

**LITTLE COSMONAUTS**

By

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**PART I - IT'S A HAPPY WORLD**

**EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

Behind one of the building's windows, students are talking, laughing and shouting - except for ONE who is sitting behind his desk - writing. No teacher is in sight.

**INT. MONTGOMERY'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS**

JOSEPH WITWER - calm and reserved - hunches over his desk, seemingly concentrated on his work.

Joey sighs and looks out the window at the TREE beside the school entrance - massive and covered in green leaves.

He continues his work.

Someone is whistling loudly. HARRISON BLYTHE - tall and buff - nonchalantly enters the classroom and is greeted by his friends. They say hi to each other.

SONNY

(Heading towards Joey)

A Monday morning's worth of jolly  
hell. And I arrive before SHE did,  
with a few minutes to spare. Miracles,  
miracles...

Sonny sits on top of Joey's desk. He glances at Joey's writing.

SONNY

Joey! All is good?

JOEY

All is good.

SONNY

Is it fun?

JOEY

What is?

SONNY

Whatever it is you're doing.

JOEY

Oh. I don't know. It's work.

SONNY

Okay.

(Beat)

Anyways...?

JOEY

Yeah, I did it - you're sitting on top.

SONNY

Well look at that. Moved to hear you say that really. You know - this reminds me of the other night. I was just walking down the road with the guys and-

JOEY

-Harrison, I...

SONNY

All right, all right. Don't worry. That's okay. If you want to keep this strictly professional - that's fine by me.

JOEY (V.O.)

You said it - strictly professional.

JOEY

All right.

SONNY

Okay. Enjoy.

Sonny grabs the papers he was sitting on.

JOEY (V.O.)

Why don't you ask for my lunch money

while you're at it?

SONNY

Thanks.

Humming, Sonny leaves with the papers and comfortably sits on top of the TEACHER'S DESK. A few of his friends approach him and they all start goofing around. He starts tapping the desk with a PEN.

Joey gives him a steely gaze.

Sonny and his friends are aiming rolled up papers at the trashcan.

Joey continues writing.

Noises start accumulating - the students' voices seem almost desperate now.

STUDENT (O.S.)

She's coming! She's coming!

Everyone panics. Sonny and his friends scramble out of the teacher's desk.

Joey slowly organizes his books.

Everyone desperately gets to their seats.

Strict-looking - MISSUS MONTGOMERY steps in her classroom. The bell rings. Everyone is silent.

She heads directly towards the board and starts writing.

MONTGOMERY

(Southern accent)

Good morning class.

EVERYONE

(Uncoordinated)

Good morning Missus Montgomery.

MONTGOMERY

If I am correct, last class we left off with page 98 - 1917 revolution?

Joey raises his hand.

MONTGOMERY

Yes Witwer?

JOEY

Yes Missus Montgomery, we left off with page 98.

MONTGOMERY

Good. Write this down. For Wednesday; questions 1 through 9, page 102.

Half the class grunts.

MONTGOMERY

Now, about our current assignment. Anyone wish to start?

Sonny mockingly raises his hand.

MONTGOMERY

Blythe... Good. Question 1; who had control over the country's provisional government?

Sonny confidently looks at his paper but falters.

Joey seems unmoved.

SONNY

(Laughing nervously)

I... I actually don't know. I didn't do this one - just this one.

MONTGOMERY

You don't know?

SONNY

No.

MONTGOMERY

It's in your notes - you ought to

know.

(Beat)

Anyone?

Silence. She heads towards her desk and sights Sonny's pen. She holds it for the class to see.

MONTGOMERY

Whose pen is this?

(Beat)

I'm not going to be the one to remind you of the rules, am I?

(Beat)

Witwer, concerning the school rules, tell me about the teacher's desk.

JOEY

We do not touch anything on the teacher's desk or the desk itself.

MONTGOMERY

Good. Whose pen is this? I'm asking, you ought to answer.

Nobody answers.

MONTGOMERY

All right then. Everyone write your name on a piece of paper.

The students start writing. Sonny turns around to the desk behind him.

SONNY

(Whispering)

Quick. Give me a pen.

MONTGOMERY

Harrison Blythe! Are you searching for your pen?

SONNY

Yes Missus Montgomery.

MONTGOMERY

You don't keep a spare?

SONNY

No.

MONTGOMERY

(Laying the pen on  
Sonny's table)

Then you must be looking for this. How many times have I said that a student sits down behind a student's desk... and it's the teacher who sits behind the teacher's desk? Ever heard of rules?

SONNY

Rules? Should I OUGHT TO KNOW what are those?

MONTGOMERY

Don't you get cocky with me - not in this class. This won't get you anywhere. Understood?

He doesn't answer.

MONTGOMERY

No answer means detention - detention means less time for you to fool around. I asked you if you understood.

SONNY

I do Missus Montgomery.

Montgomery goes back to the board.

MONTGOMERY

Blythe, do you know whose government we're talking about?

SONNY

Yeah, the soviets'.

JOEY (V.O.)

What are you - stupid?

MONTGOMERY

Start by opening your notebook.

(To the rest)

Anyone have an answer?

Joey raises his hand.

MONTGOMERY

Yes Witwer?

Before answering, Joey glances at Sonny. He proceeds to give his full attention to Montgomery's class.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

The bell rings.

Joey stores his books in his locker. While doing so, he scans the hallway.

Sonny is located a few lockers away with his friends - next to a WET FLOOR SIGN.

SONNY

(To his friends)

The guy tackled me and - Boom! BROKEN SHOULDER. Out a few weeks they told-

Joey closes his locker. He looks at Montgomery, who is closing the door to her classroom.

JOEY (V.O.)

All right. She's my witness.

Joey heads towards Sonny.

JOEY

Hey Harrison.



SONNY

Joey.

JOEY

I'm sorry about today. I forgot to fill in a few things. You know - lots of work to do.

SONNY

Pff. No worries, no hard feelings.

JOEY

No but really - I wanted to-

SONNY

-Joey, Joey. It's nothing. Honestly, my priorities aren't all that present in that class, I-

JOEY

(His hand heading for  
Sonny's shoulder)

-Look, I'm sorry-

Joey grabs hold of Sonny's shoulder. Instantaneously, he slaps Joey's hand.

Stumbling, Joey slips on the wet floor and falls. He closes his eyes.

BEA (O.S.)

Joey, are you all right? Hey. Are you okay?

Joey opens his eyes. BEATRICE DOYLE - wavy curls and glasses - is kneeled next to him.

Sonny looks confused.

SONNY

I-I...

MONTGOMERY (O.S.)

Harrison Blythe! In here.

Montgomery signals him to get in her classroom. Sonny sighs.  
He goes to Montgomery.

JOEY

(To Bea)

Yeah?

BEA

Here - I'll help you up.

Helping him up, she glances back at Sonny cautiously - as if protecting Joey.

BEA

That was like that movie you were telling me about. I don't know what got over him.

JOEY

Yeah. You - you remembered.

BEA

Why of course sire, why wouldn't I?

Joey rubs his leg.

BEA

You sure you're all right?

JOEY

Forget about it. It's nothing.

BEA

And you're the one who told me wet floors break bones.

(Beat)

Well, let's go - shall we?

They walk along the hallway - talking.

JOEY (V.O.)

You know the story already; my modest friend turned dream girl. And, if you were to ask me now - I'd say we're getting there.

**CUT TO BLACK**

**PART II - HOMECOMING KING**

**EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY**

Students start leaving the cafeteria with food trays and lunch boxes, settling down in the empty schoolyard.

MARVIN ROBINS - hard as a rock - is passing through the cafeteria's doors - awkwardly carrying his lunch bag and a load of BOOKS.

JOEY (V.O.)

Marvin Robins...

He accidently drops his books and someone kneels down to grab them - a NERDY-LOOKING girl. She hands them over. Talking to the girl, Marvin smiles nervously and shifts from side to side.

JOEY (V.O.)

Who would have guessed? Harriet Reed... Man, his technique is really off point. He's leaning too much on his dorky side. You know? Stop shaking you might explode or something. What do you want - to explode? Want to explode into little Marvin particles?

Bea emerges from the cafeteria next to Harriet.

JOEY (V.O.)

Oh. Hello there.

They share a few words. The girls leave. Marvin looks around awkwardly.

Joey - sitting alone on the steps leading to the main building, facing the cafeteria - raises his hand to Marvin.

Marvin heads towards Joey and sits down next to him. He starts rearranging his books.

JOEY

How you doing Marv?

MARVIN

I'm good.

Marvin takes off his over-bloated backpack - it has a BOY SCOUT BADGE pinned on its side.

JOEY

Lots of work?

MARVIN

Yes. You?

JOEY

Just as much. Listen - homecoming is this weekend.

MARVIN

Yes. I know.

JOEY

Well? I saw you talking to Harriet there. I mean - get out of here.

MARVIN

(Getting back up)

Oh.

JOEY

(Bringing Marvin back)

No, no. It was metaphorical. It's just that.. Look at you. What were you talking about back there?

MARVIN

About nothing.

JOEY

Come on. You're a block of stone and

you wobbled like one back there. You like Harriet?

MARVIN

No. I don't like Harriet. I mean - I don't like her in that way.

JOEY

You sure?

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

Well if you ever need any help - just know - I'm this business's equivalent of a teacher.

MARVIN

Do you like someone?

JOEY

No.

JOEY (V.O.)

What a classic.

JOEY

So... You going?

MARVIN

Where?

JOEY

To homecoming.

MARVIN

I don't know.

JOEY

You don't know? What do you mean you don't know?

MARVIN

It's not for me.

(Beat)

I have work.

JOEY

Yeah me too... Well, maybe we should make an exception - just a little one. You know?

MARVIN

I don't know.

JOEY

I mean - I get it. I do. But this - homecoming - it could really lead somewhere.

(Beat)

You know the importance of knowing where you want to be. Don't you? Not many do. It's me, you and a few others like Bea. You know?

MARVIN

Bea?

JOEY

Yeah. She knows her priorities.

MARVIN

How do you know?

JOEY

I just do. She's the type that makes it through college with straight A's and goes off and starts a family.

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

So listen to me here. You can't start a family if you don't know anyone. And what place is better to meet someone than homecoming?

MARVIN

It's just that... I'm...

JOEY

Don't worry. Homecoming is the place of revolutions - remember that.

Joey looks at Marvin's Boy Scout badge. He unpins it. He stands up and hands it to Marvin.

JOEY

Take this and get up for just a sec.

Marvin awkwardly gets up.

JOEY

Now kneel.

Marvin stares confused.

JOEY

I said kneel.

Marvin kneels.

JOEY

Now hold your Boy Scout thing up to me.

Marvin does so.

JOEY

Now say: "Would you marry me?"

MARVIN

What?

JOEY

Come on. "Honey, would you marry me?"  
Say it.

MARVIN

Umm... Would - would you marry me?

JOEY

(Grabbing the badge)

Yeah. I would.

Joey sits down and hands the badge back.

JOEY

See? That wasn't so hard. Now you can do that to anyone just as long as you go to homecoming - and just as long as it isn't me again.

Marvin chuckles. He looks at Joey - convinced.

MARVIN

Do I need to ask someone out before...?

JOEY

No, we don't do that here - not part of the culture.

MARVIN

Okay. I'll have to see.

Joey looks around the playground - at all the eating students.

JOEY (V.O.)

How do you think these guys will show up tomorrow?

Sonny and his friends are goofing around at the bottom of a tree.

JOEY (V.O.)

You just wait till they show up packed in their fiery Mustang, greasing their hair back and showing off their new



jackets. When things get tight,  
homecoming is great for straightening  
these guys out.

Bea eats with Harriet nearby.

JOEY (V.O.)

Tonight you're going to one of you're  
friends' house to get your makeover  
and tomorrow - gone are those glasses  
and gone are those curls. As much as I  
like them - there's nothing no one can  
do about it.

Joey looks at Marvin - rearranging his books again.

JOEY (V.O.)

And you... I think I've found someone  
that understands - that knows all this  
waiting and hard work pays off in the  
end. You're my other me. My best man.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT**

The music roars. Joey and Marvin - dressed in suits -  
struggle to make their way through the dancing crowd.

They spot Harriet and Bea - no change in appearance - on THE  
STANDS. Suddenly, Sonny appears next to them with boxed wine.  
He sits down and starts talking to them.

Joey looks at Marvin doubtfully and pats his shoulder.

JOEY

(Drowned by the music)

Now's the time.

MARVIN

What?

Joey is already on his way.

Joey and Marvin both arrive at the stands - the music is  
softer here. Sonny is sitting right next to Bea.

JOEY

How's it going over here?

SONNY

Great, great. I was just asking around  
- seeing how others were living the  
party.

BEA

Living the party indeed.

HARRIET

Yep.

JOEY

Great. Mind if we come live the party  
here?

SONNY

Not at all. Come over, come over.

Joey and Marvin sit. Joey gives Sonny a quick menacing glare  
- which he does not see because he's drinking.

JOEY

So... Y'all living the party then?

SONNY

Not yet. I'll be leaving unconscious  
on an ambulance.

JOEY

What's that you got there?

SONNY

Booze. You want some?

JOEY

No, I'm not the type.

SONNY

Anyone?

EVERYONE

No.

JOEY

How d'you sneak it in? Like past the teachers and all?

SONNY

How did - Ha! The teachers... Ah, Joey. Here - have some.

JOEY

No, perfectly fine without it.

SONNY

Have it your way.

JOEY

No but really - how did you get it in? Big package. It's too big to go unnoticed. Don't you think so, Bea?

BEA

Yeah, that's true.

JOEY

Marv? Harriet?

MARVIN AND HARRIET

Yes.

SONNY

I don't know. I just did it. Didn't have to think twice about it.

Joey leans in and grabs hold of the boxed wine - examining its dimensions. He shakes his head in denial.

SONNY

Well maybe you should try some. Then you'll see how easy it is.

JOEY

No, no.

SONNY

Come on.

JOEY

No.

Sonny grabs the wine and tries to force it down Joey's mouth.

SONNY

Please, you'll love it.

JOEY

No, no.

Joey swallows a few gulps of wine.

JOEY (V.O.)

Delicious, the cheap taste of plastic  
and the sweet-

BEA

-Hey, he said he didn't want some.

JOEY (V.O.)

Perfect.

SONNY

Well it won't happen again Missus.

JOEY

And I won't drink again - never.

SONNY

Oh, so that's why you never go to  
parties.

JOEY

No, it's actually because of all the  
work I have.

SONNY

Oh, because of that.

JOEY

Yeah. You know... school. I spend eight hours a day in this hellhole and spend the rest sixteen thinking about it. But it'll pay off - in the end.

SONNY

Whatever you say boss. And you Marv?

MARVIN

What?

SONNY

Why don't you go?

MARVIN

Where to?

SONNY

Never mind.

(To the girls)

No point in asking you two.

Bea and Harriet smile. Joey shifts uncomfortably.

JOEY

Hey Harrison, I think you've got a little stain on your suit.

Sonny searches for the stain. He doesn't find it.

SONNY

Where?

Joey goes and squeezes himself between Sonny and Bea. He rubs Sonny's collar.

JOEY

There. Good as new.

Joey looks distastefully at Sonny - almost excluded from the

circle.

JOEY

The stain could have been worse. Like in that movie I told you about. Remember Bea?

BEA

I do.

(Beat)

That scene with the stain - it was almost nauseating. It all felt so enclosed - you know?

JOEY

Yeah.

BEA

And then by the time it was over - wow - it was a relief - a huge relief. I felt free all over again. I don't know how it was done but that's just what I felt. Magic, right?

JOEY

Well, there's a whole technique behind it but it's pretty much what you just said.

Joey looks at Marvin and Harriet - both uncomfortably quiet.

JOEY

You know this one?

They shake their heads. Joey turns towards Sonny - bored.

JOEY

And you?

SONNY

Nope. I don't really watch anything.

JOEY

Well, it's just like the one with the white flowers.

Sonny doesn't understand.

MARVIN

The one with the lawyers? I've seen this one. It's a classic.

JOEY

It is. You know this one, Harriet?

HARRIET

No, I don't think so.

JOEY

Well then Marv can take the time to talk to you about it. All right Marv?

MARVIN

Oh, okay.

Uncomfortably, Marv starts talking to her. His voice fades into the background.

BEA

The one with the lawyers was good. I liked it.

JOEY

I know right? What makes it great is how it all connects in the end.

BEA

(Thinks)

Yeah. Of course.

(Beat)

But what I liked most about it was how it made me feel - like it was all super weird, almost like you were floating, kind of like..

MARVIN (O.S.)

Like a dream.

Marvin had finished talking to Harriet.

BEA

Yeah. Exactly like a dream. I love how it shows you whatever it wants - it's really special.

MARVIN

It's like a-

JOEY

(Unconvinced)

-Almost seems like magic...

Joey turns to Sonny - bored and grabbing his head.

JOEY

So you don't like movies?

SONNY

I don't know. Watch one from time to time. Explosions and... the fun stuff.

JOEY

The fun stuff? You know those movies are all the same right?

SONNY

I don't know. I haven't watched enough to notice.

JOEY

Well they are. And they're pretty bad for the most part.

SONNY

Pretty fun to me. A movie can show me whatever and I'll still be entertained.



JOEY

No. A movie can't show you whatever - everything has to be calculated. Or else it's just a mix of nothing.

SONNY

How do you know?

JOEY

Look. You know how you watch a two-hour movie and feel like you already know the characters? And it's only been two hours - you just met them and now you know just about everything about them. And it's only because we don't see them washing the dishes or hanging out with their buddies. You see - that just doesn't matter. What matters are the big steps - the milestones - those decisive choices that make them who they are. Hmm? You following?

Joey glances at Bea.

SONNY

Okay. I guess so.

JOEY

And also - it can't show you all things. Some are just illogical.

SONNY

Hmm.

JOEY

Like two different things don't always fit together. For example, you can't expect a movie to work if you mix a western with a space-

SONNY

-All right, all right. I get it.

(Beat)

I thought you said you worked all day.

JOEY

Yeah, I do. I'm always constantly-

SONNY

-Then how do you know so much about movies?

Long silence. Joey stares at him coldly.

SONNY

(Chuckling)

Well - anyways - you can talk about movies all day. I'll be with chilling with the guys now. Nighty-night.

He leaves.

JOEY

He shouldn't drink. It affects his thinking.

Bea nods reassuringly.

The four sit in silence. Joey looks at Bea - he's nervous - even scared.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT**

Joey and Marvin are sitting alone on the gym's stands, both bored. Joey seems uneasy.

MARVIN

Hypothetically speaking... If - and this is a huge "if" - if I were to like Harriet... What should I do?

JOEY

I thought you'd never ask. Look, I'd-

MARVIN

-Do you like someone?

JOEY

(Thinks)

Yes.

MARVIN

Who?

JOEY

You'll see.

MARVIN

How are we going to do this? It has to be tonight.

JOEY

Hey, what got you running now? Don't worry. It's all planned already.

MARVIN

Hmm. We're wasting time.

JOEY

No. Never think you're wasting time by waiting. Never.

MARVIN

Okay.

JOEY

Look, why are we doing this?

MARVIN

I don't know.

JOEY

Sure you do. After tonight - we can finally rest and be happy. You'll be with your hypothetical Harriet and I'll be with... a certain someone.

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

We're gonna get there. All right? You see - people like you and me - we start out humble. But we're the ones who are going to rule when we get older. We're millionaires in the making, we're the bosses, the salary gods, and we're the ones who are going to be happy with who we are as people. Right?

MARVIN

Right.

JOEY

Now... We look at the jocks, we look at the princesses, we look at all those who think that are better and then we have to say... they're not. Because they just aren't. Their popularity is their title of nobility. And that title is just a title - it's completely worthless. It just covers up their bankruptcy. You know? They throw their royal parties whenever and wherever but where does that leave them tomorrow? You following?

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

Good. So... Whatever they say about us, remember - it's the nerd who wins in the end. And it's the nerd and the geek and the dork and those minorities who have to think about where they're gonna be tomorrow that prosper. It's all going to be all right for us.

MARVIN

Yes. Exactly. Exactly!

Marvin seems to lighten up - as if breaking through his rigid self.

JOEY

Tell me - are you happy right now?

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

Good. Now, just remember this is nothing compared to what we're going for. When we get there, we'll have it all - multiply this happiness by the hundreds and you're just barely scratching the surface - and then, you'll look back at this moment and say - "If only I knew what awaited me."

Marvin calms down.

Marvin straightens his bow tie. He then nervously straightens Joey's.

MARVIN

There you go.

He starts leaving.

JOEY

Wait.

Joey tidies up Marvin's hair quickly.

JOEY

You look great. You look like a boss.

MARVIN

I do?

JOEY

I'd even say you look perfect for the

job. Now, you are going to walk up to her - looking perfect as I said - and do your thing. All right? Good luck.

Marvin smiles.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SCHOOL GYM - CONTINUOUS**

Joey and Marvin face the crowd. Joey breathes heavily. He spots Sonny nearby - goofing around. He sighs.

JOEY

This is the moment. This is the moment  
- all right? This is it.

Marvin has already gone into the crowd.

JOEY (V.O.)

Who would have guessed I taught so  
well? Well, just one more step now.

Joey heads towards Sonny - jumping around with his boxed wine.

Joey passes by next to him. Sonny accidentally bumps into him - spilling a little wine on his suit.

JOEY

Hey, Watch it!

SONNY

Joey? You want some booze?

JOEY

You almost spilled some of that on my  
suit.

SONNY

Sorry, didn't see you coming.

JOEY

Oh. You didn't see me coming. So that  
fixes it?

SONNY

No. I'm sorry.

JOEY

Ts. What a schnook.

SONNY

You know - I'm happy. I'm very happy.

JOEY

You're homecoming king?

SONNY

No. Are you?

JOEY

No.

SONNY

Doesn't matter. Well, I'll be going.

JOEY

Wait a second now. You don't do this again. You don't go around spilling wine over people suits - all right? You hear me?

SONNY

Sure.

JOEY

You don't do this again. You don't.. All right - go.

Sonny leaves and immediately goes back to jumping around elsewhere.

Joey stares at the crowd - a huge COMMOTION is occurring.

JOEY (V.O.)

Only one thing left for me to do..

Joey falters. However, someone slowly and angelically walks out of the crowd - Bea.

She smiles at Joey, heads towards the end of the room and leans back against the wall.

JOEY (V.O.)

Where the music is soft. Genius.

Joey heads towards her and leans against the wall too - SHOULDER TO SHOULDER with her.

JOEY

So... Living the party?

BEA

I sure am.

JOEY

Seems like they are too. Quite a commotion.

BEA

People tend to exaggerate things.

JOEY

These people...

BEA

You smell like wine.

JOEY

It's Harrison. He spilled some on me.

BEA

Oh.

JOEY

Yeah. Apparently he just isn't able to do anything that doesn't involve ruining someone's day.

BEA



Well... he is the loud type.

JOEY

Yeah. He's the loud type. He's the dumb type. He's the popular type. He's the bad type. You know?

BEA

Yeah, maybe.

JOEY

I mean - he knew I clearly didn't want to drink. I don't want to get involved in that stuff. You know? But still, he makes me drink it and then gets the stuff all over me.

BEA

He shouldn't have.

JOEY

You know - he's so reckless. Parents should teach their children not to be this reckless. People aren't supposed to be like that. Or else look what happens.

BEA

Hmm.

(Beat)

Your suit still looks good - I don't think much wine got on it.

JOEY

Oh, thanks. I might have said this already but you too look great in your dress.

BEA

Thanks. You hadn't said it.

JOEY

Oh. Well I'm saying it now. You know - the color and the overall shape - it really suits you.

BEA

Thanks. You too look good in your suit.

JOEY

Thanks. You did say that though.

BEA

I know.

JOEY

(Drowned by the music)

You know - I've always thought that your eyes were pretty special. They've always reminded me of-

BEA

-What? Sorry I didn't catch that.

Bea stands up properly. On the other side of her dress - previously unseen - Marvin's BOY SCOUT BADGE is pinned on.

Joey stares at the badge - surprised and then worried. He looks up at Bea again in shock.

JOEY

Oh... You know - I was just saying that... that your eyes reminded me of something but I can't remember what - you know...?

BEA

Oh.

JOEY

And also when I... complemented your dress - I wasn't... I was just saying I liked the color and the overall shape of it. As in "your dress is

interesting".

BEA

Interesting?

JOEY

You know. Interesting - it's cool - it's unique. It's like the one from that movie I told you about.

BEA

I don't...

JOEY

Don't worry, it's nothing. Forget about it. I just liked the color of it.

BEA

Oh. Okay, thanks again.

Ugly ever-lasting silence.

BEA

Which movie did you mean?

JOEY

I... I don't remember.

BEA

Cause I think I know which one it is. The one with the train maybe?

JOEY

Hmm. That's probably the one.

BEA

Yeah... I liked it.

JOEY

That's great.

(Beat)

Look - I think I'm going to-

MARVIN (O.S.)

-Hey guys, wait up!

Marvin emerges from the crazy crowd. The crowd is cheering for him. Marvin arrives next to Bea and they hold each other. Joey tries not to look.

Marvin winks at Joey. Joey manages to show him a nervous little thumbs up. His other hand curls into a fist.

Bea and Marvin smile at one another and kiss.

JOEY

So... C-Congratulations.

BEA

Thanks.

MARVIN

I think we're in for the long run.

(To Bea)

Unless you think differently of course.

They both laugh.

JOEY

Wow. You're... You know - I just never saw you two together. Didn't know you got along so well.

MARVIN

Maybe you just never saw us.

JOEY

Yeah. I guess I never did... Anyways, I'll think I'll leave you two for the moment. All right?

Before giving them the time to answer, Joey turns his back on them and walks away.

Anxiety-filled - he tries to make his way through the crowd. However, the crowd seems to trap him as he desperately tries to reach an exit.

**CUT TO BLACK**

**PART III - REJECTION**

**INT. MONTGOMERY'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Silence. Montgomery is talking but Joey can't bring himself to listen. He tries to pay attention but keeps zoning out.

The bell rings. It is as if he awakens.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

No teacher is present. The class is a mess. Everyone is talking and shouting but Joey sits alone behind his desk - staring blankly at Marvin and Bea. Everyone else claps and cheers at them.

SONNY (O.S.)

Look at these champs! Congratulations.

Joey slouches on his desk and buries his head in his hands - falling asleep.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey wakes up disoriented. The class is still a mess.

NORA (O.S.)

(Barely distinguishable  
from all the noise)

Quiet children...

NORA PEACE - plump, old and unmoved by the noise - sits behind the teacher's desk - scrolling through her computer.

Joey sighs and looks around. Only Marvin and Bea are actually working.

JOEY (V.O.)

That was deep sleep. I'm talking about  
1<sup>st</sup> degree felony here and I just got

away with it.

(Beat)

Look at this hellhole... This place is a mess. Look at all these guys... fooling around...

Sonny and his friends are moving a desk across the room.

The bell rings.

NORA

All right children, remember to finish your essays for tomorrow. Done individually please. Goodbye.

She leaves the room.

Joey looks over at Sonny and thinks. He approaches him.

JOEY

Hey.

SONNY

Joey.

JOEY

You doing that essay?

SONNY

Nah - don't think so. Why?

JOEY

Neither do I.

SONNY

You're kidding right?

JOEY

No.

(Beat)

Or you know what? Yeah, I'll do it.  
Pass by the library after last period

and I'll give it to you.

SONNY

Whatever you say boss.

JOEY

All right.

Sonny leaves satisfied. Marvin and Bea approach Joey.

MARVIN

Hey Joseph, you're doing it with him.

JOEY

I know.

MARVIN

Missus Peace said the essay had to be done individually.

JOEY

Yeah, I heard her.

MARVIN

Bea, don't you think he shouldn't do this?

BEA

Yeah, maybe.

JOEY

Well - it's only one little change in plans.

#### **INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY - DAY**

Joey and Sonny are sitting on either side of the table. Joey is writing and working while Sonny is playing with his pen.

JOEY (V.O.)

Look at this guy. Thinks he's got it all figured out. Come on. What do you think you're doing? Leave the pen alone. Is that so hard? Just leave the

pen and get to work.

Sonny flicks his pen and it lands on Joey's notebook.

SONNY

Oops.

JOEY

You're gonna stop?

SONNY

Why am I still here?

JOEY

Because I told you so.

SONNY

What for? I'm useless.

JOEY

No.

SONNY

What's that you've got plugged in your ears?

JOEY

I've got nothing.

SONNY

Then you heard me and you heard all the teachers. I'm useless.

JOEY

Why don't you work? I mean, look at you - and look at what the teachers think of you - you're going nowhere.

SONNY

Where are you going - Vegas?

JOEY



You'll see.

SONNY

Good for you.

JOEY

You didn't answer.

SONNY

I know. Look, I have better things to do outside of school. I'd rather break my back from a car crash than from sitting all day long. But I'm glad you think differently, I'm glad you're happy with all this and I'm glad you're doing my homework.

JOEY

I'm happy with school?

SONNY

You sure do seem the type that is.

JOEY

I'll only be happy with school once I leave it. And - didn't you say you didn't care about school? Why do you care if I do your homework or not? Do you care or do you not?

SONNY

I don't. But if I trick the system, I have fun. And if I get caught tricking the system, I get that rush.

JOEY

You're a mess. You know that? I mean - look at your grades.

SONNY

Grades - what? To get me to Vegas? I don't give a damn. I don't care where I'm at in ten years. I don't even care

about what I'll be doing tomorrow - or even in five minutes. I don't care about what your school has to offer. I have a life.

JOEY

(Angry)

Well then why don't you go?

SONNY

Because now I'm having fun.

(Whispering)

We're in the library.

Silence. Thinking, Joey stares at Sonny.

Joey gives Sonny back his pen.

JOEY

So, if you get caught cheating the system - you're okay with that?

SONNY

I call it the rush.

Joey hands Sonny one of his papers.

JOEY

Copy the introduction and the third paragraph. And change the words.

SONNY

What about the second one?

JOEY

The second one - you either leave it in blank or you do it yourself.

SONNY

Why would I do that when I can just copy everything?

JOEY

Try reading the second paragraph. I quoted Orwell. You know who that is?

SONNY

Should I?

JOEY

Just ask yourself what would happen if you handed Nora an assignment where you quoted Orwell. And what would happen if I just happened to quote him too? It's obvious, she'll know. I mean - come on.

SONNY

Does she even care? And why should she judge me that way and just guess that it wasn't you who copied me.

JOEY

Because they all know it's you who doesn't care.

SONNY

Exactly, I don't see the issue here. I don't care about getting caught.

JOEY

But I do.

Joey hands him another paper.

JOEY

Just copy the last three sentences in the fourth.

SONNY

Whoa. Too much. The fun has now expired. Now you're definitely crossing the boundaries of bad companionship.

JOEY

Bad companionship? I'm trying to help you here. If you're going to copy, you're gonna have to copy well. If you don't copy well, you don't copy at all.

(Beat)

You know... I have a serious job opportunity for you.

Sonny looks at Joey suspiciously.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Nora hands Joey his corrected assignment, an A+.

NORA

Good job.

She heads to the next desk and hands over another assignment.

Nora arrives at Sonny's desk and hands him his assignment, a B+. Over many voices, Joey listens to Sonny and Nora.

NORA

You did a pretty good job here.

SONNY

Thanks.

NORA

Am I sensing a change here, Harrison?

SONNY

I don't know but I trust your senses.

NORA

Please be honest Harrison. Did you do this by yourself?

SONNY

Yes, of course. That's what you wanted, isn't it?

(Worried)

Nora, you did say this was to be done individually, right?

JOEY (V.O.)

That was a fine touch.

NORA

I did. That's why I'm asking. It was just curious to me that you would have handed over this assignment when I had seen no change in you - at all.

She slowly and inquisitively raises an eyebrow.

SONNY

No change? Please, Nora. If you would allow me to say so - I think I've been progressing a lot in English lately.

NORA

What makes you say so?

SONNY

I think I have a gift for spotting figures of speech. I'm seeing metaphors everywhere I go now.

He chuckles. Some students around Sonny stop talking and tune in to the conversation.

NORA

Figures of speech... Metaphors... That's good.

SONNY

Yeah. And I've been practicing my reading too.

NORA

Reading? That's good. What have you been reading?

SONNY

Orwell.

The whole class has gone silent and is now listening to this conversation.

NORA

That's great. Joseph over here quoted Orwell on his assignment. I'm just curious, what did you read?

Sonny glances quickly at Joey - who signals with his hands: a 1, a 9, an 8 and a 4.

SONNY

1,9,8 and 4.

Joey grabs his head.

JOEY (V.O.)

What are you - stupid?

NORA

You mean 1984?

SONNY

Oh, so that's what people call it. You know - I've been researching literature on my own so I never had anyone say the name to me before. Thanks for clearing that up by the way. I had my doubts.

A student behind Sonny snickers.

NORA

Are you telling the truth Harrison?

JOEY

Yes he is, Nora. You know - he's been reading a lot.

Nora looks approvingly at Joey.

NORA

Harrison, I'm sorry for the disturbance. It's my job as a teacher to assure the legitimacy of each

assignment I'm given.

SONNY

You don't have to worry at all. Nora,  
it's okay.

Nora continues distributing assignments. Everyone goes back to talking. Sonny turns around and faces those behind him - all holding in their laughter. He winks at them.

JOEY (V.O.)

She was never going to doubt my word.  
After all, if the one up top says it,  
no one can do anything about it.

A paper airplane hits Joey. It comes from Sonny - who gives Joey a big thumbs-up.

JOEY (V.O.)

That was when I knew I had entered a  
whole different world - a world of  
gangsters and outlaws. There are no  
rules here - there never really were.

**CUT TO BLACK**

#### **PART IV - THE MOB**

##### **INT. MONTGOMERY'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Montgomery is standing firmly in front of the board.

MONTGOMERY

It'll be next Wednesday - not a day  
earlier, not a day later. All we have  
studied concerning the Cold War will  
be in this test. All we have studied  
concerning the Cold War you must know  
and communicate through paper.

Everyone grumbles.

JOEY (V.O.)

Cold war? For next Wednesday? We just  
started that, you Mississippi schmuck.

MONTGOMERY

That means everything. Concepts,  
definitions, political figures-

JOEY

-Missus Montgomery? Excuse me, I-

MONTGOMERY

-Excuse me? You wish to add anything?

JOEY

I... just thought that having the test  
next Wednesday might be a bit too much  
for us. You know?

MONTGOMERY

No I do not, Witwer. To make myself  
clear - if you wish to postpone the  
test, I'll add pages 124 to 129. No?  
Good. That'll be all.

JOEY (V.O.)

Add pages 124 to 129? 124 to 129?  
That's the fucking Treaty of  
Versailles. No way.

MARVIN (O.S.)

Missus Montgomery, does the test  
include the 1917 Revolution?

Joey looks at Marvin - sitting next to Bea.

MONTGOMERY

Did we have a test concerning the  
Revolution?

MARVIN

No. I'll study it then. Thank you,  
Missus Montgomery.

Joey is taken aback.

JOEY (V.O.)

Ah Marv. Always by the side of the  
Missus. You never change - but after



all - why should you? You made it.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

The students are heading for the exit. Joey and Bea walk together down the hallway in silence. Joey tries not to look at her.

MARVIN (O.S.)

Hey guys, wait up!

Marvin catches up to Joey and Bea.

MARVIN

I was just asking Missus Montgomery about next week's test.

JOEY

She's already made it?

MARVIN

Yeah, that's how she helped me.

JOEY

That's great, Marv.

MARVIN

(To Bea)

Anyways, what are we doing after school?

BEA

I don't know. Maybe we-

MARVIN

-How about we do what we did last time?

BEA

Last time was good.

MARVIN

Yeah lets do that again.

Marvin smiles at Bea. Joey looks back and forth between them. They go through the school's entrance.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

They step out of the building. Marvin grabs Bea's waist and faces Joey.

MARVIN

Joseph. We'll see you tomorrow.

JOEY

Wait so... You said Montgomery has her test papers already?

MARVIN

Yeah, I think so.

JOEY

All right. Well, see you.

BEA

Bye bye.

They walk towards the big tree.

JOEY (V.O.)

Where do they even go?

Sonny appears behind Joey.

SONNY

We doing it?

JOEY

I don't know. Seems risky.

SONNY

I'll cover your back. If something goes wrong - it'll be on me.

Joey thinks.

JOEY

All right. Let's go.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Only one classroom still has its lights turned on. Sonny patrols the hall and - while passing next to the class - glances inside. He reaches Joey at the other end of the hall.

JOEY

And?

SONNY

She's a machine. Doesn't she move?  
What is she even doing at this hour?

JOEY

She lives here. She won't move.

(Beat)

All right. We'll do what I said - I'll  
distract and you get the papers.  
Paper. Remember - just one is enough.

Sonny reaches into his pocket and takes out a Walkman.

SONNY

(Handing it over)

This'll sell it.

Joey grabs it and puts on the earphones. He takes a deep breath.

SONNY

You can do this, okay? We'll have that  
test in our hands a week in advance  
now.

Sonny smiles and pats his shoulder.

JOEY

Yeah - but it's not me who needs to be  
reassured.

SONNY

Fair enough. Just tell me if you need a little pep talk next time.

JOEY

All right, go.

Sonny turns around and goes hide in the bathroom. Joey walks towards his locker.

JOEY (V.O.)

Next time? Next time I'll have someone else do this job for me.

He reaches his locker. He looks around the empty hall and sighs. He bangs his fist against it. Unnerving silence.

MONTGOMERY (O.S.)

Hello?

Joey opens his locker and starts looking inside it. Montgomery steps outside her classroom.

MONTGOMERY

Witwer?

Joey continues to look through his locker,

MONTGOMERY

Witwer? Excuse me Witwer - I'm talking to you.

She starts walking towards Joey. She reaches him.

MONTGOMERY

Witwer?

Joey looks surprised. He takes off his earphones.

JOEY

Yes Missus Montgomery?

Behind Montgomery, Sonny sneaks out of the bathroom and into the classroom.

MONTGOMERY

What was that noise, Witwer?

JOEY

What noise?

MONTGOMERY

Are you tooling with me, Witwer?

JOEY

No, Missus. I'm sorry - I just don't know what you're talking about.

She stares at him.

MONTGOMERY

All right. Have a good day.

She starts turning around.

JOEY

Wait.

MONTGOMERY

Yes, Witwer?

JOEY

I have a doubt concerning next week's test.

MONTGOMERY

Witwer, I appreciate your concerns over my subject but you know the rules. I only answer questions in the hour that follows last period. If you have any questions feel free to ask them at that time or in class. Have a good day.

JOEY

But...

MONTGOMERY

You can ask them tomorrow.

JOEY

But... All right. Good-bye Missus  
Montgomery. Have a good day.

She smiles approvingly and turns around. She heads towards  
her classroom. Joey stares - unmoved. Montgomery reaches her  
class, looks inside and gasps.

MONTGOMERY

Harrison Blythe!

She quickly gets in the classroom and shuts the door loudly.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Some students are chitchatting while Marvin is standing in  
front of the board, presenting. His voice remains inaudible  
since Joey has his earphones plugged in.

JOEY (V.O.)

Did you set us up? Did you? I mean -  
it was you who told me about the  
papers. Did you...? I don't know - maybe  
I just misunderstood you. I'm sorry.

Sonny enters the classroom without knocking. Joey unplugs his  
earphones and Marvin goes quiet.

SONNY

Good morning y'all.

He signals something at Nora - to which she nods - and sits  
next to Joey.

MARVIN

As I was saying, the author decides  
to-

SONNY

(To Joey)

-Papers weren't there. The Mississippi  
machine got me.

JOEY

What did she say?

SONNY

The usual.

JOEY

Anything about me?

SONNY

No. Just the usual.

JOEY

You would do something like this again  
- right?

SONNY

If I...? I don't think you understand.  
Look, she's a fucking confederate. Any  
day now she might have us enslaved -  
yeah. But having her scream at me for  
a few minutes makes for much more of a  
story than her boring-ass classes. So  
yeah, I'm in for the next one.

MARVIN

The author decides to emphasize -

SONNY

(To Joey)

-And... That rush you get, it's what  
it's all-

MARVIN

-Hey Harrison, I'm presenting.

SONNY

I know.

(To Joey)

Look - we can still-

MARVIN

-Missus Peace, could you please...?

NORA

Harrison, could you please be quiet?

SONNY

Are you kidding me, Robins?

MARVIN

No, I'm-

SONNY

-You think I care about your presentation?

NORA

Harrison.

SONNY

No but really - I-

NORA

-Enough Harrison!

Smiling at her without breaking eye contact, Sonny stands up and leaves the classroom.

JOEY (V.O.)

What a mess. Ah Marv - don't be a schnook - you can't... Look, I'm not going to say anything bad about you. Just - come on - you can do better than that. And... what would Bea make of all this?

Joey looks across the classroom at Bea - looking down and grabbing her head.

JOEY (V.O)

Is that... embarrassment?

#### **INT. MONTGOMERY'S CLASSROOM**

Montgomery lectures her class. Joey is staring directly over at Bea - interested.

MONTGOMERY



(Loudly to the whole  
class)

Is that understood?

Joey jolts. He looks down at his notebook - opened on a blank page. He looks back at Bea.

JOEY (V.O.)

That can wait now. Bea... I don't know -  
I just think something may be going on  
here. You know? Maybe she just wants-

MONTGOMERY

-Witwer?

JOEY

(Surprised)

Yes?

MONTGOMERY

What was his solution?

JOEY

I... I don't - I don't remember, Missus  
Montgomery.

MONTGOMERY

(To the rest of the  
class)

Well then who does? Anybody, students  
please. I've been lecturing you for  
over three quarters of an hour and now  
I'm asking. What was his solution?  
What did he propose?

JOEY (V.O.)

As I was saying, she's not playing  
Marvin's game - not anymore. You know  
- I think-

MONTGOMERY

-It's not much I'm asking. You don't

have to recite poetry - you can summarize and synthesize. You ought to know how to do that - we saw how it was done, you should know.

JOEY (V.O.)

(Irritated)

You think I care? Again - I think I might-

MONTGOMERY

-Wake up students, the test is this Wednesday.

JOEY (V.O.)

You Mississippi slaver!

The bell rings. Montgomery stares at her students - all avoiding eye contact - except for Joey. Silence.

MONTGOMERY

So did he propose anything? No? No solution? Why are you all looking down? You won't find anything in your notes as it seems. You'll find your answer on page 112. Study hard for Wednesday.

She grabs her stuff and leaves the classroom. Everybody panics. Sonny rushes to Joey.

SONNY

What's the plan?

Sonny looks at Joey's empty notes.

SONNY

Wow.

Joey looks at the class. Everyone is panicking except for Marvin and Bea, who are silently packing.

STUDENT

Which page?

STUDENT 1

Who's that supposed to be?

STUDENT 2

It was Stalin not Lenin.

STUDENT 3

Do we still have to study pages 124  
and 129?

STUDENT 4

Wasn't it pages 124 to 129?

STUDENT 5

I don't know - ask him.

STUDENT 6

Who?

Joey sighs.

JOEY

All right. All right. Here - look.

Joey takes a deep breath, stands up and starts walking up to  
the board.

SONNY

What are you doing?

JOEY

Supplying a demand.

Joey reaches the board and knocks on it. Some look in his  
direction.

JOEY

Guys...

They keep talking.

JOEY

Hey people!

This catches some of his classmate's attention.

JOEY

Look - people - I have an idea.

The panic is too overwhelming. Some start leaving the room.

SONNY (O.S.)

Hey! Come back here dipshits. There's an announcement.

Silence. Those who were leaving come back. Sonny walks over to the door, closes it and stands guard.

SONNY

We're listening.

Joey looks at his class - all impatiently waiting - except for Marvin and Bea who seem completely unmoved.

JOEY

There's a test on Wednesday - and we're probably all screwed already.

STUDENT

Tell us something we don't know-

MARVIN

-That's not true. I've been studying and it really isn't that hard - I don't know what all the complaining-

SONNY

-Oh - good for you, Robins. Good for you.

JOEY

So... Almost all of us are lost here - and we should really do something that could help us in this test - together. You know?

STUDENT

What does that mean?

JOEY

It means that I have an idea.

SONNY

And what's that?

JOEY

Look - we're all screwed for-

STUDENT

(To Sonny)

-Sonny, could you please move? We're missing lunch.

SONNY

Wait.

JOEY

All right, look - we're all screwed for Wednesday's test and it's because of one thing and one thing only: Missus Montgomery - that old southern schmuck... Right? I mean - does any one of you like her?

STUDENT

No.

STUDENT 1

No way.

JOEY

Would you say she has power over you?

STUDENT

Hell no.

JOEY

Yes, she does.

STUDENT

She does not.

JOEY

Yes she does and that's the point.

STUDENT

No.

JOEY

You ign- Are you saying I'm wrong?

STUDENT

What do you think I'm saying? What do you-

SONNY

-That's enough, calm down.

JOEY

Yes she does. And only because we follow her stupid rules - that's why. What is she without them - without those rules? She's a nobody. She's a schnook. But somehow - we allow that woman to rule us. That's her only purpose in life - to rule us. We follow her rules - doing all our homework every night, waking up early to go to school, playing nicely, raising our hands - but we all know that there are easier ways to get what we want...

STUDENT

Screw the rules. Screw her.

JOEY

Yes. Screw her and her rules. Break the rules. They don't matter. You think the Missus' rules will matter once you leave this hellhole?

STUDENT

Hell no. But why-

JOEY

-Good. I almost took you for a schnook myself.

Some students - including Marvin and Bea - shift uncomfortably in their seats.

JOEY

This is no risk. You're not dropping out of school - you're dropping the rules. In the eyes of just about everyone, all will seem just fine. And look at you - look at y'all - you're all hungry for this and you know it.

STUDENT

For what? What's your great idea?

JOEY

Well... I have a system in mind.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Joey walks down the hallway - following Marvin and Bea but keeping his distance.

JOEY (V.O.)

(Stressed out)

Marvin didn't seem at all convinced. I don't want him washing Bea's head. Come on. You're not going to do this to me.

Marvin and Bea reach an exit.

JOEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You're not. There's no point in doing so - you're in the class, you're in the business. I'm gonna - well - Bea doesn't need you washing her head. Let her decide for herself -

Joey reaches the exit.

**EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS**

Joey looks at the playground - packed with students. He looks around - no sight of Bea and Marvin. He looks around even more. He gives up.

JOEY (V.O)

Forget it. She's happy as she is.  
She's made up her mind already.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

The class is a mess. By her desk, Nora - frustrated - looks through a folder.

NORA

Children please... This is a test. Take your seats.

(Beat)

I forgot the brainstorming papers.  
Could anyone please go and fetch them for me?

SONNY

I'll go.

From his seat, Joey signals him to come. Sonny approaches Joey.

Joey whispers something in his ear.

SONNY

I'll take care of it.

Sonny leaves the classroom.

**INT. MONTGOMERY'S CLASS - DAY**

The CLOCK ticks at 11:09. No teacher is around. The students are sitting behind their desks - breathing heavily and shifting uncomfortably.

Sonny - laid back - looks around and slowly starts shifting uncomfortably too. Silence.



The bell rings and Montgomery marches in her classroom.

MONTGOMERY

Good morning class.

EVERYONE

Good morning Missus Montgomery.

Sonny smiles at Joey and taps his stomach - making a crunchy noise.

Montgomery passes by the front row of desks and gives each student a stack of papers.

MONTGOMERY

Take two brainstorming papers and the test sheets - remember to keep those upside down. Pass on the rest.

They do so. They all have their papers.

MONTGOMERY

Students, you may start. Time is running.

The students turn their test sheets around. The clock ticks at 11:11.

Silence. Sonny looks around. He smiles at himself - as if trying not to laugh.

A student is nervously writing gibberish and crossing it out on his brainstorming paper.

Sonny holds his pen but doesn't write. Montgomery passes by next to him and he starts thinking and writing on his brainstorming paper.

Another student - with her test sheet blank - looks up at the clock - 11:16. Another looks up at it - 11:17. Another looks up at it - 11:18.

Confidently - Joey stares at the clock - 11:19. A few students glance nervously at Joey. The clock strikes at 11:20. Joey nods at them.

Joey and the students nearby look over at Montgomery - checking on their classmates at the other end of the room.

Joey grabs one of his brainstorming papers and slips it beneath his desk – silently rolling it up and putting it in his pocket. He searches for something behind his shirt. He takes out a new paper and slides it on his desk. This paper is full of writing.

Montgomery starts approaching Joey. He starts copying what he has on his brainstorming papers onto his test sheets

Montgomery passes by next to Joey and observes him - he is working hard. She looks at him approvingly and moves on.

Now, everyone has new brainstorming papers and is copying with impunity.

JOEY (V.O.)

Who in the world actually takes the time to brainstorm in school? What are you going to do - rearrange your ideas? Please - now that's funny. Anyway, you know what surprised me the most about winning? It's the simple fact that having to organize and plan out everything, getting everyone on my side, having them do their part; writing down their share on the papers and all - it wasn't fun - it was easy.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND – DAY**

Joey is walking confidently towards the canteen with Sonny at his side. A classmate is waiting by the canteen's door.

When Joey arrives, the student nods at him and opens the door. Joey pats his back. Sonny signals something to Joey and they part ways.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN – CONTINUOUS**

Joey walks towards the long table in the middle of the cafeteria.

On his way, a few students happily walk up to him. Joey pats one's back, whispers something in his ears and sends them all off to sit at the table.

Joey sits down at the head of the table. Sonny walks up to him and sets a lunch bag under him. He sits at his side.

Joey smiles.

**DISSOLVE TO BLACK**

**PART V - WISEGUYS**

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - CONTINUOUS**

The students are eating and talking. Joey and Sonny are talking with a few of their classmates.

SONNY

Is there another one?

JOEY

No, no sequel. The big guy wins - he's a winner. And the movie just ends - and he stays that way.

SONNY

Oh, I still would have loved another one of those - it would have been great.

Joey smiles with a sense of superiority.

STUDENT

Witwer?

JOEY

Yeah?

STUDENT

You like this kind of stuff, right?

JOEY

You're asking if I like movies?

STUDENT

Yeah.

JOEY

Well, I don't mind them. You know? I mean - I watch one from time to time -

when there is time.

STUDENT

I see.

JOEY

But now I'll be able to watch some more TV. You know? This thing we're starting here in school - it's gonna help us.

STUDENT

Yeah.

JOEY

We'll keep on doing our thing here and then we'll have time to have some fun - to fool around.

SONNY

Yeah, that's the spirit.

JOEY

But let's not stop to fool around just yet - we're winning and we're going to keep on winning. All right?

SONNY

(Chuckling)

Well, you know me Joey.

JOEY

Come on. Look at us - look at what we're doing. It's no time to loosen up.

Sonny sighs.

Joey looks outside the cafeteria - at Marvin and Bea on the steps next to the playground - studying together.

JOEY

We're not going to be schnooks forever

- I'll guarantee that. You just wait a little more.

No one argues.

**INT. MONTGOMERY'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Montgomery is watching her class from her desk.

Joey is writing. He looks over at Montgomery and then at Sonny - doodling on his notebook. Sonny catches Joey's gaze and starts making faces and showing him his doodles.

Sonny draws something new and shows it to Joey - a stick figure with something resembling wings and a whip. He nods towards Montgomery's direction.

Joey looks at Montgomery's desk - she isn't there. She is heading towards Sonny.

MONTGOMERY

Harrison Blythe. Show me your notebook.

Joey goes back to his writing.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey is sitting next to Sonny and his friends.

SONNY

Whoa! He did what? Amazing, amazing.

Joey looks around the classroom - a few classmates are working but most are chitchatting. Nora is scrolling through her computer.

NORA

Quiet children... Remember to finish questions five and six.

Sonny looks at Joey.

SONNY

Just a sec. I'll be back.

Joey nods. Sonny goes towards Marvin and Bea.

SONNY

Hey guys. What's up?

MARVIN

We're good, thank you.

SONNY

Cool. So, did you finish questions five and six?

MARVIN

Yes.

SONNY

You mind... passing them?

MARVIN

Yes, I do.

BEA

Marv, it's no big deal. We can-

MARVIN

-No Bea. This is our work. It matters.

SONNY

I think it's two against one here.

MARVIN

No it's not. We're not going to pass it.

SONNY

Come on. You heard her - it's no big deal. It really doesn't-

MARVIN

-Missus Peace?

NORA

Yes Marvin?

MARVIN

Harrison is trying to copy my work.

NORA

Harrison, don't do that.

SONNY

Really Robins? I can't believe you - please do something in your life that doesn't involve the Missus' help.

MARVIN

Hey.

NORA

Harrison, go back to your seat.

Bea grabs her head. Joey raises an eyebrow.

SONNY

"Harrison, go back to your seat." It's always Harrison this - Harrison that. Don't you worry about little Marv here - he's harmless.

NORA

Harrison, go back to your seat.

SONNY

You kidding me? Why?

NORA

You're in a classroom - not a rock concert. Now go back to your seat.

SONNY

Okay - I'll go back to my seat. But tell me first - why me?

NORA

Because you can't copy your friend's work.

SONNY

But-

NORA

-Those are the rules. I didn't make them. If you want to complain - complain to the one who made them.

SONNY

Oh. Okay - so you don't believe in your own rules?

NORA

Harrison...

SONNY

No but really. I mean it. You're always-

NORA

-Harrison, you're staying for detention this afternoon.

SONNY

Great. That's great. I couldn't care less.

Looking straightly at Marvin, he goes to the door. He smiles at Nora and leaves. Joey grabs his notebook and starts taking notes.

#### **INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

The students are having fun at the table while eating.

SONNY

I've never seen something like that in my life.

STUDENT

I know right?

SONNY

He was just going at it. The look on his face... Priceless!



Sonny laughs. Joey grabs something from his backpack and sets it on the table – a piggy bank. Joey taps Sonny's shoulder.

SONNY

Nice piggy bank. What's it for?

JOEY

Tell everyone to listen up.

SONNY

Okay.

(Beat)

Listen up!

His classmates stop talking. They all look at Joey.

JOEY

Guys – we're doing great. We're almost there. We've been kicking most of our teachers' asses and I'm proud we're doing so in such a glorious manner. And most importantly – I'm proud of all of you great beautiful idiots. So before I ask anything more, I want a big round of applause for the guy next to you.

Joey starts applauding and all his classmates do too. The clapping stops.

JOEY

In all seriousness though, there are still errors in our day to day. And I'm not just talking about Montgomery existing. I'm talking about the goofs – the schnooks – frigging Nora who made Sonny over here stay for detention the other day. I mean – Nora? Really? Now that's a schnook. That's a schnook I can't take seriously. What is she thinking – trying to establish her rules so late in the game? No, no, no. I'm not abiding. And I want to believe that

none of you do. Do you?

STUDENT

Of course not.

SONNY

Nope. She can't even keep a straight face when talking about the rules.

JOEY

Sonny, I couldn't have said it better myself. See - I have an idea - an idea that will keep her out of the way - for some time.

Joey grabs the piggy bank at his side.

JOEY

This is where this comes in. Any objections about spilling a little money into the business?

Silence. Some seem unconvinced.

SONNY

Joey... I think that's too much.

JOEY

No. It'll be worth it in the end - you'll see. Listen here - you all know what the money is for. Don't you?

No one makes eye contact.

JOEY

That's what I thought.

(Beat)

You know - Montgomery - she calls us students. Why? Why are we students? Why the fuck are we students? A student learns - a student studies. Look at us now. Are we studying something? Do we have anything to

learn from her?

(Beat)

We're not students anymore. But we're forced to obey. And you know how I feel about that.

STUDENT

Montgomery - that evil bastard.

JOEY

Yes. Sonny?

SONNY

As evil as one can be.

JOEY

Good. Screw the Missus. So - again - is there any objections about spilling a little money into the business?

SONNY

How much?

JOEY

Thanks for asking. I just need your lunch money.

SONNY

What are we supposed to eat?

JOEY

Cafeteria's free, Sonny.

SONNY

No one eats that food - it's garbage.

JOEY

Then tell your parents the food you buy doubled its price. It's not that hard. I just need two dollars a day for the bank. That's all.

(Beat)

There are more than twenty of us in Nora's class - that's a lot. Now if we all put our two little dollars in the bank every day for a week - we've got ourselves more than 200 dollars. Now just imagine what we would make in a month - in two months - in three months. It's some good money... Now picture Nora. She's no poor but she's not untouchable either - she's out in the real world - she's got taxes to pay. Give me a few months' worth of pay and give her a rough time and the class is all yours.

(Beat)

So no objections?

Long silence. Everyone is thinking about it.

JOEY

No objections then. The class will be ours.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Joey and Sonny walk along the hall.

MARVIN (O.S.)

Joseph, Harrison, wait up.

They turn around. Marvin is panting.

JOEY

Marvin. Where were you all this time?  
Living under a rock?

MARVIN

No. I just heard about the money. I know what you're going to do with it. You can't do that.

JOEY

Really? I don't know. I'll have to check the rulebook.

MARVIN

Joseph-

JOEY

-It's going to work out just fine, Marvin. It's been a while since I got this planned. Don't worry.

MARVIN

I don't want to be part of this.

JOEY

If you heard what it's all about, you know it ain't too much money.

MARVIN

I don't care. I don't want to be part of this.

JOEY

Marvin, you're in Nora's class - aren't you?

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

Well then you have no other choice.

Joey gives Sonny a menacing glance. Hesitantly - Sonny rolls up his sleeves and cracks his knuckles.

JOEY

Or - I don't know. Do you have a choice I don't know about?

MARVIN

No.

JOEY

Oh. Well that's what I thought - you know? I'm allowing you to be indifferent. Same goes for Bea. Pass the message off to her - will you?

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

Remember what we're going for here. And remember that if you're in the class, you're in the business.

Joey smiles reassuringly.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

The class is a mess.

SONNY

Happy Valentine's Day, my lovely boys.

Sonny and his friends are goofing around. Joey sits comfortably behind his desk - observing. Beside him, a heart-shaped chocolate box sticks out of his backpack.

SONNY

Whoa! I love you too but don't you get too comfortable with me. Nah - only joking - come here man. Come here!

Laughing - Sonny aggressively hugs one of his friends.

NORA (O.S.)

Quiet children...

SONNY

So anyways - remember what I was saying about-

NORA

-Harrison, calm down and sit.

SONNY

It was just like-

NORA

-Harrison.

SONNY

Yes, Nora?

NORA

Sit down.

He sits.

NORA

Did you finish the exercises?

SONNY

Exercises?

Nora sighs. She stands up.

NORA

All right children... Have any of you-

The bell rings. Everyone storms outside.

Nora is left standing in front of the board. She goes to her desk and sits miserably.

Joey observes her from his own desk. He grabs the chocolate box and walks up to her. He moves a front row desk next to Nora's. He sits down.

JOEY

Nora...

NORA

Why...?

JOEY

Don't worry, it's all right Missus.

She smiles sadly.

JOEY

I have a little solution here for you,

Nora.

Joey places the chocolate box on her desk.

NORA

I love chocolates. Thank you Joseph.  
That's very kind of you.

JOEY

Ah yes - chocolates - the best kind of  
treat. You know... I've been thinking  
lately - well... we've all been thinking  
lately - that the good old school  
rules haven't been doing you any  
favors.

NORA

Joseph, I am a teacher and... I do love  
my job.

Joey sighs.

NORA

I'm very grateful for the chocolate. I  
can open this now and give you a few  
pieces if you want. What kind of  
chocolate do you-

JOEY

-Are they chocolates though? You know  
- we think that you share our  
discomfort. And we think and ask  
ourselves - why even try to force the  
rules upon others when we all disagree  
with them to begin with?

NORA

Joseph? What are you telling me here?

JOEY

Maybe - just maybe - I'm suggesting a  
new academic technique - just for you.  
It's a way of education that  
prioritizes... leisure, students' well



being - and above all - your well  
being of course.

NORA

Joseph...?

JOEY

And I mean it when I say that we can  
really help you. I mean - 30 hundred -  
31 hundred - 32 hundred - that's a lot  
that comes in real handy.

Joey slightly pushes the chocolate box towards Nora.

JOEY (CONT'D)

You know? It's a lot for just being  
whom you want to be - being relaxed  
and unworried...

Nora is in shock.

NORA

Joseph...? Don't do this. This - this is  
not normal for a kid your age. This is  
a problem

JOEY

No. It's probably just a phase.

Silence. Nora starts to tremble.

NORA

I don't agree with this school's  
rules. I don't like them. But what I  
love are my students. It seems that  
only yesterday I used to be one here  
myself. I came back because of that  
love for the craziness of it all. And  
I want you all to live good plentiful  
lives. I wish that you could all just  
forget about your work and do what you  
want and be happy. You know - when I  
was your age, I had this teacher that  
let us do whatever we wanted. We loved  
him - everyone did.

JOEY

Nora... You could very well be that teacher. You would be the sole best teacher around.

NORA

And the rules here - they're-

JOEY

-Nora, you don't have to justify yourself. I understand.

NORA

And the job... It doesn't-

JOEY

-I understand. I know it's hard.

NORA

And even though my job dictates-

JOEY

-Nora.

Joey opens the chocolate box just so slightly so that she can see what's inside. Nora gulps.

JOEY

Academically speaking, nothing would be lost.

(With slight aggression)

You know what we think of you - don't you?

Nora sheds a tear.

JOEY

That's what I thought.

(Beat)

You could do whatever you want with

this. Or - you could make me carry it back home. And it's heavy - believe me. Are you going to make me carry it back home? Are you now?

Nora doesn't respond.

JOEY

Good. You're the wisest teacher we have, Nora.

Joey gets up.

NORA

Joseph? What kind of man will you be?

He thinks.

JOEY

You'll see.

He leaves the classroom. Nora is left paralyzed - looking at the chocolate box as if afraid to touch it.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey is sitting on the bench under the big tree - now grey and leafless. He stares at the school's front yard - empty and glazed with muddy snow. He sighs - satisfied.

**CUT TO BLACK**

**PART VI - THE END**

**INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey is sitting behind the teacher's desk - thinking in silence.

SONNY (O.S.)

What do you want me to tell them?

JOEY

Tell them the system is ready for us - for real this time. It's done.

SONNY (O.S.)

Anything else?

JOEY

Tell them I've started developing my new technique.

SONNY (O.S.)

Do I say what it is?

JOEY

No. Not yet.

SONNY (O.S.)

I'm sure they'll love it.

JOEY

Yes. Good to keep them coming.

SONNY (O.S.)

Anything else?-

JOEY

-Yes. Tell them this. Tell them that soon enough... there will be no more work.

Joey smiles up at Sonny with a slight hint of sadness - almost as if pleading for an answer.

**INT. MONTGOMERY'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Montgomery is writing on the board.

MONTGOMERY

Study hard - all of you. The finals are less than two months away. Now, finish your exercises. I'll hand over last week's assignments.

She goes to her desk and looks through her folder. A rolled-up paper ball hits Joey - it's Sonny who is nodding mockingly at Montgomery.

Montgomery distributes an assignment - and another - and then reaches Sonny. She places his assignment on his desk -

without saying a word.

SONNY

Yes?

MONTGOMERY

I'm not sure what grade to give you here, Blythe.

SONNY

Well, it's your choice Missus. But if you want my opinion - I'd say the assignment is pretty good.

MONTGOMERY

It's more than pretty good, Blythe. There's not one single mistake.

SONNY

Oh. Thank you Missus.

MONTGOMERY

Any confessions to make?

SONNY

None.

MONTGOMERY

Blythe, you handed over an A+ level assignment yet I see no change in you.

SONNY

No change? I don't get it. My recent works have all been pretty good. I'm working hard.

MONTGOMERY

Be honest - did you do this individually?

SONNY

Yes, of course. That's what you

wanted, isn't it? Missus, you did say this was to be done individually, right?

She doesn't answer.

SONNY

Missus Montgomery, if you would allow me to say so - I think I've been progressing a lot in History lately.

MONTGOMERY

Have you?

SONNY

I think I have. I've come to realize that I have quite a gift for explaining historical situations. I think that at this point I'll tell you an entire biography if you're a stranger I crossed down the road.

He chuckles. Montgomery looks at him skeptically.

STUDENT (O.S.)

He's right Missus.

The students behind Sonny intervene.

STUDENT 1

Yeah, he's actually pretty good at this.

STUDENT 2

He wants to study History at university.

Montgomery just stares. Joey looks behind her - students are tossing papers and copying each other's work. Marvin tries to signal this to Bea.

MONTGOMERY

So? Are you going to justify that statement Blythe?

SONNY

Well - I think it's pretty self explanatory, Missus. I want to study History.

MONTGOMERY

You want to be a historian?

SONNY

Yeah, I'm pretty certain about it.

MONTGOMERY

Any idea where you want to study History?

SONNY

Somewhere that'll get me places - I've been thinking about studying abroad.

MONTGOMERY

Abroad?

SONNY

It means outside the country.

MONTGOMERY

You... Where to?

SONNY

I've been thinking about Budapest.

MONTGOMERY

Budapest?

Sonny nods. Joey looks slightly worried.

MONTGOMERY

Now - ignoring the language barrier - how do you expect to be accepted at a university in Budapest?

Joey is about to step up.

SONNY

Well - first of all - about that barrier - I am thinking of learning Hungarian next year - starting this summer actually. And... I expect to be accepted due to my grades. I have been doing better lately - especially in History.

STUDENT

He did just hand over an A+ level assignment.

STUDENT 1

Yeah, he's really good.

SONNY

You know Missus - I think that - sometimes - you should worry less.

Silence. Montgomery sighs. Unconvinced - she scribbles an A+ on Sonny's assignment and hands it to him.

MONTGOMERY

Congratulations.

SONNY

Thank you, Missus Montgomery.

She moves on to a desk at the other side of the room. Joey re-accommodates himself in his seat.

Sonny turns around and faces the students behind him - chuckling.

Joey looks over at Marvin - who seems very annoyed.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Joey is storing his books in his locker.

He stares across the hall - at Marvin and Bea. They are arguing. Joey looks down at the ground and back at them - thinking.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**



Nora is nonchalantly distributing assignments – all A+s. The class is a mess – everyone is talking out loud and music is heard.

She reaches Marvin's desk – he is working - and gives him his assignment – an A.

NORA

Good job.

MARVIN

Thank you, Missus Peace.

She moves on to the next desks – giving more and more A+s.

She reaches a cluster of desks – all packed together to form a circle. Sonny and his friends are playing cards in the round – listening to an old radio. Nora stops.

SONNY

Whoa! Whoa. No cheating there. No looky.

STUDENT

No cheating here. I'm not spying on your cards.

SONNY

Whose then?

Sonny grabs a card from the middle.

SONNY

Oops.

He smacks his desk with his deck of cards.

SONNY

Bingo!

NORA

Excuse me, children.

She hands each student their respective assignments. They don't even bother to check the marks.

SONNY

Thank you Nora.

She moves on to the next desk – Joey’s – and gives him his assignment. They exchange looks and Nora moves on to another desk.

Joey is relaxed behind his desk – looking suspiciously at Marvin and occasionally taking notes.

SONNY (O.S.)

Wait a sec. Don't start the round without me.

Sonny taps Joey’s shoulder.

SONNY

Hey Joey, whatcha doing?

JOEY

Hmm? Oh, work.

SONNY

Work?

JOEY

Yeah. You know – planning out in advance – making things easier for later.

SONNY

Oh. Well – anyways – want to come play over here?

JOEY

Nah, I’m good.

SONNY

Come on. Come play a game of cards with us.

JOEY

No – really – I’m good. Besides, I

don't know how to play.

SONNY

Come on. Here - I'll teach you.

JOEY

No, no.

SONNY

Yeah, yeah.

He quickly grabs his deck of cards from his desk.

SONNY

So - you've got seven cards. They're all random - look - they're like this.

He shows him the cards.

SONNY (CONT'D)

And you've got to align numbers in order or the pips by their respective - well - pips. To win - you either make a whole stack of seven cards or one of three and one of four. You following?

JOEY

No.

SONNY

(Chuckling)

Well I didn't expect you to.

Joey cracks a smile.

JOEY

I'll play another time. All right?

SONNY

Okay. Just remember to have some fun. Hmm?

JOEY

I'll play another time.

SONNY

You okay Joey?

JOEY

Yeah. I'm good. There's just work to do.

Sonny stares at him.

SONNY

No there isn't.

JOEY

There is.

SONNY

Joey, what you do is important - I appreciate it - really. But you should take a break, relax, chill the F out...

JOEY

I'll do so - soon enough.

SONNY

When?

Unsure - Joey shrugs off.

JOEY

(Nonchalantly)

You'll see.

Silence. Sonny grabs Joey's shoulder.

SONNY

I'd like to make you dance someday - but if you dance or not is up to you.

Joey nods. Hesitantly - Sonny slowly walks back to his desk. Joey accommodates himself in his seat. He looks over at Marvin. He takes notes.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey is leaning on the wall next to the front entrance. His suspicious stare follows something. His gaze stops. He looks confused.

He stares at Montgomery - down by the road - hugging a little child and a middle-aged man. They say a few words to each other and walk off.

Joey thinks and nods to himself. He shifts his gaze to Marvin and Bea - crossing the road. Suspiciously - he focuses his sight on Marvin.

**INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey sits behind the teacher's desk.

JOEY

My new technique is ready. It's... like nothing they've ever seen before. It's... The finals stand no chance.

SONNY (O.S.)

That's great. Should I arrange a meeting?

JOEY

Yes. Yes, please do that.

(Beat)

They need to know how it all works.

SONNY (O.S.)

I'm sure they'll be very intrigued.

JOEY

Hmm. I'm sure they will.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Sonny sits behind his desk - in the round of desks - where he and his friends are playing cards and listening to the radio.

STUDENT

Hmm. Maybe next time we could have

someone copy homework for everyone.  
Just imagine her face when she sees  
that all the work she's correcting has  
the same handwriting - same  
everything.

SONNY

Yeah, that would hit different.

(Beat)

We have another meeting tomorrow.

STUDENT

What time?

SONNY

Just after last period.

STUDENT

Again? Why is he making us stay after  
school?

STUDENT

It's nothing. It'll only take a while.

SONNY

It's pretty important. It's the new  
technique he's been talking about.

STUDENT

(Chuckling)

The brains on the guy...

SONNY

Anyways - someone turn that radio up  
to the max. Now who deals the cards?

**CUT TO:**

Joey - sitting behind his own desk - looks down. He shifts  
his gaze to Marvin - who is complaining to Bea, pointing  
fingers at Sonny and his friends. She shrugs it off.

MARVIN

Missus Peace?

NORA

Yes Marvin?

MARVIN

I can't work like this.

NORA

Like what?

MARVIN

I can't work with that radio being so loud.

Joey stares at Nora - who glances nervously at him.

NORA

(Hesitantly)

I'm sorry Marvin. There's nothing I can do.

MARVIN

But I can't work.

NORA

There's nothing I can do.

MARVIN

No one is working. Everyone is copying here.

NORA

I'm sorry.

Nora buries herself behind her computer.

Marvin complains to Bea. Joey stares suspiciously at Marvin. He nods to himself and takes notes.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Joey stores his books in his locker and closes it.

BEA (O.S.)

Hey.

Joey turns around.

JOEY

Bea... Hi. How you doing?

BEA

Good.

JOEY

It's been some time.

BEA

Been busy?

JOEY

Yeah. You know - I have things to do - work.

BEA

Do you really?

JOEY

Yeah. It's what it is.

BEA

Anyways, you know what I've been thinking of?

JOEY

No.

She smiles.

JOEY

What is it?

BEA

Well... Let's just say it's a rebellious



thought.

Joey smiles.

JOEY

A rebellious thought? That it?

BEA

No. There's more.

JOEY

Well then I'm listening.

BEA

Remember that night on homecoming -  
near the beginning of the school year?

JOEY

Yeah. I do.

BEA

Well... You know Marvin - you know how  
he is.

JOEY

I do.

BEA

Well then this might come as no  
surprise. You see - the other day... we  
were doing the usual, we were going-

MARVIN (O.S.)

-Hey Bea. Let's go?

Marvin arrives and stands firmly besides Bea. Joey's smile  
dissolves.

BEA

Yeah, of course.

MARVIN

Same place as last time?

BEA

Sure.

(To Joey)

Well, see you.

JOEY

Yeah... see you.

Marvin and Bea head towards the exit. Joey's stares at Marvin with a hint of anger in his eyes.

**INT. CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey sits behind the teacher's desk - worried.

JOEY

Something's wrong.

SONNY (O.S.)

What is?

Joey doesn't answer. Silence. Joey is thinking.

Sonny sits on top of the desk.

SONNY

What's wrong?

Joey smiles nervously.

JOEY

You know what - forget it. Forget about it.

SONNY

No, no - come on. You can tell me.

JOEY

Never mind. It's nothing.

SONNY

Hey Joey - you okay?

JOEY

Yeah.

SONNY

You happy? You happy doing all this?

JOEY

Yes, of course. I like what I'm doing.  
Why else would I do it?

SONNY

I don't know - you should know maybe.

JOEY

Well - I know what I'm doing.

(Beat)

It's just that... there are some things  
that if changed - would make other  
things better.

SONNY

Changed how?

JOEY

What?

SONNY

Things would be how?

JOEY

I...

SONNY

Joey, you've been like this for  
months.

The bell rings. Sonny stands up.

SONNY (O.S.)

Look... If you ever need anything - call  
me.

He pats Joey's shoulder and leaves. Joey looks down.

**INT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey is standing behind the window - looking outside.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

On the sidewalk across the school, an old lady and a child walk their dog. The dog happily wags its tail, jumps and runs around in circles.

**INT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

Joey looks down and shuts the window's blindfolds.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

The class is a mess - everyone is talking over one another. Sonny and his friends are playing cards and listening to the radio. Joey overlooks the class from his desk.

STUDENT

Yeah, of course they'll be easy.

STUDENT 1

Who cares about the finals anyway?

STUDENT 2

It's nothing man. Don't worry about it.

The bell rings. Everyone starts to pack.

STUDENT

See y'all tomorrow.

STUDENT 1

Bye guys.

Nora and most of the students have already left. Joey makes his way to the door.

MARVIN (O.S.)

Joseph.

Joey turns around. Marvin does his best to stand firmly.

JOEY

Yes Marvin?

MARVIN

I wanted to tell you something -  
concerning the finals.

Sonny glances at Joey and stands firmly beside him. The room  
is empty.

JOEY

Well then - say what you have to say.

MARVIN

I don't like what you're up to.

JOEY

You don't like what I'm up to?

MARVIN

I don't like what the whole class is  
doing - cheating.

JOEY

You don't like it?

MARVIN

Joseph, I'm working to get places. And  
no one else is. But everyone is  
getting the same credit as me. It's  
not fair.

JOEY

No one is forcing you to work.  
Remember - you're in the business.  
You're part of the scam. You signed up  
for this.

MARVIN

But I haven't-

JOEY

-You can work just as much as them and still get some good credit. I recommend you do that.

MARVIN

No. I want to keep doing what I do. I'm okay with working-

JOEY

-No you're not. I work. I take care of everything. You don't have to worry about nothing. You sit back and relax. All right?

SONNY

Yeah. Joey is right. You can hang out with the guys if you want. Take a step back and just enjoy the moment.

MARVIN

No. I won't step back until I'm - until I...

JOEY

All right... Look, you'll stop working from now on. All right? You'll take a break and-

MARVIN

-No. This - this is wrong. I came to tell you this because... because if you don't stop this - I'll tell the teachers everything.

Silence.

JOEY

Is this a warning?

MARVIN

Yes.

JOEY

You're warning me? You're going to rat on me? You're going to rat on all your friends?

MARVIN

I... Yes. But it's only because-

JOEY

-I don't care why. You won't rat.

SONNY

Look - Marvin... we can sort this out.

JOEY

Yes! We will sort this out. Sit down.

Marvin hesitantly sits down behind the nearest desk.

JOEY

What makes you think you can rat?  
After so much hard work...

MARVIN

You know it's not right.

JOEY

What isn't right? What about all this  
isn't right? You know the cause.

Marvin's eyes are full of fear.

MARVIN

It's... It's your... It's your new  
technique.

JOEY

Oh, so that's what this is all about.

MARVIN

It's wrong. And not just that.  
Everything is - everything you've been  
doing this year...

JOEY

Oh, but it surely hasn't helped anyone.

MARVIN

Well it hasn't helped you. You got to the top - you succeeded - but you're-

JOEY

-And you didn't?

MARVIN

What difference does it make to you? You won everything - a whole year's gone by but-

JOEY

-You don't raise your voice like that. All right?

SONNY

Look guys... I'm sure we can sort this out. Let's just all take a moment and-

JOEY

-Sonny, what are you doing in school at this hour? It's late. Maybe you should go home - or go hang out with the guys now - or do whatever it is you do. All right?

SONNY

I don't know - I think that-

JOEY

(Menacingly)

-Harrison.

Sonny looks at Joey - both shocked and disappointed.

SONNY

Okay...

Hesitantlv - Sonny leaves the classroom. Joey grabs Marvin



and takes him outside too.

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Joey observes Sonny - heading towards the exit. He lays his eyes on Marvin - with a sense of sympathy. He slowly corners Marvin into the lockers.

JOEY

You know... I get it. I too still see mistakes everywhere I go. I know it's infuriating but I'm trying to make everything better now.

MARVIN

Yes...

Joey glances at Sonny - still heading towards the exit.

JOEY

And - you know - I'm sorry I called you a rat. I mean - I get it - you're just wanting to get somewhere. And - I know you just...

Joey glances at Sonny - now going through the school's exit. He leaves.

Joey looks back at Marvin. Joey slams Marvin against the lockers.

JOEY

You fucking rat.

MARVIN

No, no, no-

JOEY

-Hey, hey. You don't have to raise your voice.

MARVIN

No, I-

Joey punches him in the face - grabs him and hits him repeatedly in the stomach.

He slams him against the locker and holds him against it.  
Marvin's face is bruised.

JOEY

What's the matter with you?

MARVIN

I - I don't know...

JOEY

You're fucking lucky I don't have no  
Gulags.

MARVIN

Yes, yes...

JOEY

Don't go around ratting on people.  
Keep on going like this and you'll be  
a schnook forever. I don't want to see  
you anymore. All right?

MARVIN

Yes...

JOEY

Yes what?

MARVIN

Yes sir.

JOEY

What's the matter with you? Huh? You  
fucking idiot...

He throws him to the ground.

JOEY

Go. Get out of here.

Tumbling and as fast as he can - Marvin leaves.

Joey slowly stops panting. He grabs his bruised fist.

Silence.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

The class is a mess.

Joey enters the classroom. The class shuts up. Joey looks at Marvin and Bea's desks - empty. He goes to his seat.

He stares at nothing. Around him, his classmates glance nervously at him.

Sonny approaches Joey hesitantly. He sits on top of his desk.

SONNY

Joey.

JOEY

What do you want?

SONNY

I think that-

JOEY

-Please get out of here.

Hesitantly - Sonny leaves him. Unmoved - Joey stares at nothing. His classmates start chitchatting again.

**BEGIN MONTAGE**

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey comes out of the front doors. He stops and looks at the school's front yard - empty.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey goes through the front doors.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey is slouched over his desk - bored.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

Joey is sitting at the head of table. His food is untouched.

Around him, his classmates are talking and laughing.  
He stares at them and then at his food - with slight disgust.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey comes out of the front doors. He stops and sighs.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey goes through the front doors.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey is slouched over his desk - bored. He looks at his pencil case - a pen is sticking out of it.

He grabs it - a retractable pen. He clicks it. He clicks it again and again. He presses it against the table and makes it bounce up in the air. He cracks a little smile.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

The students are talking and laughing. Joey is sitting at the head of table - eating.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey comes out of the front doors.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

The pen - in the air - falls on top of the desk.

Joey makes it bounce up and down - again and again.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

Joey is sitting at the head of table. While eating, he makes the pen bounce up and down.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

The pen bounces up and down - countless times.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

The pen bounces up and down.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

Joey is sitting at the head of table. While eating, he makes the pen bounce up and down.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey goes through the front doors.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey makes his pen bounce up and down.

He takes a quick break.

He makes it bounce again.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

The students are talking and laughing. Joey is sitting at the head of table - eating.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey comes out of the front doors.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey goes through the front doors.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey makes his pen bounce up and down. He stops.

He slouches over his desk - bored.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

Joey is sitting at the head of table - simply eating. Around him, his classmates are talking and laughing.

He stares at them and thinks. He goes back to his food.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey comes out of the front doors.

**CUT TO:**

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey goes through the front doors.

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey is slouched over his desk - bored.

**INT. SCHOOL CANTEEN - DAY**

Joey is sitting at the head of table. His food is untouched. Around him, his classmates are talking and laughing.

He stares at them and then at his food - with disgust.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

Joey comes out of the front doors. He sits on the front steps - bored and alone. Time drags.

**CUT TO:**

**INT. NORA'S CLASSROOM - DAY**

Joey's pen sticks out of his pencil case.

**END OF MONTAGE**

**INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY**

Joey is storing his books in his locker. A student stops next to him.

STUDENT

Joseph?

JOEY

Yeah?

STUDENT

You missed Nora's class today.

JOEY

Yeah.

STUDENT

She said she's retiring.

JOEY

Oh.

Silence.

STUDENT

She said she's leaving when the school year finishes.

JOEY

Oh. All right.

STUDENT

Well, see you at the finals.

JOEY

Yeah. Good luck.

STUDENT

We won't be needing any.

JOEY

Right.

The student leaves.

Joey looks across the hall at Nora's classroom - the door is open. Joey looks down.

**INT. SCHOOL GYM - DAY**

The gym is being used as an exam room - desks cover the entire room. Montgomery sits behind a desk by the end of the gym.

Inexpressive - Joey sits behind his desk. A man passes by and places a few papers on his desk and moves on.

Joey looks up at the clock - it's 2:05.

MONTGOMERY (O.S.)

Attention. Five minutes left. I repeat

- five minutes left. Thank you.

Montgomery turns off her microphone. Worried - she whispers something to the teacher next to her.

Joey looks over at a desk close to him - empty - and at another one a bit further away - also empty.

Joey looks at the clock - waiting.

MONTGOMERY (O.S.)

Students - has any one of you seen  
Beatrice Doyle and Marvin Robins  
today? Anyone?

A few murmurs. A few nervous glances at Joey. No answer.

Joey continues to look at the ticking clock.

The gym doors open and man with a suit - THE PRINCIPLE - bursts through. Joey looks back at the clock - unmoved.

PRINCIPLE (O.S.)

Which one is Joseph Witwer?

MONTGOMERY (O.S.)

That one over there.

Thumping steps. The principle touches Joey's shoulder.

PRINCIPLE

Young man - you must be Mister Witwer.

JOEY

That's right.

PRINCIPLE

Come with me please.

Joey remains unmoved.

PRINCIPLE

Witwer - you are coming with me.

Slowly - he gets up and is escorted out of the gym by the principle. Joey walks past his classmates - all trying to



avoid eye contact.

CUT TO BLACK

**PART VII - IT'S A HAPPY DAY**

**INT. PRINCIPLE'S OFFICE - DAY**

Joey sits in front of the principle's desk.

JOEY

What do you want me to say? I don't know what you're talking about. Give me your proof - do you have any?

The principle sits behind his desk and Montgomery stands next to him - both dead serious.

PRINCIPLE

Mister Witwer, we have security cameras. Mister Robins' claims are proved right in footage - and on his face.

JOEY

And you're sure the footage shows me hitting him?

PRINCIPLE

We're sure.

JOEY

All right. But that doesn't explain why I'm not taking the finals right now. I'm here in your office and my paper is out there getting an F.

PRINCIPLE

Yes. An F is what you'll get. He told us everything.

JOEY

What's that?

PRINCIPLE

He told us you cheated on every test and on every assignment you were given since September.

JOEY

And you believe that?

PRINCIPLE

I didn't - at first. You're a great student. But he also said that you were planning something for the finals. He talked about your technique.

JOEY

What's that?

PRINCIPLE

I just saw what he explained.

JOEY

What did you see exactly?

PRINCIPLE

Don't pass for gentile - you know what I'm talking about.

Silence. Joey bites his lip.

MONTGOMERY

Witwer?

JOEY

Yes?

MONTGOMERY

Be honest - have you been doing this since September?

JOEY

I don't know. What do you think?

PRINCIPLE

Mister Witwer, we're in no hurry here - not yet at least. We'll talk whenever you're ready. I've already informed your parents - they'll be arriving here in a while. I suggest you get ready for that. Then we'll talk and settle the consequences. And don't worry - there will be many.

(Beat)

Now - I have other things to attend to. Witwer, you wait just outside my office. Your parents will meet you there.

He gets up.

MONTGOMERY

May I have a word with him?

PRINCIPLE

A word, a sentence, an entire lecture...  
He's all yours.

He leaves his office.

MONTGOMERY

You're a good student.

He doesn't answer.

MONTGOMERY

You know what happens to those students who don't follow the rules?

JOEY

Please educate me - that's your job.

MONTGOMERY

A student who cares about getting to his football game on time more than succeeding at school suffers on the long run. He goofs around - has fun with his friends - but then he can't find a job. That student doesn't know

what's important. That student-

JOEY

-You think I don't know that?

MONTGOMERY

You do? Good. Why don't you show it then?

JOEY

You wouldn't get it.

MONTGOMERY

Maybe summer will make you think on the matter.

JOEY

I don't need to think about anything - I know what you're talking about - more than anyone.

MONTGOMERY

You don't show it.

JOEY

I do.

MONTGOMERY

Think about it during summer.

JOEY

What do you want me to think about?

MONTGOMERY

There is a time for play and there is a time for work. You work and then you play.

JOEY

No, no. What do you want me to think about? Come on - tell me.

MONTGOMERY

You have to know how to manage-

JOEY

-You really think I don't understand that? You really think I don't?

MONTGOMERY

Listen to me - please think about your future.

JOEY

My future? Come on. What's the matter with you? You're a teacher. Tell me something I don't know.

MONTGOMERY

During summer - when you'll be doing whatever the principle has planned for you - you'll understand-

JOEY

-I'll understand?

MONTGOMERY

You'll understand that your friends have been working hard all year long for this good summer. They'll be happy during summer - and it's all because they have worked well this whole year.

Joey thinks - troubled.

JOEY

You think my friends...? My friends...?

His voice breaks. Silence. He sheds a tear and lets it run across his whole face.

Montgomery gives him a look of understanding.

JOEY

Funny how a whole year's gone by now...

Silence.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Joey is leaning on the wall next to the principle's office - looking down.

The bell rings. Joey looks across the empty hallway. He hears students cheering from afar.

Joey looks down again.

BEA (O.S.)

Hey Joey.

Bea leans against the wall too. She has a strange look in her eyes - of empathy - or enthusiasm - almost dreamlike.

Surprised - Joey cracks a sad smile.

JOEY

Bea.

BEA

Let's sit for a moment.

JOEY

The floor's dirty.

BEA

Doesn't matter.

She sits on the floor. Hesitantly - Joey sits too.

JOEY

I'm sorry.

BEA

What for?

JOEY

Thinking the way I did about you.

BEA

I don't know what you're talking

about.

(Beat)

Marvin came to me the other day with his face all messed up.

JOEY

How's he now?

BEA

I took care of him.

Silence.

JOEY

I don't know what to do.

BEA

Well that's a nice change of pace.

JOEY

I think I... I think I messed up. I want to go back.

BEA

We all do.

JOEY

I want to go back.

BEA

We all do.

JOEY

No but really, I want to go back. Or - at least I just want to forget about yesterday and tomorrow and do whatever the fuck I want.

BEA

Well that only happens in dreams.

JOEY

No. It doesn't.

BEA

Well, you can believe what you want.

Silence. Joey observes Bea and thinks.

JOEY

Don't you hate monotony?

BEA

I do.

JOEY

And how about having words be put in your mouth for you?

She thinks and then smiles warmly.

BEA

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

Joey nods to himself.

JOEY

You know - when you win so much - each passing win becomes more and more of a loss. And when you finally reach an actual loss - it's a relief.

(Beat)

Funny how tragedies work...

BEA

Is this a tragedy though?

He doesn't answer.

BEA

I guess it all depends on how you view your life.

(Beat)



What are you doing this summer?

JOEY

I don't know.

BEA

Well then what are you doing today?

Joey thinks.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

The school's front doors gleam in the sunlight. Joey passes through them - smiling.

**EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

Joey walks past the big tree by the entrance without even looking at it. He reaches the side of the road. He crosses it.

**EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS**

Joey walks away from the school. He is heading towards a plaza nearby.

JOEY (V.O.)

(As if talking to someone  
over a phone)

So you're up for it?

(Beat)

Great. That's great.

(Beat)

I was actually really hoping you'd say  
that.

(Beat)

What?

(Beat)

Well, it was getting exhausting.

(Beat)

Oh, yeah. Forget about that. Who cares?

(Beat)

Look, I'm heading there right now.

(Beat)

The plaza. The one next to school.

(Beat)

All right, I'm here. I'll call you back.

(Beat)

I'll meet you there.

(Beat)

Yeah, yeah. We're breaking everything tonight.

(Beat)

Yeah. Like I said, forget about it.

#### **EXT. PLAZA - CONTINUOUS**

Joey arrives at the plaza - bushes, trees and benches. He eagerly sits down at a bench.

He takes in his beautiful surroundings and sighs. He smiles and closes his eyes as if finally appreciating the moment.

**CUT TO:**

#### **EXT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - DAY**

It's a cloudy day. The school's front yard is completely empty excluding the presence of one person.

Waiting to enter through the closed front doors - Joey stands there with a sense of dread.

He simply waits.

**FADE OUT.**

