

CRAZY FOR THE STORM

Written by
Will Fetters

Based on the novel by Norman Ollestad

April 15 2011

FEBRUARY 18th 1979

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP -- DAY

7,000 feet. Haloed by swirling grey clouds.

No signs of life up here save for the EVERGREEN TREES growing at forty degree angles. It's deadly quiet.

Find an ELEVEN-YEAR-OLD BOY by himself staring down a steep BACK-COUNTRY SLOPE spotted with rocks and trees.

The boy has a shock of sun-bleached blonde hair jutting out from under his wool cap. We stay tight on his wind-bitten face, bright blue eyes. This is NORMAN OLLESTAD.

Norman studies the icy slope. Just lost in his thoughts. All we hear is his steady breathing, the wind.

He appears to be all alone on this frozen mountain top.

STARTER O/S

Ollestad...

Norman turns and finds an impatient-looking MAN wearing a vintage 70's two-way radio headset, holding a clipboard.

STARTER

You're up.

Reveal that Norman is adorned head-to-toe in SKI RACING GEAR - sharpened alpine skis, helmet, aluminum poles in hand. He has a red number pinned to his chest.

Norman and The Starter cross from the undeveloped side of the mountain to the developed side. They pass by an operating CHAIRLIFT and approach a STARTING GATE.

Norman glides onto the launch ramp. Stops behind a spring-loaded PLASTIC WAND. Stares down a double black diamond SLALOM RUN. The impossibly steep slope is marked with red and blue wooden gates, slicked with ugly yellow ICE.

Norman studies the run like a chess master reading a board. A calm washes over as he places his pole tips over The Wand. He crouches down and waits. A coiled spring.

STARTER

Racer ready.

Every muscle in Norman's body tenses. 3... 2... 1...

Norman explodes out of the gate, drops into a racer's crouch. In five seconds he's up to fifty miles per hour.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He attacks the icy course. No fear. Perfect form. He brushes the slalom gates within inches. Carves up the mountainside like a surgeon wielding a scalpel. This kid is one Hell of a skier.

Norman approaches the final gate - set on a treacherous turn. He hits the gate too hard. His knee drives up into his nose. He nearly wipes out but manages to stay up.

His NOSE STARTS TO BLEED. He ignores it. Drops into a racer's crouch for the final hundred yards.

He crosses the finish line which is laid under a BANNER that reads: "1979 SoCal Ski Championships"

Norman skids to a stop, sprays snow into THE CROWD OF SPECTATORS - Parents, Coaches, Fellow Racers, etc. Before he's even come to a full stop, his eyes find the STANDINGS BOARD. After a few seconds his time is posted:

"N. Ollestad -- '45.10' -- FIRST PLACE"

The crowd cheers. Norman just stands there catching his breath, his nose bleed dripping onto his coat. He stares at his time like there must be some kind of mistake.

We find a MAN climbing over the crowd barrier, ignoring the flustered RACE OFFICIAL telling him not to. The Man is handsome, bright eyes, out-of-control hair. This is Norman's father. This is "BIG" NORM OLLESTAD.

BIG NORM

Ladies and Gentleman, we have just witnessed perfection personified.
Boy Wonder, came, he saw, he...
(sees the blood)
Might have broken his nose. Shit.
OK. Head back. Try not to bleed on anything your mom has to wash.

Big Norm gives him a handkerchief. Guides it to his nose. Norman still staring at his time in disbelief.

NORMAN

I won?

BIG NORM

Well all the other kids seem pretty pissed off and bummed out, so if you didn't, somebody better tell them.

Norman smiles through the bloody handkerchief.

EXT. LODGE -- LATER

Norman comes out of the locker room still wearing his snow pants, carrying his ski racing gear. He comes upon his father arguing with a flustered RACE OFFICIAL.

RACE OFFICIAL
...he's welcome to take the trophy today. Or we can mail it. That's the best I can do. I am sorry.

The Race Official walks off. Big Norm turns to Norman.

BIG NORM
They're doing a co-ed awards ceremony. The girls don't race 'til tomorrow and we got that reunion thing at your mom's, so...

NORMAN
I don't care about the ceremony.

BIG NORM
Of course. You get a trophy. All I get is the look on your face when they hand it to you. All the training and whining, all I get is that look and that's all I need.

NORMAN
We can't skip the reunion. Mom will freak.

BIG NORM
I'll figure something out...

Big Norm smiles reassuringly. Norman looks around.

NORMAN
Where's Sandra?

Big Norm's smile fades.

INT. LODGE -- LATER

SANDRA CRESSMAN, 29, petite and beautiful, is at the bar drinking a martini and chatting with a handsome SKI BUM.

SANDRA
...I'm a Malibu Girl. I don't do snow. Or ice. Or any activities that involve snow or ice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Big Norm and Norman walk in. They see Sandra at the bar.

BIG NORM
Wait here, kiddo.

Big Norm sits beside Sandra. She sees him and smiles a glassy smile.

BIG NORM
We got Jan's party...

SANDRA
"Jan" is his ex-wife. My boyfriend
takes me to his ex-wife's parties.
Is that weird? It's kind of weird.
Right?

The guy looks like a deer in headlights. Norm sees this.

BIG NORM
It's OK. She's not talking to you.

He signals the BARTENDER for Sandra's check.

SANDRA
Isn't there a big to-do where they
give him a ribbon or something?

BIG NORM
Tomorrow...

He looks at her. She knows that look.

SANDRA
No. Absolutely not. No way. I'm
not driving all the way back up
here just to watch your kid get a
ribbon. I won't do it.

Norman pays her check. Stands to go. Sandra doesn't move.

BIG NORM
Who said anything about driving?

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY

Norman loads his ski gear into the rack on top of his father's ghost white '65 PORSCHE. Sandra climbs into the backseat without a word.

Big Norm starts the engine. Pops in Willie Nelson's "Red Headed Stranger" album on 8-track.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- LATE AFTERNOON

Willie sings over the two-hour car ride from the frozen snow-capped peaks of the San Bernardino Mountains to the sunshine, surf and sand of:

EXT. MALIBU -- SUNSET

The Porsche drives up the PCH. Jackets off. Sunglasses on. If not for the salt stains on the wheel wells, we might think they were on their way back from the beach.

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- EVENING

A sleepy, conservative sub-division built into the hills of Malibu. Suburbia by way of SoCal.

The Porsche stops in-front of a 1940's CRAFTSMAN HOME. Vintage CARS and TRUCKS are parked out-front, mostly off-road vehicles. Every one of them has a surf/ski rack.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- EVENING

Where a traditional suburban BBQ is underway, though the GUESTS don't look like traditional suburbanites.

It's all SURFERS and BEACH BUMS, none of whom seem quite sure how to act at something like this.

JANICE ARCHER, Norman's mother, 40 and still a stunner, is in the kitchen chopping vegetables. She's not a natural housewife, but doing her best to play the part.

Norm, Sandra and Norman walk in. Norman is still wearing his snow pants. His cheeks windburned. Quite the sight in a party full of sandals, shorts and sundresses.

BIG NORM

Your attention please...

The house quiets down. Everyone turns and looks at them.

BIG NORM

Just wanted to let you know that you are in the presence of the 1979 Southern California Boys 12 and Under Slalom Ski Champion...

(off applause)

He'll be available for autographs and pictures all night.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM (CONT'D)

Anyone interested in arranging a personal appearance, see me or his mother. There is a nominal fee.

More applause. Norman blushes as his father raises his arm. Laughter and smiles now. The buzz of conversation. Life has been breathed into the party.

Norman follows his father and Sandra into the kitchen. They come upon Janice refilling chips and salsa.

JANICE

You're late...

BIG NORM

But not as late as you thought we'd be. Right? Be honest.

Janice smiles in spite of herself. Turns to Sandra.

JANICE

I'm so glad you could make it. Really. How are you?

SANDRA

Great. Do you have vodka?

JANICE

Yeah. Sure. The bar is outback.

Sandra walks out without another word. Janice looks to Norm, who shakes his head -- "don't ask".

BIG NORM

Seriously, Jan, you learn you're the mother of a champion ski racer and the first thing you do is needle him about his punctuality?

The guys share smartass smiles.

JANICE

So who wants to tell me how The Champ got blood all over his brand new snow pants?

Those smartass smiles disappear.

BIG NORM

Would it be better or worse if we said it wasn't his?

Janice walks over and kisses Norman on top of his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JANICE

Go change. I'm so proud. I wasn't needling you, I was needling your father.

EXT. ARCHER HOME -- EVENING

RICK ARCHER, Norman's stepfather, 40, broad and handsome, is manning the grill out back. He flips burgers while talking at a couple of HIPPIE types.

RICK

...we can't let these sons of bitches get The White House back. Carter isn't perfect, but there are worse things than inflation.

(pops open a beer)

Reagan? Just Nixon with better hair and fewer brain cells. All these guys are the same. Republicans don't care about people. They care about power.

Big Norm walks out carrying a plate of VEGGIE BURGERS.

RICK

Norm can tell you. He saw how these bastards operate first hand in Hoover's F.B.I.

BIG NORM

Well. Hoover's problem wasn't so much that he was a Republican...

RICK

Right. He was also a closet queer.

The Hippies laugh. Big Norm doesn't.

BIG NORM

Mostly he was a close-minded, paranoid ideologue who judged people, solely by how they looked and the company they kept.

Rick's smirk fades to a scowl. Big Norm smiles congenially as he nods to the blackening burgers.

BIG NORM

Think those are about done.

EXT. ARCHER HOME -- NIGHT

A big BONFIRE burns in a newly-dug FIRE PIT. Everyone is drinking, laughing, talking.

Big Norm pops in his Willie Nelson 8-track. Cranks it up. He dances his way around the yard. A few WOMEN join him.

Norman eats an overcooked burger while watching his father dance. He notices Sandra sitting off by herself, sipping a martini out of a water glass.

Norman tosses the burger. Walks over and sits beside her.

SANDRA

How much for an autograph?

NORMAN

Been charging ten. But, for you, I
can go as low as five.

He smiles. She manages a weak one in return. They watch as Big Norm single-handedly starts a dance party around the bonfire by sheer charisma and force of personality.

He even manages to pull a reluctant Janice out of her chair and into the fray. Sandra's weak smile fades.

SANDRA

It must be hard. Being his kid...

This lands with Norman but he shrugs it off.

NORMAN

I'm gonna grab a soda. Want one?

Sandra shakes her head as she lights a cigarette.

Norman walks over to the cooler on the other side of the porch. He fishes a coke out of the ice bath.

Rick walks up. He fishes out a Budweiser. Pops it open.

RICK

I was at USC today. Just catching
up with Coach. He's doin' a camp
next month. Said he'd hold a spot
for you. If you're interested...

Norman's sudden nervousness isn't lost on us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Dad and me were talking about
spending more time on the slopes.
To try to build off today...

RICK

(condescending smile)
Suit yourself. But you got talent.
Put the work in now and you could
land a full ride. Don't get me
wrong, I love skiing as much as
the next guy, but it's a hobby...

(beat)

There's a future in football.

As Norman ponders this, the iconic opening guitar rift of
"Blue Eyes Cryin' In The Rain" begins. COUPLES pair up
around the yard. Sway slowly together. Sing along.

Big Norm looks to Sandra. She shakes her head.

Janice looks to Rick. He shakes his head.

Big Norm and Janice exchange a nostalgic smile and shrug.

He holds out his hand. She takes it. They dance together
around the fire. He sings along louder than anyone else.

Norman watches his parents dancing with a smile.

His smile fades when he notices Sandra abruptly getting
up and walking into the house. The door slams.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Sandra is refilling her martini. She's drunk.

Janice walks in just as she drops her GLASS. It shatters
all over the kitchen floor. Sandra bends down to pick up
the pieces and almost falls over. Janice hurries to help.

JANICE

It's OK. I got it.

Sandra balances herself against the counter. Watches
Janice carefully picking up the shards of glass.

SANDRA

What's the secret, Jan? Girl to
girl. How do I get him to look at
me the way he looks at you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Janice stops cleaning. She looks up at Sandra who has tears in her eyes.

SANDRA

It's the 'mother of his child' thing. Isn't it?

Janice has no idea what to say. Big Norm and Norman walk in as Sandra hastily wipes away a tear.

BIG NORM

Everything alright?

SANDRA

No. It's not. It hasn't been for awhile but apparently I'm the only one who's noticed...

(realizes)

Sorry. That's not fair. You do notice. You just pretend not to.

He tries to take her hand. She pulls away. He sighs.

BIG NORM

I'm not doing this here.

SANDRA

OK. When? Tomorrow? Next weekend? Tell you what, you let me know when's a good time for you to talk about how completely fucked our relationship is and I'll show up.

(off his silence)

Say something. Talk to me. Please.

She looks at him with tearful, pleading eyes.

BIG NORM

I said I'm not doing this h...

Sandra slaps him. Hard. Norman flinches at the sound.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- LATE NIGHT

The bonfire is down to coals. The guests are all gone. We find Rick out back collecting beer cans and paper plates.

Norman is looking out the front window at Sandra sitting in the '65 Porsche. She's smoking a cigarette. The ember illuminates her face. The tears are gone. She looks numb.

Janice and Big Norm are talking quietly in the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

...still gotta talk to a few people but, at this point, it'll just be easier to get a plane.

JANICE

(incredulous smile)
Of course. Just "get a plane".

BIG NORM

I'm sorry about Sandra.

JANICE

(smile fades)
I'm sorry for Sandra. That girl is head over heels in love with you. And you're... well, you're you.

BIG NORM

Haven't been married for awhile, Jan, I'm a little rusty on the passive-aggressive double talk.

JANICE

You're a good guy, but you're a pain-in-the-ass to be in love with. You never let anyone all the way in. It's exhausting. What you're doing to her isn't fair...

This lands with him. He follows Janice's eyes to Sandra.

JANICE

Let her in. Or let her go.

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT -- SUNRISE

A small municipal airstrip tucked amidst beach houses.

PILOT ROB ARNOLD is doing final pre-flight inspections on his four-seat, single-engine CESSNA 172 AIRPLANE. Big Norm accompanies him as he checks gauges, propellers.

BIG NORM

...heard on the drive over there's a system moving into Big Bear. Anything we need to worry about?

ROB

Won't be able to do much sightseeing but it should be a pretty smooth ride.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sandra sits on the hood of The Porsche, flipping through a beauty magazine. She's dressed fashionably.

A wood-paneled STATION WAGON pulls in. Janice is driving. Norman is the only passenger. He's dressed in a thin ski sweater, jeans, and a pair of Vans tennis shoes.

JANICE

Aren't you gonna be cold?

He looks at her the way kids look at overprotective moms.

JANICE

What? I'm asking. I can't ask?

INT. CESSNA 172 -- LATER

Pilot Rob guides the little plane out onto the runway.

Norman is up-front. Sandra and Big Norm are in-back. Everyone is wearing noise-reduction headphones.

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT -- LATER

Janice watches and waves from the parking lot as the Cessna 172 takes off and banks east over Venice Beach.

INT. CESSNA 172 (AIRBORNE) -- LATER

The sky is blue and the flight is smooth.

Over the ever-present buzz of the plane's propellers, Norman asks Pilot Rob a steady stream of questions about the controls and how he uses them to fly.

Big Norm reads the paper while chomping on an apple. Sandra stares blankly out the window at the desert below.

Off in the distance, a DOME OF GRAY CLOUDS covers the San Bernardino Mountains. They're heading straight for them.

The Control Tower radios a warning to Pilot Rob -- "low visibility in the Big Bear area" -- He acknowledges it.

Norman stares at the ominous grey clouds getting closer.

NORMAN

We're gonna fly into that...

Rob hears the concern in his voice. Smiles reassuringly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROB

Right through it.

Norman relaxes. Big Norm finishes the apple. He sets down the paper and looks at Sandra. She looks sad.

BIG NORM

So. I've been thinking. A lot.

And. I think we should try again.

Sandra turns from the window. She studies his eyes.

BIG NORM

I want to try again.

Her lip trembles. There are tears in her eyes again, but they're not tears of sadness. He smiles ever so slightly.

BIG NORM

You good with that?

She smiles and nods while hastily wiping away tears.

He holds out his hand. She takes it. Norman glances back and sees Sandra smiling.

He gives his father an approving nod as the plane pierces the first tier of the once distant storm.

It gets dark in the cabin as a GREY MIST envelopes the plane. There's some initial turbulence, but it passes.

The clouds are so thick that if it weren't for the buzz of the propeller, it would be hard to tell the plane was even airborne. They fly like this for awhile.

Another warning is radioed in. More turbulence. Pilot Rob puts two-hands on the steering wheel. Again, it passes.

Norman looks out his window. Straining to see anything.

Suddenly something STRIKES THE WINDOW, he jumps back, it looked an awful lot like a tree branch, but...

PILOT ROB

Bird. Happens from time-to-time.

Norman starts to tell him that it didn't look like a bird, but before he can the clouds part to reveal a mighty EVERGREEN TREE a split second from impact.

Rob tries desperately to pull up, but it's too late. Before anyone can even scream, the wing clips the tree.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The Plane does a 180. Time seems to slow down. Sandra screams. The engines rev. Glass shatters. Metal tears.

The Plane bounces like a pinball off two more trees before finally slamming into **ONTARIO PEAK** as we

CUT TO BLACK

Silence. Darkness. We wait in it. We hear what sounds like GUSTS OF WIND. After a moment it becomes clear that it's actually WAVES breaking against the shoreline.

FADE IN:

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- DAY

A picturesque stretch of sand in the southern most cove of Malibu. SURFERS on wooden long boards are riding the waves we've been listening to. It's a perfect day.

SUBTITLE: "**TOPANGA BEACH -- EIGHT MONTHS EARLIER**"

The first thing we notice are the HOUSES built right on the sand. Not glamorous beach houses, more like cottages.

The PEOPLE who live here range from burnt out DRIFTERS to Ivy League LAWYERS. A family-style Hippie Commune by way of "The Endless Summer" -- KIDS build sand castles next to DRUM CIRCLES, topless WOMEN wave 'hello' to MOTHERS.

We find Norman on the beach, dark tan, white blond hair, faded O.P. board shorts. He's hand-rolling CIGARETTES on top of an old milk crate and selling them to SURFERS.

Norman is counting the money in his coffee can - a few dollars in change - when a sun-burned STONER approaches.

STONER

How much for the rest of your papers, Little Man?

NORMAN

Why do you just want the papers?

The Stoner laughs conspiratorially. Norman just looks confused. The Stoner stops laughing.

STONER

Five bucks?

Norman smiles.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- DAY

Norman hides his left over TOBACCO under a rock near the dunes. He walks nonchalantly back down to the beach.

He stops in his tracks when he sees a GIRL riding a HORSE bareback through the waves. He's transfixed. The Girl is his age, cute on her way to gorgeous. It's clear from the way he stares that the boy is in love. The Girl is ELLY.

As Elly rides by, she sees Norman and smiles sweetly.

EXT. ARCHER BEACH HOUSE -- DAY

Janice is out on her front porch tending to a 'garden' of POTTED PLANTS with pruning sheers and a watering can. The waves break right under the floorboards.

Norman walks up the beach counting his money. He pockets the cash as he climbs the stairs of the porch.

JANICE

You were selling cigarettes again.

Norman tries to look and sound as innocent as possible.

NORMAN

I was not. Who told you that?

Janice stops pruning and looks at him the way mother's look at their kids when they know they're lying.

JANICE

I have it from several sources.
Come clean, and I'll only make you
donate your profits to cancer
research. Lie to me, and you're
donating everything. That's the
best deal you're gonna get.

Norman doubles down on the righteous indignation.

NORMAN

Whoever told you that is lying. I
wasn't selling anything. I swear.

STONER O/S

Little Man!...

The Stoner is walking up the beach with his FRIENDS smoking a JOINT that he rolled with Norman's papers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STONER

...tight papers. Nice, slow burn.

Busted. He talks fast.

NORMAN

They're just gonna buy them at the store anyway and those cigarettes have all kinds of chemicals, mine are natural. They're healthier. I'm making people healthier...

Janice just holds out her hand. Norman sighs as he takes all the money he made out of his pocket. Gives it to her.

JANICE

You're staying with dad tonight.

NORMAN

Because of this?

JANICE

You haven't spent a night with him all summer. And, more importantly, Rick and I haven't spent a night without you, so...

NORMAN

Gross.

JANICE

Go pack your bag, Marlboro Man.

EXT. THE "YELLOW SUBMARINE" HOUSE -- DAY

The biggest, loudest house on Topanga Beach. Some of the best SURFERS in SoCal live under it's sun-damaged roof.

A POKER GAME is going on out back. Seven card stud.

We see a lot of the same FACES around the table that we saw at the party. They all look much tanner and happier.

Big Norm and Rick are in a hand together. Rick makes a big raise. Everyone folds, except Big Norm.

BOB BARROW, an accountant, talks to 'BEER CAN' LARRY, a drunk, over the "calls", "raises", and "re-raises".

BOB BARROW

...we're out of hoops to make The State jump through.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB BARROW (CONT'D)
It's a miracle Norm's been able to
hold 'em up as long as he has.
We'll be lucky to make it to the
end of the summer.

Rick raises again. Norm calls. The final cards are dealt.

Big Norm stares Rick down for a beat. Reading his eyes.
He pushes all his chips into the pot.

RICK
(frustrated)
You sucked out the flush...

Rick folds. Shows his hand - straight to the Ace. Big
Norm shows his hand - pair of twos. Rick turns red.

BEER CAN LARRY
I got twenty bucks says we make it
past Labor Day.

BOB BARROW
Make it fifty.

BEER CAN LARRY
You gotta give me odds. 3-to-1?

BIG NORM
I got a hundred says we make it
through the year.

It gets quiet. They all turn. He can't be serious?

BOB BARROW
Come on, Norm. Time's up. Game's
over. The bulldozers are coming...

BIG NORM
So take the bet. They're gonna
flatten your house, kick you off
your land, mine as well cash in.
(off the silence)
Two hundred. Who wants the action?

Norm looks around the table. The guys look away. Ashamed.

RICK
Make it three.

Big Norm and Rick hold a long, cold look.

EXT. THE "YELLOW SUBMARINE" HOUSE -- DAY

A rag tag group of pony-tailed TEENAGE BOYS are hanging out front, doing tricks on skateboards.

TRAFTON, 16 and already a local surf legend, sits strumming a guitar. He's clearly the alpha of the group.

Norman approaches the house, carrying his overnight bag. Trafton sees him coming. They share a nod/smile.

TRAFTON

Boy Ollestad...

NORMAN

My dad still in the game?

TRAFTON

He's up big. Don't think he's getting up anytime soon.

(off Norman's sigh)

We were gonna go skate The Getty.
You're welcome to come with.

We can tell from Norman's smile that this isn't an invitation Trafton extends to many kids his age.

INT. THE "YELLOW SUBMARINE" HOUSE -- DAY

Norman walks through the house. Finds his father in a hand with Barrow. Big pot. Very intense.

NORMAN

Is it cool if I go skateboarding with Trafton?

Big Norm's focus stays on the game. He nods.

Norman smiles. Starts to walk away.

RICK

No way.

(off Big Norm's look)

It's not me. It's Jan. He got a 'D' in math. No skateboard until school starts.

BIG NORM

You trying to play me, Boy Wonder?

NORMAN

Your night. Your rules.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

Nice try.

Norman starts to argue.

BIG NORM

Save it, kiddo. I don't want you to go skateboarding as much as I don't want to argue with your mother about it.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- DAY

Trafton and his crew are loading into an old VW Bus. A group of TEENAGE GIRLS have joined them. One of them lights up a joint. They crank the stereo.

Norman walks out. Deflated. Trafton calls to him.

TRAFTON

You coming?

Norman is about to say 'no', but then he sees Elly in that group of teenage girls. They make eye contact.

Fuck it. Norman runs over and jumps into the van. One of the kids offers him the joint as they pull onto the PCH.

Norman hits it. Coughs.

EXT. THE GETTY CENTER -- DAY

Perched atop a hill in Brentwood. That treacherously STEEP HILL is the reason Trafton and his gang are here.

The VW bus rolls to a stop. Norman and the rest of the guys pile out with their skateboards. The girls drive off down the hill. Leaving the boys with only one way down.

Trafton is the first on his board. He takes off down the steep, winding road. The rest of the guys go. It takes Norman a moment to work up the courage, then he follows.

In a matter of seconds, he's flying. Norman catches up to the guys. Sets his sights on Trafton leading the pack.

Norman catches up to Trafton. Trafton smiles. Gets lower. They approach the run out where the girls are waiting.

Norman sees Elly watching him. He tries to show off with a dangerously tight turn. It goes wrong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman WIPES OUT. His board goes flying. He baseball slides along the asphalt.

Elly runs over as Norman gets to his feet. His whole left side is scraped raw and bleeding. She winces.

ELLY

You OK?

Trafton walks up. He whistles at the sight Norman's leg.

TRAFTON

Check out that road tattoo.

Everyone gathers around to gawk at Norman's battle wound.

TRAFTON

You should get that cleaned up...

NORMAN

Let's go again. I almost had you.

Trafton smiles. Impressed by his moxie.

EXT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- SUNSET

Tucked into the Malibu Canyon. Just across the PCH from Topanga Beach. Trafton's VW Bus rolls to a stop.

Norman hops out. Walks gingerly up the driveway. As he approaches the cottage, he can hear ARGUING.

INT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- SUNSET

Sandra is pacing around the cottage, worked up, fire in her eyes. A stark contrast to Big Norm who seems just as cool as always. His calm seems to fuel her anger.

SANDRA

...I can't just drop everything to drive through a Mexican desert to see your parents. I have a life and a job.

BIG NORM

You need a vacation. We both do.

SANDRA

It's not a vacation. You're delivering a *washing machine*.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANDRA (CONT'D)
 You can't ask me to do stuff like
 this, Norm. This is "married
 people" stuff. You don't want to
 be anyone's husband? Fine. Don't
 expect me to act like your wife.
 You can't have it both ways.

BIG NORM
 OK then. Marry me.

SANDRA
 Fuck you.

BIG NORM
 You want to get married? Let's get
 married. I'm serious.

SANDRA
 No. You're not. You're patronizing
 me. And It's mean. It's so fucking
 mean, I can't even-- Hi, Norman...

He follows her eyes to Norman standing in the doorway.

BIG NORM
 Give us a minute, will ya kiddo?

EXT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- SUNSET

Norman sits on the front steps. We can tell from the look
 on his face it's been much longer than a minute.

Big Norm emerges from the cottage. Sits beside him.

BIG NORM
 Listen...

NORMAN
 I should stay at mom's tonight?

BIG NORM
 (beat)
 Tell her I said I'm sorry.

INT. ARCHER BEACH HOUSE -- EVENING

Janice has prepared a romantic CANDLELIT DINNER for two.

She and Rick sit across from each other drinking wine.
 Norman sits right between them, gnawing on a chicken leg.
 The proverbial third wheel. They eat in awkward silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

So? How was everyone's day?

Janice hides a smile. Rick downs his wine in one gulp.

INT. ARCHER BEACH HOUSE -- NIGHT

Janice does the dishes. Norman clears the table.

Rick sits in a rocking chair, drinking yet another glass of wine and watching a PBS Special on "Watergate".

Norman finishes clearing the table. He joins Rick in front of the TV where a droll Narrator is talking over stock footage of President Nixon.

NORMAN

Why do you always watch these shows? It's not like you're gonna learn anything new. Nixon lied. He lied some more. He got fired from being President. The end.

(off Rick's silence)

Seriously. Can't we watch a movie or something?

Norman crosses to a bookcase of VHS TAPES. Looks it over. He reaches up for a tape and inadvertently gives Rick a glimpse of that nasty ROAD BURN on his backside.

RICK

What is that?

Norman turns around quickly. Tries to play the innocent.

NORMAN

What's what?

Rick pops out of the chair, grabs Norman's arm and pulls up his shirt. His bloodshot eyes narrow.

NORMAN

I slipped in the canyon...

RICK

Bullshit. I can see the blacktop around the edges.

Janice hears the commotion. Walks into the living room.

JANICE

What's going on in here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICK

He went skateboarding.

NORMAN

I did not. I slipped in the canyon. Tell him to let me go.

RICK

(amazed/incredulous)
It just come so naturally for you. Effortless. Nixon would be proud.

JANICE

Rick. Let him go.

RICK

Not until he tells us the truth.

Rick grips his arm even harder. Norman yelps.

JANICE

You're hurting him. Let him go.

RICK

Your mom doesn't care about you, Norman. She's OK with you growing up to be a lying sack a shit. I'm not. Now. Tell the truth.

He grips harder. Norman finally relents.

NORMAN

OK. God. Fine. The truth is... you're an asshole.

(beat)

Am I lying?

Rick's blood boils. He raises his hand to smack Norman.

Janice runs over and tries to grab his arm before he can.

Rick accidentally hits Janice. Hard. She falls to the floor. Clutching her eye. Rick is immediately remorseful and concerned. He lets go of Norman and goes to her.

Norman loses his shit. Starts pummeling Rick with his little fists. Making it hard for him to attend to Janice.

JANICE

Norman. Damn it. That's enough.

Norman stops. It gets quiet as Rick helps Janice to the couch. Then goes to the kitchen to get her an ice pack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Norman stares at his mom holding her swelling eye. He fights back tears. Runs to his room and slams the door.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- EARLY MORNING

Pre-dawn. Still and quiet. The WAVES are up this morning.

INT. NORMAN'S BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING

Norman is asleep, still wearing the clothes from the night before. His cheeks tear-stained.

His BEDROOM WINDOW opens. Norman stirs. A pair of hands jump up and grab the ledge. They belong to Big Norm.

He climbs in - read: breaks in - through the window. He is wearing a WETSUIT. He moves to the edge of the bed.

BIG NORM

What are you doing? We got a storm front moving in, offshore wind, steady sets of six-footers at Swami's and you're *sleeping*?

Norman groans. Rolls over. His father is undeterred.

BIG NORM

Come on. Me and Sandra are leaving for Mexico in a few days. While I'm gone, you can sleep in, eat junk food, arcade, whatever. But today, it's you and me. Let's go.

(off Norman asleep)

I'm gonna go wax your board. If you're not outside in ten minutes, I'm coming back with ice water.

Norman's eyes open.

EXT. "SWAMI'S" BEACH -- EARLY MORNING

It's not even 7 a.m. and dozens of SURFERS - men, women, young, old - are already out catching six foot waves.

Big Norm and Norman paddle out. Big Norm rides a cherry 'gun' board (pro), Norman is on a yellow-railed, seven-two longboard (amateur). He still looks groggy.

They get beyond the breakers and sit on their boards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman yawns as Big Norm takes in what is turning out to be a spectacular morning.

BIG NORM

What kind of father would I be if
I let you miss a day like today?

NORMAN

A normal one.

A wave comes. Norman is in perfect position to catch it.

BIG NORM

Remember: balance and patience.
Don't rush. Let it come to you.

Norman paddles onto the wave. He catches it. But rushes to stand. Loses his balance and wipes out. Hard.

Norman swallows water as he surfaces. Starts coughing. Big Norm paddles over.

BIG NORM

Considering you were totally off
balance and showed no patience,
that was actually pretty good.
(off Norman pouting)
Get your board. Let's go again.

Norman knows there's no point arguing, so he doesn't.

EXT. "SWAMI'S" PARKING LOT -- MORNING

SURFERS leave the water. Fun's over. Time to go to work. Norman purchases breakfast burritos from a STREET VENDOR.

He crosses the lot to his dad's PICKUP TRUCK. Finds his dad changing out of his wetsuit into a business suit.

Big Norm's bare ass is in plain sight.

NORMAN

Jesus, dad. You couldn't wait
until we got home?

BIG NORM

Not going home. No time. I gotta
be in court in an hour.

NORMAN

What am I supposed to do?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

Well. You can walk, paddle,
hitchhike. Or come watch your
father fight for truth, justice
and The American Way. It's
completely up to you.

EXT. L.A. SUPERIOR COURT -- MORNING

AL FREEDMAN, 42, tall, bushy beard, is waiting on the
front steps. He paces back-and-forth. Nervous.

Big Norm and Norman, hair still wet, jog up the stairs.

AL

What happened to "let's meet an
hour early to prep"?

BIG NORM

Six-footers at Swami's.

(off Al's look)

You wanna prep? Let's prep: we're
right, they're wrong. I got this.

AL

Remember Judge Kale hates flash,
so tone it down in-front of him.
But Madison loves it, so go big
when we're on cross. Also...

BIG NORM

Al. Relax. I got this.

INT. COURTROOM (VARIOUS) -- DAY

Norman watches his dad work. We'll INTERCUT three very
different cases before three very different JUDGES.

Big Norm doesn't just litigate. He performs. The cases
and courtrooms change over the following sequence. His
passion and infectious charisma are constant.

CLOSING STATEMENT: The JURY hangs on Big Norm's every
word. Shades of Atticus Finch in "To Kill A Mockingbird".

BIG NORM

...you've heard a lot of opinions
from a lot of experts. Facts have
been presented and disputed.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM (CONT'D)

But there's one fact no one can dispute: Malcolm Carter checked into a hospital. He contracted an infection. He did not check out...

CROSS EXAMINATION: Big Norm grills a WITNESS, shades of Caffey going after Jessup in "A Few Good Men".

BIG NORM

I'm not asking what you thought about the bridge's structural integrity. I know you knew. You knew about the flaws. You knew about the danger. I'm asking why you did nothing about it?

JURY SELECTION: A young WHITE MAN stands. Norm gives his approval. The plaintiff's ATTORNEY gives Norm a peculiar look. Then nods in approval. The man is approved.

JURY SELECTION: A middle-aged INDIAN WOMAN stands. Again, Norm gives his approval. The plaintiff's ATTORNEY gives Norm a "What the Fuck are you up to?" look. He thinks about striking. But doesn't. The woman is approved.

CROSS EXAMINATION: The Witness is really sweating now.

BIG NORM

...exactly how much would it have cost to reinforce the pylons? Or, to put it more accurately, how much did you save by costing my client the use of his legs?

JURY SELECTION: An elderly BLACK MAN stands. Norm nods his approval. The flustered plaintiff's ATTORNEY gives his too, but then second guesses himself and uses another strike. The man is dismissed.

CLOSING STATEMENT: There's real emotion in Norm's eyes and voice as he says--

BIG NORM

...this case isn't just about holding a hospital accountable for the well-being of their patients. It's about closure. Closure for a wife who lost a husband. And five children who lost a father.

With that, he sits. The Jury looks moved.

The rival ATTORNEYS look concerned. Norman smiles.

INT. LAW OFFICES -- AFTERNOON

"Ollestad & Freedman" is on the door. A modest space. No flash. Not a big money corporate firm.

Big Norm, Norman and Al return from court. The PARALEGALS applaud as they walk in. Big Norm takes a bow.

INT. LAW OFFICES -- EVENING

All the employees have gone home for the day. It's quiet. Big Norm is at his desk reviewing a brief.

Norman walks around his dad's office - picking things up, putting them down. He comes across a fresh-baked BANANA BREAD with a note: "With love, The Carters"

NORMAN

What's this?

BIG NORM

Some people can't afford to pay.
They give what they can.

NORMAN

You let people pay you in bread?

BIG NORM

It's really good bread.

Norman continues looking around. Something occurs to him.

NORMAN

Why didn't you say 'no' to anyone
when you were picking the jury?

BIG NORM

I need them to like me. People
don't like profiling and
discrimination, but everyone likes
being picked first in gym class.

Norman smiles. Big Norm checks his watch. Shit.

BIG NORM

We gotta go. Sandra's cooking
tonight. You're welcome to join.

Norman makes a face.

BIG NORM

She's getting better. Seriously.

EXT. PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY -- SUNSET

Big Norm drives the pickup truck north. Norman is asleep in the passenger seat.

Big Norm notices a roadside FLOWER STAND. He pulls over.

EXT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- NIGHT

The pickup pulls into the driveway next to the Porsche.

Big Norm leaves Norman sleeping in the front seat. He takes a giant BOUQUET OF ROSES and heads inside.

INT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- NIGHT

It's dark, empty, quiet. Big Norm walks in with the roses. Smiling. He notices a a few picture frames missing from the walls. His smile fades.

Big Norm finds a NOTE on the kitchen counter. He sets the roses down. Picks it up. Reads it. We don't see what the note says, we just see what reading it does to him.

Norman walks in, rubbing sleep out of his eyes. He sees his father reading the note. Doesn't see Sandra.

NORMAN

She took off again?

(off the silence)

She'll be back. She always comes back.

Big Norm doesn't look so sure, but he manages a smile. He looks at the rose bouquet on the counter. Has an idea.

BIG NORM

I'll walk you to your mom's.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- NIGHT

Janice is moving her potted plants to protect them from the storm. She has a nasty-looking BLACK EYE.

Big Norm and Norman approach. Big Norm carries the roses. Smiling. He sees her black eye. His smile disappears.

BIG NORM

Jesus Christ, Jan.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- NIGHT

The WAVES are big tonight. Norman sits in the sand tossing shells into the ocean.

He glances back at the porch where Big Norm and Janice are arguing. He can't hear what they're saying.

Janice heads inside. Big Norm walks over to Norman. Sits beside him. They watch the waves.

BIG NORM

Your mom thinks it would be a good idea for you to come to Mexico with me, I think she's right...

(off Norman's sigh)

I know you were promised arcades, but, things happen, plans change. This wasn't exactly what I wanted either. Know what I mean?

He does. They sit in silence for a moment.

BIG NORM

Stay away from Rick. Don't look at him. Don't talk to him. Just keep clear. It's what I do. Understood?

NORMAN

Can't you just kick his ass?

BIG NORM

If he ever puts his hand on you again, we'll find out.

NORMAN

Why can't I just live with you?

Big Norm considers for a beat. His eyes on the waves.

BIG NORM

A really smart dead guy once said 'most men lead lives of quiet desperation'... Rick has the volume turned up, but you're gonna have to deal with guys like him your whole life. I won't always be there to fight your battles. One day you'll be on your own...

(beat)

Eventually we all are.

BACK TO:

EXT. ONTARIO PEAK -- DAY

9,000 feet. A white-out blizzard. Subzero temperatures.

40 mph gusts drive hail and snow. All we hear is the wind.

Norman's eyes flutter open. The first thing he sees is a large section of the plane's INSTRUMENT PANEL embedded into the side of the mountain like an upended ship.

He's still buckled into his seat, but his seat is no longer in the plane. There is no plane. It's pieces are scattered all over the mountain top.

Norman moves to unbuckle himself. The seat lurches. He freezes as he realizes that his seat is teetering on the precipice of an ICE CHUTE - a near-vertical ice-covered slope lined with jagged rocks. Mine as well be a cliff.

Norman tries the buckle again. The seat falls. Plummets into the chute. For a second, it looks like it's all over. But the seat hits the instrument panel and stops.

Norman knows he's out of time. Now or never. He hastily unclasps the buckle as the instrument panel gives way.

He jams his bare hand into the mountainside like an ice axe just as the seat and panel fall into the chute.

Norman dangles by one hand. He watches as the panel hits a sharp rock and explodes into a dozen pieces. The chair plummets down the mountainside. Disappears into the fog.

Norman drives his other hand into the thick ice crust. He winces at the pain as he does this over and over again in order to climb out of the chute and up onto a plateau.

It takes him ten minutes to climb ten feet. He lies there on the plateau. Catching his breath.

His teeth chatter as he looks around, trying to get his bearings. The Peak rises all the way up into the clouds. The thick fog makes it hard to see anything.

Through the fog, Norman sees the figure of a MAN lying in the snow about a dozen yards away. He's not moving.

The man lies face down in the snow. From the back, it appears to be the figure of Big Norm.

NORMAN

Dad...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman moves toward him. He sees that the man is wearing a BOMBER JACKET. It's not his father. It's Pilot Rob.

Norman is almost smiling with relief when he reaches Rob. He stirs him. Rob doesn't move.

He rolls him over and screams when he sees that Rob's nose is gone. His face gruesomely lacerated. He's lying in a pool of his own blood. Open lifeless eyes.

Norman recoils in horror. He scrambles backwards away from the body as fast as he can. In his haste, he slips, falls and hits his head on a ROCK. A sickening thud.

The fall knocks him out. All we hear is the wind again.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- DAY

Norman watches as his father, Bob Barrow and Al Freedman load a brand-new Maytag WASHING MACHINE into the pickup.

An old SUITCASE is packed at Norman's feet. Janice walks over. Her eye looks better.

Big Norm picks up his suitcase. Janice wraps Norman in a hug. Kisses the top his head.

JANICE

I love you. Call me every night.
Don't drink the water.

Norman follows his father to the truck. Janice watches them go. Looking concerned.

JANICE

Behave yourself.

BIG NORM

He always does.

JANICE

(smiles)
I wasn't talking to him.

EXT. U.S./MEXICO BORDER -- DAY

Hundreds of cars and trucks wait in plodding traffic to be inspected by dozens of BORDER GUARDS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman watches as an overweight Mexican PATROLMAN paces around the pickup truck, checking boxes on a checklist.

The Patrolman sees the washing machine. His brow furrows. He says something to Big Norm in mumbled Spanish.

Big Norm takes out a twenty-dollar bill. He palms it to The Patrolman in a handshake. He waves them through.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK (DRIVING) -- DAY

The Border Checkpoint recedes in the side-view mirror. Big Norm puts his wallet away.

NORMAN

Why'd you give that guy money?

BIG NORM

He had a gun and a checklist and I didn't want to deal with either.

NORMAN

You bribed him...

BIG NORM

They prefer "tax".

NORMAN

Isn't that illegal?

BIG NORM

Yeah, but nobody got not hurt. The underpaid, overworked guard got twenty bucks. We didn't get hassled. Everybody won.

(off Norman's
skeptical look)

Don't look at me like I stole your lunch money. Listen just 'cause something's illegal, doesn't make it wrong. And vice versa. Like its legal for companies to dump trash and chemicals into the ocean which harms everyone, but it's illegal for Al to smoke a joint in his office at the end of a long day which harms no one.

Norman nods. Makes sense.

EXT. TRANSPENINSULAR HIGHWAY -- DAY

The pickup truck speeds down this mostly deserted highway that runs the entire length of the Baja Peninsula.

They stop to buy tamales from a toothless OLD WOMAN on the side of the road.

Norman sleeps. Big Norm drinks a large cup of coffee.

They drive along the coast. Norm sees a pack of SURFERS floating out beyond the breakers. He pulls off the road.

Big Norm and Norman change into their wetsuits, grab their boards and jog down to the beach.

They paddle out into the waves. Big Norm catches everything he tries for. Norman misses a few and catches a few.

INT. DIVE BAR -- NIGHT

Norman and Big Norm are the only Caucasians in the place. Their hair is still wet.

The REGULARS eye them curiously. A pretty WAITRESS brings them drinks -- coke for Norman, pineapple juice for Norm.

Norman looks around at all the other men drinking beer.

NORMAN

How come you don't drink?

BIG NORM

Never been able to rationalize a few hours of shit-faced fun for a whole day of feeling like shit.

(beat)

Why so curious? Have you started stealing Rick's beers already?

NORMAN

No.

BIG NORM

You can be honest. I won't tell mom. I see you running around with Trafton. You must have had a beer or two at some point...

NORMAN

Honestly. No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

I'd rather you were a functional alcoholic than a pathological liar. Know what I mean?

NORMAN

(after a beat)

I've had beer.

Big Norm doesn't look surprised or upset. He just nods.

NORMAN

You're cool with it?

BIG NORM

Of course not. But I know there's nothing I can do to stop you. Kids try things. You're all hardwired to do stupid stuff. I can tell you how ridiculous and pointless that stuff is, but you'll do it anyway. When I was your age, your grandpop was militant about me never touching pot and that only made me want to try it more, so...

NORMAN

So then shouldn't you be telling me to drink and stuff?

BIG NORM

Yeah I'm pretty sure that's not the moral of the story.

NORMAN

If your dad telling you not to smoke pot made you want to it more than shouldn't you telling me to drink make me want to do it less?

Big Norm considers this. Can't find a hole in the logic.

BIG NORM

Drink alcohol. It's awesome. Your breath smells better, you'll never say anything that you'll regret, and the police especially love it when you do it underage and in public. In fact, as your father, I insist that you drown as many brain cells as humanly possible in misbegotten booze. Are we clear?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Norman laughs as the WAITRESS arrives with their food.

EXT. TRANSPENINSULAR HIGHWAY -- DAY

The pickup truck drives through the desert. Nothing but sagebrush and cacti for miles and miles.

They pass a SIGN that reads: **Mar de Cortés - 15 millas**

EXT. SEA OF CORTEZ -- DAY

The shimmering blue body of water that separates the Baja Peninsula from mainland Mexico.

EXT. HARBOR -- DAY

A chaotic, bustling SEAPORT. We see and hear a lot of sunburned DOCKWORKERS yelling in Spanish.

Big Norm guides the dust-covered pickup truck into a long line of cars and trucks waiting to board a FERRYBOAT.

They reach an official-looking GUARD inspecting vehicles. Big Norm hands him their tickets. He tears them.

The Guard notices the washing machine. He says a number in Spanish. Big Norm sighs. He palms the Guard some cash.

INT. FERRYBOAT -- CABIN -- DAY

A small sleeping space. Just two beds and a bathroom. Norman and Big Norm drop their bags off.

EXT. FERRYBOAT -- DECK -- SUNSET

The AIR HORN blows as the ferry drifts out to sea.

Norman sits on the railing watching the shoreline recede.

Big Norm sits on a bench strumming his acoustic GUITAR.

NORMAN

Hey dad, check it out...

He points a group of SURFERS down the coast catching some pretty intense waves. They watch a surfer disappear inside the break of wave for a few seconds then emerge unscathed. Still on his board. It's a thing of beauty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

They are giving out tube rides
left and right down here. You've
been tubed. Right?

(off Norman shaking
his head)

We're getting you one while we're
down here. We are not leaving this
country until you get a tube ride.

Norman watches a huge wave nearly wipe a SURFER out.

NORMAN

What happens if you don't make it
out before the wave breaks?

BIG NORM

You get crushed.

Norman laughs. Big Norm doesn't. Norman stops laughing.

Big Norm notices a pretty twenty-something WOMAN alone on
the other side of the boat scribbling in a notebook.

He starts playing Johnny Cash's "Flesh and Blood".

Norman sings along. Until he forgets the words. He tries
to fake it, but finally gives up and starts laughing.

APPLAUSE coming from across the deck. It's the Woman.

WOMAN

Very good.

BIG NORM

I thought I was a little off key
and he was pitchy, but thank you.

(off her smile)

I'm Norm. My friend is Norman.

WOMAN

Your friend?

BIG NORM

And my son. I lead with friendship
because we chose it.

WOMAN

I would drop a dollar in your case
but I don't have one...

BIG NORM

What do you got? We're not greedy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Kristie thinks. Then digs in her bag. Pulls out a BOX OF CHOCOLATES with Dutch-writing on it. She holds it up.

WOMAN

Belgian chocolate. From Belgium.
It'll make you believe in God.

EXT. FERRYBOAT -- DECK -- NIGHT

Norman's hands are covered in chocolate. The box is open beside him. Big Norm and The Woman lean on the railing.

BIG NORM

So, Kristie, what's your story?

KRISTIE

I'm a writer. Well. Aspiring. I kind of snapped and quit my job six months ago. Been traveling ever since. Just writing, looking for inspiration, finding mostly that I suck at writing.

NORMAN

Dad's a writer...

She looks at him. Really? He shakes his head. Not really.

NORMAN

He wrote a book.

BIG NORM

One book. Hardly makes me a writer.

KRISTIE

Well I've written no books, so, what does that make me?

(off his smile)

What was it about?

BIG NORM

I joined the FBI when I was 25.
Quit at 26. Wrote about that year.

KRISTIE

Why'd you quit?

BIG NORM

I wanted to fight crime. I learned pretty quickly that fighting crime in J.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM (CONT'D)
Edgar Hoover's FBI wasn't as
important as the perception that
we were fighting crime.

She smiles. Impressed. Amused.

KRISTIE
So? Any advice for a struggling
young writer?

BIG NORM
Don't be afraid to piss people
off. Try to piss people off.

A charged moment. Interrupted by Norman yawning from the
bench.

BIG NORM
That's my cue. Thanks again for
the chocolate.

Norman walks off as Big Norm and Kristie shake hands.

KRISTIE
My pleasure. And, if you want
more, I'm in cabin twenty-seven.

She holds his eyes. No mistaking that.

BIG NORM
I got a lady.

KRISTIE
Lucky lady...

BIG NORM
That's what I keep telling her.

INT. FERRYBOAT -- CABIN -- NIGHT

Norman sits up in his bed. Big Norm climbs into bed and
is about to turn off the light.

NORMAN
Why did Sandra leave?

The question catches Big Norm off guard. He leaves the
light on. We see the sadness in his eyes.

BIG NORM
She gets mad. She takes off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

What were you guys fighting about
the other night?

BIG NORM

I don't know. Everything. Nothing.

NORMAN

Did you say something wrong?

BIG NORM

I didn't say anything.

NORMAN

Why was she so mad?

BIG NORM

Sometimes the worst thing you can
say to a woman is nothing.

He reaches over and turns off the light.

EXT. HARBOR -- DAY

The ferryboat in port. Big Norm guides the pickup down
the ramp. They find the nearest highway and head south.

EXT. MEXICAN OUTBACK -- DAY

The highway cuts through a jungle. Canopied by branches.

They ride in silence. Big Norm just lost in his thoughts.
Norman starts to say something. Thinks better of it.

The jungle gets thicker, greener. A stark contrast to the
bleak colorless desert of the Baja Peninsula.

The highway devolves into just a narrow single-lane road
as they drive further and further away from civilization.

THUNDER CLOUDS loom on the horizon.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD -- 'CHECKPOINT' -- EVENING

A ROADBLOCK made of sandbags and a two-by-four cuts
across the only passageway.

Teenage SOLDIERS, wearing uniforms several sizes too big
for them, man the checkpoint. One of them is holding a
white flag. They are all holding semi-automatic rifles.

I/E. PICKUP TRUCK (DRIVING) -- EVENING

They drive along that same jungle road. Big Norm sees the checkpoint up ahead. There's no away around it.

BIG NORM

Shit.

Norman looks up at the Teenagers With Guns.

BIG NORM

Don't say anything. Don't do anything. Just let me handle it.

We hear the rumble of THUNDER as the pickup rolls to a stop in-front of the two-by-four.

The oldest and meanest-looking SOLDIER approaches the driver's side window. The others surround the truck.

Big Norm shows him their passports. Norman can't stop staring at the guns.

SOLDIER

Toll...

The Solider says a number in Spanish. Big Norm laughs. You've gotta be kidding? The Soldier glares. He's not.

Big Norm says a different number. The Soldier's eyes narrow. He raises his rifle. The others do the same.

Norman terrified. Big Norm stays calm.

BIG NORM

It's OK. We're fine. Just empty your pockets. Slowly.

They empty their pockets and hand over all their money.

The Soldier counts it. He's not satisfied. His eyes flicker to the washing machine. He barks an order.

His Men move to untie the machine. Big Norm protests.

The Soldier laughs in his face. His teeth are yellow. The one with the white flag makes kissing noises at Norman.

Big Norm turns red with rage. He's had enough.

A huge CRACK OF THUNDER momentarily distracts The Soldiers. Big Norm seizes on it. He drops the pickup into gear. Slams down on the accelerator. The tires squeal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

Get down.

Norman ducks as the pickup plows through the two-by-four.

The Soldiers yell in Spanish. Some of them raise their rifles.

Norman hears the POP of gunshots. He ducks further.

Big Norm keeps his head low until the gunshots fade into the distance. He keeps the accelerator floored.

They speed through the jungle. Another crack of thunder. Silver-dollar RAINDROPS splatter the windshield.

The sky opens up. Torrential rain. Curtains of it. The windshield wipers can't keep up.

They're going 70 mph and they can hardly see a thing.

BIG NORM

We gotta get off this road. Look
for a turnout, a trail, anything.

Norman wipes the fog off his window. He looks around frantically. He sees a DIRT TRAIL cut into the jungle.

NORMAN

There!

Big Norm slams on the brakes. The truck almost tips as he makes the sharp right turn onto the road.

The truck lurches and bounces as they drive deeper into the jungle. Norman grips the seat with white knuckles.

They drive like this for awhile. Finally, Big Norm slows to a stop. He kills the engine and the headlights.

It's dark and quiet. The rain pours. Thunder rumbles. Big Norm catches his breath. He turns to Norman who is still shaking.

BIG NORM

You OK? I'm sorry. That was a bad
situation that was only gonna get
worse. We had to do something.

(off his silence)

We'll crash in the truck. Tomorrow
we'll be in Puerto Vallarta.
Someday this will all be a Hell of
a story for you to tell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He smiles.

NORMAN

I'm never going anywhere with you
again.

His smile fades.

BIG NORM

Try to get some sleep.

Big Norm reclines his seat. Closes his eyes. Norman
watches his father sleep, listens to the thunder.

Norman CLOSES HIS EYES the truck.

BACK TO:

EXT. ONTARIO PEAK -- DAY

Norman OPENS HIS EYES on the mountain.

BLOOD stains the rock and the wound on his head where he
landed on it. His blonde hair is dyed dark red.

Norman sits up. Shakes off the cobwebs. Touches the
wound. It's still tender. He looks around, trying to get
his bearings. He sees Pilot Rob's body. Looks away.

He tries to stand. Wobbles. Sits right back down and
curls into a ball. He stays huddled against an evergreen
tree, trying to get warm, trying not to look at the body.

The storm grows in intensity. The wind and snow pick up.

Norman shakes uncontrollably, from fear, from cold. His
eyes keep darting to Pilot Rob's thick BOMBER JACKET. He
steels himself before crawling back over to the body.

Norman holds his breath as he takes off the dead man's
jacket. It's as horrible to watch as it sounds.

After a struggle, he gets it off. Wraps himself in it. He
stands up again. This time he doesn't wobble.

Norman's tennis shoes slip on the ice as he makes his way
across the mountain, towards THE CRASH SITE.

Debris from the plane is everywhere. Cracked fiberglass.
Pieces of metal, torn and jagged, like crumpled tin foil.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Hello... Dad? Sandra? Anyone...

No response. Just eerie silence and the wind. He keeps searching. The fog is thick. He can't see much at all.

Norman passes one of the plane wings imbedded into the ice. That's the moment the fog dissipates just long enough for him to see Big Norm. He's lying very still beside a tree, just up a steep ice-slicked embankment.

NORMAN

Dad!

Norman scrambles up the embankment. He has to use his bare hands as ice axes again, but he doesn't feel the pain. By the time he reaches his father, he has bright red scrapes on all ten of his fingers.

Big Norm's eyes are closed. There's no blood or gore. He just looks like he's asleep.

NORMAN

Dad?

Norman shakes him gently. He doesn't wake up. He shakes him a littler harder. He slumps over. He checks his breathing, listens for a heartbeat. Hard to tell.

NORMAN

Dad...

NORMAN O/S

Dad, wake up.

CUT TO:

INT. PICKUP TRUCK -- MORNING

Big Norm asleep in the driver's seat. Norman jostles him.

NORMAN

Dad.

Big Norm jolts awake. Finds Norman looking concerned.

NORMAN

We got a problem.

EXT. JUNGLE -- MORNING

The pickup truck has SUNK down into the rain-softened mud overnight. All four tires are completely submerged.

Norman stands to the side as Big Norm tries to drive forward. Then reverse. The truck just sinks deeper.

Norman pumps the accelerator as Big Norm pushes. The only thing they succeed in accomplishing is splattering him from head-to-toe in mud. He looks like Swamp Thing.

Big Norm signals to cut the engine. Norman does.

BIG NORM

We'll head for the coast. Find
someone to pull us out.

Norman looks up and down the road. Nothing but jungle.

NORMAN

We're in the middle of nowhere.
Who are we gonna find?

BIG NORM

Whoever busted their ass cutting
this trail.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD -- DAY

They hike through ankle-deep mud carrying surfboards, bags, Norm's guitar, anything anyone could run off with.

NORMAN

You think I could win a ski race
this year?

BIG NORM

You want to win a race this year?

Norman shrugs/nods. Big Norm stops in his tracks.

BIG NORM

Think about it now. Once you say
'yes', you're setting a series of
events in motion that cannot be
stopped. We're gonna train our
asses off. So, I ask again, do you
want to win a ski race this year?

NORMAN

I do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM
Then you will.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD -- DAY

The sun is high in the sky. It gets hotter by the minute.

The mud keeps getting deeper. Big Norm and Norman are both covered head-to-toe in it, both sweating profusely.

Big Norm uses his surfboard like a machete to cut through the brush. Norman plods along. Exhausted. Cranky.

NORMAN
It's so hot... I'm tired... and
hungry... and thirsty...

They keep walking. The brush keeps getting thicker.

NORMAN
I could be at the arcade right
now... drinking a slushie... I
should be. This sucks. You suck.

BIG NORM
We're on an adventure.

NORMAN
So was The Donner Party.

They walk further and further. Big Norm chopping at the palm fronds. Norman trudging along, sulking. Suddenly Big Norm stops chopping and just listens.

NORMAN
What?

Big Norm signals for him to be quiet and listen. He does. Norman hears what sounds a lot like THE OCEAN.

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

An idyllic cove formed by a coastal inlet and coral reef. White sand. Blueberry water. A hidden paradise.

Big Norm and Norman emerge from the stifling jungle covered in caked-on mud. Their feet crunch on sea shells. They stand there taking it in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They exchange a smile before dropping the bags and boards and sprinting over the sand. They dive into the ocean in their clothes. The mud leaves a stain in their wake.

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Their wet clothes hang to dry over on a PAPAYA TREE. A dozen hollowed out PAPAYAS are scattered all over. The guys lie in the sand with full bellies.

The ocean is still swollen from last night's storm. The waves are big. Bigger than any we've seen so far.

BIG NORM

I'll be damned...

He nods to a channel formed by the reef where THE WAVES are particularly large and unrelenting.

BIG NORM

Out along the reef. Perfect left-hand tubes, eight-footers...

Way off shore the waves curl beautifully before smashing into the reef.

BIG NORM

A wave like that will change your life...

A nine-foot wave drives a piece of driftwood into the razor-sharp reef. The wood cracks in two.

NORMAN

Or end it.

Big Norm gets to his feet. Norman looks at him. You've got to be kidding.

NORMAN

It's too big...

BIG NORM

(smiles)
No such thing.

EXT. OCEAN -- DAY

Big Norm and Norman paddle out over the breakers into the channel. The waves look even bigger from the water.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman barely clears several monster swells as they make their way out beyond the breakers to the line-up.

Big Norm sees one coming. He paddles hard and drops in just as the nine-foot wave starts to crest. His form is perfect, but the wave is bearing down fast. It breaks right over top of him. He appears to wipe out.

Norman looks concerned. Until Big Norm shoots out the other side of the break. Still on the board. Arms raised in triumph. He lets out a primal howl.

By the time Big Norm has paddled back out to the line-up, Norman looks like he's going to be sick. He's terrified.

NORMAN

I can't do it...

BIG NORM

Remember: balance and patience.
Keep your back foot down and bail
before the reef. You'll be fine.

NORMAN

Seriously, I can't...

BIG NORM

Hey. You're The Boy Wonder.
(smiles)
You can do anything.

Doubt leaves Norman's eyes. He looks out at the waves like a big cat waiting to pounce.

A mountain of water rises out of the ocean.

Norman paddles as hard as he can. He drops in just as it crests. Almost falls, but stays up. His left hand grazes the water as he steadies himself.

The wave starts to break over top of him. He closes his eyes. Waits to get crushed, but doesn't. His board fits right inside the lip of the curl. A 'tube' of dark blue water forms around him. The sound drops out.

Norman opens his eyes. The wall of water has formed a swirling cocoon around him.

The sound crashes back in as Norman shoots out the other side of the break. He rides out the back of the wave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Big Norm smiles. Never seen a prouder father. Norman beams, he's so caught up in the moment that he forgets to bail out. Big Norm sees the jagged white-purple coral heads of the reef bearing down on him.

BIG NORM
Bail out. Bail out...

Too late. The wave slams into the reef. The impact pitches Norman up into the air like a rag doll.

He lands hard on the reef. The coral heads slice his skin. The blueberry water turns red.

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Big Norm helps Norman out of the water. There's a DEEP GASH on his back. BLOOD trails down his rib cage.

Norman is in a lot of pain. Big Norm grabs his tee shirt off the papaya tree. Presses it against the wound to slow the bleeding. The color has drained from Norman's face.

NORMAN
Is it bad? It feels bad.

Big Norm pulls the tee shirt away. The gash is still bleeding. It's just too deep.

Norman sees the blood-soaked tee shirt. The look of concern on his father's face. He starts hyperventilating.

Norman is on the verge of a full-on PANIC ATTACK.

BIG NORM
Hey, hey, hey. Look at me.
Breathe. Find your rhythm. Find it
and focus on keeping it. Don't
think about anything but that...

Norman's eyes flicker to the almost completely blood-soaked shirt.

BIG NORM
Don't look at it. Look at me. Come
on. Just breathe...

Norman focuses. Calms. Gets his breathing under control.

A naturally-beautiful NATIVE GIRL, 13 or so, is out picking papayas and placing them in a hand-woven basket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Girl sees Norman bleeding down on the beach.

Big Norm sees her. He waves and calls out in Spanish.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE -- DAY

Mud huts thatched with coconut palms just off the coast.

Dark-skinned VILLAGERS. The women and children wear ragged clothes. The men wear colorful ponchos. None of them wear shoes. Grey MULES pull a plow through a garden.

The 'Papaya' Girl leads Big Norm through the village. He is carrying Norman. Everyone stares as they pass.

Norman looks woozy. Pale. He's lost a lot of blood.

INT. HUT -- DAY

An elderly MEDICINE WOMAN cleans and sews up the wound. Norman squeezes his father's hand tight. Trying not to cry as the needle goes in and out.

The 'Papaya' Girl enters with a clay cup filled with coconut milk-based tonic. She gives it to Norman. He looks at the grey liquid in the filthy cup warily.

She says something in Spanish. Big Norm translates.

BIG NORM

For the pain...

Norman drinks the tonic. It tastes awful but he forces a smile for her.

INT. HUT -- DAY

Norman asleep on a straw mat. The wound has been bandaged. He wakes up. His father is nowhere to be found.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE -- DAY

Norman walks outside. Finds the village empty. Eerily quiet. He looks in huts. Finds nothing. No one.

He hears a COMMOTION down by the beach.

EXT. OCEAN -- DAY

The entire village is on the beach. Big Norm is out in the shallow water, teaching the NATIVE KIDS to surf.

The PARENTS look-on from the shore, cheering for the kids as they ride their first waves. All smiles and laughter.

The villagers treat Big Norm like he's one of the family.

Norman stands there watching him. How does he do that?

Big Norm sees him. He leaves the kids with the boards and runs out the water.

BIG NORM

How you feeling?

NORMAN

Better. A lot better.

BIG NORM

Good. You can help with dinner.

NORMAN

What's for dinner?

EXT. OCEAN -- DAY

A palm-woven net full of FISH is lifted out of the water.

Big Norm and Norman help the NATIVE MEN drag it to shore.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE -- NIGHT

A fire illuminates empty clay plates of fish bones and corn husks. The whole village sits around the fire.

Big Norm is talking with the MEN and WOMEN in Spanish.

A pudgy LITTLE KID walks up to Norman and starts touching his hair. A few other KIDS do the same. All grinning in awe and yammering to each other in Spanish.

NORMAN

What are they saying?

BIG NORM

They've never seen blonde hair before. Apparently they like it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman is overrun by little hands petting his head. He laughs.

Norman keeps stealing glances at The 'Papaya' Girl. She catches his eye and smiles. He blushes and looks away.

Big Norm saw the whole thing. He smiles to himself.

The Pudgy Kid finds Big Norm's GUITAR CASE amongst the bags. He eyes it curiously. Big Norm sees him looking at it. He takes out the guitar. Strums a few chords. The Pudgy Kid likes it very much. He wants to hear more.

Big Norm starts to play "Blue Eyes Cryin' In The Rain". Conversations stop amongst the adults. They all listen.

He sings the first verse in English. The Villagers all enjoy it but are not fully engaged.

He sings the second verse in Spanish. We start to see smiles of recognition. Appreciation.

By the time he sings the final refrain, most of the men, women and children sing it with him.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE -- NIGHT

Every star in the sky is visible. Norman scavenges for PALM BRANCHES from all around the beach and jungle.

Big Norm shows him how to use the fronds and branches to build a LEAN-TO SHELTER. It's like an all-natural cabana.

They lie on straw mats. Looking up at the stars.

BIG NORM

You should get her a gift...

(off Norman's
confused look)

The 'Papaya' girl. You like her.

Even in the dark, he can see Norman's cheeks flush.

BIG NORM

Nothing to be embarrassed about.
She's cute. You should give her
something.

NORMAN

(after a beat)

I can't just give her a gift for
no reason. That's weird.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

The best gift is one that's not for anything. It says you were thinking about her. Subtext goes a long way with women.

Norman considers this. Big Norm closes his eyes.

NORMAN

It was worth it. The 'tube'...

Big Norm smiles. Nods. Keeps his eyes closed.

NORMAN

Where do they come from? Waves.

BIG NORM

Storms. Wind. It drives down on the water. Pushes them out.

Big Norm starts to drift off to sleep.

NORMAN

(after a moment)

I'm glad you brought me down here.

Big Norm snores in response. He's out. Norman smiles.

He lies in the dark listening to the ocean, looking up at the palm branch roof of the LEAN-TO SHELTER.

BACK TO:

EXT. ONTARIO PEAK -- DAY

Norman finishes building a LEAN-TO SHELTER around his father. He uses a piece of the WING for the roof.

The wind has died down but the snow has gotten worse.

Norman clears the snow off Big Norm, lays the plane's floor rug over him like a blanket. Sits next to him.

NORMAN

It's OK... We're OK... They're gonna come... They have to come...

Norman checks his father's WATCH. Still ticking. It reads: **10:37 a.m.** We hear just the TICKING of the watch. It gets louder and louder until it becomes the sound of Norman's teeth chattering. The watch again: **11:21 a.m.**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman huddled under the shelter. Shivering. He searches the sky. Finds only thick clouds. The watch: **12:54 p.m.**

The tips of Norman's hair are frozen. He's freezing. Fighting to stay awake. Big Norm's face has lost color. He doesn't appear to be breathing. The watch: **1:48 p.m.**

Frostbite on Normans lips and hands. His eyelids are heavy. He's ready to succumb, but then he hears the unmistakable sound of a HELICOPTER. Loud. Getting louder.

Norman climbs out from under the shelter. The helicopter is right over the treetops. The sound is deafening. The wind from the rotors blows his hair, swirls the fog. But it's just too thick.

Norman can't see the helicopter and it can't see him. He jumps up and down. Waving his arms.

NORMAN

Hey! Down here...

The sound starts to fade. The wind dies down. Norman's relief morphs to horror as realizes what's happening.

He just screams "No!" over and over again as the sound fades completely. Just a truly terrible silence.

He stands there staring helplessly at the sky. It all becomes too much. He starts crying. Trembling. He runs over and desperately shakes his father's limp body.

NORMAN

Wake up! WAKE UP! WAKE UP!

His tears freeze as they run down his wind-bitten cheeks. He looks around. Wild eyed. He starts to hyperventilate. Worse than before.

This time the PANIC ATTACK takes hold. He struggles to breath. A moment feels like an hour.

He remembers. Closes his eyes. Focuses. Calms. Finds his rhythm. His breathing returns to normal.

Norman opens his eyes. Looks around with purpose. Finds that the Helicopter has disturbed the fog enough for him to see just how high they are. It's a long way down.

He sees a CABIN at the base of the mountain. It looks microscopic from the peak but not so far that he couldn't make it on foot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The problem isn't the distance. It's the impossibly steep ICE CHUTE that makes up most of it. It would take a professional climber with full gear hours to get down.

Norman has no gear but Big Norm has no time. He looks at his father lying there in the snow. Makes a decision.

He starts to look around for anything he can use to insulate Big Norm before starting down the chute.

He picks up an EVERGREEN BRANCH. Runs his fingers through the thick pine needles. Lays it on top of his father.

Norman scavenges the mountaintop for the biggest BRANCHES with the thickest pine needles.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH -- SUNRISE

Norman scavenges the sand for biggest and brightest SEASHELLS. He sees what he's looking for.

A perfect ABALONE SHELL. Norman picks it up. Smiles.

EXT. NATIVE VILLAGE -- MORNING

Norman and Big Norm join the natives for breakfast. The 'Papaya' Girl sits with a group of KIDS her age. Norman approaches. Gives her the abalone shell he found.

NORMAN

For you...

She smiles. He smiles. It's kind of awkward but sweet.

EXT. JUNGLE ROAD -- DAY

The Villagers use their PLOW MULES to drag the pick up truck out of the mud.

Norman and Big Norm say 'goodbye' and 'thank you' to the Villagers. Big Norm gets in and starts the engine.

Norman starts to climb in. He sees The 'Papaya' Girl running up the road. She's carrying a colorful PONCHO.

She gives him the poncho. They share a smile.

Norman gets in the truck. Finds Big Norm grinning at him.

EXT. PUERTO VALLARTA -- DAY

The mud-splattered pick up crosses the bridge into town.

Norman smiles as they drive up the coast. His clothes are wrinkled, hair matted, he looks like Pig Pen with a tan.

EXT. PUERTO VALLARTA -- SUNSET

Big Norm guides the pickup into a cobblestone driveway that leads to a two-story STUCCO HOUSE overlooking the bay. He honks the horn as they pull in.

Norman's GRANDPARENTS come outside waving and smiling.

Big Norm shuts off the engine. Turns to Norman.

BIG NORM

So maybe we don't tell Grand Mom
and Grand Pop about getting shot
at, or the bribes, and the reef...

(thinks about it)

You know what? When they ask how
the drive was, just say 'good'.

INT. GRANDPARENTS HOUSE -- NIGHT

The WASHING MACHINE has been installed and it's working on overdrive washing Norman and Big Norm's dirty clothes.

The guys sit at the dining room table, showered and wearing GRAND POP's oversized robes.

GRAND MOM serves an authentic Mexican FEAST that only a grandmother could make. They eat ravenously.

EXT. PUERTO VALLARTA -- SUNRISE

Pre-dawn. Still and quiet. The WAVES are up this morning.

INT. BEDROOM -- SUNRISE

Big Norm in a deep sleep. Mouth open. Snoring. Norman enters wearing his WETSUIT. He walks over and stirs him.

Big Norm sees him standing there in his wetsuit. Smiles.

EXT. OCEAN -- MORNING

Norman and Big Norm paddle out past the breakers.

They are the only surfers in the water. Norman has gained confidence. He doesn't fall. Doesn't miss a wave.

EXT. GRANDPARENTS HOUSE -- DAY

Grand Mom brings out a tray of piña coladas to the boys who are playing SEVEN CARD STUD. Norman is in a hand with his Grandfather. Big Norm is coaching him.

BIG NORM

...he's had the same tell since I
was your age. Just bet big and
he'll fold.

Norman looks at his Grandfather who is stone-faced.
Norman hesitates. Then pushes all his chips into the pot.

His Grandfather cracks a smirk. Shakes his head. Folds.

Norman counts up his winnings as the TELEPHONE rings.
Grand Mom goes inside to answer. She listens. Calls out.

GRAND MOM

Hey Norie, it's Janice...

Big Norm takes the phone with a smile on his face.

BIG NORM

Janisimo! Listen I think we should
forget skiing and surfing and
focus all the kid's attention on
poker. He's a natural...

He listens for a beat. His smile fades.

Big Norm's face has lost a shade of color by the time he
walks back out to the deck. Something has happened.

BIG NORM

We gotta go back.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- DAY

An EVICTION NOTICE from "The State of California" posted
on the Archer's front door.

The same notice is posted on every door on Topanga Beach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Heartbroken RESIDENTS pack up. Move out.

Janice is out on her porch collecting the last of her potted plants. She looks like she's been crying.

The mud-splattered pickup comes screeching to a stop. Big Norm and Norman jump out. They run over to Janice.

She starts crying as soon as she sees them. Big Norm wraps her in a hug. She sobs. He comforts her.

BIG NORM

I'll figure something out...

RICK O/S

There's nothing you can do.

Rick walks out carrying a cardboard box marked 'living room'. Janice and Big Norm let go of each other.

RICK

We're out of options. Time's up.

BIG NORM

I need to use your phone...

RICK

You're not listening to me. It's been disconnected. Everyone's has.

BIG NORM

It's not over yet...

RICK

What are you gonna do? Who are you gonna call? Tell me. What's your magic bullet to save us?

Big Norm doesn't say anything. There's nothing to say.

RICK

It's over. It's been over.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- NIGHT

The last night. EVERYONE is on the beach. The party to end all parties. A big bonfire. Food. Dancing. Booze.

The HOUSES are all empty. Awaiting Demolition. We see CONSTRUCTION CONES and 'CAUTION' TAPE all over.

A six-piece DIXIE BAND plays on the Archer's empty porch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Janice dances in a crowd with Bob Barrow, Al Freedman, 'Beer Can' Larry and a bunch of other WOMEN.

Rick tends to a grill with a beer in-hand. He talks with a couple of OLD TIMERS.

RICK

...found us a place up in The Palisades. Quiet neighborhood. It'll be good for Norman. He'll have some stability, we can set boundaries. Don't get me wrong, I love it here, but it's not the best environment to raise a ki...

He trails off as Big Norm approaches and takes three one-hundred dollar bills out of his wallet.

RICK

You don't have to...

BIG NORM

Bet's a bet.

Big Norm places the money in Rick's hand. He grabs a BOTTLE OF VODKA and a glass and walks off down the beach.

Norman sits around the bonfire with Trafton, Elly and a few other TEENAGERS who are drinking and passing a joint. None of the adults seem to notice or care.

Norman sees his father sitting off by himself sipping vodka on the rocks and staring blankly out at the ocean. He walks down the beach. Sits in the sand beside him.

NORMAN

Can the state really just take anyone's house whenever they want?

BIG NORM

They gotta have a reason, but they can always find one. And they have to pay you, but they get to decide how much... so, basically, "yes".

NORMAN

That's bullshit.

BIG NORM

Yeah. Well. Call your congressman.

Big Norm takes a long sip of his drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NORMAN

But they're not taking your house
though. Right?

BIG NORM

They just want the beach.

Big Norm finishes his drink. Goes to refill his glass.
Norman doesn't want that to happen. He notices THE WAVES.

NORMAN

You want to go out?

Big Norm stops pouring. Looks at him. You kidding?

BIG NORM

It's too dark...

NORMAN

(smiles)
No such thing.

EXT. OCEAN -- NIGHT

Norman and Big Norm go NIGHT SURFING. The fire reflects
off the water. Illuminates them in an orange glow.

They paddle out. Disappear into the darkness beyond the
breakers and reappear moments later on a cresting wave.

Norman has a smile on his face every time. Big Norm never
does. His heart isn't in it. His head is somewhere else.

Eventually he stops all together and sits floating on his
board out beyond the breakers. He looks numb.

Norman paddles up beside him. Sits on his board.

They just float in silence for awhile, lit by firelight,
listening to the Dixie Band, watching the party.

NORMAN

So, Rick was saying they're gonna
make the beach into a park. So, we
can still come down whenever we
want. Go surfing, have fires.
We're not even moving far. Just up
the hill. So, I can skateboard
down to your house any time...

(beat)

So. Really. Nothing has to change.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Big Norm starts laughing uncontrollably. A sudden jarring sound. Norman watches him. Concerned. Confused.

BIG NORM

Sorry. I'm not laughing at you.

The laughter fades. He composes himself.

BIG NORM

I wish I could see this thing through your eyes, kid. I really do. All you see is beach bums and some shitty houses with bad plumbing. You don't know what we had here, so you don't know what we're losing...

(off the silence)

This place... wasn't just a beach. It was a whole community of people living their lives for themselves. I know that sounds basic. But, as you get older, it gets harder and harder to do. You'll see. It creeps up on you. Job. House. Car. Responsibilities. Schedules. Deadlines. Most people wake up one day and their lives aren't their own anymore...

(a sad smile)

People here get that you only get to do this thing once. Doctors and Drifters living side-by-side having only that in common and it was so much more than enough.

Norman sees the tears in his father's eyes. He can't tell if they're from the saltwater.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- NIGHT

Big Norm and Norman walk out of the ocean carrying their boards. The silhouette of a WOMAN walks up behind them.

SANDRA O/S

You guys are nuts...

Sandra steps out of the darkness. She looks beautiful.

SANDRA

I mean I always knew you were nuts, but, surfing in the dark? Just a special kind of insanity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Big Norm and Sandra hold a loaded look.

BIG NORM

You heard?

She nods.

BIG NORM

That why you came back?

She shakes her head. So much said with only their eyes.

BIG NORM

I'm sorry, about...

SANDRA

Me too.

The slightest of smiles. He goes to her. She meets him halfway. They hug for a long time.

BIG NORM

Let's get you a drink...

The three of them begin back towards the party.

SANDRA

I shouldn't.

BIG NORM

Oh if ever there was a night you should...

SANDRA

I mean I can't.

Big Norm stops walking and looks at her. His eyes flicker to her stomach. You saying what I think you're saying?

Sandra smiles. Bites her lip. Nods ever so slightly. She gives him a moment to process it all.

SANDRA

You good with that?

Big Norm smiles for the first time in a long time. He pulls her into a hug that lifts her off ground.

Norman has no idea what's going on but his dad is smiling again and that's all that matters.

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- DAY

That same sleepy subdivision in the hills of Malibu. A MOVING TRUCK is parked outside the 1940's Craftsman Home.

Rick, Janice and Norman help the MOVERS unload boxes.

Norman stops to look around at his new neighborhood. Observes the utter soul-crushing sameness of the houses and yards. He's a stranger in a strange land.

CAROL and BOB, middle-aged, overly-friendly, walk up the driveway with big smiles. Carol carries a TUNA CASSEROLE. Norman is the only one outside at the moment.

CAROL

Hi there! I'm Carol Calloway. This is my husband, Bob Calloway. We live just down the hill. The white house with the red shutters...

They wait for him to say something. He doesn't.

CAROL

What's your name?

NORMAN

Norman. What's that?

CAROL

Just a little welcome to the neighborhood. My famous tuna casserole. Do you like tuna casserole?

NORMAN

Yeah. I love it.

Carol smiles. What a sweet little boy.

NORMAN

But it makes me shit my brains out.

Carol's plastic smile fades.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- NIGHT

BOXES everywhere. FURNITURE wrapped in plastic.

Janice and Rick unpack boxes. Norman was helping but now he's too distraught.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

I don't want to go a new school.

JANICE

It's how the districts are drawn.
There's nothing we can do. It's a
really good school.

NORMAN

But it's not my school...

RICK

This one's better. You might
actually learn something. And they
have a good little Pop Warner
football team. Most middle schools
don't even offer football.

NORMAN

Who gives a shit about football?

RICK

Watch your mouth.

NORMAN

(after a beat)

You said nothing was gonna change.

RICK

Life is a long series of
disappointments and readjustments.
Sooner you learn that the better.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- EARLY MORNING

Janice packs a bagged lunch. Rick is at the kitchen
table, drinking coffee and reading the newspaper.

Norman walks in wearing the PONCHO he got from The
'Papaya' Girl. Rick chokes on his coffee.

RICK

Really?

Janice gives him a hard look. Leave him alone.

RICK

I just think for the first day...

Norman takes the bagged lunch and heads for the door.

INT. CLASSROOM -- MORNING

The moment before the bell. A class of noisy SIXTH GRADE KIDS talk, laugh, tell stories about their summers.

The kids are all well-dressed, preppy, wearing their best outfits for the first day of school.

Norman walks into class wearing the poncho. The Kids all turn and stare. It gets quiet. Norman's cheeks flush.

He sits and sinks down into his chair. The bell rings.

INT. CAFETERIA -- DAY

Norman eats his bagged lunch at a table by himself. He sees another BOY across the room eating alone.

The boy is playing with little GREEN ARMY MEN. He's slight and shy. None of the other KIDS even look at him. It's like he doesn't exist. This is TIMMY.

Timmy seems perfectly content in his own little world.

Norman watches as ZACK, 12, biggest kid in class, crosses the cafeteria to Timmy with a few little JOCK types.

Zack grabs one of the Army Men. He laughs as they play keep away and Timmy tries desperately to get it back.

Norman watches it happen. He looks like he wants to say or do something but doesn't.

Finally Timmy manages to get the toy back. Zack and his minions decides he's had enough.

Zack sees Norman staring at him. He gives him a hard look. You want some? Norman looks away.

I/E. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

Rick mows the lawn with a brand-new John Deere RIDING MOWER. He looks content.

Janice has just finished loading the DISHWASHER. She can't get it to start. She looks frustrated.

Norman walks into the kitchen carrying his overnight bag. He watches his mother as she opens and closes the dishwasher. Flips levers. Pushes buttons. Nothing works.

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- DAY

A long, steep HILL connects The Suburbs to The Shore.

Norman SKATEBOARDS down the hill. He stays upright and weaves back and forth to keep from going too fast.

Carol is in her front yard trimming her ROSE BUSHES. Norman skates past. She shoots him a disapproving look.

EXT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- DAY

We can see BULLDOZERS flattening Topanga Beach from the driveway. Most of the houses are already rubble.

Norman skates up just as the bulldozers bear down on The Yellow Submarine House.

He watches until the pylons crack and the house collapses in on itself. A dust cloud rises where it stood.

EXT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- SUNSET

The bulldozers have stopped. It's quiet. The sky is a thousand different shades of orange.

Norman, Big Norm and Sandra eat Chinese takeout on the porch overlooking the ocean.

BIG NORM

...you don't weight enough to win the downhill. So unless you gain 20 pounds or we find a loophole in the laws of gravity, the slalom is our best shot.

Sandra smiles through a mouthful of Kung Pao chicken.

SANDRA

I vote for the weight gain. Misery loves company.

Big Norm pulls her into a kiss while she's still chewing. She giggles. It's a sweet moment. Norman looks confused.

NORMAN

It doesn't matter what race we choose. I'm too little. I'll never be able to go fast enough to win.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

True. On fresh powder, you don't have a chance. That's why we're not focus on powder...

NORMAN

What are we gonna focus on?

BIG NORM

Ice.

(beat)

The other kids will avoid it, you're gonna aim for it. If you can master ice, you level the playing field.

INT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- NIGHT

Sandra brings in the last of the plates and glasses. She starts to help them wash. She yawns. Big Norm sees it.

BIG NORM

We got this. Don't worry about it. Go. Lie down. Relax.

He gives her a tender kiss. She smiles. They kiss again. She heads back to the bedroom. Norman look suspicious.

NORMAN

What's going on around here? You guys are acting weird...

BIG NORM

What do you mean 'weird'?

NORMAN

I don't know. Like. Happy.

BIG NORM

We are happy.

NORMAN

You haven't fought once since she's been back. She's not drinking. You're doing stuff around the house. It's like a 'Twilight Zone' episode...

Big Norm tries to hide his smile but Norman sees it.

NORMAN

What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Big Norm takes a beat to find the right words.

BIG NORM
How would you feel about having a
little brother or sister?

It takes Norman a moment to process what he means.

BIG NORM
Don't tell her I said anything.

INT. BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Sandra has fallen asleep on top of the covers. The lights are on and she's still wearing her clothes.

Norman heads back to his room. Sees her sleeping.

She looks peaceful. He walks in and gently pulls the BLANKET over her. He smiles and turns off the light.

BACK TO:

EXT. ONTARIO PEAK -- DAY

The storm is starting to fade but so is the daylight.

Norman has covered Big Norm from head-to-toe in a BLANKET OF EVERGREEN BRANCHES. He places the last few on his chest. Brushes the snow out of his hair. Takes a moment.

NORMAN
I'm gonna get help...

Big Norm doesn't move or make a sound. He's pale. Doesn't appear to be breathing. Norman has tears in his eyes.

NORMAN
Just hang in a little longer...
OK... Dad? Daddy?

He kisses his father's forehead and wipes away his tears.

NORMAN
Just a little longer.

Norman moves to the edge of the ICE CHUTE. Looks down the impossibly sheer face marked with rocks. Veiled in fog.

He studies the chute like a chess master reading a board. A calm washes over. He starts to descend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He jams his bare hands through the ice crust over and over again. He's not wincing anymore. No feeling left.

He always keeps an edge with his sneakers. His weight is balanced. His movements deliberate and controlled. He takes his time. Doesn't rush. One foot after the other.

It's slow going but he's making progress until a sudden strong GUST OF WIND nearly blows him off the mountain.

He waits for it to pass. It does. He is about to continue down when he hears a series of loud CRACKS above him.

He looks up just as one the EVERGREENS the plane crashed into comes down. It crashes into the chute and takes off like a missile. It's headed right for him.

He swings out of it's path just in time. The tree rockets past. Hits a rock. Splinters. Disappears into the fog.

It's quiet again. Norman catches his breath. Composes himself. He starts to descend. Then stops when he hears what sounds like a WOMAN'S VOICE calling out.

He turns toward the sound and, through the fog, sees the silhouette of a WOMAN on the other side of the chute.

NORMAN

Sandra...

He frantically climbs back up and across the chute to get to her. Nearly slips several times in his haste.

He finds Sandra still buckled into her seat. Shivering. She's just regaining consciousness.

SANDRA

Norman? ... Where's Norm?

Norman takes the bomber jacket off. Wraps it around her.

NORMAN

He's... OK. Knocked out. He needs help. I'm going to get help.

She moves to undo the buckle. Cries out in pain.

SANDRA

My arm...

Norman looks at her arm. It's BROKEN in several places. Ugly discoloration. Internal bleeding. It's bad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NORMAN

We gotta go. Can you move?

SANDRA

Someone will come...

NORMAN

No. They won't. I have to go.

SANDRA

Don't leave me.

NORMAN

I can help you down.

SANDRA

No. Please. Just. Wait. For a
little while. They'll come.

Norman looks at the sky. The daylight is fading fast.

SANDRA

Please.

He can see that she's completely terrified. He sighs. OK.

They huddle together for warmth. Sandra leans her head on his shoulder and closes her eyes.

NORMAN

You gotta stay awake. If we fall
asleep, we won't wake up.

Norman stares out at the sky. Lost in his thoughts.

RICK O/S

This is not my fault...

CUT TO:

INT. ARCHER HOME -- NIGHT

A heated shouting match between Rick and Janice at the dinner table. Norman tries to ignore them.

RICK

...I'm just trying to make the
best of a bad situation.

JANICE

Oh bullshit. This isn't a bad
situation. Not for you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANICE (CONT'D)

You wanted this 'Stepford' existence. You like it here.

RICK

This is normal. This is how people live. Topanga was Neverland. Just give this place a chance.

JANICE

I did. I hate it. I miss my house, I miss my beach, I miss my friends and you don't. You don't care.

RICK

You miss it so much? Why don't you go with live with Norm? I'm sure he'd have you...

JANICE

Maybe I will.

She's not kidding. Rick turns beet red. He's about to explode. Norman really doesn't want that.

NORMAN

So. Football starts this week. I was thinking about trying out...
(off Rick's look)
Think you could give me some pointers? Help me get ready?

Rick softens. Allows a little smile.

RICK

Yeah. Sure.

The bomb is diffused. They go back to eating in peace.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

A stoic Pop Warner FOOTBALL COACH presides over the tryouts being run by his overzealous ASSISTANTS.

A PUNT RETURN DRILL: The first few KIDS that go make it less than ten yards before being taken down.

Norman is up. He's wearing a helmet and pads that are way too big. Zack and his Little Jock minions are among the eleven kids that will try to tackle him.

Norman catches the punt on the run. He makes the first tackler miss. Then the second. And third. And fourth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He sprints all the way to the end zone for a touchdown.

The Coach smiles.

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- DAY

Janice is in the front yard PLANTING FLOWERS.

Norman sits on the step with his ski gear packed beside him. They both hear the roar of the PORSCHE ENGINE before they see it.

The car stops in-front of the house. Big Norm gets out. Sandra waves to Janice from the front seat.

Norman loads his gear as Big Norm approaches Janice. He smiles as he takes in her new suburban surroundings.

BIG NORM

Look at you. All domesticated. You just need the picket fence and the PTA membership and the transformation will be complete...

JANICE

Shut up.

She smiles in spite of herself.

BIG NORM

I'll have him back Sunday night.

JANICE

Try to have him back in one piece. Remember you're not training for the Olympics. Don't push too hard. I know how you can get.

BIG NORM

How do I 'get'?

BIG NORM O/S

Attack!... ATTACK!... ATTACK!...

EXT. BIG BEAR -- DAY

Norman skis a SLALOM PRACTICE COURSE. Big Norm holds a stopwatch and hollers instructions from the bottom.

BIG NORM

Brush the gates! ... Stay low! ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman finishes the course. The STOPWATCH: "58.20"

Big Norm sighs. We've got a long way to go.

BIG NORM

OK. Good start. Go again. And stay
in the path you just carved. It'll
be slicker but you'll go faster.

Norman runs the course again. Stays in his path. He's
doing well until he hits an ice patch and wipes out.

BIG NORM

Again...

Norman goes again. This time he makes it a little further
but wipes out even harder. Big Norm resets the stopwatch.

BIG NORM

Again.

Norman doesn't even make it to the first gate. He hits an
ice patch and slides into a bush.

BIG NORM

Again.

Norman makes it all the way through the course this time,
but only because he's going almost comically slow. He's
hesitant. Afraid. Taking turns wide. Staying upright.

Norman crosses the finish line. The STOPWATCH: "1:07.35"
Big Norm just shakes his head.

BIG NORM

OK. New plan. We've gotta learn to
crawl before you can walk.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- PARKING LOT -- DAY

Big Norm uses the GROUNDKEEPER'S hose to wet down a very
short, very steep hill that connects the ski lodge to the
parking lot. Confused SKIERS stare as they pass by.

The short hill has frozen solid. It's now a SHEET OF ICE.
Big Norm and Norman stand at the top. Both in ski gear.

BIG NORM

Always keep an edge. It doesn't
matter if you only slip a half
inch, on ice, you'll never stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Big Norm sets his poles and takes off down the hill. He does three perfect turns. Glides to a nice, easy stop.

Norman nods to himself. Simple enough. He sets his poles and takes off. He tries to turn. His skis go out from under him. He falls hard on his ass and tumbles down the hill. He lands in a crumpled heap at his dad's feet.

BIG NORM

Do I even need to say it?

Norman tries again. He falls hard right away. Tumbles.

BIG NORM

Keep an edge...

Norman tries again. He makes one turn but loses the edge on the second. His skis slide out and detach as he tumbles.

BIG NORM

Lean into the turns...

Norman tries again. This time he just flies straight down without turning and crashes into a parked car. He just lies there.

NORMAN

I can't do it.

BIG NORM

Well we're not leaving until you do, so...

Norman starts to complain. Big Norm cuts him off.

BIG NORM

It's not my job to choose your goals, but it's my job to make sure you meet them. Again.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

It's dark. The lodge is closed. The street lamps are on.

Norman is still trying to get those three turns. Big Norm is still giving him instructions, encouragement.

The Porsche is the only car left in the parking lot.

Sandra sits in the front seat with the heat and radio on. She watches Norman fall again. Rolls down the window.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SANDRA

Come on, Norm. That's enough. Let him do it tomorrow. It's freezing.

Norman is at the top, sore, shivering, exhausted. He sets himself and prepares to go again.

BIG NORM

Listen to me. You're not skiing anymore, you're just trying not to fall. Don't think. Just clear your head and trust yourself.

Norman clears his head. A calm washes over. He takes off.

He does three perfect turns. Glides to a nice, easy stop.

Big Norm raises his arms in triumph. Sandra applauds from the car. Norman smiles.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Norman has just stepped out of a steaming HOT SHOWER. He wears a towel around his waist.

He notices black-and-blue BRUISES running up the back of his legs from the falls. They're still tender.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Sandra is in bed, under the covers, reading a book. Big Norm is waiting to get in the shower.

Norman steps out of the bathroom. A steam cloud follows. He shivers as walks into the room.

NORMAN

It's freezing in here.

SANDRA

I told you.

BIG NORM

You guys are wimps.

SANDRA

Fine. We're wimps. You're tough. Just turn up the heat.

Big Norm goes over to the thermostat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

You really don't think it's cold?

BIG NORM

I am conditioned for all elements.

Sandra and Norman exchange a look. Oh please.

BIG NORM

Mind over matter. I'm not cold
because I choose not to be cold.

He smiles. Peels off his shirt and heads into the shower.

Sandra grows a mischievous smile.

SANDRA

Want to test his conditioning?

EXT. MOTEL -- NIGHT

Sandra and Norman fill two ice buckets with SNOW BALLS.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Big Norm is in a nice hot shower. STEAM fogs the mirrors.
The door opens slowly. Quietly.

Sandra and Norman sneak in with their buckets. They
coordinate the attack with eye contact and hand signals.

Norman sets his bucket on the counter. Tip toes over to
the shower curtain. 3... 2... 1... He pulls it back.

Big Norm lets out a shriek as Sandra's first snow ball
hits him straight in the chest. They unload on him. He
dances around yelping, laughing, begging them to stop.

Big Norm gains the upper hand when wraps himself in the
shower curtain and starts forming the slush in the tub
into balls and throwing it back at them.

Norman and Sandra retreat to the room and laugh until it
hurts. They compose themselves.

Sandra suddenly realizes.

SANDRA

I want pie.

INT. 24-HOUR DINER -- LATE NIGHT

Norman, Sandra and Big Norm are the only customers in the restaurant. Big Norm sips coffee and watches Norman and Sandra finish off two huge pieces of BOSTON CREAM PIE.

Sandra signals the WAITRESS for two more. Norman gives her a high five. Big Norm shakes his head.

They look like a family.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- DAY

Norman skis the SLALOM PRACTICE COURSE. He's brushing the gates. Attacking the patches of ice. Really flying.

Norman crosses the finish line. The STOPWATCH: "53.10"

Norman skids to a stop in-front of Big Norm. He's out of breath. They've clearly been at this for awhile.

BIG NORM

You're gonna have to be under 50
seconds to have a chance...

(beat)

How you feeling? Tired? Worn out?

Norman nods. Still panting.

BIG NORM

Completely, totally exhausted?
Like there is absolutely no way
that you can do another run?

Norman nods emphatically.

BIG NORM

OK. One more.

Norman is still catching his breath as he gets back on the chairlift.

INT. SCHOOL -- DAY

Picture Day. The SIXTH GRADERS wear their Sunday best.

THROUGH A CAMERA LENS: A steady succession of cherubic little FACES, each cuter than the last -- girl with pigtails, boy with freckles -- all with perfect hair and perfect smiles which makes it all the more jarring when:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman sits down. Windburned cheeks. Chapped lips. His hair is matted like it's been under a wool cap for days.

He smiles but then yawns as the picture is snapped.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

Norman is asleep at his desk. He snores. Mouth open. A little puddle of drool.

His TEACHER wakes him up to give him his REPORT CARD. We see a lot of the letter "D" and "F".

INT. ARCHER HOME -- NIGHT

Norman sits glumly at the kitchen table. Rick is holding his report card. Janice paces back and forth. She's mad.

JANICE

...you go to school. You come home. No Surfing. No skiing. No friends. Nothing. Just school.

Rick nods in righteous agreement.

NORMAN

What about football?

JANICE

No.

Rick stops nodding.

RICK

Hang on. Let's not be too rash. Football has been good for him. It's a school activity. He's learning discipline, teamwork, both things he sorely lacks. And he's just starting to make friends. Yes, this report card is unacceptable and he should be punished, I just think there's a bigger picture to consider.

Norman gives her the best puppy dog look he can muster.

JANICE

Fine. School. Football. Home.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

Practice. Norman wearing pads and a helmet that fit now.
He is the starting RUNNING BACK.

Norman is by far the best athlete on the field. The whole
offense is built around getting him the ball.

INT. LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

Norman has showered and changed. He packs up his GYM BAG.
Zack and the JOCKS all respect him now. He's one of them.

EXT. SCHOOL -- DAY

Norman walks out carrying his gym bag. He finds Timmy
sitting on the steps, playing with his Green Army Men.

Norman sits all the way on the other side of the steps.
Timmy looks at him. Norman keeps his eyes straight ahead.

TIMMY

Hi.

Norman ignores him. Timmy is used to it.

The Porsche pulls up. Norman practically runs to it. He
sees Sandra in the car. SKIS loaded in the roof rack.

NORMAN

But mom said...

BIG NORM

My weekend. My rules.

Norman smiles. Goes to get in the car.

BIG NORM

Not so fast. Go get your math
book. You're studying the whole
way up and back. And in the room.

EXT. SCHOOL -- DAY

Norman comes back outside carrying his MATH BOOK.

He is startled to find Timmy showing Big Norm his Army
Men.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

...so this guy is a Lance Corporal
and this guy is a Staff Sergeant,
And even though The Corporal is
bigger, he's outranked.

(off Timmy's nod)

OK. I get it now. How do you know
so much about this stuff?

TIMMY

My dad was a Staff Sergeant... he
won a medal... they gave it to my
mom...

Big Norm's smile fades. He sees Norman standing there.

BIG NORM

You guys know each other?

Timmy nods. Norman shakes his head. Big Norm gets it.

BIG NORM

Nice talking to you, Timmy.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- DAY

An intense BLIZZARD. Driving wind. Drifting snow. All the
ski resorts and lodges are closed.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- DAY

ON TV: A local WEATHERMAN issues a "Winter Storm Warning"

Sandra is helping Norman with his MATH HOMEWORK. Big Norm
is on the PHONE, pacing like a caged tiger.

BIG NORM

...all we need is one lift and one
open slope. I understand that,
I'll pay the difference. Just call
me when you know either way. Let
me give you the number.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

The snow has tapered off but it's still coming down.

ON TV: An old Humphrey Bogart movie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Big Norm and Sandra lie together in bed watching. Norman is in the other bed, reading his math book.

The phone rings. Big Norm rolls over and answers. He listens for a beat. Then sits up in bed with a smile.

BIG NORM

We're on our way...

He hangs up. Nods to Norman. They both start putting on their snow pants.

SANDRA

Seriously?

They keep getting dressed.

SANDRA

Can't you just go tomorrow? Come on. I'm tired, I don't feel good. Don't make me get dressed and drive all the way over there...

BIG NORM

Stay. Finish the movie.

SANDRA

You're just gonna leave me here all by myself?

Big Norm puts on his coat. Sandra takes his hand.

SANDRA

Please. Just. Stay.

He leans in and gives her a soft kiss.

BIG NORM

Take a bath. We won't be long.

He zips up his coat and heads for the door. She sighs.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- NIGHT

HALOGEN LIGHTS illuminate the SLALOM PRACTICE COURSE.

Norman and Big Norm are the only skiers on the mountain. They ride the CHAIRLIFT together.

They get off the lift and make their way to the top of the hill. The course is covered in fresh powder. The RED AND BLUE GATES are all buried, hardly visible

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

Decide where you're going before
you go. Visualize every turn...

Big Norm sets his poles. Prepares to take off.

BIG NORM

You should do all your thinking up
here, then let instinct take over.
If you're thinking during the run,
you're doing something wrong...

Big Norm reads the course. Then explodes down the hill.

Norman watches in awe as his father attacks the course.
Perfect form. No fear. Big Norm looks like an Olympic
racer. He stays low, brushes the gates within inches.

Big Norm skids to a stop at the bottom, sends a plume of
powder into the air. He takes out the STOPWATCH.

Norman sets his poles. Reads the course. Launches himself
down the hill. No hesitation. No fear. He's really
flying. Carving. Staying low. Brushing the gates. He
drops into a racer's crouch for the final hundred yards.

Norman crosses the finish line. The STOPWATCH: "48.97"

Norman skids to a stop in-front of Big Norm who just
shows him the stopwatch with a proud smile. Norman reads
the time but doesn't smile.

NORMAN

I can do better.

Big Norm nods. Norman skis back to the chairlift.

EXT. MOTEL -- LATE NIGHT

The snow has stopped. The CARS in the parking lot are all
covered. The Porsche pulls in. Chains on the tires.

Big Norm and Norman walk to the room with their gear. Big
Norm also carries a BOSTON CREAM PIE from that diner.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- LATE NIGHT

ON TV: Some random infomercial with an overzealous HOST.

Sandra is nowhere to be found. We hear WATER running. Big
Norm walks in first. Norman follows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

Don't be mad. We come bearing pie.

Silence. Just the sound water and the infomercial. They step onto the carpet. It squishes under their feet.

BIG NORM

Sandra...

They hurry into the bathroom where they find the bath tub overflowing and Sandra UNCONSCIOUS on the floor.

BIG NORM

Sandra?!

Norman stares at the BLOOD running down her leg.

NORMAN O/S

Sandra, get up...

BACK TO:

EXT. ONTARIO PEAK -- DAY

Sandra drifts in and out of consciousness. Norman has to keep jostling her to keep her awake.

NORMAN

...wake up. You can't sleep.

The daylight is almost gone. The temperature has dropped. Sandra's arm has swollen. The discoloration and bleeding have gotten worse. She's pale. Her lips are blue.

Norman's eyelids are heavy. He catches himself drifting off. That's it. They can't wait any longer.

NORMAN

We have to go. Now. Come on. Get up. We're out of time.

He gets to his feet. She stays curled under the jacket.

He looks for anything they can use. He sees a young evergreen tree up the hill. He climbs up to it and breaks off it's sturdiest BRANCH. Strips the needles and twigs. He climbs down to Sandra and gives her the branch.

NORMAN

Use this like an ice axe...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He shows her how to jam it into the ice crust and hang from it. The branch holds his weight.

NORMAN

I'll go first and stay under you.
Lean all your weight on me.

He helps her to her feet. She grimaces. Her broken arm dangles. Norman uses his belt to make a sling for her.

Sandra takes one look at the ice chute, the jagged rocks, the suffocating fog. She starts crying. Terrified.

SANDRA

I can't do this...

NORMAN

Just don't look down. We'll take
it one step at a time...

She just keeps saying "I can't" over and over again.

NORMAN

Hey. Look at me. I won't let
anything bad happen. I promise.

She can see in his eyes that he means it. She calms.

They make their way to the edge of the chute. Norman goes in first. He jams his bare hands through the ice. Keeps an edge with his sneakers. Sandra uses her anchor branch.

She eases her weight onto his shoulders. They begin down.

Norman's muscles tremble under the strain. Sandra doesn't weigh much, but she weighs more than him. His HANDS turn bright red as he rakes them in-and-out of the ice.

They make slow, steady progress. One step at a time.

BACK TO:

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM -- MORNING

DOCTORS and NURSES go about their business. Norman is asleep on a bench, still wearing his snow pants.

Big Norm walks out of the ICU. Physically and emotionally drained. He doesn't look like he slept at all.

Norman wakes up as Big Norm sits down beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Can I see her?

BIG NORM

She's resting...

NORMAN

Can I see her when she wakes up?

BIG NORM

She doesn't want to see you...

(softens)

She doesn't want to see anyone.

Norman looks hurt. Big Norm fighting emotion.

BIG NORM

We're gonna have to put the training on a hold for awhile...

NORMAN

OK.

Norman sees his dad's lip trembling, tears in his eyes.

BIG NORM

I'm sorry, it's just, she's...

NORMAN

It's OK.

He puts his hand on top of his dad's hand. Big Norm breaks down in tears.

Norman hugs him as hard as he can.

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- DAY

The neighborhood tress are bare. Bob Calloway is taking down his over-the-top Christmas decorations.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

A Pop Warner PLAYOFF GAME. The stands are crowded with cheering PARENTS. The SCOREBOARD: Q4 -- "0:09" -- "28-28"

Rick and Janice are in the front row. Rick has a SUPER 8 VIDEO CAMERA set up on a tripod, recording the game.

NORMAN'S TEAM has the ball on their own 15 yard line. Time for just one more play. Norman lines up at tailback.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Zack - the quarterback - snaps the ball and pitches it to Norman who sprints to the outside. The defense closes in.

Norman stops on a dime, cuts back and runs all the way to the other side of the field. Leaving would-be TACKLERS diving at his heels. He scores with no time left.

The crowd goes wild. Norman's TEAMMATES rush him.

INT. SHAKEY'S PIZZA -- DAY

Norman, Rick and Janice eat a celebratory postgame pizza. Norman still wears his mud-stained jersey and eye black.

RICK

...I know I'm biased 'cause he's
my kid, but he's just so much
better than the other kids.

Janice smiles, mostly because he said 'my kid'.

RICK

I was down at USC the other day,
catching up with Coach Robinson.
He's a good friend. I told him
about you. He said anytime you
want to come down and watch a
practice, maybe meet some of the
players. You're welcome.

NORMAN

Cool.

Janice excuses herself to go to the girl's room. Rick clears his throat, searches for the right words.

RICK

I know things haven't always been
great, with you and me, but...
you've shown a lot of maturity
these last few weeks, and... I
just wanted you to know that I've
noticed.

Rick goes back to his pizza. Norman smiles.

EXT. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

A familiar old VW BUS is parked out front. Trafton sits on the hood smoking a cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He tosses it as Rick guides the wood-paneled STATION WAGON into the driveway. Norman, Rick and Janice get out.

Trafton smiles as he takes in Norman's football jersey.

TRAFTON

Boy Ollestad. Gone Sporto. Never thought I'd see the day...

Norman laughs, suddenly self-conscious.

TRAFTON

You know they reopened the beach a couple weeks ago...

NORMAN

I heard. Been meaning to get down to check it out.

TRAFTON

No time like the present.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- DAY

Just looks like any other beach now. There's no evidence of the houses anywhere. It's like they were never there.

Norman and Trafton are out with a bunch of other SURFERS.

Norman sits on his board, beyond the breakers. He stares in at the empty beach. Elly paddles up. Sees him staring.

ELLY

Weird. Right?

NORMAN

So weird.

She sits on her board. They float there for a beat.

ELLY

Haven't seen you around in awhile?

NORMAN

Yeah. Been busy. School and stuff.

She nods. A wave rises out of the ocean.

ELLY

You should come by more often. Trafton misses you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She smiles as she paddles hard onto the wave. He watches her ride it all the way to shore.

EXT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- SUNSET

Norman walks up the driveway, carrying his yellow-railed SURFBOARD. He leans it next to his dad's 'GUN' BOARD.

INT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- SUNSET

Norman walks inside. The front door is open but there doesn't appear anyone home. He sees a few SYMPATHY CARDS on the mantle, some DEAD FLOWERS with "get well" notes in the trash, an open BOTTLE OF WINE on the counter.

He finds Sandra sitting outback, sipping wine, staring blankly out at the ocean. A light has gone out in her.

He sits beside her. He smiles. She doesn't.

NORMAN

Where's dad?

SANDRA

I don't know. Suing something?
Defending someone? Just generally
being a better person than I am...

She finishes her wine in one gulp.

SANDRA

So. Big race this weekend. You
excited?

NORMAN

Are you gonna come up? Or...

SANDRA

Wouldn't miss it. I mean you
worked so hard. I know it means a
lot to you. To both of you.

NORMAN

It's just a race...

She looks back out at the ocean.

SANDRA

Yeah.

I/E. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

Rick is digging a FIRE PIT in the backyard. There are cases of BEER stacked on the deck.

Janice is in the kitchen on the PHONE. Smiling. She's got a list of names and phone numbers, some are checked off.

JANICE

...call it a reunion if you want,
I just want to see everyone. You
don't have to bring anything but
yourselves.

Norman sits on the steps with his SKI GEAR. The Porsche pulls up. Big Norm gets out. Sandra stays in the car.

Norman loads up his gear as Janice comes outside and walks down to Big Norm.

JANICE

So the party starts at six, try to
be back by five...

BIG NORM

We'll be here.

JANICE

I'm serious. Please don't be late.
This is important to me...

BIG NORM

We'll be here, Jan.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- DAY

Norman skis the SLALOM PRACTICE COURSE. He's taking wide turns. Avoiding the patches of ice. He's rusty. Timid.

Norman crosses the finish line. The STOPWATCH: "57.10"

BIG NORM

OK. Not bad. Let's go again. Only
this time do the exact opposite of
everything you just did...

INT. RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Big Norm and Norman eat prime rib. Sandra has hardly touched her salmon but is already on her second martini.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM

You're hesitating out there.
You're not trusting yourself...

Norman shrugs meekly.

BIG NORM

It's OK. We'll be ready. I'll
figure something out.

The three of them eat in silence. They look like
strangers in a cafeteria. Sandra eats an olive.

BIG NORM

You like the salmon?

SANDRA

It's OK...

BIG NORM

Now is that King Salmon or Sockeye
Salmon? Can you tell the
difference? People say they can,
but I've never been able to...

SANDRA

Who gives a shit?

BIG NORM

Just making conversation.

They go back to eating in silence. After a moment.

SANDRA

Do you want to try again?

Big Norm nearly chokes. Norman stops chewing.

BIG NORM

Now is not the time to...

SANDRA

It's a simple question. Yes or no.

BIG NORM

That's enough.

SANDRA

What? Just making conversation.

She gets up and walks out of the restaurant.

EXT. RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Sandra sits on a bench by herself, smoking a CIGARETTE. It's well below freezing and she's not wearing a coat.

Big Norm walks out and hands the VALET their ticket.

Norman follows carrying a woman's WINTER COAT. He sees Sandra sitting alone. He walks over and drapes it over her shoulders. He sits and watches her smoke in silence.

SANDRA

He doesn't want to talk about her
and all I want to do is talk about
her, so, that sucks...

(silence)

Funny thing is I never even wanted
kids, now I don't know if I want
anything else more in the world...

She has tears in her eyes. He doesn't know what to say.

SANDRA

You know what the worst part is?
We don't get any memories. No
pictures, nothing to hold onto. We
just get the pain and baggage...

NORMAN

You have memories. Remember when
we had that snowball fight in the
motel? Then we went to that diner
and you and me almost ate a whole
Boston Cream pie by ourselves?

(beat)

She had pie too.

Sandra smiles a sad smile. A few of those tears slip out. Norman stands as the Valet pulls The Porsche around.

He holds out his HAND to help her up. She takes it.

BACK TO:

EXT. ONTARIO PEAK -- NIGHT

Norman's HANDS are bleeding from being driven into the ice so many times. Bright red cuts on all ten knuckles.

He and Sandra have made it several hundred yards down the chute, still several hundred to go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's darker. The temperature drops by the minute. The FOG has enveloped them. They can't see more than a few feet.

Norman's muscles tremble, he's sweating, out of breath. Sandra can tell he's wearing out. She tries to put more and more of her weight on the anchor branch.

They move slowly but methodically. One step at a time. Sandra is calmer now. No longer scared. Almost placid.

SANDRA

I blamed you...

She's not really talking to him, more to herself.

SANDRA

...I don't know why... I know it wasn't your fault...

Sandra's anchor branch slips out. Her full weight lands on Norman's shoulders. He almost loses his grip.

NORMAN

It's OK. Just. Focus.

But she's not focused. Maybe it's the blood loss or the broken arm, but she starts to look woozy. Out of it.

They keep moving. Sandra can barely get the anchor branch through the ice crust.

And then SHE SLIPS. It happens so fast. Norman has no time to react.

One second she's on his shoulders, the next she's falling past him. He tries to grab her arm, leg, anything, but he can't. She screams as she plummets down the chute.

She disappears into THE FOG. Her scream dwindles away in the wind.

Norman doesn't think. He just takes off down the chute as fast as he can. Screaming her name over and over again.

He slips and slides. Dragging his swollen, bleeding hands through the ice to slow himself down. His RIGHT HAND clips a rock.

The TRAIL OF BLOOD starts at a tree trunk. He follows it.

He flips onto his back. Sledding without the sled. He uses his palms and heels to control his fall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Finally, he reaches the bottom and the chute flattens out. A long, drawn-out deceleration. A blown tire limping to a stop.

He lies there. Out of breath. He tries to move his right hand. Can't. He sits up and looks around.

He sees SANDRA'S BODY lying in an enclave of spruce trees. A wound on the back of her head where she hit a rock or tree. Blood forms a halo around her.

The incline is still steep but no longer so steep that he can't control his slide. He slides down to her. Her eyes are closed. She's not breathing. There's no doubt.

He starts to cry. Just says "I'm sorry" over and over.

He cries and cries. The strength and will power just sap out of him. It's over. He lies down beside her. His breathing slows. His eyelids flutter. He's at peace.

He CLOSES HIS EYES and just waits for it all to end.

BACK TO:

EXT. BIG BEAR -- DAY

The BANNER that reads: "1979 SoCal Ski Championships"

RACE OFFICIALS sign in young SKI RACERS and pin red numbers to their chests. COACHES go over last-minute strategy. PARENTS help sharpen and polish skis.

Norman sits by himself, wearing the same ski racing gear we met him in. Through the lodge window, he can see Sandra at the bar where we first found her.

Big Norm glides over on his SKIS. Norman is confused.

BIG NORM

Follow me.

They ski over to an operating CHAIRLIFT where a RACE OFFICIAL stops them from getting on.

RACE OFFICIAL

Sorry, we're not allowing any more warm up runs...

BIG NORM

I know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RACE OFFICIAL

This lift only accesses this hill.
How are you planning to get down?

BIG NORM

We'll figure something out.

EXT. MOUNTAIN TOP -- DAY

Big Norm and Norman get off the chairlift. They cross to the undeveloped side of the mountain.

Norman finds himself staring down the same BACK-COUNTRY SLOPE we first found him staring down but the stoic composure isn't there. He looks a little pale.

NORMAN

You've got to be kidding me?

BIG NORM

Desperate times...

Norman looks at the sheer slope, the rocks, the trees.

NORMAN

I can't do this.

BIG NORM

Like you couldn't get a tube ride?
Or learn ice? Or break 50 seconds?

Big Norm sets his poles. Prepares to take off.

BIG NORM

Trust yourself to know what to do.

NORMAN

What if I don't?

BIG NORM

Than you haven't been paying
attention.

With that, he launches himself down the slope. He weaves between the evergreen trees and bushes, kicking up a cloud of powder in his wake.

Norman sets his poles. He studies the slope. Takes a deep breath and takes off. The snow is deep. Up to his knees.

He almost falls right away. He catches himself. Stays up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's hesitant. Skiing scared. Just trying not to fall or hit anything. A CLOUD OF POWDER kicks up around him, makes it hard to see. He almost crashes into a bush.

And then it clicks. We can see the moment. He steadies. The hesitation becomes determination. All the training, the work, it all comes rushing back. He gets low.

A smile is plastered to Norman's face as he weaves easily around obstacles. No fear. He sees Big Norm. Gets lower. Catches up to him. They go back and forth for the lead.

They come flying out of the woods and skid to stop in front of an ACCESS ROAD that leads up to the lodge. They stand there catching their breath for a moment.

NORMAN

I want to do it again.

Big Norm smiles.

EXT. BIG BEAR -- DAY

A fellow RACER, much bigger and stronger than Norman, attacks the slalom course as the CROWD cheers him on. The Racer brushes every gate, stays low. The kid is flying.

The Racer crosses the finish line. Norman's eyes find the STANDINGS BOARD. After a few seconds the time is posted:

"L. McCloud -- '46.70' -- FIRST PLACE"

Norman's heart sinks. He is still in shock when the Race Official comes over to tell him it's his turn to go up.

Big Norm can see Norman's concern.

BIG NORM

Hey. Relax. The work is done. This thing is already over, these guys just don't know it yet. I've never won a court case in a courtroom, I win 'em before I walk in...

Norman's GROUP OF RACERS heads for the lift. The Race Official is getting impatient. Big Norm meets his eyes.

BIG NORM

Do me a favor. When you get off the lift, go look at that back country run again. If you can do that, you can do this.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG NORM (CONT'D)
 You can do anything. There is no
 course you can't conquer, no
 mountain too high, no slope too
 steep...

Norman believing it because his father believes it.

BIG NORM
 You're the Boy Wonder. Remember
 that. Always remember that.

BACK TO:

EXT. ONTARIO PEAK -- NIGHT

Norman OPENS HIS EYES. Sits up. Looks around. Not yet.

He crawls over to a spruce tree and breaks off two of the
 sturdiest BRANCHES. Strips the leaves and twigs.

Norman slides down the rest of the slope on his ass, uses
 the branches like ski poles. He maneuvers around rocks,
 trees. Bangs into a couple. Stabs of pain. He ignores it.

The slope flattens and narrows into a sheer WALL OF ROCK.
 A naturally-formed obstacle course.

Norman climbs over and down the rocks. He stumbles, slips
 and falls a few times, but never stops climbing. He's a
 boy possessed, running on pure adrenaline.

He jumps down off the last rock and lands in knee-deep
 POWDER with a thud. He trudges along, like walking
 through quicksand. Every step saps his energy.

He's panting by the time he comes to the CREEK, six-feet
 wide, ice layer over top. He tests the ice. It cracks. He
 looks for a way around. Nothing. No choice but to jump.

He shorts the landing. Splashes into the ice-cold water.
 Sloshes out. Wet clothes. Doesn't matter. Can't stop.

Darker now. The wind picks up. The snow drifts.

Norman trudges along. He stumbles into a maze of
 BUCKTHORN BUSHES, razor-sharp thorns snag clothes, tear
 skin.

He can't see where he's going. The bushes keep getting
 thicker and harder to push through, but he does.

Finally, he emerges into a:

EXT. MEADOW -- NIGHT

Perfectly flat. Undisturbed snow. Beautiful in a way.

Norman walks the perimeter. A towering wall of ten-foot high buckthorn bushes. He looks for any sign of a trail or path. Nothing. No entry or exit point. A tomb.

The panic starts to creep into his eyes. Then he sees it.

A FOOTPRINT. Several. Leading into the bushes. Hope.

Norman crawls into the buckthorn, following the trail of prints. They cut a chaotic, circuitous along down a HILLSIDE. Not as steep as the chute, but steep.

He follows the trail deeper and deeper into the brush until the footprints cluster together and fade away. He looks around. Frantic. Finds only undisturbed snow.

He has no idea which way to go. The panic again. He starts moving quickly. Too quickly. He slips and falls.

Norman tumbles down a hillside. Twisting in the vines. He lands hard on the frozen ground. Tangled in buckthorn.

He just lies there. Exhausted. Broken. Bleeding. Frozen.

His eyes flutter. All we hear is his slowing breathing.

EXT. BALDY VILLAGE -- NIGHT

ONTARIO PEAK towers over the only short-order DINER in the small mountain town of Baldy Village.

INT. DINER -- NIGHT

GLENN FARMER, 17, all-American, sips a cup of coffee. His DOG, a skinny brown mutt, sits under the table.

The only WAITRESS, 17, pretty, approaches his booth.

WAITRESS

Hey. I just got another table. I'm sorry. Can you wait 30 minutes?

GLENN

For you? I'll wait all night.

She gives him a kiss and goes. He finishes his coffee.

EXT. BALDY VILLAGE -- NIGHT

Glenn walks out of the diner. He whistles for the dog and heads in the direction of a HIKING TRAIL.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL -- NIGHT

Glenn hikes up with a FLASHLIGHT. The beam dances over the buckthorn bushes that line the trail.

The Dog runs ahead, BARKING and playing in the snow.

Norman lies just off the trail. Hidden in the buckthorn. Barely clinging to consciousness. He hears the dog, sees the LIGHT dancing in the bushes. Glenn walks within a dozen yards but doesn't see him.

Norman starts to crawl. Branches CRACK. Brush RUSTLES.

Glenn doesn't hear it but The Dog does. He stops and looks back. Barks.

Glenn turns around. His flashlight beam finds Norman crawling out of the buckthorn.

EXT. CHAPMAN RANCH -- NIGHT

PATRICIA CHAPMAN, 41, is outside collecting firewood when she hears someone yelling "HELP!" in the distance.

She looks up and sees Glenn running through her backyard with Norman laying limp in his arms.

INT. CHAPMAN RANCH -- NIGHT

Patricia opens the door. Glenn comes in with Norman. He is barely clinging to consciousness.

Glenn lays Norman down on a soft Indian rug next to the FIREPLACE. Patricia comes in with a FIRST AID KIT.

In the firelight, we get our first look at the full extent of Norman's injuries. Broken hand, black eyes, bruising all over, deep cuts on his chin, above his eye.

The skin on all ten of his knuckles has been worn down to the bone.

Patricia tends to the wounds. Norman looks at her. She smiles warmly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PATRICIA

You're safe now.

The AMBULANCE SIRENS approach as Norman's eyes close.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

The steady sound of MACHINES monitoring vital signs.

Norman lies asleep in a hospital bed, his right hand is in a soft cast. His cuts are stitched, fingers bandaged.

Janice is at his bedside. Her eyes are red from crying. Rick stands in the doorway talking quietly with a DOCTOR.

Norman opens his eyes. Looks around. Sees Janice.

NORMAN

Hi mom...

Janice throws her arms around him.

JANICE

Hi baby...

She can't stop hugging and kissing him.

Rick walks over and pats his shoulder with a smile.

RICK

When you feel like you can eat,
let us know. They want you to eat.

Norman turns to his mother.

NORMAN

Did they find dad?

Janice starts crying.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Norman sits up in bed. Shell-shocked. Janice sits holding his hand. Rick walks in.

RICK

There are a bunch of reporters in
the lobby. They wanna talk to you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Why?

RICK

People want to know, they want to know how you did it. You don't have to. We just thought you might want to tell them...

Norman looks to his mother. She shrugs.

INT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

A press conference. Norman sits in a wheelchair. Dozens of microphones and tape recorders lie on the table in front of him. Janice and Rick are at his side.

REPORTERS surround them. PHOTOGRAPHERS snap pictures.

NORMAN

I never gave up... my dad taught me never to give up, so...

REPORTER

Do you remember what was going through your head as you were coming down that ice curtain?

He sits there thinking. Bulbs flash. It comes to him.

NORMAN

Balance and patience.

INT. CHURCH -- DAY

Hundreds of PEOPLE attend Big Norm's funeral.

They stand in the aisles, overflow into the doorways. Clients, colleagues, friends, family. All crying like they just lost a family member.

Norman sits with Janice. He isn't crying. He looks numb.

INT. WAREHOUSE BAR -- NIGHT

The RECEPTION feels like that last night on Topanga. The same six-piece Dixie Band plays softly.

The mood is more joyful than morbid. A lot of storytelling, laughing and crying.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman stands in a corner. Lost in his thoughts. Tearful GUESTS keep coming up to offer their condolences. They give hugs and kisses. He accepts them robotically.

Norman doesn't make much eye contact.

Trafton and Elly approach. Trafton wears a suit that doesn't fit. Elly wears a dress. She's been crying.

TRAFTON

I don't know what to say, you know...

(shrugs)

He was a legend.

Norman tries to nod.

ELLY

Are you OK? Of course you're not OK, that was dumb, I'm sorry...

(welling up)

I'm really sorry.

She hugs him. He hugs her back. The band starts playing "Blue Eyes Cryin' In The Rain".

Norman lets her go and walks outside.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- DAY/NIGHT

A parade of WELL-WISHERS come through the house. We won't hear anything through the following sequence.

Rick greets them all with the same handshake and dutiful nod. He knows they're not here to see him.

SOME Janice and Norman know -- Al Freedman, Bob Barrow, The Yellow Submarine Surfers. OTHERS they meet for the first time -- Poor People Big Norm represented Pro Bono.

They all have something to offer -- everything from a simple home-cooked MEAL to deeply-personal MEMENTOS for Norman -- and they all have a story to tell.

Janice hangs on every word of every story, laughing and crying. Norman wears the same emotionless mask through every visit, occasionally nodding and forcing smiles.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

The FOOD has piled up on the kitchen counter - everything from casseroles to freshly-baked banana bread.

Norman stares with that same blank look. Janice walks in.

JANICE
You hungry?

NORMAN
No...

JANICE
You sure? Did you eat lunch?

NORMAN
Tuna casserole...

He just keeps staring. Janice watches him. Concerned.

JANICE
So. I think it would be a good
idea for you to talk to someone.

NORMAN
Like a shrink?

JANICE
You've been through a lot. And...

NORMAN
I don't want to talk to anyone.

JANICE
(beat)
OK.

The doorbell rings. Janice goes to answer it. She comes back carrying a UPS PACKAGE.

JANICE
It's for you...

She cuts the packing tape. Norman opens the box and looks inside. We don't see what's inside yet, we just see how he sees it. His face loses a shade of color.

He turns and walks out without a word.

Janice reaches in the box and pulls out an engraved TROPHY with a little ski racer on top.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She sighs.

INT. NORMAN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Norman crawls into bed. Pulls the comforter up over him. He doesn't cry or anything. Just lies there staring out the window.

INT. BIG NORM'S COTTAGE -- DAY

Rick and Janice help Norman's GRANDPARENTS go through and box up Big Norm's things.

Janice is packing up a closet full of clothes when she comes across a BOX OF JUNK. Something catches her eye.

She pulls out a dusty, old FRAMED PHOTO: of Big Norm surfing at Topanga Beach with a ONE-YEAR-OLD BABY strapped to his back in a canvas papoose.

Janice has tears in her eyes as she sets it aside.

INT. NORMAN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norman watches out his window as Rick unloads BOX AFTER BOX of his father's things and stacks them in the garage.

Norman watches him unload Big Norm's SURFBOARD. He looks walks away from the window. Gets back in bed.

EXT. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

Trafton and Norman are in the driveway looking at his yellow-railed SURFBOARD.

Norman's cuts looks better and the bruises have faded, but he's still got that vacant thousand-mile stare.

NORMAN

It's got a few scratches, but it's in pretty good shape.

TRAFTON

It's in great shape. I can't believe your selling.

NORMAN

Yeah. Well. I haven't been going as much since we moved up here...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRAFTON

So this is it? You're done? For good? Just like that?

NORMAN

Yeah, I think so...

TRAFTON

So you're not sure.

NORMAN

I'm sure.

TRAFTON

Don't sell yet. You're going through some heavy stuff. Just...

NORMAN

(snaps)
You want it or not.

Trafton gets a glimpse of the anger simmering beneath the surface. He pulls out a wad of cash and hands it to him.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- NIGHT

Norman lies on the couch watching cartoons. Rick and Janice are having a heated conversation in the kitchen.

RICK

He has to go back some time.

JANICE

I understand that but we don't have to rush him.

NORMAN

You know I can hear you guys talking. Right?

They walk into the living room. Rick turns off the TV.

RICK

Do you want to go back?

NORMAN

I never want to go to school.

RICK

Do you feel like you're ready to go back?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

I'm fine.

JANICE

You don't have to go yet. You can
take a few more days, I still
think you should...

NORMAN

I'm fine, mom.

INT. SCHOOL -- DAY

Norman through the hallway. He can feel the KIDS and
TEACHERS all staring at him, feeling sorry for him.

He ignores the looks and whispers. Unlocks his locker.

ZACK

Ollestad...

Zack approaches. Norman sighs. Braces himself.

ZACK

How are you, man?

NORMAN

Great.

Zack nods. Totally missing the sarcasm.

ZACK

Sorry about your pops. Rough.

Norman nods.

ZACK

Saw your picture in the paper.

Norman just looks at him. Fucking idiot.

INT. CLASSROOM -- DAY

Norman sits at desk. Doodling. Lost in his thoughts.

His TEACHER sets his report card on his desk. He looks at
it. We see a lot of the letter "B" and "C"

Norman's eyes go straight to the "A" in math.

INT. CAFETERIA -- DAY

Norman sits with Zack and the JOCKS. They're all talking about the inane bullshit sixth grade boys talk about. Norman doesn't say anything. Just picks at his food.

ZACK

Check out Soldier Boy.

Timmy sits in his usual spot by himself, playing with his Army Men. Zack grows a smile.

ZACK

Watch this.

Norman watches as Zack and a few of his minions cross the cafeteria to Timmy. He goes straight for his 'STAFF SERGEANT' ARMY MAN.

They do the usual keep away thing until Timmy is good and distraught. Then Zack drops the Army Man on the ground at his feet. Timmy reaches down to get it but before he can Zack brings his foot down. Crushing it.

Timmy just stays on the ground staring at his broken toy. Tears welling in his eyes.

Norman doesn't even seem conscious of what happens next. He gets up out of his seat and walks straight across the cafeteria to Zack who turns with a big smile. Until Norman punches him in the face and he drops like a rock.

Norman isn't done. He jumps on top of him and hits him again. And again. And again. And again.

KIDS cheer for a fight at first, but the cheers quickly turn to audible gasps as Norman pummels Zack's face.

All the rage comes pouring out. It takes two TEACHERS to pull him off.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE -- DAY

Rick and Janice meet with the PRINCIPAL and GUIDANCE COUNSELOR behind closed doors.

Norman sits outside the office, holding an ice pack on his hand.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

Norman, Rick and Janice walk into the house together.

JANICE

Go to your room. Stay there. I'll
call you for dinner.

INT. NORMAN'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Norman walks in and stops in his tracks when he sees the
ski racing TROPHY on display on a bookshelf.

His eyes narrow. He has no doubt who put it there.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- NIGHT

Norman hasn't touched his dinner. Janice and Rick are
almost finished theirs. They eat in charged silence.

All we hear are utensils scraping plates.

RICK

You're gonna meet with the
guidance counselor. Every day.

NORMAN

For how long?

RICK

However long it takes for her to
be comfortable letting you around
other children. You broke his
nose, his parents are probably
gonna sue us. You can't just...

JANICE

Rick.

Janice just looks at him and shakes her head.

RICK

Fine. You deal with it.

Rick clear his plate and goes into the living room to
watch TV. He turns on one of those PBS Specials on Nixon.

Norman and Janice stay seated at the table. She looks at
him. He looks at his food.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANICE

You know you can talk to me about anything...

(off his silence)

About your dad...

Norman picks at his food. Janice lowers her voice so only he can hear.

JANICE

I didn't know how to surf when I met him, so, on one of our first dates, he took me to Topanga. We hadn't bought the house yet...

NORMAN

(softly)

I don't want to talk about this.

JANICE

...he wouldn't let me leave until I stood up on a wave. I thought he was kidding, but, three hours later, there I was, still...

NORMAN

(explodes)

I said I don't wanna fucking talk about this.

Janice quiets. Wounded. Rick jumps up out of his chair.

RICK

God damn it. Enough is enough.

He storms back into the kitchen.

RICK

You're not the only person to ever lose someone they love. You're not even the only person in this house who lost someone they love...

Rick realizes he's yelling. Calms. Lowers his voice.

RICK

I am sorry about what you went through. I really am, but it doesn't give you the right to treat you mother like shit and beat kids half to death. Life isn't fair, but it goes on...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RICK (CONT'D)

(softens)

I know you've been through a lot.

Norman gets up from the table and runs back to his room.

We hear the door slam. Rick and Janice exchange a look.

RICK

He needed to hear it.

Rick sits down in his rocking chair. Goes back to the TV.

Janice starts clearing the table. A quiet moment passes.

Norman comes out of his bedroom carrying the ski racing TROPHY. He walks right into the living room and throws it through the TV SCREEN. Glass shatters. Janice screams.

NORMAN

You don't know anything.

Rick just stares at Norman who is trembling with rage.

NORMAN

He thought you were a joke...

(ice cold)

You are a joke.

Norman walks back to his room. Rick tries not look affected but he is. The trophy falls out of the TV.

INT. NORMAN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norman lies on his bed, staring out the window. Janice walks in. She's carrying that old FRAMED PHOTO: of Big Norm surfing at Topanga with the baby on his back.

She sits beside him. Norman doesn't move or look at her. She just sits there looking at the photo for a moment.

JANICE

This was taken on your first birthday. That's you...

She points to the baby in the papoose. Norman sits up. He's never seen this before.

JANICE

I was so mad. Taking a baby that age into the ocean is dumb, surfing with a baby that age is criminally dumb.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANICE (CONT'D)

But he didn't see it that way, he just wanted you to experience things. That's just how he was. He never stopped to think. He never stopped. He just lived...

(beat)

This picture sums up why I always loved him and why I couldn't be married to him. I mean he would take these crazy risks, and I'd be worried sick, and he'd say these dumb things with that big smile of his like "Well, if I die, I'll die with a smile on my face" and I remember thinking 'good for you, but what about me?'...

She looks at The Photo with a bittersweet smile.

JANICE

He was crazy, absolutely out of his mind, but, he was so special, and he loved you so much...

She looks up from The Photo and finds Norman with tears in his eyes.

NORMAN

I miss him.

He finally breaks down. It all comes pouring out. He sobs and sobs as his mother holds him. Rocks him.

FADE TO:

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- DAY

The neighborhood tress bloom. Carol Calloway meticulously fertilizes her rose bushes.

A yellow SCHOOL BUS stops on the corner.

Norman gets off. His injuries are healed. The color has returned to his face.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

A new TV and VCR have been installed in the living room.

Rick is fiddling with the controls, trying to get a video to play. Norman walks in as he finally gets it to work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON TV: A highlight reel of the home videos Rick took at Norman's Pop Warner football games. The clips have been edited together with music and titles.

Norman stands there watching himself on TV. He smiles.

NORMAN

How did you do this?

RICK

Friend of mine is an editor. I just bought him a case of beer. Spring practice is starting up again soon, I figured you could use this to find things you want to work on, or...

They watch Norman break a forty yard touchdown run.

RICK

You like it?

NORMAN

Yeah. This is really cool. Thanks.

RICK

You're welcome.

Norman starts back to his room. Stops and turns back.

NORMAN

You know I never really said I was sorry for...

RICK

Don't worry about it.

(beat)

I've been bugging your mom to let me get a new TV for years.

They share a smile.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

The first day of spring football practice. Norman runs drills with the rest of the OFFENSE.

Zack is there. The smirk is gone. Getting his ass kicked seems to have been a character building experience.

Norman finishes an agility drill and looks down the field at the DEFENSE working on hitting drills. Looks like fun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Hey Coach? You think I could try
defense this year?

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

Norman delivers a bone-crunching hit to a RECEIVER coming
across the middle. Like a mini-Lawrence Taylor.

We watch him deliver HIT after HIT after HIT. Each more
vicious than the last. He's a natural.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY

Practice is over. Norman and the rest of the TEAM walk
off the field, heading for the locker room.

ELLY

Hey Sporto...

Norman sees Elly sitting in the first row of the empty
bleachers. He smiles and walks over to her.

NORMAN

What are you doing here?

ELLY

I go to school here.

NORMAN

Since when?

ELLY

Since somebody offered my dad a
bunch of money for our ranch...

NORMAN

Cool.

ELLY

Not really. How are you?

NORMAN

Good. Better. You?

ELLY

I miss Moon Star...
(off his look)
My horse.

They sit looking at the school, the suburbs around it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Well? Welcome to normal.

ELLY

You hear Trafton and the guys are
having a bonfire thing Friday?

(off his nod)

Are you gonna go?

NORMAN

I don't know. Maybe.

ELLY

You wanna, like, go together?

He looks at her. She's trying not to blush. He smiles.

INT. ARCHER HOME -- NIGHT

ON TV: A local WEATHERMAN talks about a storm system
moving into the Greater Los Angeles area.

Rick is watching the weather report intently. Janice is
gift-wrapping a cardboard JEWELRY BOX at the table.

Norman is wearing his nicest pair of board shorts and
can't stop fixing his hair in the mirror.

RICK

...it never rains in this town and
it's gonna rain for the damn game
Unbelievable. Gonna have to bring
your umbrella tomorrow, kid.

(off Norman)

Why do you keep messing with your
hair?

JANICE

(smiles)

He's got a little date...

NORMAN

Mom.

JANICE

Sorry...

She tries to stop smiling. Can't. She finishes wrapping
the jewelry box and walks it over to Norman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

We're just going down to the beach. It's no big deal.

RICK

Don't stay out too late. I want to leave early to beat traffic.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- NIGHT

The WAVES are up. Bigger than usual. Strong off shore wind. A BONFIRE burns on the beach.

Mostly TEENAGERS sit around it. Playing guitar. Passing joints. Talking. Dancing. Laughing.

Trafton and a few other SURFERS are out in the water, surfing by firelight.

Elly and Norman are the only ones that aren't drinking. They sit in the sand. Watching the night surfers.

NORMAN

I almost forgot...

He takes out the jewelry box and gives it to her.

ELLY

What's this for?

She opens the box and finds a little CHARM BRACELET with tiny horse pendants dangling off.

NORMAN

I just saw it and thought of you.

ELLY

(touched)

I love it. Thank you.

NORMAN

It has horses...

She smiles. I can see that. Trafton and the Surfers walk out of the water carrying their boards.

TRAFTON

Is that Boy Ollestad? It can't be. Boy Ollestad doesn't come around anymore. I must be hallucinating. Who slipped me acid?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Norman smiles. Get up and gives Trafton a handshake/hug.

TRAFTON

You don't have a beer. You want a beer?

NORMAN

No thanks.
(nods to the waves)
Pretty big out there tonight.

TRAFTON

This is just warm ups. Tomorrow is gonna be epic. Steady sets of 10-footers. I'm talking biblical shit. You gotta come out.

ELLY

You should totally come out.

TRAFTON

I'll rent you your board back.
Give you a fair price.

NORMAN

I can't.

TRAFTON

OK. Fine. You can use it for free, but don't say I never did anything for you.

NORMAN

I really can't.

ELLY

Why not?

The Surfers are all looking at him.

NORMAN

I gotta go to this USC football thing with my step dad. We've been planning it for awhile. He's really excited about it.

TRAFTON

They play football in spring now?

NORMAN

It's like a scrimmage or something where the offense and defense play each other in full pads.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NORMAN (CONT'D)

It doesn't count, but they still
go hard. It should be cool.
Charles White is playing, so...

The Surfers just stare like he's speaking Chinese.

NORMAN

Another time though. Definitely.

EXT. LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM -- DAY

The 93,000 seat home of the USC Trojan Football Team.

It's POURING RAIN but that doesn't dampen the enthusiasm
of the die hard FANS who have come out to watch the first
spring scrimmage.

Head Coach JOHN ROBINSON presides over the proceedings.

Rick and Norman sit under a giant umbrella. Rick provides
a running commentary on the various plays and players.

Norman can't take his eyes off two-time All-American
running back CHARLES WHITE (#33). Impossibly fast and
strong. Far and away the best athlete on the field.

White takes a routine hand off up the middle. Breaks a
tackle. Than another. He explodes into the secondary.
Pure power and grace.

Rick and Norman cheer him all the way into the end zone.

INT. LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM -- DAY

Norman stands in the tunnel as the PLAYERS emerge from
the locker room. None of them really acknowledge him.

Rick walks over.

RICK

Somebody wants to meet you...

INT. COACH ROBINSON'S OFFICE -- DAY

USC pride on every wall. Plaques. Rings. Banners.

Coach Robinson sits behind his desk. The rain comes down
in sheets outside his office windows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COACH ROBINSON

So I hear you're quite the little
running back...

Rick and Norman sit across from him.

NORMAN

I'm OK. I guess.

COACH ROBINSON

Modest too. That's good. Rick
tells me you want to play football
for USC one day.

Norman looks at Rick. I do?

NORMAN

I like football...

COACH ROBINSON

These guys didn't get here by just
liking it. They worked hard since
they were young. Younger than you.
You gotta eat, sleep, and breathe
this game, son. It takes devotion.
Sacrifice. It's not about who's
the biggest and the fastest, it's
about who wants it more. You need
the right mind set. It's not about
you, it's about what's best for
the team... never too early to
learn that lesson.

Norman just looks at him curiously.

COACH ROBINSON

Anything you want to ask me?

NORMAN

Can I use your bathroom?

COACH ROBINSON

(smiles)
I'll do you one better.

INT. TROJAN LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

Norman walks in. The players are all gone. It's quiet
save for the sound of the rain.

An EQUIPMENT MANAGER has just finished hanging the last
of the JERSEYS in the player lockers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

Looking for the bathroom?

The Man points to the back and leaves. Norman is alone.

He walks around. Picking things up. Puts them down.

His eyes find THE PLAYER LOCKERS. Militantly organized. The cleats. The pants. The Jerseys. All hung the same. Everything has a place. Everything is in its place.

He stares for awhile. Then heads back to the bathrooms.

INT. COACH ROBINSON'S OFFICE -- DAY

Rick and The Coach wait in awkward silence. Two men out of things to say to each other.

COACH ROBINSON

Did he fall in?

INT. TROJAN LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

Rick and The Coach walk in. Head back to the bathrooms.

RICK

Norman?

There's no one in the stalls. The room is empty.

RICK

Norman...

Rick's eyes find a door marked '**EXIT**'. It's ajar.

EXT. LOS ANGELES -- DAY

Norman runs out of the stadium through the pouring rain. He jumps on a CITY BUS. Dripping wet.

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- DAY

Norman gets off a DIFFERENT BUS. He runs down the street.

EXT. ARCHER HOME -- DAY

By the time he reaches the house, he's soaked to the bone. He runs straight into the garage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He starts searching frantically through all the BOXES marked "Norm". He can't find it. Where is it?

Rick's STATION WAGON squeals into the driveway. He jumps out. Beet red. Furious.

RICK

What the Hell was that? You just disappear?! Jesus Christ. I thought you'd been kidnapped. Hey. I'm talking to you...

But Norman isn't listening. He just keeps looking. And then sees it. His DAD'S SURFBOARD.

He grabs the board. Grabs his SKATEBOARD and heads out.

RICK

Where do you think you're going?

Rick grabs his arm but Norman shakes free. He jumps on his skateboard and heads off down the hill.

Rick jumps in the station wagon and goes after him.

EXT. PACIFIC PALISADES -- DAY

The long, steep HILL connects The Suburbs to The Shore.

Norman comes rocketing down on his SKATEBOARD. He stays low in a racer's crouch. Takes the turns tight. Flying.

Rick gives chase in the station wagon.

EXT. TOPANGA BEACH -- DAY

Furious, angry ocean. Wind. Monster swells. 10-footers at least. Flat out The biggest WAVES we've seen.

It's gotten so big that Trafton, Elly and the rest of the SURFERS have gotten out of the water.

Norman skateboards right onto the sand.

ELLY

Norman! You made it. You can't go out right now. It's too rough...

Norman strips off his shirt. No wetsuit. Doesn't matter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRAFTON

Seriously, man. Not safe...

The Station Wagon skids to a stop. Rick jumps out.

RICK

Norman! Get back here...

Norman grabs his dad's board and charges out into the ocean. He paddles as hard and fast as he can.

Rick runs down onto the beach. Stops at the shoreline. He can't go any further

The entire beach stops to watch Norman paddle out.

All nervous for him. He almost gets toppled by a couple waves but he manages to make it out to the line-up.

He floats there for a minute. Watching the ocean like a big cat ready to pounce. He sees a wave coming. His wave.

Everyone holding their breath as the MOUNTAIN OF WATER rises out of the ocean.

Norman paddles as hard as he can. He drops in just as the ten-foot wave starts to crest. His form is perfect, but the wave is bearing down fast. It breaks right over top of him.

Rick looks concerned. Until Norman comes shooting out the other side of the break. Still on the board. Arms raised in triumph. He lets out a primal howl.

Trafton and the surfers erupt in cheering and applause.

Elly looks so happy she could cry. Even Rick can't help but smile as he stands there getting soaked.

EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN -- DAY

Norman paddles back out beyond the breakers.

He sits on his board. Looking in at Topanga Beach. It looks like just another beach now but it will always be 'his' beach.

Norman has tears in his eyes and a big smile on his face.

We can't tell if the tears are from the rain or the saltwater but we know that smile is for his father.