

TAKE TWO

Original screenplay
by

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A man confronted
with his younger
clones embarks on a
crusade to change
their characters

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FIRST DRAFT

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INT. DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM - 1950s - DAY

Waiting are DAVID FLETCHER and his WIFE, both thirtyish. David has a nervous tick in one eye. He keeps adjusting his glasses while his Wife reads the L.A. Times. The front page bears the smiling face of J. F. Kennedy.

DOCTOR
(Entering)
Doctor and Mrs. Fletcher?

They get up anxiously.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

All seated.

DOCTOR
(Carefully.)
I'm afraid this is a delicate,
and a, well, a serious situation...

DAVID
Dispense with the prologue,
Doctor. Is she sterile?

The Doctor hesitates.

BEGELMAN (old) and ROGER PATTERSON (young) enter hesitantly, triggering alarm and foreboding in David, who stands up.

DOCTOR
Ahh-- have a seat please, gentlemen.
Doctor Fletcher, I've asked the
head of your institute--
(Gestures to Begelman)
-- to be here for this. And your
colleague, Doctor Patterson, has
come out of concern.

Foredoomed, David sinks into his chair.

DAVID
Oh no...

Heavy pause.

The Doctor passes out photographs. We SEE ONE: several rows of chromosomes all lined up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOCTOR

This is the karyotype of your sperm chromosomes. As you can see where it's marked, one of them is grossly misshapen. There's no functional damage, except that in this shape it cannot pair up with the egg cell chromosomes during mitosis and cell division.

(Beat)

We're afraid that this form of sterility could only have been caused by the kind of chemical mutagens that you may have been working with in your research.

David doesn't react, adjusts his glasses.

BEGELMAN

(Betraying apprehension)

We tried to get you to slow down, David. We assumed you knew the risk...

David is just shaking his head, staring at nothing.

BEGELMAN

(Continuing.)

... working such long hours...

David's Wife tries to comfort him.

BEGELMAN

(Continuing.)

... with unknown radioactive tracers...

(Beat.)

David?

DAVID

This is ridiculous!

(He stands up.)

I've been dying to have children for years! I've always wanted them!

(Looks coldly at Wife.)

But you had to have more security--

WIFE

(Withdraws.)

I needed a husband who would have time for his children.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
-- you kept putting it off,
and now, now look!

WIFE
David, please.

DAVID
You should have been able to
raise children, you're only
a housewife!

Glum silence from his Wife.

Embarrassed tension all around the room.

DOCTOR
(Tentatively.)
There is still adoption, Doctor
Fletcher.

DAVID
Adoption!

ROGER
Listen, David, I know how much
you've wanted children. I understand
how you must feel right now...
... But I think you've been
pushing yourself too far, you're
overwrought. Give yourself a
break for a while. I was planning
a vacation soon myself-- we could
both take one together--

DAVID
Vacation! My project is behind
schedule as it is!

David's nervous tick is more pronounced. He starts pacing
the room.

BEGELMAN
Well, firing your assistants didn't
help any.

ROGER
Yeah, why not hire some new ones?
Let them shlepp away at it for a
while.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

I can't trust my project to some incompetent grad students, it's too tricky right now. I wanted it finished by November so I could get the NMR experiment going in January and--

(Hesitates.)

-- and then be ready when the baby came...

He adjusts his glasses, Takes his seat again and stares at the floor.

BEGELMAN

(On the edge of his seat.)

In any event, I'm sure you will agree that the Institute is not at fault for your condition. Um...

(Passes David a paper.)

This is a little declaration to that effect, which I'd appreciate your signiture on. Merely a formality.

David is far off. He glances at the paper. Signs it. Relief from Begelman.

David's Wife is sniffing a little. David turns to her.

DAVID

What are you crying for?

She's stung by that. Hurt.

Someone clears their throat.

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

As Begelman and Roger pass. We FOLLOW David and his Wife.

WIFE

I want to go somewhere we can talk.

DAVID

(Avoiding her look.)

I want to get a drink.

(Beat.)

Alone.

CUT TO:

INT. CELL BIOLOGY LAB - DAY

To establish.

Roger is there alone, working on something under a microscope. He looks up at the sound of a NOISE.

ROGER

David.

AT THE DOOR

David, entering the lab, bumps a tray of test tubes and shatters them onto the floor.

Roger rushes to the accident, rescuing the intact ones.

ROGER

It's alright. They're not important.

Roger stops as he notices that David is drunk.

ROGER

Hey... Are you alright?

David slumps to the floor in a morose stupor. His nervous tick is erased. Roger goes over to David and squats beside him.

ROGER

It pains me to see you like this. Sterility is not the end of the world, you know.

DAVID

A man lives on through his children...

FRIEND

Let me take you home.

David suddenly looks up at Roger, then back down again.

DAVID

Jane is divorcing me.

ROGER

What?

DAVID

I can't believe I did it. It seems like someone else. I'll never get a woman like her again. Never.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

What do you mean, 'It seems like someone else'?

DAVID

I hit her. I beat her up.

ROGER

Oh, christ...

DAVID

I couldn't control myself. I've never felt like that before.

Roger sits back against the wall, sickened.

DAVID

(Tears coming.)

I tried to make up with her. I tried everything. But she's left me alright...

Roger observes David like a germ under his microscope.

DAVID

(Continuing.)

I'm alone and childless.

ROGER

You can't blame her, David.

But David is suddenly distracted-- inspired. A gleam in his eye replaces the tears.

ROGER

(Continuing.)

And I think self-pity is pretty inappropriate at the moment.

David springs up and goes to Roger's work table.

DAVID

That's it!

Roger follows him, mystified.

DAVID

(Continuing.)

You're doing artificial insemination, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

We insert a sperm nucleus into the egg cell.

(Beat.)

Yes, we do have a pregnant woman by the method but it's not public knowledge yet.

DAVID

And you've also made a woman pregnant without fertilization at all. You got the unfertilized egg to start dividing all by itself.

ROGER

(Dismayed.)

How did you know that? It's supposed to be top secret.

DAVID

That woman will give birth to a duplicate of herself-- a clone.

ROGER

Not a clone-- that's science fiction. Parthenogenesis. It'll be a long time before we can take a cell from your arm and get a baby Doctor Fletcher out of it.

(Beat.)

What's got into you?

DAVID

(Impassioned.)

Listen. I'm sterile because my set of chromosomes won't pair up with the female set. But what if you remove the female ones-- look, if you can put 'em in you can take 'em out-- and then you make it start growing just like you've done, like parthenogenesis.-- Only it'll be my chromosomes!

Roger looks troubled.

DAVID

Well?

ROGER

It's possible.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

Then I can have children!
Even better than children--
copies of myself! New versions
of myself!

ROGER

Wait a minute... Look, I've seen
you with lots of kids. You're
great with them. You're a natural.
Why don't you just adopt one--

DAVID

No.

ROGER

Besides, what woman would volunteer
for what you're suggesting? And
you know how controversial it
would be. That's why we've been
keeping our work here quiet.

DAVID

Exactly. We'll get Begelman to
back it as a covert experiment.
He's been waiting for decades for
a chance like this.

ROGER

(Getting what he means.)
Oh. You mean like his studies of
identical twins that were separated
since birth.

DAVID

Exactly.

ROGER

To see whether personality is
inherited or learned.

DAVID

Exactly.

Roger can't suppress a wry chuckle.

ROGER

It would be the perfect experiment
alright.

(Beat.)

But we'd need to make maybe twenty
or so copies. We'd need an excuse
to do long-term follow-up studies...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They both frown, thinking.

DAVID

I've got it! Your artificial insemination program. Women are coming to you because their husbands are sterile, right? They'll never know who the real father is anyways. And there's your excuse for follow-up studies-- because it's a "new technique".

(Beat.)

With Begelman's support I think the Board will go for it.

ROGER

(Ironic.)

This is absurd, you know.

DAVID

Exactly. We could have them born every five years, say. And until they're old enough to recognize me or each other, I could be one of the interviewers. I'd be able to be with my sons.

ROGER

But you wouldn't be able to raise them. Or even influence them.

DAVID

True, but...

ROGER

If you adopted instead, you'd really be their father.

DAVID

But these would be mine! They'd be like me! I love it!

Roger looks at the entranced David with a sense of dubious conspiracy.

FADE OUT.

BLACKNESS

A TITLE: "Thirty years later.
The present."

FADE IN:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A handfull of men gather around the conference table, shaking hands, taking seats. Some are scientists, some are executive heavies. Standing at the front is an old, distinguished-looking man.

CLOSEUP OLD MAN - AND IT'S ROGER

We can clearly recognize him. He has aged well. Looks serene.

ROGER

Well everybody is here on time.
For once. The purpose of this
conference is to work out the
next phase of Project Fletcher.
As you know--

An armed security guard opens the door and calls to Roger:

JOE

Excuse me, sir, there's a man here
who insists on coming in. He
says he's David Fletcher.

ROGER

(Surprised.)

Let him in, Joe.

All heads turn as David enters. He has not aged as well as Roger has. He looks bitter and weary, but in command, used to power. As he takes a seat at the back:

ROGER

This is a...

(Falters.)

... a wonderful surprise.

(To group.)

We are honored to have David
Fletcher with us today. I'm
sure most of you don't recognize
him, because of our-- and his--
careful censoring of photos and
public appearances. Nevertheless
this is Doctor Fletcher, chief
executive at Dupont and member of
the board here at the Institute.

OLD GUY

(To group.)

Yep, let me tell you, it's been a
load of work making sure the doubles
never learn of each other.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

OLD GUY (CONT'D)

My life's work, in fact.

(To David, standing.)

And I'd just like to commend you
at this time for your sacrifices,
sir.

Applause. David nods graciously, but he looks tense.

ROGER

It's good to see you again, David.

(To group.)

Okay, to start things off I'd like
to re-aquaint you with our thirty
subjects.

The room darkens and a slide appears on the front screen.

THE SLIDE - ROWS OF PHOTOS

of all different sorts of twins, male and female, with
personality profiles under each photo.

ROGER

In Begelman's original studies
with identical twins in the
Fifties, it was discovered that
twins who grew up with each other--
shown here-- developed different
personalities, habits, and interests.

NEW SLIDE - SIMILAR PHOTO SERIES

but this time the twins look even more alike.

ROGER

Whereas those twins that had
been separated at birth into
different families-- shown here--
they became, paradoxically, very
similar. Without having their twin
to react to, to be different from,
their personalities took their
natural, genetically determined course.

NEW SLIDE - A SERIES OF THIRTY PHOTOS

Males ranging from ages five to thirty, all looking like
David might have (and did) at those ages.

ROGER

The same seems undeniably true
for the Fletcher Doubles.

NEW SLIDE - A LITTLE BOY

ROGER

(Continuing.)

In England we have six-year-old Geoffry. He is small for his age, gets into fights at school, suffers from headaches, and recently ran away from home for a day. All of which occurred with David at this age.

BLACK-AND-WHITE SLIDE - SIX YEAR OLD DAVID
The only difference is the haircut.

ROGER

(Continuing.)

This is David.

NEW SLIDE - TEENAGER

ROGER

(Continuing.)

Also in England we have seventeen-year-old Craig. As David was at seventeen, he is big for his age, respected by his peers but has no close friends, over-achieves academically, has--

(Hesitates.)

obsessive-compulsive tendancies, is considered disrespectful of his teachers, and has poor rapport with his parents. He's the school president. David at this age was the head of the debating team. Craig reads books similar to those David read.

BLACK-AND-WHITE SLIDE - DAVID AT SEVENTEEN

ROGER

(Continuing.)

This is David.

CLOSEUP DAVID IN THE DARK

Expressionless.

NEW SLIDE

Looks like David as a young man.

ROGER

(Continuing.)

In sweden, this is thirty-year-old Issak, one of the two eldest. He is a scientist, as most of the older ones are, working on prosthetic devices for crippled children.

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ROGER (CONT'D)

He shows a rapport with children that is also exhibited by the older doubles. He is--

(Hesitates, glances in David's direction.)

-- um, driven by his work, and, uh, seems to drive those who work for him just as hard--

CLOSEUP DAVID IN THE DARK

Looks a little disturbed. His old nervous tick has not been completely erased by age.

ROGER

(Continuing.)

-- which is similar to David at this age. There are also signs of friction with his wife--

CLOSEUP ROGER

ROGER

(Continuing.)

-- who bears an uncanny resemblance to David's ex-wife, who he...

(Clears throat.)

divorced at this age.

BLACK-AND-WHITE SLIDE - DAVID AT THIRTY

ROGER

(Continuing.)

This is David.

NEW SLIDE - SAME FACE

ROGER

(Continuing)

And here in California is the other thirty-year old, Jack, a geneticist at Stanford. He is the most similar to David.

(He tries to see David in the dark but can't.

Takes a breath.)

Jack is the focus of our attention right now because he has been quarreling with his wife. All of the doubles have inherited sterility of course, and, um, we are predicting that, based on David's behaviour at this point in his life, Jack may begin blaming his wife and... and displacing his anger onto her.

CONTINUED:

There's a scuffling in the dark, the clatter of a chair falling, then footsteps and heavy breathing moving toward the door. The door opens and we SEE David exit, upset.

ROGER

Lights please.

The lights come up.

ROGER

Could we take a short coffee-break gentlemen?

(Heading toward the door.)

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY

David, his back to us, walks hastily but unsteadily away, as Roger appears in the f.g.

ROGER

David!

David doesn't respond. Roger hurries and catches up.

ROGER

David?

CLOSE TWO SHOT - BEHIND THEM

David stops and Roger comes along side him. David finally looks at him.

REVERSE - DAVID

Seething.

DAVID

You make me sick!

ROGER

What?

DAVID

It's a freak show to you. You're all sadists.

ROGER

(Bewildered.)

Can we talk in my office?

(He turns David toward the elevator.)

Please.

INT. ELEVATOR

They enter. Wait for the door to close. It closes.

Roger looks at David.

DAVID

You hate them! You hate every one of them; and you prolong this whole thing so you can keep ridiculing them!

ROGER

How on earth can you think--

DAVID

You make yourselves feel so good and well-adjusted by picking apart their faults!

Roger turns away, speechless.

DAVID

You hate them!

And on his words the elevator door opens to let someone on.

Very uncomfortable silence as the door closes on all three.

CUT TO:

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE

David slumps in a chair. Roger perches over him on the edge of his desk, hands him a drink.

ROGER

Here.

David takes it absently. He seems lost in himself. Insular. Still angry.

ROGER

I assure you, I do not hate them. And I don't see why any of the others would either. I love them as though they were my own sons... .. and because they're so like you...

David grimaces. Long pause.

ROGER

David, I think there's something else behind this anger.

That hits a nerve.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROGER

Over the last few years you've been depressed. You've been seeing a shrink. Something's eating you that you're not telling me.

DAVID

It's just the same old--

ROGER

Don't give me that crap about old age again.

David looks frustrated.

ROGER

What is it?

David looks blank. Something is trying to get to the surface but he's holding it down.

ROGER

What is it? Tell me.

David's eyes are getting watery. Something is about to erupt.

ROGER

Tell me.

DAVID

I don't know. I don't know.

Roger stares at him for a moment, shakes his head.

Then, suddenly:

ROGER

Tell me!

DAVID

I hate them! I hate them!
Goddamnit I hate them... I hate them... I love them... I hate them...

(Lots of sadness.)

I loved them so much when they were children. But then, but then the older ones, I-- I started seeing more and more of myself in them. It was fascinating at first. But then-- then it became too clear...

(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DAVID(CONT'D)

I saw myself too clearly. The way others must see me. I see things I don't want to see.

(Beat.)

I always thought I was so right, you know? And I always had to prove it. And-- and then I would see them doing things I would do, being like me, and I-- I felt repelled. I despised them. I despised myself.

(Beat.)

I couldn't admit it, I... I still can't deal with it, Roger. It's been hell. I feel trapped. Like a puppet on strings-- watching my own act go on and on and on. And I want to stop them.

ROGER

(Supportive.)

I had no idea, David.

DAVID

Now you must really think I'm messed up.

ROGER

Not at all. I understand completely. I've often wondered how it would feel. But you never talked about it before.

(Beat.)

Feel any better now that you've told me?

DAVID

No. I can't stand it. I've got to do something.

ROGER

All you can do is accept yourself.

DAVID

You said when identical twins had contact with each other they became different. Well, I could make a difference.

ROGER

Hold on--you can't interfere with the experiment. You'll ruin it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID

I don't care.

ROGER

You'll get us all put in prison.
Or rather you'll have Security
on your hands.

(Beat.)

And you know their orders are
literally to stop at nothing to
keep the thing secret.

Heavy looks.

DAVID

Well Jack is going to figure it
out sooner or later anyway. They
couldn't stop him from becoming a
geneticist. Once he knows he's
sterile he's bound to take a look
at his chromosomes.

ROGER

Yeah, that may be a problem.

CUT TO:

INT. HOME - DAY

A little girl and little boy play together. The walls
are adorned with some very impressive photographs.

The front door opens. It's Jack, looking grim, with that
same nervous tick.

KIDS

Uncle Jack! Uncle Jack!

They run to him. He smiles, scoops them up, and carries
them across the room.

JACK

Hey, you guys must have just
eaten, you're heavier. Let me
guess...

(Feels their tummies,
and glances at the leftover
lunch in the kitchen.)

... feels like, ah... tunafish
sandwiches! Right?

The kids giggle and squirm.

GIRL

How do you do that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
(Setting them down.)
Hey, I'm a scientist, remember?

Jack's wife, JULIE, enters. He goes to her.

JULIE
Your sister left the kids here
while she's at the hairdresser.
(She sees his grim look.)
You saw the doctor?

JACK
Yeah. It's me.
(Adjusts his glasses.)

JULIE
Oh Jack...

She tried to comfort him. He shrugs her off and crosses the room, fuming.

JACK
I'm a genetisist and they won't
tell me why I'm sterile! I couldn't
get a thing out of them!

He heads into the bedroom, O.S., and Julie follows.

The children are still, listening. We observe the room, the photographs, and the kids, as we HEAR Jack and Julie O.S.

JULIE(O.S.)
Honey, it's just as well this way.

JACK (O.S.)
(Shouting.)
Oh, right! That's easy for you
to say! You don't want children!

JULIE (O.S.)
It's easy for you to want them!

JACK(O.S.)
All you want to do is take pictures!

JULIE(O.S.)
You wouldn't have to take care
of them all day!

JACK(O.S.)
You don't need a career!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE(O.S.)
You're selfish!

JACK(O.S.)
Shut up!

The kids edge over closer, listening.

JACK(O.S.)
Listen!

There's a pause, total silence. Then smash! something breaks. The kids run back to their toys.

Julie comes out, tense, gathers up the kids hastily.

JULIE
Come on now, I'm taking you
back to mommy's.

BOY
But I want to play with Uncle
Jack!

The door slams behind them.

CUT TO:

THROUGH A MICROSCOPE

A jumble of chromosomes inside a dividing cell. The image jerks back and forth, getting lined up.

A camera CLICK.

INT. LAB - JACK

removes film from a camera atop the microscope.

CUT TO:

INT. LAB - JACK

with a blowup of the chromosome photo. Cutting out the individual chromosomes with scissors.

CUT TO:

INT. LAB - JACK

with the chromosomes laid out in rows on a card. He holds the card up to a chart labeled HUMAN CHROMOSOMES.

CLOSEUP THE CHART

with rows of matching pairs of chromosomes.

Jack's card has the same rows, but there are only one of each pair.

CLOSEUP JACK

In shock. White face. Cold sweat.

He knows there is only one explanation.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - DAY

A limosine pulls up at the loading entrance. David gets out and enters a back door marked AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY.

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM OF ROGER'S OFFICE

A dozen children and their mothers cram the place.

David enters.

DAVID

(To secretary.)

When do you expect Doctor Patterson back?

SECRETARY

Any minute, sir.

DAVID

(Surveying the kids.)

Is this his bone growth control group?

SECRETARY

Something like that.

David approaches a five-year-old who occupies a large seat.

DAVID

Hey, mister, how about giving a seat to an old man with aching bones. Huh?

The kid looks a little confused, smiles. David picks him up and sits in the chair with the kid on his lap. David glances perfunctorily at the kid's mother, who smiles back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DAVID
 (To kid.)
 So what do you think of life
 so far?

The Kid holds up a little Darth Vader doll.

KID
 I like Darth Vader.

DAVID
 Aha! I thought you looked the
 type.

The Kid walks Darth Vader across David's shoulder. David growls at it.

Roger enters, startled to see David. David puts the kid down and stands stroking the kid's head absently while looking coldly at Roger.

DAVID
 I want to see that last report
 on Jack.

ROGER
 (Walking into office.)
 It's not complete yet, really.

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE

DAVID
 Look, I know everyone else has
 seen it. What are you hiding?

ROGER
 Frankly, David, I think you'd be
 a lot healthier if you would just
 divorce yourself from the whole
 project for a while. Forget about
 it--

DAVID
 I want it now!

Roger looks undecided. David angrily pulls a file drawer open and rummages through it.

ROGER
 Alright. Alright. Here.

He gives David the report.

David reads it over intently. Roger looks worried.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

David shows dismay.

Then anger.

DAVID
(Turning red.)
The bastard is beating her!

ROGER
(Nervous.)
That's only from his interview.
There's no hard evidence.

DAVID
This has got to stop right now!

INTERCOM
Dr. Patterson, there's a Jack
Brown in the main lobby asking
to see you. He has no appointment.

DAVID
He's here!

INTERCOM
He says it's urgent.

DAVID
He knows!

And David is out the door as fast as his unsteady legs
will carry him.

ROGER
No, David! Stay out of this!

But he's gone. Roger presses an intercom button.

ROGER
Security!

CUT TO:

INT. INSTITUTE LOBBY - DAY

Joe, the security man, stands by the elevator with his hand
on his gun.

Then he has a thought. He crosses to the nearby stairwell,
opens it, listens. We HEAR FOOTSTEPS hurrying down. He
draws his gun and steps inside. The door slowly swings
shut behind him.

Soon we HEAR muffled VOICES. Then a loud pistol shot.
Then another shot.

Silence.

CUT TO:

INT. PAY PHONE - DAVID

Gun in one hand, bleeding from the shoulder, breathing heavy and uneven.

DAVID

(To phone.)

Roger, I must see you in the conference room immediately. With your secretary.

He hangs up. Dials again.

DAVID

This is Doctor Patteron. Send Jack Brown up to my office now.

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM OF ROGER'S OFFICE

The children and mothers waiting. No secretary.

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - DAVID

Behind the desk. In pain. Trying to compose himself. He puts the gun into a drawer.

We wait. We HEAR a few faint GIGGLES from the kids in the waiting room, through the slightly ajar door.

Now a strong knock.

DAVID

Come in.

The door opens to reveal a determined looking Jack.

JACK

Oh, I thought this was Doctor Patterson's--

DAVID

You're in the right place.

Jack moves toward David.

JACK

Who are you?

David doesn't reply. Jack gets closer, then suddenly freezes in shock.

Disbelief. Realization. He sees his own face beneath the wrinkles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They stare at each other in deathly silence for a long time.

David as cold as ice. Jack beginning to simmer with resentment.

JACK
(Righteous.)
You old--

DAVID
Shut up!

Jack hesitates a moment.

JACK
What gave you the right--!

David has struggled quickly to his feet, wincing from the wound.

DAVID
Shut up, you disgusting jerk!
I hate you far more than you'll
ever hate me! Sit down!

Off balance, Jack sits.

DAVID
(Continuing.)
You're selfish! You're aloof!
Every second of your life has
been devoted to proving how
wonderful and smart you are!
You love no one! And guess
what? No one loves you!
You're a wind-up robot on your
way to the same dead end that
I've been at for thirty years!
(Beat.)

Jack is speechless.

DAVID
(Continuing.)
Look at yourself! Look at the
trap you're in! And blame me!
I trapped you! I created you
and you're destined to be just
like me. Well you're looking
at your future right now--
an empty, lonely, "respected"
old man who regrets his whole
life!
(Beat.)
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DAVID (CONT'D)

You ought to hate me. Hate me good. Hate me so much you'd like to see me dead!

(He coughs, wavers.)

Because maybe, just maybe, you'll be able to choose your own identity.

(Beat.)

Get off it. Be someone else. Don't take your precious self so seriously.

Long pause.

JACK

Are there... others?

David thrusts a paper at him.

DAVID

Here. They're all on there. All just like you. That's right-- a nice big experiment that proves we're all genetically pre-determined.

(Beat.)

Watch them, Jack. Watch the young ones grow up. Pass on my message when they're ready... But keep it secret. Be careful... or believe me they'll kill you.

David sits, exhausted, breathing erratically, coughing, dizzy.

Then he starts to laugh.

DAVID

Watch your old self die, Jack.

David's heart stops. He dies.

Jack stands with tears in his eyes.

A little boy wanders in from outside and stands beside him. He unconsciously puts his hand on the boy's shoulder.

A transformation is taking place in him. He looks at the little boy.

He starts to laugh. The same way David had. It becomes quite hysterical, complete with tears. He has to sit down. The boy stays back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

When that subsides, he stands, composes himself, looks like he's wondering what to do next.

One last, quick look at David, and he goes out.

INT. WAITING ROOM

Jack closes the office door behind him, goes to a chair, and sits quietly waiting with the others.

Presently the Secretary enters.

JACK
Is Doctor Patterson in?

SECRETARY
Uh, in a minute.

Jack waits, smiling inwardly.

Roger arrives, worried. Apprehensive when he sees Jack.

JACK
Have you got a minute, Doctor?

ROGER
(Uncertain.)
Certainly. Come in to my--

JACK
Actually I'm in a real rush but I was just passing by and I wanted to tell you some good news-- Julie and I made up and I'm quitting my job for a while and we're adopting kids and I'm going to take care of them while Julie work as a photographer full time.

ROGER
(Stunned.)
My, my...

JACK
Yeah I know it's weird but-- well it's the nineteen eighties, you know.
(Beat.)
I really appreciate being able to confide in you all these years. So, um, I just wanted to tell you. See you later.

Jack leaves. Roger exchanges looks with his Secretary as he enters his office. The door shuts. FREEZE.

END.