

YEARBOOK

Screenplay By
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FADE IN:

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1980)

THIRD GRADERS eat lunch as mischievous LAWAYNE FUNDERBURK ogles his beloved Rocky Balboa lunch box.

LAWAYNE

I could look at Rocky all day.

Our good boy MICHAEL YOUNG looks over at Lawayne and Rocky, then sadly at his own red-and-black plaid lunch box.

Michael's eye is distracted by shy, cute BEVERLY PLOOF, a couple of rows up and over, quietly reading. He smiles as if he could look at her all day.

A KNOCK gets MRS. COOPER up to open the door for MICHAEL'S MOM, who waves at her son. He sinks down in his seat.

MRS. COOPER

Class, I'll be in the hallway with Michael's mother, so Michael that means you're in charge.

As she steps out, Lawayne taps Michael's arm.

LAWAYNE

I'm going to go look up Beverly Ploof's dress!

Michael is horrified as Lawayne gets down and crawls in front of Beverly's desk. As promised he takes a good peek.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Cooper and Michael's mom sit by the classroom door.

MRS. COOPER

Michael is doing great. He's such a joy to have in my classroom.

MOM

He's always been such a good boy. I don't know how I got so lucky.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lawayne scurries back to his desk. He pops back up and leans obliviously into Michael's angry gaze.

LAWAYNE

Did you see that? I looked up Beverly Ploof's dress!

INT. GRADE SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

MRS. COOPER
Michael's getting straight A's and
he plays well with others.

Mom beams.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael trembles, then hauls back and SMASHES LAWAYNE IN THE MOUTH. Lawayne hits the floor and Michael jumps him.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Cooper is nearly teary-eyed.

MRS. COOPER
Michael is about the sweetest,
nicest boy I have ever taught.

A COMMOTION OF SCATTERING DESKS AND YELLING CHILDREN is followed by a BANG, BANG BANG against the door.

The ladies jump up, and as Mrs. Cooper opens the door Lawayne's head falls into the hall. Michael sits on his chest. Both women put their hands to their mouths. Classmates gather around the two combatants.

MRS. COOPER (CONT'D)
Michael Young!

Michael freezes, allowing Lawayne to flip him and get on top.

MRS. COOPER (CONT'D)
Lawayne Funderburk!

Lawayne stops as he realizes Michael is looking past him. Everyone follows Michael's gaze to Beverly's face as she peers in bashfully from the back of the group. They all look back at Michael, who smiles serenely. LAWAYNE'S FIST FILLS THE SCREEN.

BEGIN OPENING CREDITS MONTAGE AND MUSIC:

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1977)

SUPERIMPOSE --

KINDERGARTEN

A YEARBOOK PHOTOGRAPH of five-year-old Michael morphs into live-action of Michael posing for the shot. There's a FLASH.

PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)
Good, Michael. Beverly's next.

Michael gets up and takes a step away as Beverly sits down.
Michael's still in the shot, gazing at Beverly.

PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Michael?!

He looks straight at the camera, turns red, then runs off.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1980)

SUPERIMPOSE --

3RD GRADE

Most of the kids have their heads down as Beverly and six others tap people and run to the front of the classroom.

MRS. COOPER
Okay, 7-Up.

Seven kids who raise their heads have hands up, including Michael.

MRS. COOPER (CONT'D)
Michael?

He hesitates, looking at Beverly.

MICHAEL
Did Beverly pick me?

Beverly blushes and is about to answer --

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAY FIELD - DAY (1983)

SUPERIMPOSE --

6TH GRADE

11-year-old Michael runs alongside Beverly, who's carrying a football. They're both giggling.

BOY (O.S.)
Michael, tackle her!

OTHER BOY (O.S.)
What are you doing!? Tackle her,
Michael!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY (1986)

SUPERIMPOSE --

9TH GRADE

Shaggy-haired, pimply-faced Michael walks by Beverly at her locker. He stops short when he sees a POSTER OF THE POGUES.

MICHAEL

Beverly, hey. I didn't know anyone else here liked The Pogues.

BEVERLY

Yeah, they're great. My uncle told me about them.

She waits for more. Long pause.

MICHAEL

Yeah. Okay. Bye bye.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT (1989)

SUPERIMPOSE --

GRADUATION

Dressed in cap and gown, geeky senior Michael is pushed by his buddy Andy in the direction of two chatting female graduates, one of them Beverly.

Michael takes the long, slow, last-chance walk toward the girl of his dreams.

As Beverly watches expectantly out of the corner of her eye, Michael walks right on by, not stopping until he's inches from the brick wall. He stands there, his back to everyone. Beverly turns back around, disappointed.

INT./EXT. HONDA ACCORD HYBRID - DAY - PRESENT

The face of MICHAEL YOUNG, now in his mid-30s, is a blank as he drives a newer Honda through Boston traffic. No longer nerdy, he's a well-groomed, confident professional.

END OF OPENING CREDITS MONTAGE.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Michael concentrates on his computer as VICTOR VALLEY, late 20s, sits in quiet contemplation. Michael finally stops.

MICHAEL
Shouldn't you be working on the
Seaview web site?

VICTOR
I'm trying to think of a woman for
you. Problem is you're too picky.

MICHAEL
I don't think so.

VICTOR
Would you go out with a smoker?

MICHAEL
No.

VICTOR
That's twenty-five percent you've
eliminated right from the start.

MICHAEL
Yeah, the twenty-five percent who
smell like smoke.

VICTOR
So what else rules a woman out?

Michael gives up working and turns toward Victor.

MICHAEL
I don't have a list. She does have
to be smart. And down to earth.

VICTOR
What about drinking?

MICHAEL
She can drink a little.

VICTOR
That's nice of you. How about if
she wears blue eye shadow?

MICHAEL
No.

VICTOR
The reason she uses blue eye shadow
is it's the only thing that cures a
fluttering eyelid condition.

MICHAEL
Is that possible?

VICTOR
Let's just say it is.

MICHAEL
I'm still kind of worried about the
eyelid thing. Why would it
flutter? Is it psychological?

VICTOR
Forget it. How about if she talks
during movies?

MICHAEL
No.

VICTOR
She can't pronounce the word
"gravitas."

MICHAEL
No.

VICTOR
What if she once dated a guy who
wore his baseball cap backwards?

MICHAEL
Oh god no.

VICTOR
She's the most beautiful woman in
the world, really nice, incredibly
smart, but she had a boyfriend who
wore his cap backwards.

Michael thinks about it.

MICHAEL
She can't be that smart if she
dated a guy who wore his cap
backwards.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Michael plops a briefcase and mail on a table, picks up the
phone and checks for messages. He sees an envelope with a
hand-written address, opens it and reads "Panther Lake
Elementary Reunion" at the top as a PHONE MESSAGE begins.

MEGAN (ON PHONE)

Hi Michael! Megan Woolcott, remember me? I got your number from Andy, hope you don't mind. I sent you an invitation to a reunion I'm heading so I'm really putting the squeeze on you here. You may have heard they're tearing down Panther Lake Elementary and some of us thought it would be fun to get together and talk about old memories. I know it's a long ways but I'm sure a lot of people would love to see you.

Michael looks equally irritated and curious.

INT. ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANDY TINGSTAD, mid-30s, unpretentious underachiever, holds the phone while sitting at a computer desk. This looks like his teenage room in his parents' house, which in fact it was.

ANDY

So are you coming?

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael rests up against the headboard.

MICHAEL

Why would I go to that?

INTERCUT BETWEEN MICHAEL AND ANDY

ANDY

My band's going to play.

MICHAEL

Andy, I'm not flying from Boston to Seattle to listen to your band.

ANDY

Don't you want to see anyone?

MICHAEL

Those people are the reason I live in Boston now. The only one I'd like to see again is Beverly. I've been thinking about her a lot lately. I Googled her. Nothing.

Andy blanches.

ANDY

Beverly?

MICHAEL

Yeah, no sign of a Beverly Ploof anywhere in the universe. She must have married and changed her name. She was so smart, she must have done something internet worthy. Only losers can't be Googled.

ANDY

I'm not on Google.

MICHAEL

Well -- there's probably too many Andy Tingstads to find your listings.

ANDY

No, there's just one. It isn't me.

MICHAEL

Huh. Anyway, you haven't heard anything about Beverly, have you? Is she still around?

Andy hesitates.

ANDY

Yeah, she's still in Kent -- And she did get married.

MICHAEL

Oh.

ANDY

But then she got a divorce.

Michael sits up.

MICHAEL

Really? Why didn't you say something?

ANDY

I thought you got over her. I thought you were dating a lot.

MICHAEL

(without enthusiasm)

Yeah, I've even got a blind date tonight.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

As Michael approaches the door to the club he sees THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN IN BOSTON standing by the door -- SMOKING.

BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Michael?

He wavers, weighing haunting beauty against a Virginia Slim.

MICHAEL

I wish.

INT. COMPANY AUDITORIUM - DAY

Michael is giving a presentation in front of 100 fellow office workers. He's self-assured and obviously admired by his peers, especially the women. Victor takes notice.

MICHAEL

We are getting too careless in how we use our graphic interfacing tools. I think a lot of you are forgetting our objective: clarity and ease of use. This software...

INT. COMPANY CAFETERIA - DAY

Michael and Victor carry lunch trays through the tables.

VICTOR

I wish I could speak in front of the group like you do. I stumble and mumble and sweat.

They pick a table in the corner.

MICHAEL

You'll get better. You know in high school I couldn't even speak in front of the class.

VICTOR

Because you were a nerd?

MICHAEL

(defensively)

I wasn't a nerd. Just shy. But I learned if I was prepared and acted like I knew what I was talking about, I had nothing to fear. Now I feel as if I could say anything to anyone. And they buy it.

Victor looks across the room.

VICTOR

Well Becky Hart was sure buying it.
She's intelligent. What do you
think of her? No blue eye shadow.

MICHAEL

Sure, she's academically smart.
But emotionally she's really
screwed up. She cried during
Powerpoint training when she
couldn't get her Toolbox to open.

Victor keeps looking.

VICTOR

Lynn Fellows. Now she's bright.

MICHAEL

I went out with her.

VICTOR

Really? What happened?

MICHAEL

She was great. Loves to read,
loves art, loves to travel.

VICTOR

So...?

MICHAEL

She talks baby talk.

VICTOR

I like that in bed. It's cute.

MICHAEL

But if you're not in bed it's kind
of scary.

VICTOR

I don't know --

MICHAEL

Trust me, it's not cute when you're
standing in line at Target.

Victor looks around the room again.

VICTOR

Kim Lewis. What's wrong with her?

MICHAEL
She stabbed her last boyfriend.

VICTOR
I heard it was self-defense.

MICHAEL
He was sleeping.

VICTOR
So she's not perfect.

MICHAEL
And besides that, she likes Celine
Dion. That's one rule I do have --
she can either stab me or she can
like Celine Dion, but not both.

Victor shakes his head.

VICTOR
Like I said, too picky. You've now
ruled out every woman in the world.
You will die sad and alone.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Michael watches TV from the couch while eating take-out. He goes to a bookcase and pulls out a YEARBOOK: "KENT-MERIDIAN DIADEM '89" and sits back down.

He looks at several PHOTOGRAPHS OF HIS FELLOW CLASSMATES.

He finally stops on the SENIOR CLASS PHOTO OF BEVERLY PLOOF. She has a pretty, kind face and long brown hair -- a look of intelligence and empathy, with a warm inviting smile.

Under "Veterinary Club" BEVERLY HUGS A BLACK LABRADOR. A few pages later there's MICHAEL PLAYING BASKETBALL -- rail thin and wearing unfashionable glasses and black socks.

Michael grimaces and flips more pages until he finds two in the back stuck together. He slips a fingernail along the edge and cracks them open, revealing two pages titled "SIGNATURES." One is blank but the other has a note:

BEVERLY (V.O.)
"Dear Michael - We never did talk
much, but I just want you to know
that I think you're the nicest boy
I've ever met and I would have
liked to have known you better..."

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Holding the yearbook in one hand and the phone in the other, Michael reads excitedly while he paces the room.

MICHAEL

"I wish I'd had the courage to tell you all this. I guess it just wasn't meant to be. But if you want to get together this summer before you go off to college, please call me. Love, Beverly."

He stops, waiting for a response.

INT. ANDY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A wide-eyed Andy is sitting forward on his bed, disbelieving.

ANDY

Oh my god.

INTERCUT BETWEEN MICHAEL AND ANDY

MICHAEL

She was crazy about me, too!

ANDY

You never saw that?

MICHAEL

I would have run naked down the street to her house if I'd seen that! She underlined "Love"! She loved me! Andy, I'm coming.

ANDY

You're what?

MICHAEL

I'm coming to Kent to ask Beverly Ploof to marry me.

ANDY

Marry you?

MICHAEL

Well at least ask her out for coffee. You said she was divorced, right? When's the reunion, Saturday? I'll fly out tomorrow. That gives me a week.

ANDY

Are you sure about this?

MICHAEL

Andy, I'm 32 and I've never met another woman who came close to Beverly. I'll be dead in 40 years. I'm running out of time here.

ANDY

Why will you be dead in 40 years?

MICHAEL

Law of averages. Look, do me a favor. See how much you can learn about her by tomorrow, can you? If you could find out where she lives, if she's seeing anyone, anything.

ANDY

But what if she's changed? It's been 15 years. You probably wouldn't even recognize her now.

MICHAEL

I'd know that face anywhere. God she was cute. And so shy. I loved that. I didn't have the nerve to tell her that before, but I do now.

ANDY

What if she's 500 pounds?

MICHAEL

I don't care -- she's not, though, right? Did you hear something? Hell, it doesn't matter. She's the one. I'm coming.

Andy looks very worried for his friend.

INT./EXT. LEXUS - SEATTLE FREEWAY - DAY

Michael talks on his cell phone as he drives a rented Lexus.

MICHAEL

Victor, this is really important. Tell the bosses one of my parents is sick. Probably dying. We need time to have a heart-to-heart talk and forgive each other and hug before they pull the plug. That kind of shit.

VICTOR (ON PHONE)
Okay. Which parent?

MICHAEL
I don't care, you pick one.

VICTOR (ON PHONE)
Where are you going?

MICHAEL
I'm already there, Seattle. You were right, there aren't many women who have everything I'm looking for. I've only met one so far. That's why I'm going back to Kent to find Beverly Ploof.

VICTOR (ON PHONE)
What's a Beverly Ploof?

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAY FIELD - DAY (1981) - FLASHBACK

Nine-year old Michael sits on a rock near a small creek just past the gymnasium. Beverly wanders by, her head coyly down.

BEVERLY
Hi Michael.

MICHAEL
Hi. Where are you going?

BEVERLY
I'm going to jump over the creek.

MICHAEL
But we're not allowed over there.

BEVERLY
Do you want to? No one's watching.

Michael looks around. He gets up and walks over to her.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
Ready? One, two --

Michael sees something and stops, but Beverly jumps over and falls to the ground. MR. ANDERSON approaches.

MR. ANDERSON
Just what is going on here?!

Beverly looks like she might cry.

MICHAEL

It's my fault. I pushed her.

MR. ANDERSON

Beverly, get back over here. And
you Michael Young, follow me!

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM - DAY (1981) - FLASHBACK

Michael's MOM AND DAD stand over him as he sits contritely on
the edge of his bed.

MOM

I don't know what's got into you!
Fighting with boys! Pushing girls!
I'm at the end of my rope! George,
what are we going to do?

Dad bends down, concerned, staring him right in the eye.

DAD

Michael, I want you to be
absolutely truthful with me right
now. Are you on drugs?

Mom puts her hand over her open mouth. Michael isn't quite
sure what drugs are, but senses a good excuse. He nods.

MICHAEL

Yes.

Mom SCREAMS.

MOM

Oh my god, what are we going to do?

She starts weeping hysterically. Dad shakes his head.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1981) - FLASHBACK

A red-faced Michael and his class watch a DRUG PREVENTION
TROUPE perform a skit dressed in brand new punk clothing.

GROUP MEMBER

Hey, I'm going to take drugs, that
would be so totally cool.

GROUP LEADER

That's not cool, that's stupid.

OTHER GROUP MEMBER

Yeah, why do you think they call it
dope?

Kids giggle. Michael looks at Beverly, who rolls her eyes. She catches his glance and shakes her head. He smiles.

INT./EXT. LEXUS - KENT STREETS - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Michael passes a "WELCOME TO KENT" sign... KENT-MERIDIAN HIGH... KENT JUNIOR HIGH... PANTHER LAKE ELEMENTARY. He pulls up to the family home, a craftsman in need of paint.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' KITCHEN - DAY

Poorly remodeled back in the 1980s, the room has a pale yellow glow as the Youngs eat around an Oak Warehouse table.

MOM

You're going to what?

MICHAEL

Go see Beverly Ploof.

DAD

I always liked her. You should have asked her out.

MOM

I thought she got married.

MICHAEL

Andy says she's divorced.

DAD

Her dad's an idiot.

MICHAEL

Why do you say that?

DAD

Because he's not very bright. They come to square dancing once in a while.

MICHAEL

Do they ever mention Beverly?

MOM

We don't talk to them.

MICHAEL

Why not?

DAD

Because he's an idiot. And the missus can't be too smart.

MICHAEL

Why?

DAD

She married the moron.

MICHAEL

Well, somehow Beverly turned out pretty bright.

DAD

You should have hit on her a long time ago. What a sweet girl.

MOM

Yeah, she was so nice. Why didn't you ever ask her out?

Michael stares at both of them.

EXT. ANDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ANDY'S MOM smiles as she opens the front door for Michael.

MICHAEL

Hi Mrs. Tingstad. How are you?

ANDY'S MOM

Good, Michael. Come on in.

INT. ANDY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Andy comes down the stairs as she shows Michael in. They shake hands and half hug.

ANDY

Hey buddy.

MICHAEL

So how is everything?

ANDY'S MOM

Andy still lives at home.

INT. ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy's on his bed, surrounded by guitars, as Michael sits in the desk chair. Andy hands him a piece of notebook paper.

ANDY

Megan gave me Beverly's address and phone number. Are you going to call her?

MICHAEL
Maybe I'll surprise her.

ANDY
She works at the elementary school.
Megan doesn't think she has a
boyfriend.

Michael smiles at his good fortune.

MICHAEL
Really? Anything else?

Andy hesitates.

ANDY
No. That's about it.

MICHAEL
So Beverly's a teacher. That's why
I couldn't find her -- teaching is
where smart people disappear. Or
did she change her name?

ANDY
Oh -- I forgot to ask.

MICHAEL
That's okay.

He stares with some satisfaction at the paper.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
So, how's the band?

ANDY
We're in the Golden Steer lounge
all week. And the reunion, that'll
be great. Everybody asking what
I'm doing and I have to say I live
with my parents, don't have a real
job, and my band plays in bars.

MICHAEL
Hey, your life's as good as any of
theirs. At least you don't wallow
in your school day glory years like
a lot of them, living in the past.

Michael stops to look at a poster of the B-52's and pauses.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I know what will cheer you up.

INT. ANDY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Michael types at the computer as Andy sits at his shoulder.

MICHAEL

I saved some internet searches of our old classmates. Look, Steve Fritts -- he came up on "Google Groups" -- he wants to know where he can buy used tires.

ANDY

Used tires?

MICHAEL

You're afraid of seeing a guy who can't afford new tires.

ANDY

I live in this room and I just bought new tires.

MICHAEL

That's what I'm saying. Here's Lyle Ecklebarger. Arrest warrant! DWI. You don't drive drunk do you?

ANDY

No.

MICHAEL

That's right. You get drunk alone in your childhood bedroom of your parents' house where you still live even though you're 32 years old. You tell me which is worse.

They both laugh.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Here's one you'll like: Lawayne Funderburk.

Andy suddenly stops smiling but Michael doesn't notice.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Nothing! The guy doesn't even exist according to the rest of the world. Maybe he died!

Andy forces a smile and laugh.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Here's Joe Tuttle, dumb jock.

ANDY
That jerk always bragged he was
going to be rich and famous.

MICHAEL
Well apparently he's trying to
become rich and famous as a
Substitute Delivery Technician 3 at
Green River Community College.

ANDY
He's a delivery driver!

MICHAEL
I feel awful snooping like this.

ANDY
Me too. What else does it say?

MICHAEL
He makes ten-fifty an hour.

They both laugh, trying to keep straight faces as they go on.

ANDY
That's so embarrassing. But I'm
not laughing because he's a
delivery guy.

MICHAEL
Oh me either! It's the dichotomy
between his youthful braggadocio
and the subsequent reality.

ANDY
And that he's not even a regular
driver, he's a substitute -- a
class 3 substitute.

MICHAEL
At a community college -- and they
call him a technician.

ANDY
Exactly! Nothing to do with Joe
Tuttle being a delivery driver. I
mean look at me, I don't even have
a job and I find it funny.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' BATHROOM - DAY

Michael is very serious again as he looks in the mirror.

MICHAEL

"Beverly, I always adored you and
thought you were the most special
woman I ever met."

He shakes his head at this pathetic attempt.

EXT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - DAY

Michael pulls up to Beverly's house, a very modest wood frame that needs work. Puzzled, Michael re-checks the address. He gets out holding a BOUQUET, walks to the front door, and RINGS THE DOORBELL. He takes a deep breath.

The door opens and standing before him is a 10-YEAR-OLD VISION OF BEVERLY -- only this is KATIE. Michael is shocked and speechless. The girl waits a moment.

KATIE

Hi.

MICHAEL

Hi. What's your name?

KATIE

Katie. Who are you?

MICHAEL

I'm Michael. Are you -- are you
Beverly's daughter?

KATIE

Yes.

MICHAEL

Oh. Is your mother home?

KATIE

No, she won't be back until later.
But my dad is. Dad!

Michael's mouth drops. He looks as if he wants flee but his feet won't move. Katie smiles at him.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Those flowers are pretty. Are they
for my mom?

Michael pauses. In the doorway is big LAWAYNE FUNDERBURK.
Michael can't quite place him.

LAWAYNE
Hey, what's up?

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1980) - FLASHBACK

Lawayne leans over to Michael.

LAWAYNE
I looked up Beverly Ploof's dress!

EXT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - BACK TO THE PRESENT

MICHAEL
...Lawayne?

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAY FIELD - DAY (1983) - FLASHBACK

Michael runs alongside Beverly with the football, giggling.

BOY (O.S.)
Michael, look out for Lawayne!

Lawayne comes out of nowhere and puts a sudden end to their
flirting with a CRUNCHING BLOCK THAT LEVELS MICHAEL.

EXT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Lawayne is eyeing the flowers and the dumbfounded Michael.

LAWAYNE
Yeah, I'm Lawayne. Who are you?

Michael shifts uncomfortably as Lawayne suddenly smiles.

LAWAYNE (CONT'D)
Michael Young? Well holy shit.

He feints as if Michael's going to punch him.

LAWAYNE (CONT'D)
You aren't going to hit me are you?

MICHAEL
Oh, yeah, no, I was just, you know,
stopping by to say hi.

LAWAYNE
You brought me flowers, how nice.

He takes them from Michael and hands them to Katie.

LAWAYNE (CONT'D)
Here honey, put these on the table
and get your stuff together.

Katie runs off. The men eye each other for a moment.

LAWAYNE (CONT'D)
So, you looking for Beverly? She's
still at school.

MICHAEL
I just thought I'd say hello -- I
heard you were divorced.

Lawayne laughs.

LAWAYNE
Well, this town sure likes to talk.
We're working on some things.

MICHAEL
So you're not divorced.

LAWAYNE
Oh she got mad and filed so
technically we are. So for now I
got my own place. I'm taking Katie
for spring break. Beverly's busy
anyway helping with the reunion
stuff. Guess we'll see you there
on Saturday huh?

MICHAEL
Yeah, I guess so.

LAWAYNE
You ready, Katie?

The door closes and Michael, dazed, heads back to his car.

INT./EXT. LEXUS - KENT STREETS - DAY

The saddest man in the world drives through downtown Kent.

INT. GOLDEN STEER LOUNGE - NIGHT

Andy is on stage setting up equipment as Michael strides up.

MICHAEL
Lawayne Funderburk.

ANDY
What?

MICHAEL

Beverly married Lawayne Funderburk.
You hadn't heard that?

ANDY

They're not divorced?

MICHAEL

Yeah, but he's trying to get her
back. And she has a daughter.
Andy, she's Beverly Funderburk!

ANDY

Huh. So now what?

MICHAEL

I'm going to go buy more flowers.

EXT. BEVERLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael sits in his car in front of the house, clutching an
even BIGGER BOUQUET. There's a light on in the window.

He hesitates at the bottom of the stairs, then steels himself
and boldly bounds up the darkened steps only to trip on the
top one and stumble noisily across the porch. As he gathers
himself the door opens and in the shadows above him she
appears -- that familiar face. She studies him for a moment.

BEVERLY

Michael Young?

Michael smiles, relieved. He hands her the flowers. He
summons all of his newfound confidence.

MICHAEL

There's something I've wanted to
tell you for a long time -- I
adored you from the time we were
kids and I've always regretted that
I didn't have the nerve to tell you
that. I know this might not be a
good time but I don't want to spend
my whole life wondering if you --

He stops as she covers her mouth and gasps. He waits, not
sure if this is a good sign. Tears are forming in her eyes.

BEVERLY

I've waited all my life to hear you
say that.

She lifts up on her toes and kisses him very softly on the lips. When she pulls back he almost topples over from shock. She takes his hand and leads him into the house.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A light in the corner gives off a romantic glow. She drops the flowers on a table and guides him into her bedroom.

INT. BEVERLY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She turns on a nightstand lamp, pushes him onto the bed and falls on him, kissing again. She pulls his shirt off, then his shoes before getting up and walking to the bathroom door.

BEVERLY

Why don't you get comfortable.

Michael takes off his pants, blinks and takes a deep breath.

BEVERLY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

How about some music?

It takes Michael a moment to comprehend. He gets up and walks timidly out the door, in underpants and socks.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He finds a rack of CDs, running his finger along them until stopping on THE POGUES "IF I SHOULD FALL FROM GRACE WITH GOD." With a happy flick he pops it out and puts it in the CD player. The MUSIC INTRO BOOMS THROUGH THE HOUSE.

BEVERLY (O.S.)

Oh, I love this song!

*If I should fall from grace with God
Where no doctor can relieve me
If I'm buried 'neath the sod but the angels won't receive me
Let me go boys, let me go boys
Let me go down in the mud where the rivers all run dry*

Michael sways to the music, then begins a little dance. He turns to see an OLD BLACK LABRADOR watching from a basket. He leaps back, afraid, but the dog watches harmlessly.

MICHAEL

Good boy. Don't hurt me.

The dog stares. Michael relaxes and looks at MEMENTOS ON THE SHELF. There's a row of dolphin knickknacks, and below that some photos -- Katie, Lawayne, Beverly, the dog, Beverly with her sister Jill. Oh yeah, Jill...

EXT. SCHOOL PLAY FIELD - DAY (1981) - FLASHBACK

Michael is trying to reach across the stream to help Beverly back. By the corner of the gym BEVERLY'S ONE-YEAR-YOUNGER SISTER JILL is pointing them out to Mr. Anderson.

JILL

There they are! Beverly you're
going to be in so much trouble when
Mom finds out!

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Michael leans in for a closer look at the photo of the two sisters.

MICHAEL

Jill?

*Let them go down in the mud where the rivers all run dry,
Yeeeeeeeeeeooooowww!*

A look of terror. It can't be.

THE MUSIC HAS STOPPED. The dog gets out of his basket and runs by him, and as Michael turns he sees THE REAL BEVERLY by the stereo, as angelic as he remembered. He's so paralyzed he forgets he's nearly naked. Beverly looks him up and down.

BEVERLY

Michael?

A pause. Hoping he's wrong --

MICHAEL

Beverly?

BEVERLY

What are you doing here?

MICHAEL

I'm here with you -- with your
sister, we, uh, we're just --

JILL (O.S.)

Hey, what happened to the music?

Michael and Beverly look at each other. She looks at the flowers on the table, confused. He works up his courage.

MICHAEL

Beverly, I believe in complete
honesty. I thought Jill was you.

BEVERLY
Jill was me?

MICHAEL
I came here tonight to say, well to
tell you -- oh god.

He suddenly realizes he's in his underwear and grabs a
comforter from the couch to wrap around himself.

JILL (O.S.)
Michael?

MICHAEL
Coming.

He shakes his head at Beverly and lowers his voice.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
No, I'm not coming, I don't know
why I said that. Beverly, I have
to tell Jill the truth.

BEVERLY
You can't. It will crush her.

MICHAEL
I've got to --

The bedroom door opens and Jill comes out wearing a bra and
panties. The three of them couldn't be more uncomfortable.

JILL
Oh, hey, you're home early.

BEVERLY
We ran out of decorations.

Silence.

JILL
So, you remember Michael Young.

MICHAEL
Jill, do you believe in being
totally honest?

Beverly shakes her head "No" over Michael's shoulder but Jill
ignores the signal.

JILL
Sure. Why?

MICHAEL

I feel awful but what I said to you
was meant for your sister. The
truth is I thought you were
Beverly.

For a moment Jill doesn't react, then smiles quizzically.
And then an UNBELIEVABLY HARD SLAP almost takes Michael down.

JILL

Oh my god! Oh my god! You thought
I was Beverly?! Aaaaawwwwww!

She runs back to her bedroom and SLAMS THE DOOR. Michael and
Beverly look at each other. WAILING AND SOBBING comes from
the bedroom. Michael walks over to the door and KNOCKS.

MICHAEL

Jill, I'm sorry. I really didn't
mean for this to happen. Jill?

JILL (O.S.)

Aaaaawwwwww....

MICHAEL

Jill, listen, I know you're upset,
but I do need my clothes. Jill?

Michael turns and looks at Beverly, shrugging his shoulders.
Jill continues to cry. Michael smiles meekly at Beverly.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

So -- how are you?

BEVERLY

Most days, pretty good. This isn't
one of those days. How are you?

MICHAEL

Good, good. I live in Boston now.
I design web sites.

Silence. Michael pounds on the door. More crying.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

So, what, you and Jill live here
together?

BEVERLY

Yes.

MICHAEL

That must be nice.

The sobbing escalates. Beverly comes over and knocks.

BEVERLY
Jill, can I come in?

JILL (O.S.)
No! Aaaaawwww...

Beverly shakes her head at Michael. There's a KNOCK AT THE FRONT DOOR and aptly named BIG JIM peeks in.

BEVERLY
This is really bad. I think you'd better go.

Michael pounds again on Jill's door.

BIG JIM
Hey, what's going on in here?

Big Jim bolts by Beverly and tackles Michael. When they hit the floor THE POGUES COME BLASTING OUT OF THE STEREO again and the DOG STARTS BARKING.

MICHAEL
Owww!

The blanket falls away and Michael is nearly naked again. Big Jim climbs on top of Michael and pulls his arms back.

BIG JIM
Are you bothering these ladies?

BEVERLY
It's okay, Big Jim.

MICHAEL
There was a misunderstanding, Big Jim.

BIG JIM
Do I know you?

MICHAEL
No, I just assumed Beverly wouldn't call you that for no reason.

JILL (O.S.)
Aaaawwww --

BIG JIM
What did you do to her?

MICHAEL

I told her I wasn't going to sleep
with her.

Big Jim looks him over.

BIG JIM

You'd think that'd be a good thing.

MICHAEL

I can't breathe, Big Jim.

SIRENS AND FLASHING LIGHTS intrude from outside.

BEVERLY

What's going on?

BIG JIM

I told my mom to call the police.

MICHAEL

Jesus, does every guy in this town
live with his mother?

TWO POLICEMEN look in the open front door, then come in.

OLDER COP

It's okay Beverly, we'll handle it.
Why don't you come outside with me.

As the Older Cop pulls Beverly out, the Younger Cop nods for
Big Jim to get off, then puts his knee on Michael's back.

YOUNGER COP

So you want to tell me what's going
on here buddy?

Michael can barely talk, so the cop bends down to hear.

MICHAEL

I adored her from the time we were
kids but I never had the nerve to
tell her back then so I came over
tonight to tell her and see if she
might feel the same way about me.

YOUNGER COP

Was that before or after you took
off your pants?

BIG JIM

What's he saying?

MICHAEL
(louder)
I love her.

JILL (O.S.)
Aaawwww!

MICHAEL
Not her. The other one.

YOUNGER COP
Have you been drinking?

MICHAEL
I wish.

The Older Cop comes back in with Beverly.

OLDER COP
Okay, Beverly says it's all right.

Beverly turns the stereo off and pets the dog. Big Jim puts an arm around her.

BIG JIM
Beverly, if there's anything you need, just let me know.

BEVERLY
Thank you, Big Jim.

He heads for the door, followed by the police. Michael covers himself with the comforter and stands up.

OLDER COP
Young man, you get your act together. We'll be watching you.

They leave. Michael looks sheepishly at Beverly.

BEVERLY
I don't think she's coming out tonight. I've got some stretch shorts that might fit you and Lawayne left some shirts here.

MICHAEL
This might not be the right time to ask, but -- can I call you?

Beverly studies him for a moment. Jill is still sobbing. Beverly looks at the door and back at Michael.

BEVERLY
Let me think about that.

MICHAEL
Okay -- okay.

EXT. BEVERLY'S PORCH - NIGHT

Michael comes out wearing plaid shorts and a shirt that's way too big. He turns to Beverly in the doorway.

BEVERLY
Good night, Michael.

She closes the door. He goes down the steps, looks at his car and remembers --

MICHAEL
My keys.

He looks at the house, thinks better of it, then starts walking down the sidewalk.

EXT. KENT SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Michael doesn't get far before a truck with Lawayne and Katie pulls up against the curb. Lawayne turns to Katie.

LAWAYNE
You stay in the car now, sweetie.

He hops out and blocks Michael's path.

MICHAEL
What are you doing, Lawayne?

LAWAYNE
Big Jim called and said there was some trouble.

MICHAEL
Nothing happened.

LAWAYNE
Then how come you're wearing my shirt and my wife's shorts?

Michael looks down at his clothes, then back at Lawayne.

MICHAEL
I'm going home now, Lawayne.

Michael steps around him and keeps walking.

LAWAYNE
I'll be watching you, Young.

MICHAEL
Get in line.

EXT. KENT SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Michael walks by a fence as a BIG DOG inside starts GROWLING. Michael growls back as the two track each other until the fence ends. Too late, Michael realizes it's not enclosed. He and the dog are face to face with nothing between them.

MICHAEL
Oh hell.

The dog GROWLS AND LEAPS.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Michael crawls through the window and flops on the floor. Lawayne's shirt is ripped and Michael has a bite mark on his arm. He stares glumly at his disheveled image in the mirror.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A despondent Michael, arm bandaged, is on the sofa flipping TV channels, pausing on a Cinemax sex movie. The front door opens and he tries to change channels but the remote sticks.

MOM
We're home.

Michael frantically tries to make the remote work as his parents sit on either side of him and look at the screen for the first time. CRUDE SEX NOISES come from the tube.

MOM (CONT'D)
Oh my god. Michael!

MICHAEL
I was flipping by and the remote got stuck.

MOM
Oh Michael. Get it off of there!

She shakes her head in disappointment.

DAD
Son, maybe you should save that for your own home.

MOM

Please change this Michael, please.
Please, Michael.

She's starting to cry.

MICHAEL

I can't.

MOM

You were such a nice quiet boy
until you got interested in girls.

DAD

Maybe we should let him watch it.
That's how he learns.

SEX SOUNDS GROW LOUDER as Michael keeps trying to click.

MICHAEL

I don't need to learn -- oh Christ.

MOM

Oh, Lord, now he's swearing.

Dad takes the remote and clicks it. A NEWS PROGRAM is heard.

DAD

So, did you see Beverly?

Michael opens his mouth but stops and gets up.

MICHAEL

I'm going to bed.

He walks out of the room. His dad calls out after him.

DAD

She's a great girl. Where's your
car?

MOM

What happened to your arm?

Dad turns to Mom and nods toward the TV.

DAD

Did you notice that lady didn't
have any pubic hair?

Mom sniffs and nods.

MOM

What's this world coming to?

INT. GOLDEN STEER RESTAURANT - DAY

Michael and Andy stare at each other across the table for a moment. Andy's mouth is wide open.

MICHAEL

And this morning the car was parked
in front of our house.

ANDY

Wow. Wow. So that's it, huh?

MICHAEL

No. I'm going over to the school
today and ask her out.

ANDY

Wow. I thought you said you would
know Beverly anywhere.

MICHAEL

I did. As soon as I turned around
and saw her I knew it was her.

ANDY

But didn't you also know it was her
when it was Jill?

INT. GRADE SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Michael walks by an open classroom door, stops and goes back.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

He takes a look at the children's artwork and writing on the
blackboard. Hanging on the wall are MATH FLASHCARDS.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1983) - FLASHBACK

The TEACHER holds a MATH FLASHCARD: 9x7. Michael, 11, stands
next to a boy seated at his desk.

MICHAEL

Sixty-three.

Michael walks to the next desk.

TEACHER

Andy, your turn to stop Michael.

She flashes the card: 11x11.

MICHAEL

One hundred and twenty-two.

He moves, she flashes 8x14. The CLASS MURMURS. 5x17. 4x19. 13x21. The kids' reaction grows. He starts up the next row.

TEACHER

Beverly, show him what you got.

Card: 7x13. Michael pauses -- and pauses. On purpose.

BEVERLY

Ninety-one.

TEACHER

Correct. Beverly's up.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - DAY - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Michael enters to find a half-dozen people decorating. He sees Beverly across the gym, but MEGAN WOOLCOTT cuts him off.

MEGAN

Michael! It's me, Megan!

She hugs him, to his surprise.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Thanks for coming. You look great.

MICHAEL

You too. I don't want to interrupt
-- I was just going to bother
Beverly for a second.

MEGAN

Sure, I'll catch up with you later.

Michael passes a PHOTO COLLAGE including the shot of him playing basketball in black socks and glasses. Horrified, he grabs it and puts it in his pocket. When he turns around Beverly is watching him.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAY FIELD - DAY

The two walk along a path between the gym and the stream.

BEVERLY

So you really thought you were
going to have sex with me?

MICHAEL

Well, you did drag me into your bedroom. I thought.

BEVERLY

You must have thought I was a slut.

MICHAEL

Oh, no, I thought you were great. I respected your decision to have sex with me. I mean --

BEVERLY

You know, I don't believe in sex before marriage.

Michael LAUGHS before he can catch himself. He sobers up, then smirks, thinking she might be joking.

MICHAEL

Seriously? Well, that's -- admirable.

BEVERLY

I still don't understand what's going on here.

MICHAEL

I just wanted to spend some time with you. I always liked you. And you liked me, I understand.

She has a small, questioning smile.

BEVERLY

That was a long time ago, Michael. And I have a really busy week.

MICHAEL

I know I should have told you years ago but it's never too late, right? Let me take you to dinner tonight.

BEVERLY

I can't. Lawayne and I have a marriage counseling session at five.

He looks pained.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

I promised him I would try it. I owe him that much. And Katie.

MICHAEL
How about after that?

BEVERLY
A teacher here at the school asked
me out to dinner.

MICHAEL
Oh, I see. Where are you going?

BEVERLY
Just down to the Golden Steer.

MICHAEL
Okay, after your marriage
counseling session with your
husband and the date with that
other guy, what are you doing? You
want to get a cup of coffee or
something?

She stares at him, not quite believing this, but impressed.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I'll be at the restaurant. He
won't even have to take you home.

BEVERLY
You know, you don't seem like
Michael Young.

MICHAEL
That's good though, right?

BEVERLY
I should get back to work.

MICHAEL
So what grade do you teach?

BEVERLY
I don't teach. I'm a cook.

MICHAEL
Cook?

INT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - DAY

They walk toward the kitchen doors.

MICHAEL
You mean, you're like old Mrs.
Streng with the hair net?

Beverly points to a PICTURE ON THE WALL of herself wearing a hair net: "Mrs. Ploof - School Cook"

BEVERLY
That's right, I'm Mrs. Streng.

MICHAEL
You didn't change your name?
You're still Beverly Ploof?

He seems disappointed.

INT. GOLDEN STEER RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Michael and Andy eat in a booth, but Michael's distracted as he watches Beverly and her date across the room, having fun.

MICHAEL
What time do you start your set?

ANDY
Nine o'clock.

MICHAEL
I'm bringing Beverly in.

ANDY
What? Why?

MICHAEL
We'll have to sit close to talk.
She's still great. It was weird
today though. I'm sure a lot of it
was because of last night. But she
seems, I don't know, like she's not
quite as joyful as she used to be.

ANDY
Joyful?

MICHAEL
Yeah. As a kid she was always so
happy. But it seems like she's
lost her sense of humor.

ANDY
It could be the divorce.

MICHAEL
Sure.

ANDY
Or you trying to screw her sister.

MICHAEL

Yeah, I suppose. But remember her shy little laugh? She had the greatest laugh. She didn't laugh once the whole time we talked.

Across the room, Beverly LAUGHS.

ANDY

Like that?

MICHAEL

Yeah, kind of like that.

ANDY

That is a great laugh.

Beverly LAUGHS EVEN LOUDER, almost falling out of the booth.

MICHAEL

Now that one seemed forced.

They watch as Beverly wipes away tears.

ANDY

Look, she forced herself to cry tears of joy.

MICHAEL

There's something else. I almost hate to say it. I remember her being, well, more intelligent.

ANDY

Intelligent? What do you mean?

MICHAEL

First off, marrying Lawayne. It doesn't make sense. It's like Madame Curie marrying Gilligan. And a cook? I don't get her lack of ambition. Look at the house she lives in. And I didn't see a book in it. She seemed too smart for the life she has going here. Maybe I idealized her too much. But there's still something about her. And she's still beautiful.

ANDY

Aren't you being a little hard on her? It's been a long time. People change.

More LAUGHTER from Beverly. Michael shakes his head.

MICHAEL
And she used to be so shy.

INT. GOLDEN STEER RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Beverly says goodbye to her date and walks across to Michael.

BEVERLY
Okay, here we are. What did you
have in mind?

MICHAEL
Remember Andy Tingstad? His band's
playing in the lounge. It's nicer
now that they don't allow smoking.

She looks flustered, but goes along with it.

BEVERLY
Okay, if I don't have to dance.

INT. GOLDEN STEER LOUNGE - NIGHT

THE BAND PLAYS "LAYLA" to a full dance floor. Michael nods at Andy, who looks tense. Michael and Beverly sit next to each other in a curved booth. A WAITRESS is right on them.

WAITRESS
What can I start you with?

BEVERLY
I'll have a white wine, please.

MICHAEL
A beer.

The waitress nods and leaves.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
It's funny, I just never thought of
Beverly Ploof drinking.

BEVERLY
Well, she does.

MICHAEL
So -- how was your date?

BEVERLY
You want to know about my date?

MICHAEL

I want to know everything about you.

BEVERLY

He's just a friend.

MICHAEL

Seemed like a funny guy.

BEVERLY

Yeah, he's very funny.

MICHAEL

Do you like funny guys?

Beverly looks past him, concerned. He looks up just in time to see a slightly buzzed Lawayne, holding a beer, push his way into the booth, trapping Michael between the two of them.

LAWAYNE

Hey baby, how's it going?

BEVERLY

Who's looking after Katie?

LAWAYNE

She's staying with my mom tonight.

Lawayne pretends to just now notice Michael.

LAWAYNE (CONT'D)

Michael! Didn't see you there. So how's your date with my wife going? Think you'll get lucky tonight?

He gives him a wink and a nudge, like guys do.

BEVERLY

Lawayne, we talked about this.

LAWAYNE

Hey, the therapist said to be more honest.

He leans over toward Beverly, squeezing Michael even more.

LAWAYNE (CONT'D)

Anyway Bev, I was thinking. If you feel our problem's in the bedroom, I'm more than willing to work on it, maybe rent some educational videos, try something new.

BEVERLY
You know the problem wasn't in the
bedroom.

Michael looks extremely uncomfortable. Beverly blushes.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Michael. That didn't
come out right.

MICHAEL
No, it's useful information.

Lawayne looks at Michael and does a double take.

LAWAYNE
Michael! Shit, I keep forgetting
you're there. Yeah, you should
write that down. The problem
wasn't in the sack.

BEVERLY
I want you to leave right now.

LAWAYNE
You heard her buddy.

MICHAEL
I think she means you.

LAWAYNE
Aren't there any married women in
Boston you can hit on?

MICHAEL
She's not married.

Lawayne looks oddly hurt by this. He looks down at his beer.

LAWAYNE
I just love you so much.

MICHAEL
(to Beverly)
I think he means you.

LAWAYNE
I love you.

BEVERLY
I know you do. Go home. I'll call
you tomorrow.

Lawayne looks as if he might cry.

LAWAYNE

I'm sorry. Michael I'm sorry.

MICHAEL

It's okay, Lawayne.

Lawayne pats his shoulder and slides out of the booth. Beverly is tearing up. Michael isn't sure what to do.

On stage Andy has started playing the guitar introduction to "CAN'T LET GO." The crowd lets out a whoop and starts dancing. Big Jim emerges, pointing at Beverly.

BIG JIM

Hey Andy, Beverly's here! Have her sing it! That's her song!

A shocked Michael looks at Beverly, shaking her head.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

Come on Beverly, get up there!

MICHAEL

You sing?

BEVERLY

A little.

MICHAEL

You sing with Andy?

Big Jim grabs Beverly and carries her to the stage. He sets her in front of the microphone, where she shyly looks at Michael, then Andy. He nods and she timidly sings --

BEVERLY

*"Told you baby one more time, don't
make me sit all alone and cry.
Well it's over and I know it but I
can't let go..."*

Michael's mouth drops. The crowd urges her on, and as she reaches the chorus Beverly sings more boldly --

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

*"I got a big chain around my neck,
and I'm broken down like a train
wreck. Well it's over, I know it,
but I can't let go..."*

Big Jim points at Beverly's feet at the instrumental break.

BIG JIM
Do the dance!

Beverly hesitates, then does a little soft shoe in place.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
No, the dance!

The CROWD AGREES. Beverly relaxes and lets go, swirling around the stage. Michael can't believe what he's seeing.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Stage dive!

Beverly leaps from the stage and Big Jim and others catch her and throw her back just in time to start the next verse.

BEVERLY
*"Turn off trouble like you turn off
a light..."*

Megan is suddenly pulling Michael from the booth.

MEGAN
May I have this dance?

She leads him onto the dance floor as Beverly sings on in full voice. Michael shakes his head and looks at Megan.

MICHAEL
She used to be so shy.

MEGAN
Look who's talking. Did you know I
had a huge crush on you?

MICHAEL
What?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT (1989) - FLASHBACK

Back to the scene of Michael moving slowly toward Beverly at graduation, only now we see that Megan is the girl Beverly is talking to. Megan also eyes Michael hopefully as he nears.

MEGAN (V.O.)
Oh god I wanted you so bad. I
would have done anything for you.

INT. GOLDEN STEER LOUNGE - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Michael's eyes are wide open but he can't speak. As the song ends Megan kisses him on the lips. He finally blinks. She steps back and raises her eyebrows suggestively.

MEGAN

See you at the reunion.

INT./EXT. MICHAEL'S CAR - NIGHT

Michael and Beverly ride in awkward silence for a moment.

MICHAEL

So -- how long have you been singing with Andy?

BEVERLY

Not too long. He's so talented. And he's so sweet.

MICHAEL

Yeah, he's a sweet guy.

BEVERLY

You guys were pretty good friends. Do you still talk?

MICHAEL

Not as much as I'd like too. In fact, I think I'm going to go find him tonight and have a good talk.

BEVERLY

That's nice.

He pulls up in front of her house.

MICHAEL

What are you doing tomorrow?

BEVERLY

Tomorrow? After I finish at school I have to pick up Katie and go to my parents' house. It's my grandma's 80th birthday.

MICHAEL

Can I come?

BEVERLY

You want to come to my grandmother's birthday party?

EXT. ANDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael waits on the steps as Andy gets out of his car, carrying a guitar case.

ANDY
Hey, Michael.

Andy puts his guitar down and sits beside Michael.

MICHAEL
You're a little more familiar with Beverly than I thought. Did you know she was married to Lawayne?

ANDY
Yeah.

MICHAEL
And that she had a kid?

ANDY
If I had told you, would you have still gone over there?

MICHAEL
I don't know.

ANDY
You seemed so excited. I didn't want to stop that momentum you had. I figured it was worth a shot.

MICHAEL
Do me a favor, in the future why don't you let me decide if I want to make a fool of myself.

Andy gives that a thought.

ANDY
Yeah, I could do that.

INT. BEVERLY'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Beverly opens the door to see Michael with THREE BOUQUETS.

BEVERLY
Oh my.

MICHAEL
One for your grandmother, one for your mother, and one for you.

BEVERLY

Thank you. I'll go put these in water. Take off your coat.

He puts his coat on a rack. Jill comes down the stairs, barely acknowledging him.

MICHAEL

Hi Jill.

She grimaces and nods. Michael puts an arm out to stop her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Listen, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Really, really sorry. I feel terrible, I really do. I'm sorry.

JILL

So where's my bouquet?

She enjoys his discomfort.

JILL (CONT'D)

Did you really think I was Beverly?

MICHAEL

Yes.

JILL

I guess that's a compliment.

MICHAEL

Yeah, she's so great. But you're good too. I mean as a kid you were a brat, but you've matured a lot.

JILL

You thought I was a brat, did you?

MICHAEL

Oh yeah. Remember how you told on us to Mr. Anderson?

She smiles and looks down, suddenly modest.

JILL

That's because I was jealous. I always liked you.

Michael is thrown by her openness. She hugs him as Beverly returns. Michael half-shoves Jill away. Beverly gives him a look as Katie walks in behind her.

MICHAEL

Hi Katie.

Katie stares at him.

BEVERLY

Katie? What do you say?

KATIE

Hi.

INT. BEVERLY'S PARENTS' DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Michael, Beverly, Jill and Katie are joined at the table for cake by MR. and MRS. PLOOF and GRANDMA. Grandma stares at Michael. She looks confused and irritated.

GRANDMA

Who's he?

BEVERLY

That's Michael, grandma, he's a friend of Lawayne and me.

GRANDMA

What's he doing here?

BEVERLY

He came for your birthday.

GRANDMA

Why? I don't know him.

BEVERLY

He just wanted to say happy birthday.

Grandma stares at him until he does.

MICHAEL

Oh, yes, happy birthday.

Grandma keeps staring. Beverly points at the vase.

BEVERLY

Michael brought you flowers.

MR. PLOOF

Michael went to school with Beverly and Lawayne, grandma. To be honest Michael, when you were a boy I thought you were retarded.

BEVERLY

Dad!

MRS. PLOOF

Mark! What he means, Michael, is that you were just a little awkward around people -- socially retarded.

MR. PLOOF

No, I mean *literally* mentally retarded, like the ones they have special classes for. Only Michael never wore the big shoes.

Beverly is trying to keep from laughing out loud.

MRS. PLOOF

He was a nerd, honey! That's how they act. No offense, Michael. And look how well he turned out.

BEVERLY

And he got such good grades.

MR. PLOOF

That don't mean anything. Even Rain Man could count. And they inflate grades for the retarded to boost their self-esteem.

JILL

It takes some people longer to grow into themselves.

MR. PLOOF

That's what I'm trying to say, for crying out loud. Considering how Forest Gump-like he was back then it's amazing he's sitting here now looking so normal.

Beverly nearly chokes from stifling a laugh at Michael's flustered reaction.

GRANDMA

Where's Lawayne?

BEVERLY

Lawayne had to work tonight. I'll tell him to come see you.

GRANDMA

Where's he been? It's been ages.

MICHAEL

You probably don't see him much
since the divorce.

Grandma looks very confused.

GRANDMA

What divorce?

MRS. PLOOF

Michael --

MICHAEL

Beverly and Lawayne's divorce.

Grandma drops her fork and clutches her heart.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Beverly, Michael, and an EMT GUY ride in the back as Grandma,
wearing an oxygen mask, is glaring at Michael.

BEVERLY

It's not your fault. We should
have told her. We didn't want to
upset her. She loves Lawayne.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry -- Grandma.

Grandma winces.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Grandma is in her hospital bed, surrounded by everyone from
dinner. She's still glaring at Michael as THE DOCTOR enters.

DOCTOR

Her heart is fine, she just got
some cake stuck in her windpipe.

MRS. PLOOF

Oh, that's great.

BEVERLY

See, Michael, it wasn't you.

MR. PLOOF

Oh yeah? His comment probably made
her do it.

They all stare at Michael. He looks to Katie for comfort,
but she looks disappointed. The doctor starts for the door.

DOCTOR

Well, anyway, she's had a little excitement but she's okay now.

BEVERLY

Thank you.

MRS. PLOOF

Did you hear that Mom?

Grandma stares at Michael.

MR. PLOOF

I'd like to have a family meeting.

MICHAEL

I'll go in the hall.

MR. PLOOF

No, that's okay --

He indicates he doesn't want to talk in front of grandma.

MR. PLOOF (CONT'D)

We'll go out.

They leave Michael and grandma alone. She looks him over.

GRANDMA

They don't make men like Lawayne anymore.

MICHAEL

No they don't.

GRANDMA

And Beverly is the most wonderful person.

MICHAEL

Yes she is.

GRANDMA

What's your name again?

MICHAEL

Michael.

GRANDMA

I understand why you'd be sniffing around her, Michael.

MICHAEL

Uh -- thank you.

GRANDMA

But what makes you so great?

MICHAEL

I'm sorry?

GRANDMA

What do you do? Lawayne can take an engine apart and put it back together.

MICHAEL

Well, I could take one apart.

She scowls at him.

GRANDMA

Have you ever used a chain saw?

MICHAEL

No.

She rolls her eyes in disgust.

GRANDMA

Oh lord almighty.

MICHAEL

I design web pages.

GRANDMA

You mean that internet stuff?

MICHAEL

Uh, yes.

GRANDMA

You sit in a chair all day?
Staring at a computer screen?

MICHAEL

Yes.

GRANDMA

Oh my, it just keeps getting worse.
God what a life.

MICHAEL

It's okay.

GRANDMA

Oh, it's not your fault. Men have fallen so far since my day. Now adays you get twice the ego and half the man. I'm so glad that when I was young you could still find a real one.

MICHAEL

Those must have been good times.

GRANDMA

Well, you just keep playing your little video games --

She makes both her hands into play guns that she thrusts forward as if shooting at something --

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

-- going pow pow pow at the evil creatures on your little screen. When you're my age you'll wake up and wonder "my god what the hell have I done with my life?"

Michael looks very hurt.

MICHAEL

That's not really what I do.

GRANDMA

I'm not blaming you entirely. Society did this to you.

MICHAEL

Society made me half a man?

GRANDMA

And your parents, I'm guessing.

MICHAEL

Yeah, that sounds about right.

INT./EXT. MARK'S CAR - NIGHT

The family and Michael pull up in front of Beverly's parents' house. Michael is slouched in the back seat, feeling very much like half a man. They get out in silence. Beverly and Katie stay with Michael as the others head for the house.

MICHAEL

This isn't going anything like I had planned.

BEVERLY
You had a plan?

Michael is turning red, his confidence gone.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
Hey, it's okay, grandma's fine.
And besides, it will make a great
story at the reunion.

Michael blanches and she laughs.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I'm kidding. Come on, you used to
have such a good sense of humor.

MICHAEL
Yeah, I'm sure I'll laugh about it
some day. Probably about the time
your grandma's able to eat solid
food again.

BEVERLY
(smiling)
See, there you go. Well, we should
get in, but thanks for a truly
interesting evening.

MICHAEL
Okay, good night then.

He gets in his car and waves goodbye at Katie. She gives a
small wave back as Beverly puts her arm around her.

BEVERLY
What do you think of Michael?

KATIE
I like him when he brings flowers.
But not so much when he almost
kills grandma.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Michael slinks in, praying to be alone, but his parents are
on the couch.

DAD
So how did it go with Beverly?

MICHAEL
Great. Really unbelievably great.

MOM

Before you go to your room, I had something I wanted to say.

Michael eases into the chair, dreading what may be coming.

MOM (CONT'D)

I called the cable company and had those dirty channels blocked. I didn't want you to find out when they don't come on and you break our remote trying to get them.

Michael looks at her for a moment.

MICHAEL

Okay, Mom. That's probably best.

MOM

I want you to know I love you no matter what you do. Just don't do it in my house. Not in front of Jesus.

She points to a crucifix on the wall. Michael stares at Jesus.

MICHAEL

I hope He'll forgive me.

MOM

Of course He will. He died for your sins.

MICHAEL

Jesus died so I could watch Cinemax?

MOM

Don't be smart. It was for all of our sins.

DAD

Don't worry, as soon as he gets a woman he won't need that stuff.

Michael leaps off the chair.

MICHAEL

Okay! I'm going to bed.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' KITCHEN - DAY

Michael looks like hell, wearing a robe, his hair a mess, slouched over the kitchen table and staring at a cup of coffee. Andy sits across from him, disbelieving.

MICHAEL

Maybe I should just go home.

ANDY

You can't give up yet. So you made out with her sister and choked her grandma. All relationships go through rough spots.

Mom and Dad enter, dressed to go out.

MOM

What are you up to these days, Andy?

ANDY

Still playing music.

MOM

Oh that's too bad.

DAD

No real job, huh?

MOM

Your parents were always very tolerant.

ANDY

Yeah, they're great.

MOM

Hmmm.

DAD

See you later.

As they leave Michael grins broadly.

MICHAEL

By the way, the band sounds really good. But why just do covers? Play something of your own.

ANDY

People like to hear what they know.

MICHAEL
Come on, you only live once.

ANDY
Look who's talking. Call Beverly.

MICHAEL
I'm too embarrassed.

ANDY
Call her.

Michael looks at his cell phone on the table. IT RINGS. He looks at the caller ID and gives Andy a surprised look.

MICHAEL
Hello?

BEVERLY (ON PHONE)
Michael, hi, it's Beverly.

MICHAEL
Hi Beverly.

BEVERLY (ON PHONE)
I just wanted to tell you that Grandma's doing great. Anyway, I felt really bad about last night, and was wondering if you might want to have lunch today?

Michael's jaw drops.

MICHAEL
Well yeah, I think I can.

BEVERLY (ON PHONE)
Meet me at the school in an hour?

MICHAEL
Yes. Yes, I'll be there.

BEVERLY (ON PHONE)
Great, I'll see you then. Bye.

MICHAEL
Bye. Bye Bye.

ANDY
Bye bye?

MICHAEL
I panicked.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - DAY

The gym is empty. Michael hears the CLANGING OF PANS and notices the metal doors to the kitchen are open. Inside is Beverly, hair net and all, taking a tray out of the oven.

He watches for a few moments as she scrapes cookies off the tray. She finally looks up to see him and smiles.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

The two of them walk through the slides and swings.

MICHAEL

You really looked like you knew
what you were doing in there.

BEVERLY

It's not hard. It's just baking.

MICHAEL

I still can't believe you're a
cook.

BEVERLY

Why? What did you think I'd be?

MICHAEL

Everyone thought you'd be a vet.

BEVERLY

I know, but things happened, then
Katie came along and I kind of fell
into this. But I love it. And I
do volunteer work with animals so --

MICHAEL

You've never wanted to get out of
Kent?

BEVERLY

Too late now. It's grown on me.

MICHAEL

You would never move?

BEVERLY

Katie has her friends here, her
dad's down the street, my parents
are getting older and I want to be
around for them. And my grandma --
you never know what's going to
happen to her.

She grins. He smiles weakly.

EXT. DOWNTOWN KENT SIDEWALK - DAY

Michael and Beverly walk along the 1950s building fronts.

MICHAEL

At least they didn't ruin downtown.

BEVERLY

Yeah, it looks pretty much like it
did when we were kids.

Former jock JOE TUTTLE comes running across the street. He completely ignores Michael's presence.

JOE

Beverly! It's great to see you!
Man you look great.

BEVERLY

Thanks Joe. This is Michael Young.

He barely nods Michael's way.

JOE

Hey. So, I was wondering if you'd
thought about maybe going bowling
or something?

BEVERLY

Well, I've been pretty busy --

MICHAEL

What are you doing?

JOE

Huh?

Joe finally turns and acknowledges this other person.

MICHAEL

Are you asking her out in front of
me? What makes you think she and I
aren't together?

Joe looks at Beverly, then back at Michael, with an expression that says he would find that highly unlikely.

JOE

You're kidding, right?

MICHAEL

Wait a second -- Joe. Joe Tuttle?

JOE

Yeah. Do I know you?

BEVERLY

That's what I was trying to tell you -- this is Michael Young.

Joe squints at him, still not registering.

MICHAEL

We went to school together.

JOE

I don't think so.

MICHAEL

We were in the same year.

JOE

Michael Young?

MICHAEL

Yes.

JOE

I don't remember you.

MICHAEL

We had classes together.

JOE

Sorry.

MICHAEL

We were both altar boys at St. Anthony's.

JOE

Huh.

Joe shrugs. Michael looks irritated, to Beverly's delight.

MICHAEL

We did that science project together -- the eruption of Mount St. Helens.

JOE

I remember the mountain. It was made out of clay.

MICHAEL
That's right.

JOE
And the lava was made with syrup.

MICHAEL
Yeah. But you don't remember me?

JOE
No.

Beverly giggles.

MICHAEL
You don't remember being in Boy
Scouts with me?

JOE
Nope.

MICHAEL
So you don't remember jerking each
other off in the pup tent?

Joe looks, up, trying to remember. Beverly tries to stop
from laughing.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
What are you doing? Are you trying
to remember us jerking each other
off in a pup tent?

JOE
Yeah.

MICHAEL
Well stop it, I was kidding.

JOE
Oh. I don't get it.

He finally recognizes something in Michael's face.

JOE (CONT'D)
Oh, wait! I do remember you! You
were the beanpole in the yearbook
who was playing basketball in black
socks and taped-up glasses!

Beverly laughs and turns away, almost crying.

MICHAEL

They weren't taped up.

JOE

Yeah, I remember you -- your hair's different.

MICHAEL

Yeah, it must be the hair. I remember you Joe -- you're the guy who dropped the wide-open pass in the end zone against Renton that would have put us in the state championship game.

Joe's mouth opens, then closes. He's obviously hurt.

JOE

Yeah, well, I've gotta go. I'll see you Saturday, Beverly.

BEVERLY

Okay, Joe, see you there.

MICHAEL

I'll see you there, too, Joe.

Joe stops and gives him a look, then hunkers off. As soon as he's out of range Beverly explodes laughing again.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Half way through their meals, Beverly is still in a great mood. Michael is happy she's finally opening up to him.

BEVERLY

Hey, you made quite an impression on Joe Tuttle.

MICHAEL

He had to be kidding, right?

BEVERLY

I don't think he was. But bringing up the dropped pass -- you would have never said something like that before. The grown up Michael Young is such a badass.

MICHAEL

By the way, the pup tent thing was actually true. My feelings were hurt that he didn't remember.

Her laugh sends a thrill right through him. At last, this is the Beverly he'd come looking for. Michael seizes the moment to get more personal.

MICHAEL (CONT'D) (cont'd)
There's something I have to ask
you. I have to be honest.

BEVERLY
You do, don't you? Well, go ahead.

MICHAEL
I don't get Lawayne.

BEVERLY
Don't get what?

MICHAEL
You and Lawayne.

BEVERLY
Lawayne has his problems but he's
very sensitive. He's passionate
about life. He's an animal lover.
Everyone loves Lawayne. Except
you.

MICHAEL
He's not smart enough for you.

Her eyes narrow.

BEVERLY
I don't think you know Lawayne that
well.

MICHAEL
Do you mind my asking why you
divorced him?

BEVERLY
Yes I do mind, actually. That's
between him and me.

MICHAEL
So he cheated on you.

BEVERLY
What?

MICHAEL
You're not really thinking of going
back with him, are you?

BEVERLY

I don't want to talk about it.

She looks wearily out the window. He looks hurt.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Okay, I'll tell you. Our marriage was perfect until one day he ruined a beautiful lunch we were having, so I told him to get the hell out.

Michael almost smiles.

MICHAEL

Okay, sorry. I'll change the subject. So -- what kind of movies do you like?

BEVERLY

Movies? I don't know, all kinds. I'm too busy to get out much.

MICHAEL

What about music? Who are you listening to these days?

BEVERLY

Hmm, all sorts of things.

MICHAEL

Do you like Celine Dion?

He braces as he waits for her answer.

BEVERLY

Celine Dion? Yeah, I like some of her songs.

He can't hide his disappointment.

MICHAEL

Yeah, she's great. I really like that...emotive...warbling...sound she makes. Hey, I remember you were always a big reader. Read anything good lately?

Beverly is getting annoyed again. She puts down her fork.

BEVERLY

Is this some sort of quiz? How am I doing?

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. It's just that I want to know about you.

She picks up her fork and plays with her food.

BEVERLY

I finally read The Da Vinci Code.

MICHAEL

Oh god, wasn't that awful?

BEVERLY

I thought the story was good.

He reaches across the table for her hand.

MICHAEL

I'm being a jerk.

She looks at him, softening.

BEVERLY

Hold that thought -- I'm vibrating.

Beverly pulls out her phone and reads a text message, frowning. She snaps the phone shut and looks at Michael.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

I have a question for you. Do you like dogs?

Michael blanches.

INT./EXT. LEXUS - KENT STREETS - DAY

Michael drives, with growing alarm.

MICHAEL

So what kind of dog is it?

BEVERLY

A pit bull. Most of them are actually very sweet dogs.

MICHAEL

Uh huh.

BEVERLY

You're not afraid of dogs, are you?

Michael's face reddens.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

It's okay, a lot of people are.

MICHAEL

It's just that I got bit when I was a kid and I haven't had much luck with them since.

BEVERLY

You've never had a dog?

MICHAEL

Never.

BEVERLY

That's so sad.

MICHAEL

So what do you have to do?

BEVERLY

I tell them I'm from Canine Rescue and I'm there to inquire about possible dog abuse. I ask if we can take the dog until the matter is investigated. On this one we have reports that the guy kicks the dog and doesn't feed it properly.

MICHAEL

You shouldn't be alone with someone like that. I'll go with you.

She pulls into the driveway.

BEVERLY

No, you have to stay in the car. Only trained personnel can be involved.

MICHAEL

This guy could be violent.

BEVERLY

I know how to handle cowards like him. I do it all the time.

She gets out and turns to him, putting her hand out.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Stay.

EXT. DOG OWNER'S HOUSE - DAY

Beverly goes up to the door of this house with faded paint and junk in the yard. Michael watches as a GUY IN A BACKWARDS CAP answers and he and Beverly exchange words.

Michael sees the sad PIT BULL by a chain link fence on the side of the house. He gets out, sneaks up to the gate and creeps in. The dog looks wary but hungry for attention. Michael bends down and creeps toward the dog, shaking.

MICHAEL

It's okay buddy. I won't hurt you.
Please don't hurt me. So, what
kind of music do you like? You
like Celine Dion?

The dog's tail starts wagging as Michael draws near. He slowly reaches out his hand and pets the dog. The dog gets more excited and starts licking Michael.

At the front door Beverly pulls a \$100 bill out of her purse.

BEVERLY

I'll give you \$100 for the dog.

GUY IN CAP

Jesus, hell yes. Take him!

He grabs the money.

In the yard Michael picks the dog up and starts for the gate. Just as he's opening it a young boy comes around the corner.

BOY

What are you doing with Buster?

As Michael opens the gate the kid bends down and picks up a HANDFUL OF ROCKS AND STARTS THROWING. Some hit the fence, but a few hit Michael as he heads for the car.

BOY (CONT'D)

Dad, dad! He's taking Buster!

Beverly and the Guy in the Cap watch as the boy chases Michael, rocks still flying. Michael opens the car's back door and throws Buster in, then runs to the driver side.

MICHAEL

Beverly, I got him! Come on! Run!

Beverly watches Michael run - astonished and completely charmed by his gallant and fearless act.

BOY

They're getting away with Buster!

Beverly walks by him and gets in the car. Michael peels out.

GUY IN CAP

It's okay Sly, I'll get ya a snake.

BOY

A snake? Okay.

INT./EXT. LEXUS - KENT STREETS - DAY

Michael breathes hard as Beverly looks on with admiration.

BEVERLY

You're my hero.

MICHAEL

I can't believe that guy didn't
come after us.

BEVERLY

He said you looked too scary to
mess with.

Michael enjoys the moment. He rubs his head where he got hit
and smiles at Beverly.

MICHAEL

Can you believe that kid?

BEVERLY

I think Buster's better off without
either one of them.

She turns to look at Buster, who seems to agree.

INT. ANIMAL CENTER BATHROOM - DAY

Cleaning dog hair from his coat, Michael looks at himself in
the mirror with a self-satisfied grin.

INT. ANIMAL CENTER - DAY

Michael exits the bathroom to see Beverly across the room,
playing with Buster as people gather around.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Michael and Beverly get out of his car in the Panther Lake
Elementary parking lot and look out over the school.

MICHAEL

Why are they tearing this down?

BEVERLY

The school board says it's out of date, and it would cost too much repair and modernize it.

MICHAEL

There go all our memories.

BEVERLY

I loved going to school here.

MICHAEL

I loved you going to school here, too. Did you know that I was always watching you?

BEVERLY

Sometimes. I have to admit I did notice you a little too.

MICHAEL

Really?

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY (1979) - FLASHBACK

Seven-year-old Michael is running on the pavement as he watches Beverly skipping rope.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

I remember you running into the pole when I was skipping rope.

Michael runs headfirst into a breezeway pole and drops.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY (1981) - FLASHBACK

A group of kids play dodge ball.

BEVERLY (V.O.)

I remember you catching the dodge ball and saving me so I didn't have to come out of the game.

A ball bounces off of Beverly and Michael dives to catch it, bringing him the reward of her grateful smile.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1983) - FLASHBACK

Beverly, 11, pulls a Valentine's Card from the board.

BEVERLY (V.O.)
I remember the time you were my
secret Valentine.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Beverly is smiling wistfully now. Michael's heart is racing.

BEVERLY
They can't take those memories
away.

She leans over and kisses his cheek.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
Thank you for helping me with the
dog. You saved a life today. So
are you still willing to let me
cook you dinner tonight?

MICHAEL
Definitely. I'll be there.

Michael gets in his car and Beverly starts for the gym. He
watches her walk, and halfway there she turns and waves.
Michael is in love.

EXT. ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Michael bounds up the steps to Andy's house.

INT. ANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Andy's slouched on his bed as Michael paces, very excited.

MICHAEL
She's not how I imagined her all
these years. She may be even
better. Andy, I heard the laugh
today. I want to be around that.
It's a great cure for the rest of
life. She's the kind of woman who
can really ease the pain.

ANDY
What pain?

MICHAEL
The pain. Don't you have pain?

ANDY
Huh. Yeah, I suppose I do.

MICHAEL

And I think I have something to offer her. She has a great life but I know she's lonely.

ANDY

She probably has pain, too.

MICHAEL

And I was wrong. She's about the most intelligent person I've ever met. She knows exactly what she wants and doesn't care what anyone else thinks about her -- even me. Everyone I know is so screwed up --

Andy tilts his head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

-- except for you -- but she's so well grounded. There's no games, no drama. And through all of the lunacy I've brought into her life this week, she's been understanding and classy and given me every chance to redeem myself.

He pauses as if he just realized something.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I think I even get her and Lawayne. She feels sorry for all creatures. She thought she could help him.

He sits down in the desk chair and leans close to Andy.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

And she's a great mom -- I was watching her with Katie the other night. She's not one of those parents who think their kid is the center of the universe. It's just so natural, loving but firm. She's the adult, Katie's the child and they love each other for that. She's amazing. You know, I would even move back to Kent if that's what it takes. I would play the town nerd again to be with her. I love her Andy.

ANDY

I know you do.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Beverly and Jill are having coffee on the couch.

JILL

He thinks he rescued the dog?

BEVERLY

Don't tell him. But he's scared of dogs, and it was a pit bull.

JILL

A pit bull? He is crazy for you.

BEVERLY

You think?

JILL

Hell, I never had a chance.

Beverly smiles. There's a KNOCK AT THE DOOR. She opens it to find Big Jim.

BIG JIM

Beverly, hi. I, uh, had something I thought I should tell you. It's been kind of bothering me.

BEVERLY

Is it about the other night?

BIG JIM

Well, no, and yes.

She gives him a curious look.

INT. ANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Michael and Andy are sharing beers and memories.

MICHAEL

I remember sitting in this very room, the two of us describing what we wanted in a woman.

ANDY

Which was presumptuous seeing as how neither one of us had ever even seen a nipple at that point.

MICHAEL

We've got to find you someone, Andy. What are you looking for?

ANDY

I wrote a song about that.

He grabs his guitar and strums a faux-country tune.

ANDY (CONT'D)

"I want a woman who knows who she is -- but isn't that sure who a lot of famous historical figures are, like Magellan."

Michael smiles.

ANDY (CONT'D)

"She likes to take long walks on the beach, which gives me time to watch TV without a bunch of yapping."

MICHAEL

Of course.

ANDY

"Her skin should have a moist, glistening shimmer in the moonlight, but only if there is some sort of liquid on it."

MICHAEL

That's not asking too much.

ANDY

"But most of all, she'll scratch me no matter where I itch."

He hits one final chord as Michael claps.

MICHAEL

That shouldn't be too hard to find.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Big Jim is seated across from the women, hesitating.

BIG JIM

See, I was at the Golden Steer the other night while you were there.

BEVERLY

With Michael.

BIG JIM

Before that.

INT. GOLDEN STEER RESTAURANT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Michael is telling Andy his initial negative reaction to Beverly, but now we see Big Jim in the booth next to them.

BIG JIM (V.O.)

Michael told his buddy some things about you I thought were -- well, I thought you should know. He said you marrying Lawayne was dumb and he didn't understand why you were just a cook, and he was surprised at how low class you were and that you weren't nearly as smart as he remembered. But you were still hot so he'd still try to nail you.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Beverly stares at Big Jim. She exchanges looks with Jill, then, teary-eyed, looks away.

JILL

Are you sure, Jim?

BIG JIM

I wouldn't lie to you.

BEVERLY

Thank you Big Jim, I appreciate it.

BIG JIM

I thought you should know.

She nods. He stands up and pats her shoulder.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

You know how I feel about you.

He heads out the door. Beverly and Jill sit for a moment.

JILL

Do you believe him?

Beverly nods.

BEVERLY

Michael even said as much about Lawayne, and my job. I felt like I was being judged. I thought I understood why, that maybe he was just nervous. I guess I was wrong.

JILL

What are you going to do?

Beverly thinks, then looks back at Jill.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The door opens, and Michael is there with FLOWERS AND A GIFT, grinning happily as Beverly smiles back.

INT. BEVERLY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Beverly pulls out a BOTTLE OF WHISKEY, with obvious delight. Michael looks puzzled.

BEVERLY

Can I pour you a drink?

MICHAEL

Whiskey? Isn't that a little strong for this early?

BEVERLY

It's never too early for the good stuff.

She pours a glass and drinks it -- straight. Then smiles.

INT. BEVERLY'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

The table is full of Italian food, the light is low. The gift is on the table. Beverly has a good buzz as she takes a drink and eyes Michael. Her dog Rex sleeps on the floor.

BEVERLY

Now that is good bourbon.

MICHAEL

Yeah? Well, this food is good. You are a great cook.

BEVERLY

Well thank you. So, when do I get to see my present?

He hands it to her. She unwraps it to find his YEARBOOK.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Is this your yearbook?

MICHAEL

You said you lost yours.

BEVERLY
But I can't take yours.

MICHAEL
I want you to have it. I'll borrow
it if I need to.

BEVERLY
Thank you. That's very sweet. Now
-- I want to do something for you.
I know you believe in honesty, so
I'd like to just get some things
out there and see where we stand.

He looks a little nervous.

MICHAEL
Yeah, that sounds great.

She takes a deep breath.

BEVERLY
Okay, here we go. I -- I ---

MICHAEL
It's okay. I won't judge you.

BEVERLY
I voted for George W. Bush for
president.

Michael rocks back.

MICHAEL
Oh god.

BEVERLY
Now I remember that you were always
a little liberal --

MICHAEL
Well, moderate liberal.

BEVERLY
So I wanted you to know up front.

MICHAEL
Wow. Okay, yeah, well, I can kind
of understand that, in the 2000
election. I mean, who knew? And
Gore wasn't very exciting. That's
what you mean, right, 2000?

She starts shaking her head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I mean by 2004 it was pretty
evident --

She shrugs.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Please tell me you didn't vote for
him in 2004. And I'm not judging
you but please, please say you
didn't. You didn't, right?

She screws up her face. He puts down his fork and demands --

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Did you vote for George W. Bush in
2004?

BEVERLY
Yes.

MICHAEL
Oh my god! I'm sorry, but ooooh.

BEVERLY
I just thought he was the best
choice to stop the gays.

Michael's eyes get very wide.

MICHAEL
Stop -- the gays?

BEVERLY
I know you probably disagree, but I
don't believe in the gay lifestyle.

MICHAEL
You don't believe in it?

BEVERLY
It's not natural. God said men
shouldn't lie with other men.

MICHAEL
God said? I don't remember you
being that religious.

BEVERLY
Oh, yeah, I'm way into it now.

MICHAEL
Well, you know, I was raised
Catholic, so --

BEVERLY
I'm a member of the First
Scientists congregation.

MICHAEL
First Scientists? That's not like
the Scientologists is it?

BEVERLY
Oh, no --

He looks relieved.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
-- First Scientists probably seem a
little further out than
Scientologists --

MICHAEL
Further out?

BEVERLY
No, but hey, I don't want to scare
you, because I don't believe in
everything they preach. Like the
gay reservations.

MICHAEL
Gay reservations?

BEVERLY
First Scientists believe we should
put the gays on reservations.

MICHAEL
Reservations? Like Indian
reservations?

BEVERLY
They think it would be better for
them and us. But I think that's a
little nutty. That goes too far.

He stares at her, trying to guess if she's joking.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
Your food's getting cold.

He looks down, takes a forkful and starts eating.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
Oh, and I like Clay Aiken.

He chokes on his food a little, grabs for his water.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I know how you are about music. So
I wanted to be honest.

MICHAEL
No, he's a good singer.

He chokes on his words, takes another big drink of water.

BEVERLY
I'm so glad you said that!

She grabs a remote and points it across at the stereo in the living room. CLAY AIKEN erupts from the speakers.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
Isn't he great? It's so romantic.

MICHAEL
What?

She hits the remote again to turn the music down.

BEVERLY
There, I'll turn it down a bit.

MICHAEL
Thank you. Thank you so much.

BEVERLY
Now there's a couple of more things
I hate to bring up but if this
continues you'll find out sometime.

He braces as she walks over to him, slowly pulling up on her shirt and lowering her pants enough to show the small of her back, where there's a BIG BLUE TATTOO: "LAWAYNE FOREVER."

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I have a "Lawayne Forever" tattoo.

Michael's mouth drops. He jumps out of his chair.

MICHAEL
Holy shit!

BEVERLY
It's not that big.

He looks pleadingly at her.

MICHAEL
Damn it, Beverly, he looked up your
dress!

She smiles coyly and winks.

BEVERLY
I know.

He's staggering now. She covers up as he backs away.

MICHAEL
I'll be right back.

BEVERLY
Oh, okay. I'll be right here.

As soon as he's out of sight she dips her hand in a water
glass and splashes her face.

INT. BEVERLY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Michael sits on the edge of the bathtub, holding his head.
He takes a few long breaths and gets up. He looks at himself
in the mirror, his face flush and starting to sweat.

BEVERLY (O.S.)
Michael, do you want me to reheat
your dinner?

MICHAEL
No, I'll be out in a second.

He wipes his face and braces himself, opening the door.

INT. BEVERLY'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael returns to find Beverly back at the table, SMOKING.

MICHAEL
You smoke?!!!

BEVERLY
I'm sorry Michael, I know you hate
it but I love to smoke and it's the
last secret, I swear.

She exhales a huge puff of smoke across the table and into
his face. He slumps back down in the chair.

MICHAEL
How long have you been smoking?

BEVERLY
Since junior high.

MICHAEL
You were smoking in school?

BEVERLY
Yeah. I didn't want you to know, I
thought you might not like me.

MICHAEL
I'm getting dizzy.

He gets up again and heads for the bathroom.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Excuse me.

As soon as he's gone she stumbles around the corner.

INT. BEVERLY'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Beverly wavers and crumbles onto the floor, holding her head
and coughing. Rex comes over and licks her face.

INT. BEVERLY'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael is splashing his face with water, trying to recover.

INT. BEVERLY'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Rex is resting his head on Beverly, who is still hacking
away. Her eyes are closed until she hears the bathroom door.
She lurches back up to her feet and into the dining room.

INT. BEVERLY'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They both sit back down at the table.

MICHAEL
Beverly --

She pulls another cigarette out of the pack and lights it up.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
God damn you really smoke.

She smiles, painfully.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Listen, Beverly, I haven't done anything right this whole week and for that I'm sorry.

BEVERLY

No, it's been very flattering.

MICHAEL

You see, I've gone a little crazy ever since I found what you wrote in my yearbook. I swear I never saw it until last week. And I just had to come here and see if you might still feel that way about me.

BEVERLY

What I wrote in your yearbook?

MICHAEL

Yeah, about how you liked me and wished I had asked you out. You don't know what that meant to me. I went a little insane.

BEVERLY

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

She blows smoke as he grabs the yearbook and finds the page. He hands it to her. She holds her head as she silently reads. As she nears the end of the note tears fill her eyes.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

That's beautiful.

MICHAEL

Yes it is.

BEVERLY

But I didn't write it.

They look into each other's eyes for a moment.

MICHAEL

What?

BEVERLY

That's not my handwriting.

His face is turning redder.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I would have never written
something like that in your
yearbook for everyone to see.

Of course. Michael can't believe he didn't think of that.

MICHAEL
I'm such an idiot.

BEVERLY
It was lovely that you thought I
wrote that. In fact --

She stands up and starts reaching for him, but she stumbles
and puts her hand on the table for support.

MICHAEL
Are you okay?

BEVERLY
Not even close.

She falls as he tries to grab her. He gets down beside her.

MICHAEL
Beverly! Beverly!

He lifts her up. She looks at him, then slumps in his arms.

EXT. EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Michael pulls up in the Lexus and runs to the passenger side
to help Beverly out. She stumbles, so he picks her up and
carries her through the sliding glass doors.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM RECEPTION - NIGHT

Still carrying her, Michael approaches the front desk.

MICHAEL
She passed out!

RECEPTIONIST
Weren't you here last night?

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM HALLWAY - NIGHT

A FEMALE DOCTOR and Michael are in the hall just outside of
the recovery area.

FEMALE DOCTOR
Don't worry, she'll be fine.

Jill, Lawayne, Katie, Mr. and Mrs. Ploof, and Grandma come quickly down the hallway.

LAWAYNE

What did you do to her, Young?

FEMALE DOCTOR

It's nothing serious, she just got light-headed from drinking and smoking. You can see her now.

JILL

Drinking and smoking?!!!

They race into the room as Grandma glares at Michael.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM RECOVERY - CONTINUOUS

Michael looks around the door as the family gathers around Beverly. There's no room for him.

INT. EMERGENCY WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Sitting forward, distracted, Michael waits. He notices that one of his hands has blue ink on it. He starts rubbing it. Katie comes out of Beverly's room and sits beside him.

KATIE

Hi.

MICHAEL

Hi.

They sit quietly for a moment.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Katie, you know your mother's going to be good as new, don't you?

KATIE

Yeah.

More silence.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Why was my mom smoking?

MICHAEL

That's a long story, but I can tell you she will never do it again.

KATIE

Do you like my mom?

MICHAEL

Why sure, everyone likes your mom.

KATIE

And you knew my dad, too, when you were my age, didn't you?

MICHAEL

Sure.

KATIE

My dad says he was the smartest one in your class.

Michael takes a long pause.

MICHAEL

Okay. Sure, let's say that he was.

KATIE

He knows everything.

MICHAEL

Well -- he certainly knows a lot.

KATIE

He's the best dad.

MICHAEL

...Yeah.

KATIE

And my mom's the best mom.

MICHAEL

Yes she is.

KATIE

Do you have kids?

MICHAEL

No -- but if I did, I'd want one just like you.

Jill comes out and motions for Michael to talk in private.

JILL

She can leave in a couple of hours.

MICHAEL

I'd like to go clean up the mess before she goes home.

JILL
I'll go with you.

INT. BEVERLY'S DINING ROOM, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Michael and Jill come in to find the all the lights on, the stereo going, food still on the table. Jill turns the stereo off. Rex looks up from his bed.

They clear the table, going back and forth to the kitchen.

JILL
So why was she smoking?

MICHAEL
She said she loves it.

JILL
She hates smoking. And she only drinks a little wine.

MICHAEL
Huh. Do you know who she voted for president in 2004?

Jill gives him a puzzled grin.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Your sister is upset with me, isn't she?

JILL
Why do you say that?

MICHAEL
She was trying to drive me away tonight. Why else would she have you draw a tattoo on her back?

Jill looks a little sheepish.

JILL
You'll have to ask her. I can tell you she used to like you a lot.

MICHAEL
Are you sure?

JILL
Of course.

She walks over and stands right in his face.

JILL (CONT'D)
What are you, an idiot?

She notices the yearbook, still open to the page, and reads.

JILL (CONT'D)
That's beautiful. Too bad Beverly
didn't really write it.

MICHAEL
How did you know?

JILL
I know my sister's handwriting.
Besides, that looks like it was
written by a guy trying to write
like a girl.

He looks at the note, confused. He indicates the yearbook.

MICHAEL
Where should I put this?

JILL
She's got her books upstairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS LIBRARY - NIGHT

Michael looks over Beverly's large, eclectic collection,
impressed. He finds an open space and slips the yearbook in.

INT. BEVERLY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As Michael comes down the stairs, the DOG WHINES.

JILL
Oh, Rex didn't get his walk.

Michael goes over to Rex and squats down, nervously extending
his hand. Rex lowers his head under it and Michael pets him.

MICHAEL
I'll take him.

EXT. KENT SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Michael walks Rex as Jill walks beside him.

JILL
I have to tell you something.

MICHAEL
Why not, it's a good night for it.

JILL

When you came to the house that night, I had a feeling that you might think I was Beverly.

MICHAEL

Really?

JILL

But I always liked you and I thought well, maybe you had liked me, too. You were the nicest guy and I've always ended up with the bad boys. So when you said those things I let myself believe they were for me. It was an awful thing for me to do.

MICHAEL

I don't know what to say, Jill.

She stops him and starts to tear up.

JILL

Please don't tell Beverly. I couldn't bear it if she knew.

He nods. She kisses him on the cheek.

INT. GOLDEN STEER LOUNGE - NIGHT

Andy's band is finishing a song as a grim-faced Michael enters and walks up to the stage. As the crowd applauds Andy nods at Michael, but he doesn't respond.

ANDY

Thank you. Okay, we're going to take a ten-minute break.

Michael indicates the side door. Andy jumps off the stage.

ANDY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

Michael opens the door and they step outside.

EXT. GOLDEN STEER RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

The two walk a few feet into the light.

ANDY

So what happened?

MICHAEL

Why didn't you tell me you wrote
that note in my yearbook?

Andy looks down.

ANDY

I tried. Ever since you called.

MICHAEL

Was it supposed to be a joke?

ANDY

It wasn't a joke. I wrote it
because I thought it might give you
the courage to finally ask her out.

Michael studies him to see if he's telling the truth.

ANDY (CONT'D)

And when you found it and said you
were coming to see her, I thought I
should let you have your shot.

MICHAEL

You made me look like a god damn
fool. And what's the real deal
with you and Beverly, anyway?

Andy rubs his chin and turns slightly away from him.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY (1983) - FLASHBACK

Michael stands by Beverly as the teacher holds the flashcard.
Now we see Andy flash the answer to Beverly with his fingers.

ANDY (V.O.)

I always liked her, Michael. You
didn't know that?

Beverly smiles in appreciation at Andy.

BEVERLY

Ninety-one.

EXT. GOLDEN STEER RESTAURANT - BACK TO THE PRESENT

MICHAEL

Then why didn't you ask her out?

ANDY

Because you liked her. And you
were my best friend.

He turns and goes back in, leaving Michael speechless in the glare of the parking lot lamp.

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM - DAY

Michael is under the covers, staring at the ceiling.

MOM (O.S.)

Michael, it's eleven o'clock. Are you okay?

MICHAEL

Yes, Mom.

MOM (O.S.)

We're going to the store, do you want anything?

MICHAEL

No thanks.

INT. BEVERLY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Beverly and Jill are in their robes, hunched over the table, drinking coffee, recovering.

BEVERLY

Michael cleaned up the house?

JILL

Yeah, and then he walked Rex.

Beverly lifts her head in surprise.

JILL (CONT'D)

I know he's been acting really weird, but he's still very sweet.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' KITCHEN - DAY

Michael, disheveled, wearing his robe, opens the refrigerator and looks inside for the longest time, not moving.

INT. GOLDEN STEER LOUNGE - NIGHT

Andy and his band are playing a slow song as Michael watches from a booth. Jill slides in next to him.

ANDY

"This is not my real face, I'm much more handsome than this..."

MICHAEL

Hey.

JILL

So, what's going on?

MICHAEL

Jill, I've decided to tell Beverly what you did that first night.

JILL

What?!!

MICHAEL

Unless you go to the reunion with Andy.

JILL

Andy?

He nods toward Andy singing. She looks toward the stage.

JILL (CONT'D)

Andy?

MICHAEL

You said you wanted to go out with a nice boy. Well he's much nicer than me.

She looks at Andy again.

JILL

Andy.

ANDY

"This is not my real voice, I sing much better than this..."

JILL

I like this song.

As the song ends the audience applauds.

ANDY

That's a song I wrote.

Michael looks surprised.

JILL

He writes songs?

Michael shrugs. Andy hops off the stage and walks over to the booth. He and Michael study each other for a moment.

MICHAEL

Nice song.

Andy smiles and sits down, finally focusing on this woman who looks so much like Beverly. He does a double take.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Andy, you remember Beverly's sister, Jill.

ANDY

Hi Jill.

MICHAEL

Jill has something she wants to ask you.

Jill looks at Michael, then Andy.

JILL

Yeah, I was wondering if you'd go to the reunion with me?

Andy looks at Michael, then back at Jill.

ANDY

Sure. My band will be playing a lot of the time, though.

JILL

I don't mind. You guys are great. I could just sit and listen.

Andy smiles and exchanges a pleased look with Michael.

INT. MICHAEL'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Michael's parents come in DRESSED IN SQUARE DANCE OUTFITS as he watches TV on the couch.

MOM

Well, we're about to take off. We're going square dancing.

MICHAEL

That's good. Otherwise your dress would be too big.

MOM

Too big for what?

MICHAEL

Pretty much anything other than square dancing.

MOM

Shouldn't you be getting dressed for the reunion?

MICHAEL

I don't think I'm going.

MOM

What?

She sits on one side of him, her dress puffing up almost to eye level, as his dad sits on the other side, cowboy hat brim almost in Michael's face.

DAD

You came all this way for the thing.

MICHAEL

I've already seen everyone I wanted to see.

MOM

What about Beverly?

MICHAEL

That didn't work out, Mom.

MOM

Why not?

MICHAEL

Turns out she was too smart for me.

DAD

Well, she was pretty sharp.

MOM

Still, you should go.

Michael looks at the two of them in their colorful outfits.

MICHAEL

Why?

MOM

Go show them all what a success you've become.

DAD
Make us proud.

MICHAEL
That would make you proud?

DAD
There must be other women there who
aren't too smart for you.

MOM
Yeah, go get one of them.

Michael thinks it over, the absurdity of his parents' well-meaning, square dance attired pep talk lightening his mood.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL - NIGHT

The whole school is lit up and RECORDED MUSIC DRIFTS FROM LOUDSPEAKERS as Michael walks down a breezeway.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

The gym is now a dance hall as Michael strides in. The first thing he sees is the WALL OF PHOTOGRAPHS, including the embarrassing one of him playing basketball, now twice the size as the one he took down. He's deflated once again.

ANDY
I didn't give it to them.

Michael turns to find Andy in a suit and Jill in a stunning black dress, which catches Michael off guard.

MICHAEL
Wow.

JILL
Hi. Beverly's going to be late.
Lawayne was drunk so she had to get
Katie and take her to her parents'.

Megan slides up beside him, a red dress rivaling Jill's.

MEGAN
Hi Michael.

MICHAEL
Oh, hey, it looks great. The gym.

MEGAN
This is Brian Clark.

BRIAN steps up, looking a lot like Michael did in high school, only he's 35. Andy laughs.

BRIAN
Hi.

MICHAEL
Hi.

Joe Tuttle barges in.

JOE
Michael, right? See, I remember.

ANDY
Hi Joe, it's me, Andy Tingstad.

Joe looks at him.

JOE
Yeah, Andy. You were in band.

ANDY
So what are you up to these days,
Joe?

JOE
I work for the university.

MICHAEL
Really? What do you do?

JOE
I'm involved in transportation
management.

Michael and Joe exchange looks and suppress smiles. Joe points at Michael --

JOE (CONT'D)
Now I know what you do --

Michael looks confused at that.

JOE (CONT'D)
So what are you doing, Andy?

ANDY
Still in a band. In fact, my group
is playing tonight.

JOE
Great. What's your day job?

Michael mouths the word "lie" to Andy, who considers it.

ANDY
Nothing. That's it.

JOE
Wow, so how do you get by?

Andy straightens up as if he's proud about it.

ANDY
I still live at home with my
parents.

JOE
Oh my god, you're not one of those
middle-age guys who live in their
parents' basement, are you?

ANDY
No, I don't live in my parents'
basement.

JOE
Thank god.

ANDY
I live in the attic.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - LATER

Michael slumps in a chair, alone at a table as Andy and his
band play a slow dance number. Megan comes over.

MEGAN
Dance with me.

They go out on the floor and start to slow dance. As they
turn, her date Brian can be seen standing on the sidelines.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
I talked to Beverly this morning.
She told me about the yearbook.

MICHAEL
Great.

MEGAN
I'm so sorry.

MICHAEL
What are you sorry for?

MEGAN

I did it.

MICHAEL

Did what?

MEGAN

I glued the pages together.

MICHAEL

Why?

MEGAN

I was jealous. I didn't want you to see a love note from Beverly.

Michael isn't sure what to say.

MICHAEL

I see.

MEGAN

I hope I didn't ruin anything. I could never forgive myself if I hurt you.

MICHAEL

Don't worry about it. Most of my wounds are self-inflicted.

MEGAN

I wish I could make it up to you.

MICHAEL

What about the handsome guy you've got over there?

They look at Brian, uncomfortably waiting on the sidelines.

MEGAN

I found out that he's planning to ask me to marry him tonight at midnight.

MICHAEL

That's good, isn't it?

MEGAN

Yeah, it's great. He's great.

She rises up and whispers in his ear.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
But until then, I will still do
anything you want me to do.

She blows in Michael's ear and his eyes get huge.

Another turn and he sees Beverly standing in the doorway,
stunning in a dark green dress, watching him. As they go
around again Jill is standing there.

JILL
Mind if I cut in?

MEGAN
He's all yours.

Jill and Michael dance in silence for a moment. Beverly is
talking to a couple of friends, but keeps her eye on Michael.

JILL
Is Andy really that nice or is it a
big act?

MICHAEL
It's a very real and scary act.

JILL
Does he really live with his
parents?

MICHAEL
Obviously. I mean, look at him.

JILL
That's kinda cool.

Jill sees that Michael is watching Beverly. She leans in.

JILL (CONT'D)
I'm not supposed to tell you this,
but Big Jim told Beverly you
thought she wasn't very bright but
you were going to nail her anyway.

Michael stiffens.

MICHAEL
That's a lie.

Jill smiles. The song ends and they walk back to the table.

JILL
I'll be back in a few minutes.

Michael sits down and watches Beverly mingling across the room. He works up the courage to go over, starting to get up just as LYLE ECKLEBARGER and his wife LAURA pin him down.

LYLE

Michael, it's Lyle Ecklebarger.
And this is my wife Laura.

MICHAEL

Hi Laura.

LAURA

Hi.

LYLE

She's hot, don't you think?

MICHAEL

Well...

LYLE

Come on you can say it.

MICHAEL

Lyle, I feel a little strange
commenting on your wife's looks
while she's sitting right here.

LYLE

Hell, I don't mind. You don't
mind, do you honey?

LAURA

No I don't mind.

They both wait.

MICHAEL

Okay Lyle -- your wife's hot.

Lyle looks very upset.

LYLE

What kind of thing is that to say
about my wife, Young!??

Michael blinks. Lyle and Laura start laughing.

LYLE (CONT'D)

Hey, I'm just kidding you. You
probably forgot about my sense of
humor.

MICHAEL
Yeah, I sure did.

Michael tries to see where Beverly is. Lyle is digging something out of his pocket.

LYLE
I heard you're doing well. I'm not doing too shabby myself. I got some land in Covington real cheap 10 years ago and built this house.

He shows Michael a photo of a huge suburban cul-de-sac home.

MICHAEL
Ah yes, that's a nice big house to drive home drunk to.

LYLE
What?

MICHAEL
Lots of room to stumble around in there.

He winks at Laura. Lyle gives Michael an odd smile and shoves another photo at him.

LYLE
And here's a picture of our granite countertops.

Michael looks at this pathetic man and his wife.

MICHAEL
You're a lucky man. A hot babe and granite countertops.

Lyle smiles. Michael sees that Beverly is finally alone, just looking around. He leaps up.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Excuse me, I'll be right back.

Michael gets a few steps before Andy makes an announcement.

ANDY
Beverly Ploof, would you join us for a song?

The crowd applauds and Michael walks over by the wall as Beverly takes the stage. The band starts the upbeat intro to "I LOVE THIS TOWN" as Beverly approaches the microphone.

Michael watches, now enamored with this new Beverly.

BEVERLY

*"I love this town, like an unmade
bed, I love this town of the living
dead, I love this town, gonna paint
it red, If I can spare a minute..."*

Michael's too entranced to notice Lawayne walk up beside him. Lawayne is bleary-eyed and shaky.

LAWAYNE

Why don't you just go up and sit on
her face?

Michael gives Lawayne a cold glance.

LAWAYNE (CONT'D)

Still stalking my wife? I think
it's time you and I step outside.

MICHAEL

Don't be a child, Lawayne.

LAWAYNE

Afraid I'll kick your ass?

MICHAEL

Yes, actually, I am.

Lawayne grabs him. Michael looks around, not wanting to make a scene. He nods for Lawayne to follow him.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - NIGHT

Beverly's singing wafts through outdoor speakers as Michael and Lawayne stop by the playground equipment. Lawayne has a scary look in his eye. Michael leans on the jungle gym.

MICHAEL

So what do you want to do, hit me?

LAWAYNE

That's a start.

MICHAEL

Look, Lawayne, I understand. I
know what it's like to lose
Beverly.

Michael jumps inside the jungle gym. Lawayne wavers, not sure what to do.

LAWAYNE

Come out of there, you coward.

MICHAEL

You come in.

LAWAYNE

Quit being childish.

MICHAEL

You're being childish.

Michael backs away as Lawayne circles. Lawayne puts one leg in and Michael puts one leg out. Lawayne takes his leg out and stares at him. Michael puts both feet back inside.

A long pause as Lawayne thinks. Then Lawayne leaps through the bars and grabs for Michael's coat, ripping it. Michael jumps out the other side. Lawayne runs out after him.

Michael runs around the slide and Lawayne almost has him, so Michael runs up the steps. Lawayne circles around the slide, then runs up the steps as Michael runs clanging down the slide. Lawayne gets to the top, but is too unsteady to run down, so he sits and slides down.

Michael uses the head start to run back toward the gym, with Lawayne about fifty feet behind.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - CONTINUOUS

Beverly has just finished a chorus and steps back for an instrumental break. Megan comes up to the microphone.

MEGAN

Okay, it's time for our first award of the evening. This is for the person who's come the farthest, and the winner came all the way from Boston -- Michael Young!

The crowd claps as Megan, Andy and Beverly look for Michael.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Michael? He came all this way and he can't make it to the stage!

Just then Michael bursts through the door, running through groups of people and tables.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

There he is! Michael Young!

Michael looks up at her, not knowing what's going on as the crowd applauds. Lawayne comes racing in and spots Michael, now scurrying through people on the dance floor.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Michael, you won the award for
coming the farthest! Come on up!

Michael spots Lawayne closing in. Instead of going for the stairs he makes a running leap, flopping onto the stage. Lawayne comes skidding up below him, not sure what to do.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Wow, what an entrance!

Michel tries to pull himself together, but his clothes are torn and tousled, his hair is askew, and he's sweating and winded. Megan hands him the award.

MICHAEL

Thank you. First of all I just
want to say that the only time I
ever forgot my white gym socks and
contact lenses was the day they
took that damn photograph. And
second, there's something I'd like
to say to the lovely and talented
Beverly Ploof...

He turns toward her but before he can continue Lawayne's hand comes up and grabs Michael's ankle, yanking him down onto the dance floor. Lawayne jumps on Michael as Big Jim comes in to help him out. Andy puts down his guitar and jumps on top of them, as Jill and Megan join in to try to defend the boys.

The bass player motions for Beverly to finish the song. She steps up to the microphone.

BEVERLY

*"Everyone's friendly to your face,
And everybody knows their place, As
long as you respect their space,
You won't have to worry..."*

She stops, looking down into the fray.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Okay, that's enough! Stop it!

The melee continues.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Fucking stop it right now!!!

The combatants freeze, looking up at Beverly.

ANDY

She used to be so shy.

INT. NURSE'S OFFICE - DAY (1979) - FLASHBACK

Seven-year-old Michael has a cut on his head that the NURSE is cleaning up. He lies on his back looking up.

NURSE

How did you do this young man?

MICHAEL

I ran into a pole.

NURSE

Why did you do that?

MICHAEL

I was looking at a girl.

NURSE

A girl? You poor thing.

She notices that he's staring at the ceiling.

NURSE (CONT'D)

What's so interesting up there?

MICHAEL

The tiles are 12 inches by 12 inches. That's 144 square inches, and there's about three holes per inch so that's 532 holes per tile.

The nurse looks up at the tiles, amazed.

NURSE

What grade are you in?

MICHAEL

Second.

NURSE

You're not going to be staying in this little town when you grow up.

MICHAEL

Why not?

NURSE

There's nothing for you here.

INT. NURSE'S OFFICE - NIGHT - BACK TO THE PRESENT

Michael is on his back, staring up at the tiles while Megan bandages a cut on his arm. Andy sits in a chair as Jill wipes blood from his head. Megan gives Michael a loving pat.

MEGAN

There you go. I have to get back.
Only two hours until midnight.

She looks at Michael suggestively as she heads for the door.

ANDY

I'll be ready to play again in a
couple of minutes.

MICHAEL

Megan -- thanks.

MEGAN

I'll see you in a while.

She smiles and winks before leaving.

MICHAEL

Where's Beverly?

JILL

I haven't seen her.

ANDY

Why don't you go find her?

Jill kisses Andy's head, much to Andy's amazement. He and Michael exchange looks. Michael stands up.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Michael hurries down the hall, walking with purpose again. As he passes an open classroom door, something catches his eye -- Beverly sitting at a desk in the second row. Michael slides to a stop, goes back and enters the classroom.

INT. GRADE SCHOOL CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

He walks quietly among the rows, then sits one row back and one seat over from Beverly. She's sitting slightly forward, staring at the desk. He waits. Silence.

MICHAEL

So what happened to Lawayne?

BEVERLY
I called him a cab.

A long pause.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)
I'm not perfect, you know. I never
claimed to be.

MICHAEL
Oh hell I know that. You're not
even close.

She lifts her head a little, mildly amused.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
But you're much closer than I am.

Michael opens up the desk and takes out a pen and notebook.
He rips out a page and writes a note on the next page of the
notebook: "Sorry, I borrowed a piece of your notebook paper.
Thank you."

He takes a \$10 bill out of his wallet and puts it on top of
the notebook, then closes the desk, as Beverly watches him.
He writes on the other piece of paper.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I heard what Big Jim said. He lied
to you because like every guy in
this town he's in love with you.
But I did say some things that I
regret, things I turned out to be
very wrong about. I was an idiot.

BEVERLY
It doesn't matter.

MICHAEL
It does to me. When I found that
note in the yearbook I was so
happy, even though I knew it was a
long shot that you'd still be
interested in me. I've made a
complete fool of myself this week
but it was still worth it to see
you. You're still the best person
I've ever known. You could
actually be a tattooed fascist cult-
follower and considering your other
virtues, you'd still be the best
person I've ever known. I love
you. I've always loved you.

She fights back tears. He hands her the piece of paper.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I don't want to bother you any more. Here's my address, phone numbers, e-mail. If you ever want to see me again, or just talk, anything, I'd love another chance. If not, I understand. Just give me a sign, any sign, and I'll be here.

She stares at the paper for a long time.

BEVERLY

You were the best thing in my whole childhood, you know. Every day I looked forward to seeing you at school.

MICHAEL

I had no idea.

She sniffs and laughs at the same time.

BEVERLY

When I was a girl I always dreamed I would marry someone different than my dad, who didn't say mean things all the time, who didn't always make me explain why I wasn't exactly the way he wanted me to be. Someone kind. Like Michael Young.

Beverly finally turns to face him.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I didn't write that note in the yearbook.

MICHAEL

It's okay --

BEVERLY

Because whoever did write it knew exactly how I felt.

Her words are both painful and encouraging to Michael.

MICHAEL

I wish we could go back fifteen years and start all over, but we can't. But we can go back a week and start again, if you wish.

She searches for words, pauses, then stands up.

BEVERLY
Remember playing 7-Up?

MICHAEL
7-Up? Yeah.

BEVERLY
Put your head down.

He obeys. She taps him on the shoulder and walks to the front of the classroom, hesitates, and walks out the door.

MICHAEL
Are you ready?

Silence. He looks up. He's alone. He guesses anyway.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Did Beverly pick me?

He smiles at his own pathetic joke, then looks confused.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Was that a sign? Seriously, I mean, was that supposed to be a sign? God, I'm terrible at this.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

Andy and his band are tuning up. Michael walks up to the open door and sees Beverly half way across the room with a friend. He watches for a moment, then backs up and takes a few steps toward the parking lot.

ANDY
Sorry about the interruption. I have a request here from one of our special guests, an old Pogues song.

He plays the opening chords of "RAINY NIGHT IN SOHO." Michael stops. He walks back up to the door and peers in.

ANDY (CONT'D)
*"I've been loving you a long time,
Down all the years, down all the
days..."*

INT. GRADE SCHOOL GYM - CONTINUOUS

Michael starts walking toward Beverly, who chats with her friend while keeping an eye on Michael.

ANDY

*"And I've cried for all your
troubles, smiled at your funny
little ways..."*

Michael reaches her, but goes right on by. Beverly hesitates, then turns slightly, but doesn't see him. She turns back, and there he is on the other side of her.

ANDY (CONT'D)

*"We watched our friends grow up
together, and we saw them as they
fell..."*

Michael holds out his hand and she takes it, following him onto the dance floor. Jill and Megan part before them.

ANDY (CONT'D)

*"Some of them fell into heaven,
some of them fell into hell..."*

They slow dance. Andy watches with a melancholy smile.

BEVERLY

I know you believe in being honest.

MICHAEL

Not so much anymore.

BEVERLY

I didn't request this song.

He freezes.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

But I'm glad Andy played it.

Michael smiles and dances her out a side door into the night.

EXT. GRADE SCHOOL PLAY FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Andy's singing can still be heard as Michael takes her hand and walks her into the field, glowing from the lights.

MICHAEL

Can I ask you something?

BEVERLY

Yes.

MICHAEL

Would you go out on a real date
with me?

BEVERLY

Yes.

MICHAEL

So you always liked me?

BEVERLY

Yes.

MICHAEL

As much as I liked you?

BEVERLY

Yes.

MICHAEL

And the no sex before marriage
thing was a joke, right?

BEVERLY

Michael?

MICHAEL

Yes?

They're at the stream. She pushes him across. He stumbles
to his knees, then looks up at her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

We're going to get in trouble.

BEVERLY

Yes we are.

She jumps.

*I sang you all my sorrows
You told me all your joys
Whatever happened to that old song
To all those little girls and boys
Now this song is nearly over
We may never find out what it means
But there's a light I hold before me
And you're the measure of my dreams
The measure of my dreams*

FADE TO BLACK