

WHIPPING BOY

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

Half a dozen STUDENTS, including CARTER, JESSUP, and NORTON, 16, rich kids in private school blazers. A school from 30 years ago. Half smiling, they watch TONY, 16, lean over the teacher's desk. Tony's blazer is too small and worn.

The TEACHER, removes his coat and drapes it over a chair. Then, he grabs a wooden pointer and steps behind Tony.

TEACHER

We are gentlemen here, not boorish
riff-raff. We do not apply foreign
substances to the instructor's
chair!

With that, the Teacher whips Tony with the pointer.

TEACHER

Do
(swat)
You
(swat)
Understand?
(swat)

TONY

Yes, sir.

But the Teacher doesn't stop. Another vicious swat.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Older, 40s, heavier, Carter, Jessup, and Norton sit at a small table as a waiter, ANTON, 40s, bald, bent from labor, pours scotch and opens a box of cigars, an after dinner ritual.

40 NORTON

(to Anton)
You're new. What's your name?

ANTON

Anton, sir.

40 NORTON

Well, Anton, you look familiar.
Did you work at the Ale House?

ANTON

No, sir.

40 NORTON

Well, we met somewhere. It will come to me.

Anton leaves the bottle on the table and leaves.

40 CARTER

As I've said before, I'm against opening up the school to females.

Jessup sips scotch and smiles.

40 JESSUP

Where did you get this scotch, Carter?

40 CARTER

It's not mine, although it's superb. Norton?

Norton shakes his head as he grabs a cigar.

40 NORTON

You know I prefer port. I'm guessing it came from the club's private stock.

40 CARTER

Remind me to send a thank you to management.

40 NORTON

Back to the topic. Should we allow females to enroll?

40 JESSUP

I don't see how we can avoid it. You know the drill. We'll turn down some girl, and her parents will sue. If you think the federal courts won't enforce a coed student body, you have your head in the sand.

40 CARTER

Wasn't Judge Chamberlain in the class ahead of us?

40 NORTON

Even if he rules for us, we'll lose on appeal.

INT. SCHOOL - STUDENT DORM - DAY

A large room with four small beds, four desks, and four dressers, a spartan dorm. 16-year-old Carter, Norton, and Jessup sit at their desks, studying. Into the room limps Tony who goes to his bed and falls face down.

The other three look at Tony who doesn't say a word.

CARTER

Did you break?

Tony shakes his head.

JESSUP

Don't lie. We'll soon know.

Tony shakes his head again.

NORTON

In that case, our agreement holds.

Norton stands, pulls out a wallet, and extracts several bills. He walks over and lays the money on Tony's desk. Carter and Jessup do the same.

JESSUP

If you rat us out now, you'll regret it.

Tony doesn't answer, just lies there in pain.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cigar smoke fills the room as Jessup, Norton, and Carter continue to drink and talk.

40 CARTER

What if we hand out a few more scholarships? Bring in an Asian and a couple Muslims. Muslims like segregated education, correct?

40 NORTON

You might get away with that in a country where women don't drive or vote, but not here.

40 JESSUP

Didn't we have a scholarship boy in our class? What was his name?

40 CARTER

Tony.

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY

Jessup, Carter, and Norton sit in their seats. At the front, Tony kneels on his hands, and from his shaking, he's been on them for some time.

40 JESSUP (V.O.)

Whatever happened to him?

40 CARTER (V.O.)

He didn't graduate. I remember that.

40 NORTON (V.O.)

Because of the pig.

Tony can't take any more. He falls to the side. The Teacher nudges Tony with his foot and points to his seat. Tony rises, his hands dangling and red, and finds his chair.

INT. SCHOOL - STUDENT DORM - DAY

Tony sits at his desk. His hands swollen, he tears a match from a book of matches and lights it, staring at the flame. One by one, Norton, Carter, and Jessup walk past and lay cash on the desk.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The smoke is thicker. The men are a bit tipsy from the scotch. One by one, they loosen their ties. The bottle is half empty.

40 NORTON

I don't see how we can avoid going coed, so how do we make sure we get females that will embrace the true essence of the school?

40 JESSUP

Legacies. If their fathers graduated, then there's a good chance the daughters will be made of the right stuff.

40 CARTER

We raise tuition. If they can afford the tariff, then they probably come from good stock.

40 JESSUP

If you give a scholarship to a boy, you'll have to give one to a girl. Title whatever, remember?

40 CARTER

Athletic girls. We may as well recruit the best athletes we can.

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dark. The door opens. Jessup, Carter, and Norton slip in. Norton carries a big plastic bag. While Jessup watches out the door, Norton and Carter open the bag and pull out a bloody pig's head.

The set the bloody head in the middle of the desk and can't help but laugh. What a prank.

JESSUP

Shhhhhh....

CARTER

It's wicked.

NORTON

A pig for a pig.

JESSUP

Come on!

They slip out, leaving the pig's head behind.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The bottle has a quarter left. The smoke is thicker than ever. The men have taken off their coats and ties.

40 CARTER

Do we put the girls in with the boys or give them their own dorm?

40 JESSUP

How about their own floor? They'll be with the boys everywhere else.

40 NORTON
I agree. If they want to hook up,
they'll have to take a bit of risk.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Tony, his battered suitcase in hand, walks out of the school to an old, beaten car where his father, dressed in a deliveryman's uniform, waits.

40 NORTON (V.O.)
Did they turn off the air
conditioning?

40 JESSUP (V.O.)
And where is our waiter? We could
use some water.

In the window over the door, Norton, Jessup, and Carter watch Tony approach the car.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Carter pours scotch into his tumbler and reads the label. The smoke is too thick to be only cigar smoke.

40 CARTER
Anthony's private reserve. Never
heard of it.

Jessup pulls over the cigar box.

40 JESSUP
This says Anthony's private reserve
also.

40 NORTON
We need air and ice.

Norton rises and goes to the only door in the room. He opens it, and thick smoke billows into the room.

40 NORTON
What the hell. We're on fire!

Norton shuts the door as quickly as he can, but not before the others cough.

40 JESSUP
Who has a phone? Where are the
fire trucks?

40 CARTER
We didn't bring phones. No way to
record or video, remember?
Strictly private.

Norton goes around the room, pulling aside drapes, looking
for a window.

40 CARTER
Don't bother. There's only one way
in or out.

40 NORTON
The roof?

Carter shakes his head.

40 JESSUP
Then, we have to leave now.

They cough a bit more.

40 CARTER
We're two floors up. The stairs
are on fire. What are your chances
of reaching the street? Better to
wait for the fire fighters.

40 NORTON
We can't just sit here.

40 CARTER
Be my guest.

Norton grabs his coat which he drapes over his head.

40 NORTON
Anyone with me?

Carter sits. Jessup follows Norton to the door. Norton
opens the door, takes a breath and plunges into the smoke.
Jessup closes the door as quickly as he can.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Tony's Father takes Tony's battered suitcase and tosses it
into the trunk as he heads for the driver's door.

40 NORTON (V.O.)
Do you find it odd that the alarm
didn't sound?

40 CARTER (V.O.)
As odd as the scotch and cigars.

Tony turns and looks back at the school, specifically at the window where the others watch.

40 NORTON (V.O.)
What do you mean?

Tony salutes the three and mouths--I'LL BE BACK.

INT. PRIVATE DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door bursts open. Jessup enters in a cloud of smoke, his coat on fire. He closes the door and stomps out the burning coat.

40 JESSUP
I made it to the second floor, but
the door is locked or blocked or
something.

Jessup comes to the table, pours out the last of the scotch into his glass. All the men fight coughs. Jessup studies the label.

40 NORTON
Do you think we'll burn?

40 CARTER
The smoke will kill us first.

40 NORTON
Did you think it would end like
this?

40 CARTER
I think this time we take our
medicine.

40 JESSUP
What do you mean?

40 CARTER
There's no Tony to take it for us.

Norton picks up the box of cigars and stares at the label.

40 NORTON
You don't think, do you?

Carter smiles and shrugs.

FADE OUT.