

Yep, Summer drills, Fort McPherson, two weeks.

LOUIS

I'll tell the boys in the morning.

Louis gently hangs up the receiver.

INT. GYM - DAY

The boys are assembled on the bleachers and appear puzzled as to why they are there. The cheerleaders are in the opposite corner practicing their routines.

Louis and Spencer walk in to give them the news. The girls stop their cheers. Katie steps forward to listen.

Louis has a grim expression, the boys pickup on it and go silent. He steps up directly in front of them with Spencer by his side.

LOUIS
(hesitating)
Uh...there isn't any easy way to
put this but...

He stops to look at all the faces.

LOUIS
I have decided to resign.

The boys are floored and restless. Earl interrupts.

EARL
Where are you going?

LOUIS
Reserves, Spencer and I are going to
Summer duty at Fort McPherson.

Frankie raises his hand to interrupt.

FRANKIE
What about football practice?

LOUIS
Spencer will take over till a
replacement can be found.

This is hitting him hard, he chokes up, but regains his composure. The gym goes quiet. Katie moves closer listening.

LOUIS
Anyway I have enjoyed my time here
and I'm proud of all of you.

Earl isn't going to leave it at that and stands.

EARL
(quoting Shakespeare)
I think the King is but a man, as I
am. The violet smells to him as it
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EARL (cont'd)

doth to me. The element shows to
him as it doth to me. All his
senses have but human conditions.

The other boys seem to understand. Tuck takes the lead and stands up, the rest of the team joins him standing. In unison the whole team recites the rest of the quote.

WHOLE TEAM

We happy few, we band of brothers.

Katie seems to get it too.

Louis is stunned at the loyalty and commitment.

LOUIS

Thank you boys.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The boys are putting up their gear and getting dressed. Spencer walks in with fresh towels. Earl stops him.

EARL

Hey, is there anyway to to convince
the Coach not to go.

SPENCER

Son believe me I've tried.

They are joined by the other boys.

FRANKIE

If we could show him how much we
need him.

SPENCER

It's not that simple.

TUCK

How so Coach?

SPENCER

The school is going to let him go.

SANDY

Why?

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER

He's changed and not the same.

Earl realizing.

EARL

He still blames himself for my Dad
and is afraid he'll make a mistake
with us.

SPENCER

Maybe.

FRANKIE

If we could get his confidence
back.

SPENCER

The only way to do that is to start
winning.

EARL

But he's going to be gone this
Summer how can we show him what we
can do.

Spencer's expression changes to thoughtful.

EXT. LOUIS HOME - MORNING

Spencer drives up and honks the horn. Louis hops out in his
Army fatigues. He sports captains bars on his collar.

Putting on his cap he reaches back in and gets his duffel
bag then shuffles to the car and gets in.

SPENCER

Did you tell Sarah you were
leaving.

LOUIS

No, I'll wait till I get back.

The vehicle backs out and drives away.

EXT. SARAH'S HOME - DAY

Earl sits on the front door stoop flipping a stick. The hot
Summer breeze ruffles the bushes. It's quiet and boring.
Frankie comes out of the house with a lemonade and sits
beside him.

(CONTINUED)

FRANKIE
Sure is hot.

EARL
Yeah.

FRANKIE
Want something to drink?

EARL
No.

Earl's looks depressed and it shows. A Red Ford Pickup races up the street. It screeches to a stop in front of the house. Tuck is driving and showing off.

Sandy gets out of the passenger side and saunters over to Earl. Tuck slowly follows him. They join the boys on the steps.

SANDY
What' y'all doing?

EARL
(sarcastically)
What does it look like, nothing.

TUCK
Come on runt he's just talking.

EARL
Would you quit calling me that.

Tuck doesn't press the issue and puts his hands in his pockets.

SANDY
If we could just go to that Fort.

EARL
What do you mean?

SANDY
They don't do anything down there
but drink beer. My cousin told me.

TUCK
That ain't true.

FRANKIE
And what if we do?

Tuck and Sandy see there is nothing is going on and bow out.

(CONTINUED)

TUCK

We'll see you around.

They begin to leave. Earl's gears are turning in his head.

EARL

Wait he's not gone till school starts.

SANDY

Yeah so?

EARL

Summer football camp.

FRANKIE

What are you talking about?

EARL

A way to save the coach.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

The whole team is gathered around Earl. There is a heated debate going on. Tuck stands up arguing and pointing his finger at him.

TUCK

You are out of your mind!

SANDY

You're not serious?

EARL

We'll sneak on the base find the coach and tell him what we're planning.

TUCK

Do you know how crazy that sounds?

Earl does and it shows on his face.

SANDY

And what do we tell our folks?

EARL

We'll tell them we're going to to a Summer Football camp. They'll be so glad to get rid of us for a couple of weeks.

(CONTINUED)

TUCK

How do you know he won't send us home?

EARL

His job's on the line.

FRANKIE

He could get into trouble?

EARL

You saw his reaction when he told us.

Tuck starts to shake his head yes.

TUCK

He was all broke up.

EARL

Coach Tibb's could convince him.

SANDY

He doesn't want him to go either.

FRANKIE

I think we could get away with it.

EARL

Okay who's in?

Slowly at first Tuck raises his hand, then Sandy and finally the whole team.

FRANKIE

How are you going to explain to Mom?

EARL

I have no idea.

EXT. SARAH'S HOME - DAY

Earl slips an envelope into the mailbox.

LATER:

Sarah arrives home and opens the mail box. She takes out several envelopes, one looks official. It is from Williams High School and addressed to her.

Curious she opens it, walking and reading at the same time.

INT. SARAH'S HOME - DAY

She enters and calls out for her boys. They come running in from the back yard out of breath.

EARL
Yes Ma'am.

SARAH
Looks like somebody impressed the college leagues. Your going to a Summer Football Camp at Bluehaven.

Earl is all smiles. Sarah grins too, but looks a bit nervous.

EARL
Wow that's great!

SARAH
Will you be okay? Louis won't be there.

FRANKIE
I'll go with him!

SARAH
I don't know.

EARL
Please Mom, its just football.

The look on both their eager faces is more than she can stand.

SARAH
Well okay.

EXT. BLUEHAVEN FOOTBALL CAMP - DAY

Sarah pulls the car up to the closed front gate. She glances around curious then honks the horn. Earl has a fit.

EARL
Mom! Please don't do that.

SARAH
You've got to check in.

FRANKIE
You're embarrassing us.

(CONTINUED)

Through the windshield they see someone in a COACHES OUTFIT waiving at them.

EARL

See Mom, we'll get out and walk.

FRANKIE

Come on Mom.

She grips the steering wheel and bites her lip then relents.

SARAH

Okay, I'll see you back here in two weeks.

EARL

Yes Ma'am. Love you Mom.

His words strike a chord with her.

FLASH BACK BEGINS:

Her deceased husband JIM sits on the passenger side of the car looking at her.

JAMES

I love you.

FLASHBACK ENDS:

The face of her husband fades and is replaced by Earl's. A tear comes to her eye. She leans over and hugs him tight. Frankie from the back seat reaches across and gives her a kiss. The two boys get out and wave goodbye to her walking across the field.

EXT. BLUEHAVEN FOOTBALL CAMP - DAY

The boys hurry over to the person wearing the Coaches uniform. From their POV the coach walks behind the bleachers on the field.

Sarah honks the horn as she drives away, the boys wave a final good bye. With her out of sight they quickly dash to the bleachers

EXT. BLEACHERS - DAY

Behind them they meet the **COACH** but it is only Tuck dressed like one.

TUCK
I can't believe it worked.

EARL
Have any trouble?

TUCK
You kidding, my old man was glad to get rid of me.

A horn blares. Earl and Frankie look around from their POV they see a school bus. Both of them are surprised and stunned.

FRANKIE
Where did you get that?

TUCK
From the school idiot.

EARL
You stole it?

TUCK
No we borrowed it, its the one that carries us to away games. The thing sits behind the field house all Summer, nobody will miss it.

They see Sandy behind the wheel and all the other boys are hanging out the windows yelling for them to come on.

TUCK
How did you think we'd get there?

Tuck may not be a mental giant but his logic is impeccable. Bowing to his reasoning, the boys pile on and the bus takes off.

INT. BUS - DAY

The team is tired from the long ride and less excited. The sun dips in the sky. The heavy woods from middle Georgia are thinning. Pines give way to old oaks with Spanish Moss hanging from them.

(CONTINUED)

An occasional Palm tree with lots of marshy areas along the sides of the road. The air has a different smell, salty and fresh.

The bus rounds a corner and there it is sprawled out to the horizon. **THE OCEAN** the boys look at it in awe.

S/O WOW! LOOK AT THAT! IT'S BIG!

SANDY

Wonder how deep it is?

Tuck rolls his eyes at the stupid comment and continues to drive the bus.

The setting sun hits Earl in the face, he stares in wonder watching the lapping waves.

EARL

Smell the Ocean Boys.

TUCK

What?

EARL

Something my Dad would say.

The bus continues on. Through the windshield and Tuck's POV we see the front gate to Fort McPherson coming up on the left. They don't slow down but everyone notices the large perimeter fence and the guards posted outside.

TUCK

How are we supposed to get through there?

EARL

I didn't think about that.

FRANKIE

I'm hungry.

The rest of the team agrees with him.

EARL

Lets eat, we'll figure out something.

They keep on driving and heading down the two lane highway they pass an intersection with a flashing yellow light. In the streetlight off to the side is a phone booth.

(CONTINUED)

Tuck slows down and looks both ways and proceeds on through the light. Moments later the engine starts to rattle and clunk. The bus shakes and lurches. Tuck looks for a place to pull off.

EARL
What's the matter?

TUCK
I don't know.

Through the darkness just ahead them he spies a service road.

EXT. SERVICE ROAD - NIGHT

The bus creeps over to the dirt road and turns right. Off the little road is a clearing between a clump of pines just big enough to squeeze the vehicle into. Tuck manages to get the vehicle between them and then the bus dies.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Tuck looks around under the seat then in the glove compartment and finds a flashlight. He and Earl get out and maneuver around to the front of the bus.

Tuck opens the hood and smoke billows out. It is dark and hot the flashlight doesn't offer much illumination.

EARL
What's wrong?

TUCK
I can't tell it's too dark.

Frankie and Sandy climb out of the bus. Sandy is the first to panic.

SANDY
What are we going to do now?

TUCK
Shut up I'm thinking.

EARL
We've got to have help.

TUCK
No shit Sherlock.

Earl feels in his pocket for change but its empty.

(CONTINUED)

EARL
Anybody got a nickel?

SANDY
What?

EARL
I saw a phone booth about a mile
back.

TUCK
And just who are you going to call?

EARL
The coach dummy.

SANDY
Quit calling me that.

Tuck digs into his pocket and pulls out a shiny new nickel
and hands it to Earl.

Earl takes the flashlight and looks at his watch.

CLOSE ON WATCH

11:30 PM

EARL
I'll be back.

FRANKIE
I'm going with you.

EARL
Okay.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The Highway is deserted and the bright moon hangs in the
sky. It provides enough light that the boys don't have to
use the flashlight. A dog barks in the distance.

The two brothers quietly walk along.

FRANKIE
You know this is the first time
we've been out of town since the
funeral.

(CONTINUED)

EARL
Yeah and that wasn't much fun.

FRANKIE
No, it wasn't.

Earl smiles at his brother.

EARL
I'm glad we did this.

FRANKIE
Me too.

Ahead from their POV is the lit up phone booth.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

The two boys squeeze into the small enclosed glass and steel cubicle. Earl takes the nickel and inserts it into the slot. He then dials the operator.

S/O Operator's voice picking up.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Can I help you?

EARL
Uh? Yes Fort McPherson please.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Thank you.

S/O the female operator switching the line. It connects to the base and rings.

INT. ARMY BASE OPERATOR ROOM - NIGHT

The young private **BASE OPERATOR** sits at his desk reading a Stars and Stripes magazine. He ogles at a picture of a voluptuous pin-up girl. The buzzer rings and it startles him. He stuffs the magazine on top of the switchboard.

The **BASE OPERATOR** picks up. In a long southern drawl he answers.

BASE OPERATOR
Hello.

INT. PHONE BOTH/OPERATOR ROOM - NIGHT

Earl nervously answers.

EARL
I need to speak to Coach, I mean
Captain Seville.

BASE OPERATOR
At this time of night pal?

Frankie urges him to make something up.

EARL
It's an emergency.
(pause, beat)
I'm his son.

Earl winces at the lie, but it convinces the operator.

BASE OPERATOR
Okay! just a second!

He plugs in the appropriate line.

INT. OFFICERS BARRACKS - NIGHT

Spencer lies on his cot reading the sports section of the newspaper in his underwear. Louis is on the edge of his cot facing the open window polishing his boots.

SPENCER
Says here that Lavender is the team
to beat this year.

LOUIS
Tillman will be glad to hear that.

Both men chuckle. Then the phone rings on the wall. Louis stops what he's doing and goes to answers it.

LOUIS
Captain Seville.

BASE OPERATOR (V.O.)
Sir, I have your son on the line.

LOUIS
Son?!

Louis looks at Spencer with a questioning look. Spencer shrugs his shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
Put him through.

INT. OFFICERS BARRACKS/PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Louis hangs on the line as he is connected.

 LOUIS
Hello.

 EARL
Hey Coach its me.

 LOUIS
Earl? Whats the matter, is your
mother okay?

 EARL
Yeah fine.

 LOUIS
Why are you calling?

Earl swallows hard, the moment of truth.

 EARL
Coach we've had car trouble.
 (pause)
We're outside the base.

 LOUIS
Who, you're family?

 EARL
No, the team.

 LOUIS
What? How did you get here?

 EARL
We took the school bus.

 LOUIS
You stole a bus?!

Spencer looks at him confused.

 LOUIS
Wait stay where you are.

EARL

Yes Sir.

Earl hangs up the phone. Louis turns to Spencer.

LOUIS

Your not going to believe this.

EXT. BUS - NIGHT

Earl has rejoined the other boys waiting beside the busted vehicle. From up the road they see headlights approaching.

INT. JEEP - NIGHT

Louis keeps an eye out then spies a glint off the tail reflector on the bus.

LOUIS

There they are.

Spencer steers towards them.

EXT. BUS - NIGHT

Spencer pulls up behind the bus and stops they both quickly jump out.

LOUIS

Are you boys okay?

EARL

We're fine.

Spencer goes to look under the hood of the bus. His face is troubled at what he sees.

LOUIS

Then explain yourselves.

EARL

I- I'm sorry.

LOUIS

Do you how much trouble you are in?

FRANKIE

We came practice.

Spencer joins Louis wiping his hands of oil and grease on a handkerchief. He glances at Louis and doesn't look happy.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
What's the matter with it?

SPENCER
Fuel pumps shot, I told you we
needed to replace it.

LOUIS
How long to get it fixed?

SPENCER
It'll take a week just to get the
part.

LOUIS
I can't believe this.

EARL
We heard they were going to fire
you.

The two men appear proud at the boys loyalty.

LOUIS
We'll have to call your folks to
come get you.

SPENCER
Wait a minute, if you do that
you'll be held responsible for them
taking the bus.

LOUIS
That doesn't matter.

SPENCER
You'd be arrested for sure, then no
team period.

LOUIS
They can't stay here.

SPENCER
Let's think this through. This
could be good.

LOUIS
What?

SPENCER
Nothing ever goes on around here.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
(incredulous)
Spencer, wait? We aren't bringing
them on base.

SPENCER
They're already here.

Earl's stomach growls.

LOUIS
When did you boys eat last?

EARL
Yesterday.

SPENCER
They need to eat.

Louis turns to Spencer.

LOUIS
Go to the mess hall and grab some
sandwiches.
(to Earl)
Son, I appreciate it, but this
won't work. Stay on the bus till
morning and I'll figure something
out.

EARL
But?

LOUIS
(to Spencer)
Drop me off back at base.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Spencer divvies up the sandwiches and cokes. The boys chow
down. Tuck sits across from Earl. Earl barely eats.

TUCK
I told you he'd never go for it.

FRANKIE
Leave him alone.

SANDY
It would have never worked anyway.

(CONTINUED)

EARL
(to Spencer)
What's going to happen to the
coach?

SPENCER
I don't know bud.

FRANKIE
We can't just leave after we've
come all this way.

SPENCER
He doesn't want you to get hurt.

EARL
You said nothing goes on.

Spencer looks out at the sad faces with scheming in his eyes.

SPENCER
You boys get some shut eye. I'll be
back.

INT. BASE OFFICE - NIGHT

Spencer sneaks into the office. He heads to the file cabinet.

As he rummages through it he comes across a file. From his POV he sees the name TILLMAN PEDANT.

Spencer quickly opens it up and smiles.

SPENCER
(whispering)
Ammunition.

He takes out the paper and folds it into his pocket.

Then he sits down at a desk with the typewriter. He inserts a form CLOSE ON FORM - IT READS TRANSFER ORDERS. He begins to type. It types

CLOSE ON TYPE JR. ROTC

Spencer smiles at his genius.

EXT. BASE - NIGHT

Spencer quietly heads over to the supply barracks. There is a jeep parked outside. He goes inside the building. Moments later he returns with an armload of supplies and puts them in the back of the vehicle.

He makes several more trips filling up the jeep. Spencer gets in the driver's seat and cranks it up then drives away.

EXT. BASE - DAY

Morning formation all the men stand at attention. Louis stands in front of them. He looks at his watch **SIX AM**. Spencer is no where to be found.

The soldiers yawn and grumble, another boring day. Louis looks worried. Spencer pops up behind him. Louis is startled and jumps at his sudden appearance.

LOUIS

Where have you been?

SPENCER

Did you make any calls?

LOUIS

No it was too late.

SPENCER

Good.

Louis gives him a look.

LOUIS

Spencer?

SPENCER

I've got it all figured out.

LOUIS

What did you do?

SPENCER

You know that old firing range we don't use anymore it is perfect for practice. I can fix the bus then the boys can go home. Look, they told me their parents think they are at football camp anyway. Well they are, kind of, and who better to look out for them than us?

(CONTINUED)

Louis considers the plan, the logic to it shows on his face.

Then Spencer takes out the piece of paper he found in the office the night before. Thinking better, he folds it back into his pocket before Louis can see it.

LOUIS
What's that.

Spencer quickly tries to dismiss it.

LOUIS
Nothing, I'll show you later.

Louis accepts that and returns to thinking.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A half dozen bivouac tents have been erected in the middle of the field. Larger than the average pup tent and meant to house four people at a time.

The boys have been outfitted in fatigues and they are are busy digging holes. Sandy is complaining.

SANDY
Why have we got to do this?

EARL
It's called a latrine.

TUCK
Ain't no bathrooms out here.

FRANKIE
Boy we're having fun.

TUCK
It's as hot as hell.

EARL
Come on, we all decided to stay.

Tuck and the others look disgruntled but nod in agreement. Then from up the road they see a jeep approaching. The boys appear worried, Earl cups his hands over his eyes in the glaring sun.

EARL
It's the Coach.

The jeep pulls up beside the group and stops. He looks concerned and worried.

(CONTINUED)

He gets out the boys form up around him.

LOUIS

It's against my better judgment but
since the bus must be repaired I
guess we could try.

The boys let out a cheer. The shirtless Tuck and Sandy lean
on their shovels.

TUCK

It's like this Coach we're on
vacation.

SANDY

Yeah camping.

The other boys laugh at their humor.

LOUIS

This isn't funny. What you did was
wrong.

EARL

We want to do this.

LOUIS

I don't know if this will work.

SPENCER

It won't, if you keep arguing.

LOUIS

Shut up Spencer!

Spencer doesn't like his tone and gets in his face.

SPENCER

You ain't gonna talk to me like
that.

LOUIS

I outrank you.

The tension is building between them and the heat is making
it worse. The two friends arguing is too much for Earl.

EARL

STOP!

FRANKIE

Coach, we're here now.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER
(calming down)
Give it a chance buddy.

Louis looks out at all the eager faces and sees their commitment to him.

SPENCER
They did this for you, but its for them too.

Louis takes off his hat and rubs his head then puts it back on.

LOUIS
Well, have we got a football?

Spencer and the boys smile.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The boys are spread out across the huge field clearing it. They push manual mowers cutting the grass. Others are clearing stones away and squaring off the field.

There is a particularly large outcropping of stones. Tuck and Sandy try to pry a big boulder out of its socket. When they flip it over they find a Rattlesnake, it hisses at them, both boys jump back.

TUCK
Shit!

SANDY
Oh Jesus!

Tuck takes his shovel and slams it down on the snake killing it.

Louis and Spencer survey their work. The field is shaping up. Spencer looks at his watch.

SPENCER
We've got to get back.

LOUIS
They'll miss us if we're gone too long.

Spencer lets out a shrill whistle getting the boys attention, He motions for them to come over. They gather round.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS

Okay we need to head back.

SPENCER

Finish up the field then practice tomorrow.

EXT. BASE - DAY

Louis and Spencer drive right up to their barracks and park. From Louis POV he sees the **COLONEL BRADFORD** (50's) of the base stepping out on to the front porch of his office.

Their eyes meet. Louis salutes in his direction. Spencer gets out and walks around and does the same.

SPENCER

He could be a problem.

LOUIS

I know.

The Colonel walks down the few steps and heads towards them.

He stops right in front. The Colonel eyes the jeep seeing the dirt on the tires and vehicle.

COLONEL

God knows this is just a vacation to you guys, but I like to know the whereabouts of my officers.

SPENCER

Uh, I lost my watch on the way in.

LOUIS

Yes, we were out looking for it.

SPENCER

It has a loose band.

The Colonel spies a watch on Spencer's wrist.

COLONEL

Looks fine to me.

SPENCER

This is my back up, the other belonged to my Grandfather, it's an heirloom.

(CONTINUED)

COLONEL
And you brought it to camp?

SPENCER
Dumb me.

The Colonel looks tired of the excuses and changes the subject.

COLONEL
Never mind.

The Colonel leaves it at that and walks away.

SPENCER
He's gonna be watching us.

LOUIS
I told you this wouldn't work.

SPENCER
We'll be careful.

LOUIS
Do the boys have enough to eat?

SPENCER
Sure, they have three cases of rations.

LOUIS
That stuff is awful.

SPENCER
But it won't spoil.

EXT. BOYS CAMP - NIGHT

The sun is setting over the palm trees and the breeze from the nearby ocean softly drifts in from the coast. They have built a small campfire and are huddled around it sitting in the sand.

They hold the open tin cans of the Army C-Rations in front of them. Their faces are repulsed, and noses turned up at what they see and smell.

TUCK
We're supposed to eat this?

(CONTINUED)

SANDY
What is it?

EARL
I don't know.

The only one not put off by the strange canned food is Frankie. He is chowing down on it.

The others look at him in amazement. He finally notices their stare and looks up, and with his mouth full he comments.

FRANKIE
What?

EARL
That's disgusting.

FRANKIE
Not bad to me.

Tuck looks at his can.

TUCK
Canned in nineteen forty?

SANDY
Shit.

EARL
They are designed to stay good.

FRANKIE
Well I'm hungry.

The other boys stomach's growl and they reluctantly start to eat. It is a comedy of expressions as each boy takes a bite, trying to swallow without puking.

EXT. BOYS CAMP - NIGHT

Later the boys sit around the campfire. They are tired, but like most teenagers find the energy to chatter and tell stories.

Sandy is the huckster he stands up and bends over the campfire and farts. A flame shoots out from the expelled gas towards Tuck.

Tuck falls back startled by the fire. He jumps back up ready to fight. Sandy rolls on the sand with laughter along with the others.

(CONTINUED)

TUCK
That wasn't funny man.

EARL
(laughing hard)
Yes it was!

FRANKIE
Your face.

Frankie makes a comical surprised and scared face. It brings more laughter from the group.

FRANKIE
This is kind of fun.

Tuck sits back down on the sand dusting himself off.

TUCK
Fun, I ache all over.

SANDY
When was the last time you went
anywhere?

Tuck thinks but can't come up with anything.

SANDY
Never, me neither.

FRANKIE
Ain't none of us had a vacation.

EARL
The war killed that too.

TUCK
My Dad hasn't spoke since my
brother died.

FRANKIE
At least you got one.

EARL
Mom cries every night.

FRANKIE
I thought she'd be over it.

EARL
Are you, any of ya.

Earl looks around the group. Everyone of them looks down.

(CONTINUED)

EARL
Sorry fellas.

TUCK
Forget it.

SANDY
It's still a blast.

FRANKIE
I got an idea.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The full moon illuminates the beach and the boys revel in the refreshing water. Cooling off from the tortuous hot day. relaxing and expelling youthful energy.

Enjoying reckless horseplay and howling at the moon. Only Sandy, again, seems timid at the prospect of getting in.

SANDY
What about sharks!

TUCK
Your idea.

EARL
It's fun jump in.

FRANKIE
Yeah man get cooled off.

TUCK
You stink dummy get in.

SANDY
Quit calling me that.

He finally takes the plunge diving into an oncoming wave. Sandy surfaces only to have Tuck push him under again. He comes up choking on salt water.

SANDY
That's not funny.

TUCK
Payback for the fart.

The other boys enjoy and laugh at their antics.

EXT. BASE CAMP - DAY

Morning roll call is over. The Colonel dismisses the formation. A **BRAND NEW CADILLAC** drives up to his office. Louis and Spencer try to get a glimpse of who it is, but the drivers side faces away from them.

The Colonel stands and talks to the person inside then walks around to the passenger side and gets in. The Cadillac does a u-turn and drives out the front gate.

The guards salute as it passes. The dust the car kicks up prevents Louis and Spencer from getting a visual on the driver.

Louis and Spencer look relieved that he is gone and turn to one another to plan their course of action.

SPENCER

Wonder where he's going?

LOUIS

Doesn't matter, at least we won't have him lurking around.

SPENCER

I'm going to get that fuel pump.

LOUIS

Drop me off at the boys.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Spencer walks into the typical Mom and Pop filling station. The bell chime above the door announces his arrival. The interior is an eclectic orderly mess. Automotive parts in various states of repair sit on top of the counter.

On the shelves is a wide assortment of other automotive paraphernalia in boxes. The walls once nice and white have grown dingy from the constant muffler fumes floating in and out. Daubs of oil and grease are splattered interminably everywhere.

Spencer tries to be careful and not get any on his uniform.

The Owner **MR. WALLACE** is a sixty year old grease monkey, walks in from the garage wiping his hands off hearing the door bell. His face is kind, but weathered from years of hard work and not much to show for it.

(CONTINUED)

He greets Spencer with an honest and friendly countenance. It is obvious they are acquainted by the way he puts a big smile upon seeing him.

MR. WALLACE
Spencer, where you a been hiding
boy?

SPENCER
You know I only come around once a
year.

MR. WALLACE
Of course.

Mr. Wallace and Spencer shake hands across the counter.

SPENCER
Place never changes.

MR. WALLACE
Just more oil for decoration.

They both chuckle.

MR. WALLACE
What can I do for you?

SPENCER
Looking for a fuel pump.

MR. WALLACE
Got an engine number.

SPENCER
V1209 1945 Ford Bus.

Mr. Wallace thinks.

SPENCER
I'm sure you'll have to order it.

MR. WALLACE
No, wait a minute.

Mr. Wallace walks to the back into the garage then returns moments later with the part.

MR. WALLACE
Had one similar to it last week
with a busted trans, owner didn't
want to spend the money so I'm
junking it out.

(CONTINUED)

Spencer is surprised but conservative.

SPENCER
Great, how much?

MR. WALLACE
It's worth twenty, but I'll let you
have it for eleven and a quarter.

It's a great deal and Spencer whips out his money.

SPENCER
There's twelve keep it.

MR. WALLACE
Your always a good one.

SPENCER
Oh if anyone asks, I wasn't in
here, and you don't anything about
a fuel pump.

MR. WALLACE
A surprise for somebody?

SPENCER
More like a delayed gift.

MR. WALLACE
Right.

Spencer makes a zipped lip.

SPENCER
Remember, not a word.

MR. WALLACE
Won't say a thing.

He returns the zipped lip sign.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - DAY

Spencer takes the part and buries it in a tool box in the
back of the jeep. He is careful to conceal it so that no one
can find it. He seals the tool box up, then gets back in
the jeep and drives off.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The camouflaged School bus sits behind some trees. Spencer pulls up and maneuvers the jeep through the brush and around to the other side of the trees to keep out of sight.

He stops and gets out, then goes to the toolbox and digs out the fuel pump.

INT. BUS - DAY

Spencer boards the abandoned bus and walks to the back seat. He leans down and puts the new fuel pump under the seat. That done, he heads back out.

EXT. BUS - DAY

He retrieves his toolbox and opens the hood. With the skill of a surgeon he removes the broken part.

INT. OFFICERS BARRACKS - NIGHT

Spencer sits on his bunk fiddling with the old pump. Louis paces up and down.

LOUIS

Did you get that part?

SPENCER

They said it would be Friday. But maybe I can fix this one.

LOUIS

Four days.

SPENCER

No problem.

LOUIS

We can't do this.

SPENCER

What are talking about?

Louis doesn't say a word and walks to the phone on the wall. He picks up the receiver and dials the operator.

LOUIS

Connect me with Atlanta2607.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER

Who are you calling?

LOUIS

The Principal at Williams, I should have done this in the first place.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S HOME - DAY

An Older modest home that looks like a bookworms haven. The Principal sits reading his paper. The phone rings and the Principal answers.

PRINCIPAL

Hello.

INT. OFFICERS BARRACKS - NIGHT

Spencer jumps up and hits the receiver hanging the call up. Louis looks irritated at him.

LOUIS

What did you do that for?

SPENCER

You can't do that they'll court martial you.

LOUIS

Better than having one of these boys get hurt. Football isn't worth that.

SPENCER

You really have lost something.

LOUIS

And you've lost your mind, if you think I'm going to let this continue.

SPENCER

So that's it, just giving up.

LOUIS

I'm done, maybe Tillman is the right man for the Job?

SPENCER

Your not serious?

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
(confused, upset)
I don't know.

SPENCER
Give it a shot buddy. Please.

Spencer's pleading eyes weigh on Louis and he gives in.

EXT. PRACTICE FIELD/ARMY BASE - DAY/NIGHT

LATER

The days go by with Louis, Spencer and the team going through their routines.

MONTAGE BEGINS:

Louis with other soldiers in formation.

Various Military duties around base with Spencer and Louis. Target practice, marching, in chow line secretly going over playbook.

Louis on sideline with boys running plays.

Earl completing passes.

The team around campfire at night horsing around.

Louis and Spencer on sideline looking satisfied with teams progress.

MONTAGE ENDS:

EXT. SARAH'S HOME - DAY

Katie knocks on the front door. Sarah opens the door and is surprised to see her.

SARAH
Hey dear, what are you doing here?

KATIE
Have you seen Earl?

SARAH
He's at football camp.

Katie looks disappointed.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH
Won't you come in?

INT. SARAH'S HOME - DAY

Katie steps inside the house.

KATIE
I'm sorry, just stopping by like
this.

SARAH
Would you like something to drink?

KATIE
Oh, no Ma'am.

The air is awkward between them.

SARAH
You know, I was thinking about
going to see the boys myself this
afternoon, want to come?

Katie has a hard time holding back her excitement.

KATIE
Yes Ma'am.

SARAH
Let's go.

EXT. BLUEHAVEN FOOTBALL CAMP - DAY

Sarah drives through the front gate and proceeds to the
closest building. There are lots of cars parked around
dozens of football players heading to, and from practice.

INT. CAR - DAY

Sarah looks around curiously.

SARAH
Seems to be a lot more people here
than when I dropped the boys off.

She continues up to the building and parks the vehicle.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Getting out she spies Tillman Pendant walking out of the Front office. She and Katie walk over to him.

Tillman recognizes her and puts on a fake smile. He greets her in Good Ole boy fashion.

TILLMAN

Sarah it's good to see you, is this your lovely daughter?

SARAH

No, this is Katie Starnes.

TILLMAN

How are you Hun?

KATIE

Fine.

SARAH

(getting to the point)

I'd like to see how my boys are doing.

Tillman looks puzzled.

TILLMAN

Sarah, your boys play for Williams High School.

SARAH

I'm aware of that. But Earl got a letter saying he was picked by College scouts to attend here.

TILLMAN

We don't have anything like that.

Sarah is indignant at the accusation.

SARAH

My boy doesn't lie.

TILLMAN

Well he ain't here.

INT. SARAH'S HOME - DAY

Sarah and Katie return home after their short trip. Sarah is confused and upset and so is Katie. But the teenager tries to try offer a solution.

KATIE
Call the Principal.

SARAH
No, I'll call Louis first.

KATIE
He wouldn't know.

SARAH
What do you mean?

KATIE
He told us he was leaving.

SARAH
Why didn't you tell me?

KATIE
I'm sorry.

Flustered Sarah dials the number. The phone rings and the Principal picks up.

PRINCIPAL (V.O.)
Hello.

Sarah tries to compose herself.

SARAH
Hello, Principal Jones, this is Sarah Allen.

PRINCIPAL (V.O.)
Sarah, how good to hear from you.

SARAH
Thank you. Sir, do you know where Coach Seville is.

PRINCIPAL (V.O.)
I'm sorry but he resigned.

SARAH
I know, did he say where he was going?

(CONTINUED)

PRINCIPAL (V.O.)
Said something about going back
into the military. Down to Fort
McPherson for summer camp.

SARAH
Summer Camp?

Katie picks up on it.

PRINCIPAL
Yes.

Sarah is stunned. Then the Principal begins again.

PRINCIPAL (V.O.)
Anything wrong?

SARAH
Not yet. Thank you sir.

A shocked Sarah hangs up the phone.

SARAH
Those conniving little devils.

KATIE
We Band of brothers.

SARAH
What?

KATIE
I know where they are.

INT. PRINCIPALS HOME - NIGHT

The Principal is sitting on his couch enjoying a radio
broadcast. Then there is a knock at the door. He gets up and
goes to answer it. Opening the door Norman Pendant is
standing on the other side.

He is all fluffed up with pride and walks right in like he
owns the place.

NORMAN
Evening!

PRINCIPAL
Schools out for the summer.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

But business never waits.

Norman pulls out what looks to be a contract.

PRINCIPAL

What is that?

NORMAN

My boy's contract.

The principal is put off by Norman's wanton presumption and calls him on it.

PRINCIPAL

That can wait till the fall.

NORMAN

Your going to sign it now.

He forces the paper into the Principal's chest. Then takes out a pen from his coat pocket and hands it to him.

PRINCIPAL

Louis is a far better man than your son will ever be.

NORMAN

Maybe, but he ain't here.

The Principal bends down to sign the paper then remembers.

PRINCIPAL

Sarah Allen was looking for him.

NORMAN

Earl's Momma?

PRINCIPAL

Seems her boys were supposed to be at a football camp and thought Louis knew something about it.

Norman just fluffs it off.

PRINCIPAL

But he's at Fort McPherson.

NORMAN

(aghast)

What?

Norman doesn't hesitate and flies out the door.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Sarah drives a lonely stretch of road in middle Georgia. It's pitch black out. Katie is asleep in the passenger seat.

Sarah looks worried and a bit lost, then she sees a road sign. From her POV it reads Fort McPherson sixty miles.

She looks relieved, but weary, her eyes start to droop. Her head begins to nod, as sleep starts to take over.

Her head lolls to one side nodding off. She jerks her head up struggling to stay awake. But the more she resists, the harder it is to remain alert.

She rolls the window down in an attempt to use the breeze to help. But the warm air has the opposite effect. Sarah settles and finally she is out with her head to one side.

The car begins to veer off the road. She drifts into the oncoming lane. Ahead of her, car lights have appeared on the horizon and are getting bigger as they approach.

The advancing car hasn't seen her yet, then they do and lay on the horn. The noise rouses Sarah and she sits up straight, for an instant she doesn't know where she is, then realizes the impending danger.

Seeing the other car, she braces the steering wheel with both hands, and jerks it to the right. She swerves back into her lane just as the other car barely misses her.

She stands on the brake stopping in the middle of the road. The force of the sudden stop wakes Katie up, tossing her forward.

Startled, and scared, she calls out.

KATIE
What happened!

SARAH
Are you alright?!

Katie checks herself.

KATIE
Yeah, I'm okay.

Sarah shakes her head, and shivers releasing the terror that gripped her, trying to settle down.

She lets out a large exhale.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

When I get a hold of those boys.

KATIE

Earl and Frankie?

SARAH

No all of them.

Katie understands her innuendo. Sarah puts the car in gear and drives on.

EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

The makeshift football field has shaped up to look some semblance of the real thing. With whitewash used to grid off the yardage and lines.

The boys are running plays. Louis is in his element, the atmosphere away from schools seems good to him.

Earl calls out a play and the ball is snapped to him. Sandy takes off and Earl completes the pass. Louis looks very satisfied.

LOUIS

Yeah, that's more like it.

Spencer drives up and stops. He watches Louis and is pleased to see him in such a good mood. He waits for a moment soaking it in, then continues on over.

He gets out, Louis turns hearing the jeep come to a halt. Spencer has a big grin across his face. Louis blows the whistle.

LOUIS

Okay guys, take a water break.

Frankie runs out to the others with a water bucket. The parched team clamors for a drink.

LOUIS

Don't drink to fast, you'll cramp up.

SPENCER

The team looks good.

LOUIS

They do indeed.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER

Best I've seen in years.

Louis smiles, but gives him a wavering eye.

LOUIS

Don't try and talk me out of this.

SPENCER

I'm not, but you should see yourself.

LOUIS

I do have that old feeling.

SPENCER

Like when anything was possible.

LOUIS

Maybe, a little.

SPENCER

Hold on to that, think about it.

Louis looks out over the boys proudly.

LOUIS

When's that part coming in?

SPENCER

They said it would be Friday.

LOUIS

Well we've gotten away with it for four days, maybe we'll get lucky for one more.

SPENCER

We'll have too.

Spencer thinking.

SPENCER

When did all this start?

LOUIS

You know good and well when

SPENCER

No when the Principal talked to you.

LOUIS
Oh, the last day of school, why.

SPENCER
Just curious.

Earl runs over to the two men. He is sweaty and out of breath.

EARL
Hey, they wanted me to ask can we get something better than those canned things.

There is a pleasant smile shared between Louis and Spencer.

LOUIS
Not very good are they?

EARL
Terrible.

LOUIS
Tell you what why don't you come with me. There is a diner not too far from here we'll pick up some BBQ and Hot Dogs.

Spencer looks troubled.

LOUIS
You stay here.

SPENCER
But?

LOUIS
We'll be fine.

Spencer digs in his pocket and hands him the keys.

INT. JEEP - DAY

The wind whips through the open jeep, blowing Earl's hair all around his head. He smiles and looks over at Louis driving. The road parallels the beach about a hundred yards away. There is nothing but sand and sea grass between the road and shoreline.

Earl looks out to the deep, green blue water, his eyes are distant. Louis notices his concentration and veers off the road. The bumpy ride surprises, and jostles Earl around in his seat.

(CONTINUED)

He hangs onto the side to keep from being thrown out. Louis laughs having fun, Earl chimes in enjoying the ride.

LOUIS

Hang on!

The jeep heads up to the crest of a sand dune. Louis slows down and stops. Spread out before them is the wide vista of the endless ocean, stretching across the horizon.

Again Earl is transfixed by the view, and wonder of it all.

EARL

Smell the ocean.

LOUIS

Yes.

EARL

My Dad used to say that.

Louis gaze is affixed to the horizon. His expression is distant, he takes his hat off, closes his eyes and lets the wind ruffle his hair.

Louis continues, with the sounds of the waves in the distance.

LOUIS

Hear that?

EARL

The ocean?

LOUIS

Yeah, that's eternity laughing at us.

EARL

I don't get it.

LOUIS

Long after we are gone that tide will continue to come in, on, and on.

EARL

Sounds depressing.

LOUIS

No comforting, that the world will continue without us.

Earl understanding.

(CONTINUED)

EARL
Like me, Frankie and Mom without
Dad.

LOUIS
Or the team without me.

EARL
What killed him?

LOUIS
Cancer, you know that.

EARL
Why do you blame yourself?

Louis goes blank expressionless, its a question he fears
answering, and does not want to.

LOUIS
Your Dad and I were close. I let
him down.

EARL
How?

LOUIS
Let's not talk about this.

EARL
Why?

It's clear Louis is not getting out of this one.

LOUIS
Your Dad, Spencer and I were like
bothers. After Pearl Harbor we all
joined up. But your Dad skipped his
physical.

EARL
Yeah, he was already sick.

LOUIS
He wasn't going to be left out.

EARL
He would have died anyway.

LOUIS
Don't you see he followed us in.

EARL
It's not your fault.

LOUIS
I guess in the back of my mind I
couldn't stand the thought of
anyone else getting hurt because of
me.
(pause, beat)
Your Dad did tell me one thing
before he died. I never quite
understood it.

Louis hesitates, Earl is all ears.

EARL
Tell me, please.

LOUIS
Sacrifice is all that matters.

EARL
What does that mean?

LOUIS
At first I thought he meant that by
giving up his life we could save
millions. But now I know it was
meant knowing what was good for
everyone. The team can't survive
with me leading it.

EARL
Quitter.

There is sorrow in Louis eyes as he cranks the jeep and puts
on his cap.

LOUIS
We need to go.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Louis drives up to the gas station and stops next to one of
the pumps. Mr. Wallace comes out.

MR. WALLACE
Fill it up?

LOUIS
Yes.

Mr. Wallace notices the jeep and Louis uniform.

(CONTINUED)

MR. WALLACE
You over at the fort?

LOUIS
Yes Sir.

MR. WALLACE
Know Spencer?

LOUIS
(laughing)
Oh yeah.

MR. WALLACE
He's something.

LOUIS
That he is.

Louis thinking.

LOUIS
Did you get that part?

MR. WALLACE
What part?

LOUIS
Fuel pump, didn't Spencer come by?

MR. WALLACE
Yes, he picked that up a couple of
days ago.
(caught, surprised)
Crap he told me not to tell anyone.

LOUIS
Really?

MR. WALLACE
Darn it, don't say I said anything.

LOUIS
That's okay.

LATER

Mr. Wallace finishes filling up the gas tank and Louis pays him.

MR. WALLACE
Thank you, I didn't get your name.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
Louis Seville.

MR. WALLACE
Good to know ya! Don't say a word
to Spencer.

Louis acknowledges with a nod.

EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

The afternoon has worn down, and the team is receiving instructions sitting in front of Spencer.

Louis and Earl drive up with the food. Tuck looks up and punches Sandy in the shoulder. They jump up excited.

TUCK
Chow Time!

SANDY
Alright!

The team runs past Spencer racing towards the jeep. Spencer twirls trying to maintain his balance, but manages a smile.

Earl climbs out and goes to the back he hands out the hot dogs, BBQ and cokes. The boys push and shove trying to get at the tasty meal they have waited for.

LOUIS
One at a time.

EARL
(smiling)
Easy fellas!

Seeing Earl has it in hand, Louis walks over to Spencer. His expression is not as happy. Spencer catches on, but doesn't let it spoil the moment.

SPENCER
That's all they been talking about.

LOUIS
(Getting to the point)
You lied to me.

There is no use in denying it, Spencer owns up.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER

Okay, so I lied, shoot me.

LOUIS

When can you put it on.

SPENCER

It will be dark soon.

LOUIS

Start first thing in the morning.

Spencer looks towards the boys having fun and chowing down.

SPENCER

They trust you, I trust you. Why don't you trust yourself.

LOUIS

I don't know.

SPENCER

Don't give up now.

LOUIS

I have already quit

Louis gazes at the team.

LOUIS

And Tillman will replace me.

Spencer has an ace up his sleeve and pulls out the piece of paper he got from the Colonel's office. He hands it to Louis.

SPENCER

Not if they know about this.

Louis begins to read and his eyes widen.

LOUIS

That son of a bitch.

INT. OFFICERS BARRACKS - NIGHT

Louis is fuming mad, but relieved at the same time. The confidence he once had has returned.

LOUIS

Isn't that some shit.

His cursing is new, but refreshing to Spencer.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCER

That's more cuss words in two days than I've heard in lifetime from you.

LOUIS

Tillman dodged the draft and the Colonel was in on it.

SPENCER

You can bet money was involved.

LOUIS

It's a court martial offense.

Spencer gets up and goes to the window letting a breeze cool him off.

SPENCER

Now you don't have to worry about him. You've got leverage.

LOUIS

The boys are still on an army base.

SPENCER

I'll have the bus fixed tomorrow and they'll be gone.

Spencer turns the radio on. The big band music floats over the airways. Then an Emergency broadcast breaks in.

ANNOUNCER

We interrupt this program - Crises in Berlin, Communists blockade city.

SPENCER

That doesn't sound good.

ANNOUNCER

US forces to be put on standby.

LOUIS

We may have run out of time.

LATER

Spencer is asleep and Louis is on the phone. It's dark, and he is barely visible in the half light coming in from the window. His voice is low, but we hear bits and pieces of the conversation.

(CONTINUED)

TUCK
What's up?

SPENCER
Trouble.

EXT. CAMP GATE - DAY

It's been a long nights drive for Sarah, she and Katie look haggard. She is no mood to be toyed with. She drives up to the gate and a Guard comes out to meet her.

Sarah rolls down the window and the Guard peers in.

GUARD
Can I help you Ma'am?

SARAH
Do you have a Louis Seville here?

The Guard looks at his clipboard.

GUARD
I have a Captain Seville

SARAH
Yes, I need to see him.

GUARD
Sorry Ma'am, no civilians.

Sarah isn't taking no for an answer, she gets out of the car.

EXT. CAR - DAY

She gets right up in the young guards face.

SARAH
Look, I have driven all night, and
I demand to see him.

The guard doesn't want any part of a mad female and gives in. He opens the gate. Sarah gets back in her car and drives through.

EXT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Sarah's car pulls up to the Colonel's Office. She and Katie get out. From her POV she sees the shiny Cadillac.

She and Katie climb the steps and enter the building.

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY

They timidly enter the office. Sitting across from the Colonel is Norman Pendant. Sarah is surprised to see him and he her.

NORMAN

What in the blazes are you doing here girl?

SARAH

I might ask you the same question.

NORMAN

None of your damned business.

SARAH

It's the boys, they are here aren't they.

The Colonel intervenes

COLONEL

Seville had no authorization to bring them on base.

KATIE

He didn't.

NORMAN

Don't interrupt young lady.

KATIE

Shut up old man!

Norman is indignant at her attitude and stands up. He looks like he is ready to slap her.

COLONEL

Sit down, my MP's are picking him up now.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Spencer and the other two boys fly up the road. They turn on to the road to the practice field.

EXT. PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

They speed towards the field. From Spencer's POV he sees a Jeep and a Large transport truck. The military police are putting Louis in handcuffs.

The Boys are arguing with them to let Louis go. Spencer screeches to a stop, and jumps out.

SPENCER
Hey wait a minute!

An MP shouts an order to another Soldier.

MP 1
Grab him too!

The Second MP lunges, and quickly subdues Spencer wrangling his hands around his back and cuffing him.

EARL
Stop, they didn't do anything.

TUCK
Yeah, it's our fault.

MP 1
Tell that to the Colonel.

LOUIS
Be quiet boys, you'll only make
this worse.

The MP shoves Spencer into the back of a jeep.

MP 2
You broke about a dozen
regulations.

The MP walks over to the transport truck and lowers the tailgate.

MP 1
Alright boys pile in.

(CONTINUED)

SANDY

You can't order us we ain't in the
army.

MP 1

No, your trespassing on government
property. Now get in!

The soldiers tone is firm and loud, its clear he means
business. The boys grumble and board the truck.

The other MP places Louis in the passenger seat, and he gets
behind the wheel. The last of the boys board the truck and
the other MP closes the tailgate. With everyone packed up
they drive away.

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Sarah and Katie wait like pissed off prisoners. The door
opens and the MP's bring in Louis and Spencer. Sarah stands
and slaps Louis.

SARAH

How could you?

Louis wants to explain but holds back.

INT. TROOP TRUCK - DAY

Earl sits nearest to the tailgate, he sees his mother's car.
He can't stand it and jumps out of the vehicle.

The guards try and stop him but he is already in the
building.

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Earl bursts into the room. Sarah sees him, he runs and hugs.
Sarah holds him tight, Earl pulls back.

EARL

It wasn't him we did it.

SARAH

Louis should have sent you home the
minute you stepped on this base.

SPENCER

They couldn't with a busted fuel
pump.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
That, we could have fixed sooner.

SPENCER
Do you have to be so honest.

LOUIS
It's the one thing lacking around here.

NORMAN
You's in a lot a trouble boy.

COLONEL
This is a court martial offense.

LOUIS
Maybe, but what you did was worse.

The Colonel looks at him like he's lost his mind.

LOUIS
Reach into my top pocket.

The Colonel comes around from behind the desk and reaches into Louis's top pocket. He Pulls out a slip of paper, he unfolds it and reads.

The blood drains from his face and he begins to rip it up.

LOUIS
That won't make any difference. I phoned the General last night. He should be here any minute.

EXT. COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY

A Staff Car flying a flag with two stars pulls up and parks. The soldiers all around come to complete attention.

Getting out of the car is **GENERAL MANN** (60's) tall authoritative. He is dressed in his Class A fatigues. He calmly walks up the steps and into the building.

INT. COLONELS OFFICE - DAY

General Mann walks in, and everyone except Norman, Sarah and Katie snap to attention. General Mann eyes the Colonel with disdain.

(CONTINUED)

COLONEL
General, what a pleasant surprise.

GENERAL MANN
Don't say another word Colonel. I am aware of your arrangement. You may want a lawyer. You are hereby relieved of duty.

Earl has to speak up.

EARL
It was my fault Sir. The Coach lost his way we came down to help him find it, and I guess, I needed it too.

The General turns to the MP's.

GENERAL MANN
Release those men.

NORMAN
Now wait here General.

GENERAL MANN
You may be a big Shot in the City, but not out here. Your money's no good.

Sarah is confused by the turn of events. Louis explains the situation.

LOUIS
The Colonel was taking money to make sure a certain someone, namely Tillman avoided the draft.

SPENCER
He was taking kickbacks.

LOUIS
He has a nice piece of real estate in Panama City.

SPENCER
I wouldn't plan on retiring there.

GENERAL MANN
And it seems Norman coerced your Principal. Threatened him with the loss of his job. I don't know if you two know what century we're

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL MANN (cont'd)
living in, but you can't just bully
people. Not on my watch.

NORMAN
Now whose the fool, money is power.

LOUIS
Your going to need all of it on a
good defense attorney for you and
your son.

The General turns to Louis.

GENERAL MANN
Your not out of the hot seat
either.

LOUIS
I know.

SPENCER
Court Martial?

GENERAL MANN
That's right, if you were in the
army.

Louis and Spencer look confused.

GENERAL MANN
I'm charging you with trespassing.
Fifty dollar fine, pay me then both
of you go back to doing what you do
best. I'll have your discharge
papers sent to you.

LOUIS
Sir?

The General turns to Earl.

GENERAL MANN
Because if you can turn out boys of
character like this, we need more
men like you.

Sara looks on proudly, Katie goes and hugs Earl.

KATIE
Why didn't you tell me?

EARL

I'm sorry.

SARAH

(to Louis)

I'm sorry too.

LOUIS

I just ran away.

SARAH

You don't have to run anymore.

Spencer always looking on the bright side.

SPENCER

See I told you it would work.

EXT. WILLIAMS HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

SEVERAL MONTHS LATER

Fall has come, the leaves have turned to vibrant colors. It is the **FIRST GAME** of the new school year. The stadium is packed and with a carnival type atmosphere.

Sarah and Katie sit together in the stand, they are nervous wrecks watching the game. General Mann strides up the steps of the bleachers to them.

GENERAL MANN

Mind if I join you?

SARAH

Of course not.

The General settles in then cups his hands over his mouth and yells.

GENERAL MANN

Come on boys!

The team has the home field advantage but the visiting team is a powerhouse. Louis and his boys are having a rough go of it. The game has been going on a while. The score is in the opposing teams favor. We see the score board.

HOME 14 VISITOR 21 FOURTH AND GOAL.

Louis and Spencer pay keen attention, pacing back and forth on the sideline. Louis talks to himself.

(CONTINUED)

LOUIS
You can do it.

The boys and other team form up on scrimmage line. A Surly monster **TACKLE** Points a finger at Earl.

TACKLE
Your going down little man.

Tuck gives the opposing tackle the eye sizing him up.

Earl puts his hands under the Center.

EARL
Ready set Hut! Hut!

The ball is snapped and the huge Tackle pile drives through the line knocking Tuck aside. He plows towards Earl. Seeing him coming and no Tuck, Earl makes split decision and runs ball.

The other teams quick reaction cuts him short of a yard. Tuck disgusted with himself pounds dirt.

The Boys huddle up.

EARL
We're going for the turnaround.

TUCK
No, we've got to punt.

SANDY
No time.

EARL
That's right, if we tie it up, we can go to sudden death.

SANDY
An onside kick?

EARL
Exactly.

The boys break with a clap. Louis and Spencer on the sideline wonder what's going on.

SPENCER
What's he doing?

LOUIS
(proudly)
Winning.

Earl assumes his position behind the center.

EARL
Ready Set, Hut! Hut! Hut!

Again the tackle tries to roll through, but this time Tuck is ready. With a full body blow he sends the opposing tackle reeling.

TUCK
I'm coming for you. Asshole!

Back to Earl who faints left as Sandy comes around for fake hand off. The other team is caught off guard. Earl goes right, and Sandy takes off down field.

It's now poetry in motion as Sandy approaches the end zone. Earl dodges another Tackle, and lets the ball fly.

Spiraling in air it loops in slow ark all the way to the cradle of Sandy's arms. TOUCHDOWN.

The crowd goes wild, but it's still not over. Then the kick field goal **GOOD!** On Scoreboard:

Home: 21 Visitor: 21.

The teams line up for the kick-off. The boys eye one another, head signals shore up their intention.

The kicker runs up to the ball and slightly stumbles kicking it barely passed the 50 yard line. Sandy is at full steam and pounces on it. They've recovered.

Now to the drive. Play, after play, they inch the ball back to goal now only yards away.

Earl sets up in a shotgun formation, the ball is snapped and the line rushes forward. He peels right, then left, dodging tackles. He has no clear throw with Sandy completely covered. Earl takes it up the middle.

Sarah and Katie are on their feet cheering him on.

Earl, like superman goes up and over the line, flying into end zone. **TOUCHDOWN GAME OVER.**

Everyone is on their feet, the General hugs Sarah, then Katie they are all smiles.

(CONTINUED)

Louis falls to knees, emotionally drained. Frankie picks up water cooler and dumps on Louis head. The player scoop up Earl on their shoulders. The other boys on the sideline pick up Louis the two groups meet in the center of the field.

Louis reaches across and shakes Earl's hand.

Later the team lines up for a photograph. Earl holds the game ball.

INT. EARL ALIEN'S HOME - DAY PRESENT

Earl's eyes glaze over with tears of nostalgia. A gentle elderly female hand caresses his shoulder. Earl looks up into Katie's eyes, his wife of sixty years.

EARL

Do you remember it?

KATIE

Like it was yesterday.

EARL

Doesn't seem like all that long ago.

KATIE

That's because we were young, and those moments stay that way.

Back to the old picture of the team.

EARL (V.O.)

Norman Pendant fought the law suit for years finally loosing his fortune. Louis went on to win two state championships and Tillman wound up selling insurance.

(beat)

I had lost my real father, but that Summer I gained so much more

His eyes glance at Louis, Spencer, Frankie and rest of the team and finally himself. All young and full of life.

FADE OUT

THE END