

CHRISTINE

Screenplay

by

Bill Phillips

Based on the
Novel by
Stephen King

SHOOTING SCRIPT
February 16, 1983

The action of this film takes place in the typical American small town of Rockbridge, California, during the school year 1978-79.

Except for the opening scene...

CHRISTINE

FADE IN:

1 BLACK SCREEN 1

The SILENCE IS SHATTERED by the boasting-blues/rock guitar of George Thorogood's BAD TO THE BONE.

During the WAILING GUITAR INTRO, the TITLE FADES UP out of the black:

CHRISTINE

When the lyrics begin, we:

CUT TO:

2 INT. PLYMOUTH FURY ASSEMBLY LINE 2

SUPERIMPOSE:

Detroit, 1957

The plant is state-of-the-art for 1957. Manual labor is prevalent. No computers, little automation. Just plain hard work, and the seething anger that goes with it. You can see it in the eyes of the assembly line workers. Some of them are black. Most are white. All of them sweat. Grimy hands work fast to marry engine block to chassis. We are looking at a red-and-white Plymouth Fury.

GEORGE THOROGOOD (V.O.)
(singing an angry
boast)

On the day I was born...
The nurses all gathered 'round...
They gazed in wide wonder...
At the joy they had found...
The Head Nurse spoke up...
Said leave this one alone...
She could tell right away...
I was Bad to the Bone...
Bad to the Bone, Bad to the Bone.
(etc.)

As the red-and-white Fury receives its engine, someone's hand is mashed. His shouts can't be heard over the MUSIC and the RISING DIN OF FACTORY NOISE. A supervisor wearing a Detroit Tigers baseball jacket leads the bleeding man away. Another replaces him. No time is lost. An efficient operation, fueled by replaceable humans.

3 AT AN INSPECTION STATION 3

on the line, men are better dressed, but they work with furious haste, marking their checklists as they comb each vehicle for flaws. A loose windshield wiper gets rejected. On another car, a stiffly rolling window is rejected. A slightly overweight supervisor walks by the beehive of inspectors, inspecting them. He looks down the line of cars to come.

4 SUPERVISOR'S POV - THE PLYMOUTH FURIES 4

A fleet of the heavy duty cars extends to infinity in the pre-OSHA dimness of the plant. They look like armored battle wagons. Big. Sturdy. The grim-faced employees are their infantry. By now, the MUSIC TRACK HAS BEEN LOST TO THE NOISE.

5 ON THE ASSEMBLY LINE 5

A BLACK MAN manually raises the red-and-white Fury's antenna, gets in, ignoring the NO SMOKING sign on the wall, flicks a cigar ash on the car's plastic interior protective cover. He turns on the RADIO. It works, playing Buddy Holly's NOT FADE AWAY. He checks the headlights.

6 AT THE END OF THE LINE 6

An employee, JOE, 54, looks at his watch. It is nearly 5 P.M.

The factory clock hits 5 P.M. A LOUD WHISTLE SOUNDS. Men relax. The line slows to a halt. The NOISE CEASES. Men start to walk off. Several men remove earplugs. The TIME CLOCK CLATTERS, its noise mingling with TIRED CONVERSATIONS. These are the only sounds. Almost.

7 JOE 7

Hears RADIO MUSIC playing from down on the line. Three cars away, the red-and-white Fury sits with the headlights on. No one is around, but Buddy Holly's voice continues NOT FADE AWAY.

Joe walks down the line, CAMERA FOLLOWING. The MUSIC GETS LOUDER. Joe sees something, looks displeased, mutters something like "asshole" as he opens the red-and-white Fury's door. The black man tumbles out the door, dead.

He has bitten through the cigar, and it still smokes. His eyes indicate he died in terror.

(CONTINUED)

7

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7

Joe leans on the car's horn, HONKS for help. CAMERA MOVES PAST the dead man, PAST the horn, UP TO the RADIO. It still PLAYS.

8

EXT. ARNIE'S HOUSE - DAY

8

It is early morning. DENNIS GUILDER, 17, good-looking and athletic, continues to HONK THE HORN of his '75 Duster. The RADIO MUSIC from the previous scene has SEQUED, without losing a beat, TO Tanya Tucker's 1978 version of NOT FADE AWAY.

Dennis is getting impatient as he waits in front of Arnie's parents' middle-class home.

SUPERIMPOSE:

Rockbridge, California, 1978
September 12, 1978

*

The garage door is open, revealing a '68 Volvo. After a moment, REGINA CUNNINGHAM, late 30's, ducks out the kitchen door, peering out of the garage at Dennis. She is handsome in a rather semi-aristocratic way, even in her jeans and Woolrich shirt.

REGINA

He's coming. He's changing his shirt.

Dennis nods, looking impatient.

REGINA

That's noise pollution, what you're doing.

Dennis barely hears what she said. He TURNS DOWN THE RADIO to a low level just as the local rock D.J. gives his station i.d., followed by the usual patter.

REGINA

You might as well be dumping toxic waste onto our lawn.

Dennis' RADIO starts playing Bruce Springstein's BADLANDS.

ARNIE CUNNINGHAM, 17, hurries into the garage, laden with books and the family garbage. He is 5'5", weighs about 100.

ARNIE

Hey, Dennis. Be right there.

(CONTINUED)

Before Arnie can reach the waste barrel, the wet bottom of the trash bag gives way, spilling garbage and refuse across the floor. Arnie moans and starts to pick up the mess. Regina helps him.

Dennis sinks into his seat, trying to stay patient.

Arnie heads for the car.

REGINA

Arnie...? Your lunch.

Arnie stops in mid-step. Regina picks up a brown paper bag off the top of the freezer, hands the lunch to Arnie.

REGINA

Try to keep it cold. There's a yogurt in there.

ARNIE

(embarrassed)

Right.

Dennis GUNS his ENGINE, Arnie hurries to the car, hops in, and Dennis PEELS OUT, further aggravating Regina.

REGINA

Slow down!

As Dennis drives, he eats a doughnut and offers one to Arnie, who declines. Arnie is as straight as a high school student can be. He wears glasses, a white short-sleeve shirt, dark pants, boring shoes, and he carries a plastic shirt-pocket pencil case loaded with pens and pencils. Arnie is a Loser. He also has a case of acne. The RADIO BLARES the Pointer Sisters' FIRE.

DENNIS

You guys having a war or something?

ARNIE

She's pissed off 'cause I'm taking Shop. Like it embarrasses her or something. My Dad, too.

DENNIS

It won't embarrass them when their Volvo breaks down and you fix it for free.

Arnie leans over, TURNS DOWN THE RADIO, somewhat irking Dennis, who says nothing about it.

(CONTINUED)

9

CONTINUED:

9

ARNIE

Last night we're playing Scrabble. It's like neck-and-neck between me and her. We blew my Dad away early. So, right at the end, I had a choice of putting down "ratio" for five lousy points, or...

Arnie pauses for effect.

DENNIS

Yeah?

ARNIE

Or "fellatio" on a triple word for twenty-four points and the game.

DENNIS

What'd she do?

ARNIE

She wouldn't let me have it. She won by seven points because she said obscenity isn't allowed in Scrabble.

Dennis laughs. Arnie is pleased that Dennis is amused.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

It's in the dictionary.

10

EXT. DENNIS' DUSTER

10

drives through the small town of Rockbridge. It has the look of any small town in America. Children wait at a crosswalk, protected by an elderly safety patrolman armed with a portable STOP sign. A small clump of stores indicates the smallness yet contemporary nature of Rockbridge. And there is a village green on the route.

11

INSIDE DENNIS' CAR - DRIVING

11

The boys ride in silence for a moment.

(CONTINUED)

DENNIS

Y'know, I was thinking.

ARNIE

Uh-oh.

DENNIS

~~Now that we're gonna be seniors...~~
 well, I think it's about time...
 we gotta get you laid this year.

Arnie ponders the thought, somewhat uneasily.

ARNIE

You need a girl to get laid.

DENNIS

What about Gail Justin?

ARNIE

You mean Gail Just-in-case? I don't
 like her moustache.

DENNIS

What d'you care if you get a
 little hair in your mouth?

Arnie shrugs.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

There's always Sally Hayes...

ARNIE

She's a sophomore!

DENNIS

So? She's a walking sperm bank. *

ARNIE

I don't think I have the minimum
 deposit to open an account.

DENNIS

Are you kidding? You carry your
 life savings between your legs.
 Arnie, you gotta start somewhere.

ARNIE

I think I'd rather just beat off.

The boys ride in embarrassed silence for a moment. *

ARNIE (CONT'D) *

You know... there was somebody
 once... Her name was Alice. *

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

DENNIS

Alice who? I've known you since kindergarten. You never knew any Alice.

ARNIE

(drawing Dennis in)

A horny young thing was Alice.

(pause)

Used a dynamite stick for a phallus.

They found her vagina

In North Carolina,

And her asshole in Buckingham Palace.

Dennis throws the remains of his doughnut at Arnie.

12 EXT. ROCKBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

12

Dennis pulls into the lot. In the b.g., little cliques of students are gathering, some coming from their cars, others from a line of parked school buses. As Dennis pulls into a parking space, Arnie brushes doughnut crumbs off his shirt.

DENNIS

Listen, Arnie. I'm serious. We'll get you fixed up.

ARNIE

(without enthusiasm)

Right.

Dennis looks to Arnie as though he wants to kick some confidence into him. The SCHOOL BELL RINGS.

13 INT. HIGH SCHOOL CORRIDOR

13

The SCHOOL BELL continues RINGING. Students line the hallway. LOCKERS SLAM open and closed.

Dennis opens his locker. A few lockers down, Arnie has trouble with his. Throughout the scene, he keeps trying to open it. ~~Several students greet Dennis. Arnie~~ greets Arnie. As Dennis closes his locker, he is mock-tackled by fellow-halfback, CHUCK JENKINS, 17, a heavy-set guy wearing a football windbreaker. Dennis lurches back at him and gives him a jocular pummel to the arm.

CHUCK

Guilder, you playin' this year or what?

(CONTINUED)

DENNIS
Hey, somebody's gotta pick it up
when you fumble.

(CONTINUED)

13

CONTINUED:

13

CHUCK

Listen, how's your gimpy knee? *

DENNIS

Better. Coach wants me at practice. *

CHUCK

'Bout time. Last three weeks I been
eatin' dirt with your name on it. *

Chuck gives Dennis a slap on the shoulder and goes down
the hall as quickly as he had arrived. A girl's voice
causes Dennis to turn in her direction. *

ROSEANNE (O.S.)

(sexy tease)

Hi, Dennis.

ROSEANNE, 17, ENTERS FRAME. She is a cute cheerleader.

DENNIS

Hi, Roseanne.

ROSEANNE

Are they gonna let you play this
year?

Behind Roseanne, Arnie is mocking her by flapping his
eyelashes. Dennis almost cracks up, but he manages to
stifle it.

DENNIS

Doctor says I'm good as new.

ROSEANNE

Then I guess I'll be seein' ya out
there.

DENNIS

(barely concealing a
smile, because of Arnie)

I hope so, Roseanne.

ROSEANNE

Well... T.T.F.N.

HARRY BEMIS appears at Dennis' elbow, and they both watch
Roseanne wiggle off. Bemis looks like a horny high
school intellectual/clown.

BEMIS

(whispering to Dennis)

I wouldn't put that in my mouth,
Dennis. You don't know where it's
been.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

Dennis smirks.

ARNIE
(eavesdropping)
Yeah, but we know where it hasn't
been.

(getting no response;
trying too hard)
Hasn't been with you, heh.

Bemis regards Arnie as one might regard a gnat.

BEMIS
Having trouble with your locker?

ARNIE
(lying)
Nah.

Arnie still holds his lunch bag in his hand. He tries to think of something more clever to say, but by the time he does, Bemis is again talking to Dennis.

BEMIS
Did you see the new girl?

DENNIS
Harry, I just got here.

BEMIS
Dennis, I'm in love. She's perfect.
And you know how fussy I am.

ARNIE
(eavesdropping)
I never noticed you were fussy.

BEMIS
(good-naturedly; with
no investment of
energy)
Drop dead, Cunningham.

Arnie returns to trying to open his locker.

DENNIS
What's her name?

BEMIS
I don't know. She's in the office.
She looks smart, but she's got the
body of a slut. Oh shit, here she
comes! Gimme something for my lap,
will ya?

(CONTINUED)

13

CONTINUED: (3)

13

Dennis hands Harry a notebook, which he melodramatically thrusts in front of his crotch. Harry, Dennis, and Arnie all stare as LEIGH CABOT, 17, walks by, accompanied by Mister SMITH, the Assistant Principal. A small, bird-like administrator in a conservative sport coat and tie, even he looks like he's harboring illicit thoughts, so beautiful is this innocent young girl.

SMITH

I think you'll like it here, Leigh. You won't find higher S.A.T. scores anywhere in the state. And we have one heck of a good marching band. Went to the Rose Parade last year. Not a bad way to meet boys.

LEIGH

(not interested in band)
I would like to get involved in the yearbook.

SMITH

(undaunted)
Well, we have one heck of a terrific yearbook staff. Won a prize last year. (fumbles with a scrap of paper)

Uh, here. This is your locker combination. I'll bring you down there and introduce you to Miss Tebbets, your home room teacher.

LEIGH

Thanks.

Bemis invents something important to say so the boys won't be caught staring flat-footed. Leigh smiles as she walks by.

BEMIS

(to Dennis)
So, what do you think about admitting Red China into the U.N.?

DENNIS

(staring at Leigh)
Uh, I think we already did that.

BEMIS

Yeah, but uh, do you think it was a good idea...or what?

(as Leigh passes)
She smiled at me. I wanna have deep, meaningful sex with her.

(CONTINUED)

Even Arnie stares after her.

DENNIS

Go get her, Harry.

BEMIS

You think I should?

DENNIS

You have nothing to lose but your
virginity.

Harry follows Leigh and Mister Smith as they round a
corner. We may HEAR Smith trailing off as he disappears. *

SMITH

(in b.g.)

...one heck of a solid English
program... *

ARNIE

(in f.g.)

Can you give me a hand with this?

(CONTINUED)

13

CONTINUED: (4)

13

Dennis walks over to Arnie's locker, still somewhat distracted by Leigh's having passed by.

DENNIS

He doesn't have a chance.

ARNIE

I don't think so, either. She's too classy for him.

Dennis gives the locker door a good push, then opens it with ease. Arnie is simultaneously impressed and chagrined that he needed Dennis' help.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

What'dja do?

Another BELL RINGS. Arnie jiggles the handle on his locker door, closes it carefully, without having put anything in it.

DENNIS

See you at lunch.

ARNIE

(flattered)

Okay!

Dennis hurries off in one direction. Arnie tries his locker door, finds it stuck again, gives it a hit. No luck. He hits it once again. Still stuck. He kicks it, drops his lunch bag. Arnie is lost amidst a crowd of students hurrying to their first class.

14

OMITTED

14

15

EXT. INNER COURTYARD

15

Dennis is getting restless as he waits for Arnie. Students seat themselves around the courtyard, some with bag lunches, others with hot lunch trays. A greasy-faced SHOP STUDENT passes by.

DENNIS

(to the Shoppie)

Have you seen Arnie?

SHOPPIE

(uneasily)

Uh, yeah. He's still in the Shop.

(CONTINUED)

DENNIS
(sensing something
wrong)
What's the matter?

SHOPPIE
Buddy Repperton has his lunch.

DENNIS
(repeating the
dreaded name)
Buddy Repperton...

The Shoppie slithers away.

16 INT. CORRIDOR

16

Dennis is running. All other students are walking in the opposite direction, toward the lunchroom.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Dennis into the bowels of the Shop Area. As he travels, he becomes more and more an outsider entering the terrain of the high school's social outcasts. He passes several of these people.

He enters the Auto Shop. At the far end, a circle of some twenty students is enjoying the taunting that is going on. Dennis approaches the circle. MOOCHIE WELCH, 19, a short, gruffy shop student with rotten teeth, sees him first. He pokes RICH TRELAWNEY, 18, a gawking, pallid, whiskered youth. They look, then lose interest in Dennis, distracted by the activity within the circle.

17 IN THE CIRCLE

17

BUDDY REPPERSON, 20, is tall and broad-shouldered. His hair is long and dark-blond, tied back in a ponytail with a hank of rawhide. His face is heavy and stupid and mean-looking. There is a disturbing air of insanity about him.

BUDDY

Come on, pizza face. You want it, come get it.

Arnie is practically in tears, but he steadfastly tries to maintain his pride. He moves closer to Buddy.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Why isn't your name on it if its yours?

Arnie fumes, holds out his hand.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Arnie Cuntingham.

(pause)

Why doesn't it say Cuntingham?

Buddy enjoys the leering smiles of his audience. He holds up the bag a little higher, taunting Arnie to come closer.

DENNIS (O.S.)

Just take it, Arnie. And let's go eat.

All eyes turn to Dennis. Arnie looks grateful.

BUDDY

Yeah, that's all ya gotta do. Here.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

As Arnie reaches, a long stiletto BLADE TEARS through the paper bag, its hard spring action driving it right through the yogurt container. The white sticky yogurt covers the blade and drips to the floor.

Several of Buddy's friends find it amusing. Buddy withdraws the knife, wipes the blade on his white Haines T-shirt. Rich Trelawney, 17, loves the excitement.

RICH

Hey, Buddy. Brand 'im.

Dennis pokes FREDDIE LYONS, 16, hard in the ribs.

DENNIS

Go get Mister Casey.

Freddie runs off. Buddy glances to Dennis, then back to Arnie.

BUDDY

Come on. You want to go for it?

ARNIE

(scared; bluffing)
Put down the knife and I will.

DENNIS

(to Buddy)
Put down the knife, Repperton.

BUDDY

(turning to Dennis)
You want to make me put it down?

DENNIS

You've got a knife and he doesn't. In my book, that makes you a chicken-shit.

Repperton flushes with anger. Dennis' interference gives Arnie a false sense of security.

ARNIE

Yeah, and that's chicken-shit.

Dennis dies inside at his best friend's stupidity. Someone else speaks up.

SOMEONE (O.S.)

Put it down, Buddy.

SOMEONE ELSE

Yeah, put it down.

Buddy's eyes flicker from Arnie, to Dennis, to the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

A hank of hair falls across his forehead. He tosses it back, looks to Dennis again. Dennis makes a move toward him, and the eight-inch blade swivels in Dennis' direction. That same instant, Rich Trelawney thrusts a greasy boot between Dennis' legs, and Moochie Welch pushes Dennis, tripping him and sending him sprawling into a shop bench, CLATTERING TOOLS as he hits.

Arnie foolishly tries to help, but Don Vandenberg grabs him by the shoulders and throws him into a grease spot on the shop floor, knocking his glasses off and bloodying Arnie's nose. Arnie feels blindly for his glasses, only to have Buddy Repperton's boot come down on Arnie's hand, simultaneously crushing his glasses and his fingers.

Buddy takes such pleasure in this sadism that he doesn't see Dennis hit him with an effective karate-chop to his knife-hand. The knife tumbles to the floor, and Dennis lands a solid blow to Buddy's jaw, sending him into the crowd.

Dennis is about to hit Buddy again, when Moochie Welch's arm locks around his windpipe. Moochie's other hand searches between Dennis' legs, locates his balls, and squeezes hard. Dennis collapses in agony as Moochie lets go of his neck, lets him fall to the floor.

MOOCHIE

(smiling through
rotten teeth)

How do you like that, dickface?

CASEY (O.S.)

Break it up! Break it up right now!

CASEY elbows his way through the bystanders.

CASEY (CONT'D)

You kids take a walk. Take a walk,
dammit!

Buddy snatches up his switchblade, folds the blade, and pockets the knife into the hip pocket of his jeans in one quick motion. His jaw is swollen.

Moochie backs away from Dennis, glancing toward Casey.

Rich Trelawney steps over Arnie, surreptitiously getting in a kick to the ribs before stepping back. Vandenberg has disappeared into the crowd.

CASEY (CONT'D)

(to lingering
spectators)

Get lost.

(CONTINUED)

They start to drift away, including Moochie.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Not you, Moochie.

MOOCHIE

Aw, Mister Casey. I ain't been doin' nothin'.

Casey looks from Moochie to Arnie, then to Dennis. Arnie is just getting up off the floor, cradling his shattered glasses in his sore hand. Casey helps Dennis up.

CASEY

Are you all right, Dennis?
(turning to Repperton
& Co.)

This is cute, isn't it? Three on one.

Arnie feels left out.

BUDDY

They started it. Those guys.

ARNIE

That's not true --

BUDDY

Shut up, cuntface.

Casey grabs Buddy with all his might, taking him by surprise, and SLAMS him against the wall. As he talks, he repeatedly SLAMS him, each time CLANGING A METAL SIGN that reads TOOLS, accenting his tirade.

CASEY

You want to shut your big mouth. You want to shut your mouth or clean up your mouth. Because I don't have to listen to that stuff coming from you, Buddy.

He lets go of Repperton, whose shirt is now untucked, his white belly showing.

CASEY (CONT'D)

(turning to Arnie)
Now... what were you saying?

ARNIE

When the first bell rang, I went to get my lunch... and Repperton had it. So when I tried to get it back...

Buddy gives Arnie a threatening look, as if to say, "Don't say any more".

(CONTINUED)

ARNIE

... that's what started the fight.

DENNIS

Mister Casey...

Repperton's eyes flash a warning to Dennis, who ignores it.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

He's got a knife.

BUDDY

You fucking liar!

Casey looks to Repperton without saying a word.
Trelawney and Welch look extremely uncomfortable.

DENNIS

It's a switchblade.

BUDDY

(hoarsely; eyes
blazing)

That's bullshit, Mister Casey. He's
lying. I swear to God.

Casey says nothing for a long time. He turns to Arnie.

CASEY

Cunningham. Did Repperton here pull
a knife on you?

Arnie won't answer at first. Long, silent tension.

ARNIE

(finally; softly)

Yeah.

Casey's whole posture changes.

CASEY

Empty your pockets, Buddy.

BUDDY

Fuck I will. You can't make me.

CASEY

If you mean I don't have the authority,
you're wrong. If you mean I can't turn
your pockets out for myself --

BUDDY

(interrupting)

Yeah, try it. I'll knock you through
the wall, you little bald fuck.

(CONTINUED)

17

CONTINUED: (5)

17

Dennis, Arnie, Moochie and Rich look on in disbelief.

CASEY

(calmly; to Moochie
and Rich)

You two boys go up to the office and
stay there. Don't go anywhere else.
You've got enough trouble without that.

Moochie and Rich walk away slowly. Dennis and Arnie
exchange awed glances. The BELL RINGS, and students
begin to mill in the hall.

CASEY (CONT'D)

You holding a knife?

BUDDY

(shouting in panic)

Prove it!

CASEY

(calmly)

If you don't empty your pockets right
now, I'm going to call the cops.

After a long wait, Buddy reaches into his pocket, throws
the switchblade onto the floor. It lands on the go-
button, the blade popping out, its chrome steel gleaming
from the floor.

CASEY (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Go up to the office, Buddy.

BUDDY

(hysterically)

Screw the office! I'm getting out
of this fucking pigsty.

CASEY

(without emotion)

All right. Fine.

Buddy starts off, turns back to Arnie. CAMERA MOVES IN
CLOSE ON Buddy.

BUDDY

I'll fix you.

He kicks the knife away as he leaves.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (6)

17

BUDDY (CONT'D)

~~You'll wish you were never fuckin'
born.~~

Arnie believes Buddy. It shows in his face.

The cleats on the heels of Buddy's motorcycle boots CLICK AND SCRAPE as he walks off. Arnie picks up his decimated lunch bag.

Another BELL RINGS.

18 DRIVING SHOT

18

It is late afternoon. Dennis and Arnie head home. Dennis' hair is wet from showering. He wears a football jacket he didn't have in earlier scenes. He enjoys the lack of conversation as he listens to his radio play the Cars' JUST WHAT I NEEDED. After a while, Arnie stirs. He wears his broken glasses.

ARNIE

So... all in all, it wasn't a bad first day.

They both laugh, Dennis mildly.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Think Repperton will try to get even?

DENNIS

Nah, he's a douchebag. He'll find somebody else to pick on.

ARNIE

They kicked him out, y'know.

DENNIS

Good. They kick Moochie out?

ARNIE

Probation.

DENNIS

Those assholes.

ARNIE

(suddenly excited)

Oh my God! Stop the car, Dennis!
Go back!

Arnie has craned his neck back over his shoulder. His eyes bulge from behind his glasses. Dennis quickly pulls over.

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED:

18

DENNIS

(alarmed)

What's the matter?!

ARNIE

Come on. I want to look at her
again. *

(dead serious)

Will you go back?!

They have passed a little old house with a junked car lying in the weeds beside its garage. It seems to have been recently hauled out of the dusty garage, whose open doors reveal a wall full of old license plates, a junk-laden workbench, and a floor of cracked concrete and grease. A sun-faded FOR SALE sign sits beside a spider-web of cracks in the car's windshield. Her paint job is faded to a sandblasted dull-red and off-white. She is a decaying old 1958 Plymouth Fury. Arnie springs out the door and has his hands all over the old car. He caresses the rusted dent in her right rear deck, pain showing on his face. *

19

DENNIS

19

eventually joins him, kicks the back bumper, which lies in the weeds.

ARNIE

Careful, Dennis!

Arnie lovingly tries to close her trunklid, but it springs back up. He runs exuberantly around the car, tries the driver door. It comes open with a RUSTY SCREAM. A hot billow of dusty air puffs out of her door. Arnie bounds in and settles into the ripped and faded seat.

Dennis reaches in, pulls up a little puff of upholstery, examines it, and blows it away.

DENNIS

This is a piece of shit, Arnie.

ARNIE

She could be fixed up. She could...
She could be tough, Dennis.

Arnie runs his hands all over the interior. Dennis peers at the odometer.

20 INSERT - DENNIS' POV - THE ODOMETER 20

Through the dusty glass, it reads 93475/9.

DENNIS (O.S.)

Forget it, Arnie. This baby's got
ninety-three thousand miles on it.

21 DENNIS 21

turns to Arnie.

DENNIS

Probably a hundred ninety-three.

ARNIE

I don't care.

DENNIS

It probably won't even start.

GEORGE LEBAY (O.S.)

She'll start.

Both boys jump, frightened by the sudden appearance of the old man. GEORGE LEBAY is 50, looks 60. He wears green old man's pants and low-topped Keds. He wears no shirt, but his waist is cinched by a corset-like back brace. A cigar burns between his teeth. He holds out his rusty car keys.

LEBAY (CONT'D)

But y'need these.

ARNIE

How much do you want for her?
Whatever it is, it's not enough.

DENNIS

(under his breath)

Jesus, Arnie.

But it is too late now. LeBay knows his sucker when he sees him.

LEBAY

(to Arnie)

Sonny, you ever owned a car before?

DENNIS

(interrupts; lying)

He owns a Mustang Mach II --

ARNIE

(cutting Dennis off)

No. I just got my license.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

LeBay tips Dennis a crafty look, then swings his full attention back to Arnie. He puts both hands in the small of his back and stretches. He assesses his victim, then extends his right hand.

LEBAY

Name's George LeBay.

ARNIE

(shaking hands)

Arnie Cunningham. How much are you asking?

LEBAY

Start her up.

ARNIE

Really?

Dennis is disgusted with his friend. Arnie puts the keys in the ignition, STARTS her right UP. Her ENGINE PURRS much more smoothly than one would expect. Arnie's face lights up.

LEBAY

Her name's Christine.

ARNIE

I like that.

DENNIS

C'mon, Arnie. We gotta get goin'.

LEBAY

My asshole brother bought her back in September '57. That's when you got your new model year, in September. Brand new, she was. We used to drive around in 'er. She had the smell of a brand-new car, and that's about the finest smell in the world... except maybe for pussy.

Arnie blushes. Dennis almost cracks up at this ridiculous old man.

LEBAY (CONT'D)

When he got her, she had a total of six miles on the odometer.

(pause)

Goddam Roland went through hell and back with Christine.

DENNIS

(suspiciously)

If your brother loves this car so much, why are you selling it?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

LeBay turns a frightening gaze on Dennis. For a moment, he says nothing. Dennis refuses to lower his eyes. He staunchly awaits an answer to his question. Arnie doesn't notice the eye-to-eye duel going on. He is pre-occupied with running his hands over Christine's interior.

LEBAY

(with no sensitivity
at all)

'Cause he's stone cold dead, that's
why! Died six weeks ago.

Dennis is disturbed by an evasive quality in LeBay's manner. Arnie is oblivious.

ARNIE

How much do you want for her, Mister
LeBay?

LeBay looks to the sky, ponders, then looks down at Arnie.

LEBAY

I've been asking three hundred. But
I'll make it two-fifty for you.

DENNIS

Arnie, this thing isn't worth fifty
bucks.

LEBAY

The money's not important, and
there'll be no bringing her back
here, 'cause I'm sellin' this shit-
hole an' buyin' me a condo.

ARNIE

(ignoring Dennis)
It's a deal.

LEBAY

I'll get the pink slip.

LeBay returns to the house. Dennis just stares at Arnie in disbelief.

DENNIS

Arnie, will you stop and think about
this for a minute? Where are you
getting the money?

(CONTINUED)

ARNIE

I've been saving all summer.

DENNIS

For college...

ARNIE

Easy for you to say. You already have a car.

DENNIS

He's screwing you, Arnie. You could get a really decent car for that kind of money.

ARNIE

Christine is decent.

DENNIS

The guy's weird, Arnie. He's fucking weird.

LeBay's front door SLAMS shut. He heads for the car with the pink slip. Arnie digs out his checkbook.

ARNIE

Three hundred, did you say?

LEBAY

Yeah, that's it --

DENNIS

You said two-fifty.

LEBAY

(not flinching)

Two-fifty would do it.

Arnie starts writing the check. LeBay walks into the garage.

DENNIS

(quietly; to Arnie)

If this is such a good idea, let's come back tomorrow.

ARNIE

(oblivious)

She's twenty years old. Do you realize that makes her officially an antique?

DENNIS

Yeah. Darnell's junkyard is full of official antiques. Know what I mean?

(CONTINUED)

21

CONTINUED: (4)

21

ARNIE
 (finishing writing
 check)
 I'm buying her, Dennis. I don't care
 what you say.

DENNIS
 (pissed off)
 Your funeral, man.

Dennis gives up on Arnie, gets up and tries LeBay, who is
 hunched over a pile of refuse in the garage, touching it
 with distaste.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
 Look, Mister. Give Arnie a break.
 He doesn't know what he's doing.

LeBay looks up. Dennis is startled at the coldness of
 his eyes.

LEBAY
 You don't know half as much as you
 think you do, shitter.

Dennis just stares at LeBay, chilled by the encounter.

22

INT. ARNIE'S KITCHEN - CLOSE ON REGINA'S FACE - NIGHT

22 *

REGINA
 You did what?!

CAMERA REVEALS Arnie, Dennis, and Arnie's father,
 MICHAEL, early 40's, standing around an open refrigerator
 in Arnie's kitchen.

ARNIE
 (pouring milk for
 Dennis)
 It's outside.

MICHAEL
 (carrying yogurt)
 You're kidding, right?

Michael peers out the window.

REGINA
 You can't buy a car. What in the
 world are you talking about? You're
 seventeen years old!

MICHAEL
 (under his breath;
 seeing the car)
 Oh, boy.

(CONTINUED)

ARNIE

(to Regina)

Actually, you're wrong. I couldn't finance it, but buying it for cash presents no problems. Of course, registering a car at seventeen is something else entirely. For that, I need your permission.

REGINA

(trying diplomacy)

Arnie, you know how we do things. You could have consulted with us about --

ARNIE

I've consulted with you on every damn thing I've ever done! Every thing is a committee meeting, and if it's something I don't want to do, I get outvoted two to one! But this is no committee meeting. I bought the car and that's... it.

REGINA

It most certainly is not it.

Michael takes a bite of yogurt.

REGINA (CONT'D)

(turning to Dennis)

How could you let him do this?

DENNIS

I didn't let him. He wanted it, and he bought it. I tried to talk him out of it, in fact.

REGINA

I doubt that you tried very hard.

DENNIS

Yeah, well, I'm going home.

REGINA

I think you should.

ARNIE

That's it. I'm getting the fuck out of here.

(CONTINUED)

Regina gasps. Michael blinks as if he had been slapped. He tries to speak to Arnie, but Regina cuts in.

MICHAEL

Listen, Arnie, what kind of lang --

REGINA

What did you say? What did you -- ?

ARNIE

You wanted me in college courses, I'm there. You wanted me in the chess club instead of the band, okay, I'm there too. I've managed to get through seventeen years without embarrassing you in front of the bridge club or landing in jail.

(pale and trembling)

I'm telling you. I am going to have this. This one thing.

REGINA

You're not keeping any car at this house.

ARNIE

Fine!

Arnie SLAMS his way out of the house, stranding Dennis to confront the furious parents. They don't know what hit them, but they look inclined to take it out on Dennis.

DENNIS

Thanks for the milk.

He hurriedly opens the door, gently closes it, heads for his car.

23 EXT. ARNIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

23

Arnie PEELS OUT in Christine. Dennis hurries to his car, follows his friend down the road in his Plymouth Duster.

24 DRIVING SHOT - NIGHT

24

Dennis follows Christine down a dark street, a little surprised he is having trouble keeping up. His RADIO plays the Who's WHO ARE YOU.

25 CHRISTINE

25

hits a bump and loses her muffler. It drags for a moment, sparks flying beneath her, then falls off. The PURRING IS TRANSFORMED INTO a painfully LOUD SPUTTER OF EXPLOSIONS. Smoke pours from beneath the old Plymouth.

26 DENNIS

26

nearly runs over the muffler. He stops for it.

27 OUTSIDE DARNELL'S GARAGE

27

Arnie brings Christine to a stop. He looks frustrated. Darnell's garage is a long, rusty, corrugated-tin building. Out front is a sign, caked in grease, which reads: **SAVE MONEY! YOUR KNOW-HOW, OUR TOOLS!** Below that, in smaller type, reads: **GARAGE SPACE RENTED BY THE WEEK, MONTH, OR YEAR.**

Behind the garage sits a block-long automobile junkyard, the space enclosed poorly with five-foot-high strips of the same corrugated tin.

After a moment, Dennis pulls up behind Arnie. Christine is **IDLING NOISILY** in front of a big garage door with a sign which reads: **HONK FOR ENTRY.** A feeble light spills through the grime-coated window beside the door, indicating that someone is there.

Dennis gets out of his car, walks up to Arnie, hands him the muffler.

ARNIE

(embarrassed)

Would you mind honking your horn for me, Dennis? Christine's doesn't seem to work.

Dennis runs back to his car and **HONKS TWICE.** After a pause, the big **GARAGE DOOR RATTLES UP,** and Christine enters. Dennis follows on foot.

28 INSIDE DARNELL'S GARAGE

28

WILL DARNELL, 60, waves the car in, directs Arnie to drive to the far end of a long line of rental stalls. Darnell is obese and has the appearance of a low-class gangster. He wears a large, dirty shirt, and his belly hangs over khaki pants. He has an irritable, wheezy voice.

DARNELL

Stall twenty! Stall twenty! Get it over there and shut it off before we all choke.

As Arnie drives noisily into the cavernous warehouse, Dennis stops just inside the huge door.

The atmosphere is surrealistic, with piles of tires, trunklids, hubcaps, battered chrome bumpers, even engine blocks littering various areas in this dark and high-ceilinged building.

(CONTINUED)

Dusty, greasy windows are few, and they are reinforced with wire mesh for security. The repair stalls are laid out as though we are in a huge tin stable. Stall Twenty is halfway down the junk-littered central drive. Signs are everywhere: ALL TOOLS MUST BE INSPECTED BEFORE YOU LEAVE and MAKE APPOINTMENT FOR LIFT-TIME IN ADVANCE and MOTOR MANUALS ON FIRST-COME FIRST-SERVE BASIS and NO PROFANITY OR SWEARING WILL BE TOLERATED. Dozens more.

Dennis and Arnie have interrupted a poker game in the corner of the garage, just outside a glass-partitioned office. Poker-chips, cards, and beer bottles litter the card table, attended by a group of SLEAZY MEN. They look at Christine with varying expressions of disgust and amusement. Directly over their heads, running parallel to the office windows, is a tire storage rack. It sags under the weight of scores of tires.

As Arnie shuts off Christine, a cloud of blue exhaust escapes. He SLAMS her door shut.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Kiddo, if you sold him that piece of shit, you oughta be fucking ashamed of yourself.

DENNIS

I didn't sell it to him. I tried to talk him out of it.

DARNELL

You shoulda talked harder. I knew a guy had a car like that. Fuckin' bastard killed himself in it.

(squinting his eyes
at Christine)

You coulda poured boiling water down that shitheel's throat an' he woulda peed icecubes.

(to Arnie, who
approaches)

Okay, that's the last time you run that mechanical asshole in here without the exhaust hose. I catch you doin' it, you're out, y'unnerstand?

ARNIE

(tired)

Yes --

*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

DARNELL

(cutting him off)

You want an exhaust hose, that's two-
fifty an hour if you reserve in
advance. And I'm telling you
something else right now. I don't
take any shit from you kids.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DARNELL (CONT'D)

This place is for working guys that got to keep their cars running so they can put bread on the table, not for rich kids who want to go out dragging on the Orange Belt. I don't allow smoking in here. If you want a butt, you go outside in the junkyard.

ARNIE

I don't sm --

DARNELL

Don't interrupt me, punk. Don't interrupt me and don't get smart.

DENNIS

(feigning politeness)

Sir?

DARNELL

(swinging around)

What?

DENNIS

Those men over there are smoking. You better tell them to stop.

Dennis is referring to the poker players. Smoke hangs over the table.

DARNELL

(to Dennis)

You trying to help your buddy right out of here, Chuck?

DENNIS

No.

DARNELL

Then shut your pie-hole.

(turning to Arnie)

I know a creep when I see one, and I think I'm lookin' at one right now. You're on probation, get it? You screw around with me just one time and it don't matter how much you paid up in front, I'll put you out on your ass. Is that clear?

Dennis gestures behind Darnell that Arnie should tell him to shove it. Arnie remains silent for an extended moment.

ARNIE

(faintly)

Yessir.

(CONTINUED)

DARNELL

Awright. Get outa here. We're closed.

Arnie stumbles away blindly, nearly walking into a pile of old tires. Dennis grabs him and diverts him from the collision. Darnell heads back to the poker table.

ARNIE

I'm all right, Dennis. Let go of me. I'm all right. I'm okay.

Dennis lets go of Arnie's arm. Laughter rises up from the poker table. As the boys are about to exit, Darnell shouts again as he pushes a button outside the office to lower the automatic door.

DARNELL

And you ain't gonna bring your scumbag friends in here, or you're out!

POKER PLAYER

And leave your dope at home!

Arnie cringes. The HUGE DOOR RATTLES DOWN behind them, and they are out in the dark.

Neither says anything. Under the orange lights of the huge Monroeville Mall parking lot, Dennis breaks the silence.

DENNIS

You shoulda told him to shove it, Arnie. He's a bum.

Arnie is too upset to talk. More silence. Then Dennis hears the sobbing. He turns to see Arnie breaking up. The fury of his weeping causes Dennis to pull over immediately.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Arnie --

Dennis lets Arnie cry it out. As he waits and watches, he grows uneasy at the strength and nature of the garbled sounds Arnie is making. Words are forming.

ARNIE

(through sobs)
I'll get them! I'll get those
fucking sons of bitches I'll get them
Dennis I'll make them sorry I'll make
those fuckers eat it... eat it!

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

DENNIS

Stop it, Arnie.

ARNIE

I'll get them. You'll see.

Arnie looks more ravaged and haglike than Dennis has ever seen him. Dennis is alienated by the bitterness, but he overcomes his distaste and slides across the seat and puts his arm around Arnie. Arnie sobs, lets himself be held. Dennis is comforting, but part of him clearly doesn't want to be seen holding his male friend. Two pre-teen girls walk by and stare. Nevertheless, Dennis hangs in there. After a long moment, Arnie pulls back, looks appreciative.

30 DRIVING SHOT - ARNIE'S STREET

30

Dennis pulls over in front of Arnie's house.

DENNIS

You going to be all right, man?

ARNIE

(managing a smile)

Yeah. I'll be okay. Y'know, you ought to find some other charity, other than me 'n' Christine.

DENNIS

(sympathetically)

What is it about that car?

ARNIE

I dunno.

(thoughtfully)

Maybe it's because for the first time in my life, I've found something uglier than me. And I know I can fix her up.

DENNIS

You're not ugly, Arnie.

ARNIE

I know what I am.

DENNIS

Queer, maybe, but not ugly.

ARNIE

(smiling)

Fuck you.

The Cunninghams come out their front door.

(CONTINUED)

30

CONTINUED:

30

REGINA
(distraught from
worry)
Arnold?!

ARNIE
Bug out, Dennis. You don't need this
shit.

Arnie gets out of the car, and Dennis STARTS UP. As he drives away, he hears more. CAMERA STAYS with Dennis, who watches the encounter in his rear view mirror.

MICHAEL
Where have you been? You had us
worried sick. You don't just up and
drive off whenever --

Dennis turns on his RADIO to have the tirade drowned out by Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band singing STILL THE SAME. As he drives, he slightly shakes his head.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

31

EXT. AUTO PARTS GRAVEYARD -
ADJACENT TO DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

31

Arnie's solitary figure is silhouetted in the moonlight as he picks over an immense heap of corroding auto parts, a flashlight in his hand. They have been bulldozed into huge pyramids of cracked glass and dulled steel. A Caterpillar dozer sits nearby, moonlight glistening off its huge blade. In the background, lights burn in Darnell's garage.

SUPERIMPOSE: October 9

*

The silence is occasionally broken by Arnie's pulling a part from the pile like some ant on a giant's pile of pick-up sticks. He examines the part, rejects it, sends it CLANGING down the side of the pyramid until it catches on another jutting piece of metal.

31A

INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE

31A

Darnell stands in front of Christine with PEPPER BOYD, 81, an old mechanic whose own jalopy is three stalls closer, in Seventeen. We don't see Christine well.

(CONTINUED)

31A CONTINUED:

31A

DARNELL

(to Boyd)

He's done all this shit in three weeks, but look how cockeyed he works ... fuckin' brand new windshield wipers, and the glass is still broken.

31B EXT. ~~AUTO PARTS GRAVEYARD~~

31B

~~Finally, Arnie finds something worth keeping:~~ a perfectly good Fury hubcap. He starts toward the garage, his face not clearly seen in the dimness of the night.

32 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE

32

Mercury vapor light casts a sickish glow over the huge garage door as it RATTLES open, revealing Arnie with his newly-found hubcap. As he enters, we notice distinct changes in his appearance. His acne has cleared up. His hair is a little longer, better looking. His sideburns are more fashionably cut. His glasses are gone. No dramatic difference, but the overall impression is rather good-looking.

As Arnie approaches Stall Twenty, the garage DOOR LOWERS behind him. He slows his walk as he sees something he doesn't like.

33 ARNIE'S POV - STALL TWENTY

33

Darnell and Boyd are still in front of Christine's stall.

34 CLOSER ON DARNELL AND BOYD

34

BOYD

The boy does have good hands.

DARNELL

Good hands... bad taste in cars. Y'know, Pepper, my mother always used to say, "Ya can't polish a turd."

Arnie arrives, hubcap in hand.

BOYD

(seeing Arnie)
Comin' along, is it?

(CONTINUED)

ARNIE

(to Boyd)

Yeah.

(showing Darnell
the hubcap)

Look what I found.

Darnell looks oddly at Arnie, but Boyd doesn't notice.

BOYD

Hard to find parts for that year.

ARNIE

I been pretty lucky so far. Just
found this out back.

DARNELL

I should be charging you for that
shit.

(still puzzled)

Where're your glasses?

ARNIE

(evasively, with scorn)

Aah, I got rid of 'em.

BOYD

What I wanna know is, where in
hell'd ya ever find half a
grill? I didn't know they made
'em that way.

ARNIE

I dunno. Somewhere. 'Scuze me.

Arnie pushes past the two men.

DARNELL

Other half's up his ass.

*
*

BOYD

(retreating to his stall)

Well, if ya find a trunk lid for a
'29 Model A, let me know, will ya?

ARNIE

(curtly)

Sure.

CAMERA FOLLOWS Arnie into the stall, revealing
Christine.

(CONTINUED)

~~Progress has been made on the old junk,~~ a shiny chrome antenna, a new driver door, a newly upholstered back seat, half a grill shiny, the other half rusted, the ludicrous new windshield wipers resting against the spiderweb of cracked glass. The erratically scattered pattern of restoration leaves Christine looking half brand-new and half abandoned. There is no apparent logic to the pattern of her repair, but what has been done has been done impeccably.

Arnie sets the hubcap down against a wall of the stall, uses a shirt tail to polish off a barely visible finger print on one of Christine's new portions. Darnell just stands there.

DARNELL

Y'know...

(waits for Arnie
to look up)

...when I said you could scrounge through that shit-pile out back, I didn't mean you could build your whole fuckin' car with my stuff.

ARNIE

What do you care? You're not doin' anything with it.

DARNELL

Don't think you have the gold key to the crapper. Nobody takes advantage of me, y'understand?

*
*

Arnie is preparing to install his newly-found hubcap.

ARNIE

Yeah.

DARNELL

If you didn't have me around, it'd cost you a pile o' scratch to put that thing together.

ARNIE

(uneasily)

I know.

DARNELL

Look... I know you ain't got money falling outa your asshole. If ya did, ya wouldn't be here.

*
*
*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DARNELL (CONT'D)

(pause)

Maybe we could work out some kind
of deal.

*
*
*

Arnie stops working.

DARNELL

You do a few lubes, pick up around
the place, keep the toilet paper on
the little spools... shit like that.
Do that, and you c'n keep raiding my
junk pile for whatever ya want. I
might even throw in a little cash.

ARNIE

(unsure)

I'll have to think about it.

DARNELL

Don't think about it too long or I'll
kick you out on your fuckin' ass.

Arnie blanches at the thought. He clings to Christine
for strength.

Darnell allows himself a seedy smile, shakes his head at
the weird kid and the strange car, then waddles back
toward his office.

When Darnell is gone, Arnie relaxes. He climbs behind
the wheel of Christine, turns on his RADIO, getting KDIL,
the Golden Oldies station. After a moment of D.J.
PATTER, Johnny Ace comes on with PLEDGING MY LOVE. Arnie
cozies back into the seat. It takes a moment for the
SONG to pull at him, but it finally does. He becomes
moved by the ultra-romantic lyrics. He looks lovesick.
He looks happy.

JOHNNY ACE (V.O.)

Forever my darling, our love will
be true;

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

34

CONTINUED: (3)

34

JOHNNY ACE (V.O.)(CONT'D)

Always and forever, I'll love just
you;
Just promise me darling, your love
in return;
Make this fire in my soul, forever
burn. (etc.)

As the MUSIC CONTINUES, happy tears well up in Arnie's eyes. He rests his head on Christine's steering wheel.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

35

INT. HIGH SCHOOL STUDY HALL - DAY

35

MRS. ROY, 50, patrols the aisles, looking for goof-offs. Most students have mastered the appearance of study. They carry on their conversations quietly, behind propped up books.

Beautiful Leigh Cabot reads a textbook, scribbles in a notebook, nibbles on her pencil from time to time. She is unaware that she is being observed. There is a vacant seat across from her.

Roseanne, the Head Cheerleader, sits directly in the line of sight between Leigh and a table of horny high school seniors: Dennis, Chuck Jenkins, Harry Bemis, and two other jocks. She thinks the boys are ogling her, unaware that Leigh is their target. All talk is whispered.

BEMIS

(to Dennis)

I'll bet you a dollar she says no.

CHUCK

(to Bemis)

Just because she shot you down...

BEMIS

(his pride wounded)

She says no to everybody.

Dennis is trying to gather enough nerve to walk over to Leigh.

CHUCK

Look what she's doing with that pencil!

BEMIS

I wish I were a piece of lead.

(CONTINUED)

Mrs. Roy walks by, and the three hush up. Bemis is reading "Eight Tales Of Terror" by Edgar Allen Poe. The teacher/guard passes.

Roseanne smiles self-consciously from her table to the boys. They don't see her, but she can't tell that.

BEMIS (CONT'D)

(to Dennis)

Go on, Studley. Ask her out.

DENNIS

(embarrassed, eager)

Mind your own business.

CHUCK

Just don't tip the table over.

Jenkins KNOCKS on the underside of their table, representing an imaginary colossal erection. STIFLED LAUGHTER from that table draws the teacher's cold gaze. The boys immediately assume study posture, but Dennis turns red.

Roseanne stops smiling, buries her face back in the book. Leigh doesn't notice any of this. Mrs. Roy marches on, fiddles with a venetian blind.

Dennis stands, walks to the water fountain just past Leigh. INTERCUT his ginger walk to the bubbler with Leigh's obliviousness, Roseanne's expectations, the teacher's unawareness, and the four boys' mirthful curiosity. Dennis gets his drink, sits opposite Leigh at her table, using his math book for moral support. Roseanne wonders where Dennis went, turns to see him looking at Leigh. The voyeurs' WHISPERING gets too loud.

MRS. ROY

This is a study hall, people. Let's act accordingly.

By the time Dennis gets up his nerve, Leigh is engrossed in an extremely long entry in her notebook. He COUGHS twice before she looks up. He smiles shyly.

DENNIS

You like music?

Leigh nods.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

How about dancing?

LEIGH

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

DENNIS

(blushing)

You wanna go out... dancing? Uh, to a dance? With me... like, uh, maybe this Friday? After the game?

Roseanne and the boys are eating their hearts out.

LEIGH

I'm sorry. I can't.

Dennis accepts defeat, gets up from the table. Then, rather than walk off, he reconsiders, decides to go for broke. He sits down. Leigh doesn't look up, so he must COUGH again to get her attention.

DENNIS

Why not?

LEIGH

I have a date.

The Teacher walks by. Dennis buries his head in his math book, hoping she'll pass without incident. No such luck.

MRS. ROY

Mister Guilder, are you lost?

DENNIS

No, Ma'am.

MRS. ROY

Then why don't you return to your own seat and get back to work?

Dennis rises. Leigh tries to look studious. Roseanne seems upset. Mrs. Roy frowns until he is on his way. He walks obediently back to his table, pulls out a dollar bill, hands it to Bemis.

36 EXT. ARNIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

36

Dennis pulls up in front, HONKS his horn. The lights are on inside the house, but no one responds, so he gets out of his Duster, walks to the side door. As he approaches, YELLING can be heard from inside.

REGINA (O.S.)

Listen, Mister. This is not a hotel you can just drop in and out of whenever you feel like!

ARNIE (O.S.)

Will you just can it?! I don't need this!

(CONTINUED)

REGINA (O.S.)

What do you need, Arnie?

The door flies open, and Arnie nearly knocks Dennis over on his way out.

ARNIE

(back to Regina)

I need to leave. I'm late.

(surprised to see
Dennis)

Oh, shit.

DENNIS

Greetings to you, too.

Dennis reacts to Arnie's good looks. Arnie knows it.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

You look good, man.

ARNIE

Dennis, I can't make it. I meant to call you, but I forgot.

REGINA

(coming to the door,
furious)

Is Dennis going with you?

(to a confused
Dennis)

Are you going with him?

DENNIS

(bewildered, to Arnie)

Am I?

ARNIE

(to Regina)

No.

(to Dennis)

I have to do an errand for Darnell.

DENNIS

Need a ride?

ARNIE

(pointing to a
'74 Caddy)

I got his car. Thanks, though.
Sorry about the movie, Dennis, but
this is work. I gotta go.

DENNIS

(somewhat hurt)

Don't worry about it.

(CONTINUED)

REGINA

(outraged)

Did you have plans with Dennis?!

(gets no answer,
asks Dennis)

Did you two have plans?

DENNIS

(covering for Arnie)

Nothing really official.

REGINA

(to Arnie, who starts
the car)

Arnold Cunningham, you're going to
find yourself with no friends at all
if you keep treating people this way!

ARNIE

Will ya get off my back?!

Arnie GUNS the engine and drives away, leaving Regina to
fight back her tears in front of an embarrassed Dennis.

REGINA

(voice cracking)

You're his best friend. What's going
on? Is he like this in school?

DENNIS

I don't see him much.

REGINA

(breaking down,
crying)

Neither do we...

Dennis stands awkwardly by Regina as the tears flow.

REGINA (CONT'D)

Ever since he bought that car, he's
been obsessed with it.

(pause)

And do you know what else? When we
signed the registration papers at the
Town Hall...? They told us the last
man who owned that car died in it...

(sniffs)

...of carbon monoxide poisoning...!

(CONTINUED)

DENNIS
(astounded)
Does Arnie know this?

REGINA
(resignedly)
Arnie doesn't know anything anymore.

Dennis just stares. He is angry.

CUT TO:

37 EXT. LEBAY'S HOUSE - DAY

37

Dennis tears up LeBay's driveway, raising clouds of dust. He SKIDS to a stop, jumps out of the car, hurries to the base of a ladder supporting George LeBay as he paints the house. There is a newly placed HOUSE FOR SALE sign on the recently mown front lawn. LeBay is uneasy at the sight of an angry Dennis Guilder.

LEBAY
What the hell do you want?

DENNIS
I wanna talk to you.

LeBay comes down the ladder, not looking forward to this encounter.

LEBAY
Wanna buy a house?

DENNIS
Why didn't you tell Arnie about that car?

LEBAY
I ain't takin' her back.

DENNIS
I know about your brother. I know he died from the exhaust fumes.

LEBAY
You don't know shit, kid. My brother died 'cause he wanted to. He ran a rubber hose from the exhaust pipe. That was in the newspapers. Ain't my fault if you're too stupid ta read. I'm the one who cleaned up the mess.

(CONTINUED)

DENNIS

(his attack blunted)
Arnie wouldn't've bought it if he
knew somebody died in it.

LEBAY

Either you're dumber than you look or
you don't know your friend very well.
He had the same look in his eyes that
Roland always had. Prob'ly the only
thing my brother ever loved in his
whole rotten life was that car. No
shitter ever came between him 'n'
Christine.

Dennis reacts to that word again.

LEBAY (CONT'D)

If they did, watch out. He had a
five-year-old daughter choke to death
in the damned thing. But he wouldn't
get rid of it. Just rode around with
the damn radio blarin', not a care in
the world... 'cept for that car.

(pause)

Only time I ever got mixed up with it
was when Rita killed herself.

DENNIS

Who's Rita?

LEBAY

His wife. He didn't care a rat's ass
about her. She died the same way he
did -- Then I made him sell the car
-- Outa decency, y'know? 'Course,
the car came back three weeks later.

DENNIS

(uneasily)

What do you mean, "came back"?

LEBAY

(evasively)

Folks who bought it hated it. Roland
was happy as a pig in shit to get
Christine back.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2)

37

DENNIS

(disturbed)

Three people died in that car?

LEBAY

Look. It ain't the car. Like the man says, the only de-fect in that car is the nut behind the wheel.

LeBay COUGHS up some phlegm in his throat and SPITS on the grass.

38 EXT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

38

Darnell's Cadillac is IDLING outside the big garage door, which is RATTLING down slowly. When it is closed, Darnell locks it, waddles back to his Caddy, climbs in, and DRIVES off.

39 NEARBY

39

Dennis gets out of his Duster, makes his way to the door. In the dim light of the deserted garage, he tries lifting the huge door. Since it is locked, it doesn't budge. He scans the building for another way in.

40 DENNIS

40

pulls himself up to a frosted-glass window protected by wire mesh. After some tugging, he finds the wire loose at one corner. He works it until he can get his whole arm between it and the window.

41 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - THE WINDOW

41

Dennis is silhouetted in the moonlight as he squeezes through the now open window, past the gaping tear in the wire mesh. He drops to the floor below.

42 DENNIS

42

walks through a surrealistic graveyard of auto parts. Shapes look ominous in the darkness, various chrome parts catching the light and bending it weirdly. It is very quiet here. Dennis grows accustomed to the strange surroundings, quickens his pace.

43 STALL TWENTY 43

Dennis approaches the stall, peers in.

44 DENNIS' POV - CHRISTINE 44

A slice of moonlight crosses her still-battered hood. The eerie light refracts strangely through the spiderweb of cracks in her windshield. But there is tremendous progress in her rehabilitation since we have last seen her. Still spotty, erratic, but progress.

45 DENNIS 45

looks around, disappears into the stall. After a long pause, he FLICKS on a light, its yellowish beam spilling out of the stall.

46 INSIDE STALL TWENTY 46

Dennis is mystified by Christine. She is beautiful, but strange. Those parts of her which Arnie has fixed look brand new. The rest look corroded and ragged beyond repair. The radio antenna sparkles eerily. Dennis steps closer, still feeling uncomfortable about trespassing. He inspects Christine's side panel, the one Arnie had found so badly gouged on first seeing Christine. He runs his hand along its smoothness. Dennis is impressed.

After long hesitation, Dennis opens the driver door, sits in the seat. He rather likes the feel. He runs his fingers along the spiderweb crack in the windshield. It extends the full height of the windshield.

Then he notices the odometer: 88,492 miles. He looks puzzled.

Dennis gets out of the car, ducks underneath, looks around. When he rises back up, he looks into Christine from near the driver side fender. He can't believe his eyes.

47 DENNIS' POV - THE WINDSHIELD 47

The spiderweb crack appears to be less than a foot in diameter.

48 DENNIS 48

walks closer, looks closer, tries to get back inside Christine to get a look from behind the steering wheel. She is locked.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

He persists with the door handle, but to no avail. He gives up, pounding his fist with a moderate thump on the door. As his fist THUDS on the metal, the RADIO suddenly BLARES DEAFENINGLY, causing Dennis to jump in fright. The radio plays Little Richard's KEEP A-KNOCKIN'. Dennis runs around the car, tries the passenger door, but it, too, is locked. Panic in Dennis' eyes. He is afraid of being caught snooping. The MUSIC ECHOES in the tin stall.

49 OUTSIDE STALL TWENTY

49

The light goes out. Dennis escapes from the stall, the RADIO MUSIC REVERBERATING throughout the deserted garage, transforming it into a giant tin music box. He is half-way to his entry window, running scared, when the MUSIC suddenly STOPS. Dennis stops running, stares back at the stall. Silence. OVER this, a SHRILL WHISTLE BLOWS.

CUT TO:

50 EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

50

It is a beautiful fall day. Brisk and colorful. Jacket weather.

Several Pittsfield Terrier football players are peeled off a pile-up, one by one, until Dennis is revealed, helmet askew, face full of dirt, victorious look on his face, ball clutched to his belly. In the background, the BAND PLAYS well.

The REF takes the ball, blows his WHISTLE again, signals a first down. The crowd CHEERS.

Roseanne leads a starry-eyed CHEER for her almost-boy-friend and his winning team.

The scoreboard shows Rockbridge to be beating Pittsfield 14-7 with nine minutes left in the third quarter.

Buddy Repperton, Rich Trelawney and Don Vandenberg look curiously less surprised than others in the stands when a VOLLEY OF FIRECRACKERS GOES OFF beneath everyone, startling most. A moment later, Moochie Welch emerges from under a railing with a shit-eating grin on his face, which he immediately wipes off, cued by a sharp look from Buddy.

(CONTINUED)

Chuck Jenkins helps Dennis up, pats the dirt off his fanny as Dennis readjusts his helmet.

The opposing moose-sized Pittsfield tackle gives Dennis a mean swipe as they cross each other's path toward their respective huddles.

Dennis waits with his teammates as the Rockbridge quarterback confers briefly with his coach on the sidelines.

The park is rather small, with bleachers comprising the main seating capacity.

Many cars are piled up around the corners of the field, with spectators seated on their hoods or roofs. They are decorated in respective school colors.

Harry Bemis sits with his date in the stands, BLOWS a long plastic HORN...one of many around the small field.

Dennis is the first to notice a brand new red-and-white 1958 Plymouth Fury drive up and park near a sideline. He gives a wondering look.

Repperton and gang also notice the car. They are impressed with its beautifully restored condition.

Rockbridge's quarterback runs onto the field, and the CROWD NOISE picks up again as the team goes into a huddle. Dennis raises his head from the huddle to look toward the sidelines for an instant.

51 DENNIS' POV - CHRISTINE 51

Arnie gets out of the car.

52 DENNIS 52

is tugged into the huddle. He looks perplexed.

53 ON THE SIDELINES 53

Buddy Repperton pokes Trelawney in the ribs, points to Arnie, who is now helping Leigh out of the passenger side of Christine.

REPERTON

(in disbelief)

Hey, Trelawney, is that Cuntingham's car?

(CONTINUED)

53

CONTINUED:

53

MOOCHIE

I know where he keeps it.

Buddy seems happy to hear that. Very happy.

Another WHISTLE BLOWS.

54

ON THE FIELD

54

The teams are lined up on scrimmage.

The offense shifts, Dennis and Chuck making slow jogs to their appointed shift-positions, each playing halfback.

The quarterback CALLS the signals.

The ball is snapped.

Quarterback backpedals, tries to throw to Jenkins, who isn't clear.

Dennis eludes an opponent, gets free.

Quarterback throws to Dennis. A pretty spiral.

Dennis catches it by the sideline. The crowd CHEERS. He has a shot at the goal. But as he catches the ball, his eyes catch sight of Christine once again. He is disoriented.

55

DENNIS' POV - CHRISTINE

55

Arnie and Leigh lean on Christine's hood. He is kissing her lips, their eyes closed.

56

DENNIS

56

loses a crucial edge as he takes one awkward step, still thrown off by the image he has seen. Not by much. Just enough.

Two opposing players hit him simultaneously. One is the tackle from the pile-up. He hits low. The other is a lanky linebacker. He hits high.

BONES CRACK.

Silence, as though time has stopped.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

Roseanne, the coach, Bemis, Chuck, the opposing players: each knows that something bad has happened.

So do Buddy Repperton and friends.

Dennis stares off into nowhere.

SOME PLAYER'S VOICE

Get a stretcher!

Dennis can't move. The linebacker looks worried. So does the tackle. They move off Dennis very carefully.

The Referee kneels beside him.

REFEREE

What hurts?

Dennis can't talk. He looks over to Christine.

57 DENNIS' POV - CHRISTINE

57

Arnie and Leigh are still kissing, but Leigh pulls back, aware that something has happened on the field. She points to Dennis. Arnie looks up, a shock of recognition on his now handsome face.

REFEREE (O.S.)

Hurry up with that stretcher!

58 THE FIELD

58

The stretcher arrives. Dennis is helped onto it. He seems paralyzed and is treated accordingly by the attendants. Someone carefully positions his head on the stretcher.

In unison, the ambulance team lifts Dennis, carries him off the field. CAMERA PULLS BACK to bring Christine INTO FRAME. There is no sign of Arnie or Leigh. Just the shiny, beautiful car. Watching.

59 DENNIS

59

Lapses into unconsciousness.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

60 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DENNIS' POV - DAY

60

His eyes blink open, revealing Arnie Cunningham sitting at the foot of the bed, reading a magazine. Arnie looks handsome and somewhat hip, but not too outlandish.

SUPERIMPOSE: November 5

*

is puzzled by Arnie's appearance, but very glad to see him. He wears a neck brace, a head bandage, and a full plaster cast on his left leg. The cast has several autographs. Dennis is weak.

DENNIS

Hi, Arnie...

ARNIE

(dropping a book
on Dennis)

Here. Five thousand dirty limericks.
That oughta keep you busy for awhile.

Arnie sits next to an appreciative Dennis, on the bed.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

This is the third time I've come
by. Must be dynamite drugs. You're
always asleep.

DENNIS

Doesn't quite kill the pain.

ARNIE

You know, Rockbridge hasn't won a
game since you got hurt. I guess
that makes you some kind of hero,
hunh?

DENNIS

Did you hear I won't be playing
football again?
(swallows)

Ever.

ARNIE

(after a stunned
pause)

Those shitters really did a job on you.

Dennis looks oddly at Arnie, uncomfortable with that word.

DENNIS

They said ah... one centimeter more
and I woulda' been paralyzed from the
waist down... or else dead.

ARNIE

Whew.

(an awkward silence,
changing subjects
to his cast)

Lots of autographs.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

DENNIS
(still uneasy, handing
Arnie a marker)

~~How about yours?~~

As Arnie hunches over the cast and signs it, Dennis watches him closely.

ARNIE
(a little jealous)
Leigh signed it?

DENNIS
(noticing the
jealousy)
Yeah. She came over once with
Roseanne. Roseanne's been really
nice, y'know? Brought me some
cookies. Want one?

Dennis reaches for a tin of cookies.

ARNIE
(with a hint of
threat)
You be careful, Dennis.
(tries to change
his meaning)
Ah, good way to get fat.

Arnie forces a smile. Dennis forces one back, hands Arnie a cookie. Arnie hefts it, then puts it on Dennis' tray.

DENNIS
So, what's this about you and Leigh
Cabot?

ARNIE
Uh, we like each other okay.

DENNIS
Listen to Mister Cool. She happens
to be the most beautiful girl in
school...!

ARNIE
It's not what you think, Dennis.
I really respect her mind, and...
(trying not to smile)
...well, she really lusts after my
body. What can I say?

Dennis crumples an empty dixie cup and throws it at Arnie, who lets it bounce off his face, picks it up, and dunks it into a nearby wastebasket.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (2)

61

DENNIS

I saw you guys at the football game.
(awkward pause)

~~How'd you ever get that car fixed
up? It looked brand new!~~

ARNIE

(evasively)

~~Just plain old hard work.~~

(another awkward
pause)

~~'Course, I can't keep Christine at
home. Regina says it makes the yard
look "crowded."~~

DENNIS

I'm surprised they even let you
register it.

ARNIE

It wasn't that easy. I told 'em if
they didn't, I'd drop out of school
on my eighteenth birthday.

DENNIS

(a little concerned)

Were you serious?

ARNIE

(walking toward door)

They just don't want me to grow up,
because then they'd have to face
getting old.

(leans in doorway)

Has it ever occurred to you... that
part of being a parent is trying to
kill your kids?

Dennis is startled by the comment. This makes Arnie
uncomfortable.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

See ya around, pal.

Arnie slinks out of the room and is gone.

Dennis just stares at him, seeing nothing but an empty
doorway. He is disturbed.

CUT TO:

62 TWO SHOT - JOHN TRAVOLTA AND OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

62

are enjoying each other in a scene from "Grease."

(CONTINUED)

The SOUND TRACK has the tinny quality of a drive-in theatre speaker, and it mingles with the REPEATED WHOOSH of windshield wipers. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal about twenty cars in the Rockbridge Drive-In Theatre audience tonight, each of them running their wipers.

CAMERA SINGLES OUT Christine. Rain falls steadily on her roof. The SPEAKERS and WIPERS BECOME LOUDER as CAMERA MOVES THROUGH Christine's fogged windows to find Arnie gently moving his hand under Leigh Cabot's T-shirt. Her nipples are stiff with excitement, her breathing short and steep. Their mouths interlock in a wet and passionate kiss.

Leigh's hand shyly makes its way from Arnie's stomach to his turgid groin.

Neither lover is skilled, but what they lack in experience, they make up for in passion. Arnie's hands find the zipper on Leigh's jeans.

Her eyes open. His kissing continues. The passion leaves her. She pulls back, opens Christine's door, bringing on the courtesy light, which illuminates their practically untouched soft drinks, foil-wrapped hamburgers, and french fries. She exits into the rain.

The MAN, about 25, in the next car, notices Leigh SLAM Christine's door and head for the ladies' rest room area, adjacent to the snack bar.

Arnie is flushed with passion, short of breath, and frustrated as hell. He pounds his fist on the leg of his jeans, adjusts his crotch for an exit, and struggles to get out his door, impeded by the drive-in speaker on his window.

Leigh stands out of the rain, in the shelter of the ladies' room entrance. The projector beam behind her illuminates a widening slice of the downpour as the WHIR OF THE PROJECTORS mixes with the SOUND OF RAINFALL. Arnie comes up behind Leigh, takes her by the shoulders, pulls her close to him. She turns to face him, her tears mingling with the water dripping from her rain-soaked hair.

ARNIE

What's the matter? What's wrong?

Leigh shakes her head and cries harder.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH
(with hesitation)
I never touched anyone before.
(sniffs)
It's not that I didn't want to...

ARNIE
Then what is it?

LEIGH
I can't... here.

ARNIE
Nobody can see.

On the drive-in screen, something romantic is happening, seeming to mock Arnie's problems at the moment.

LEIGH
In that car.

ARNIE
(thunderstruck)
Huh? What are you talking about?
Why not?

LEIGH
Because... I hate that car.

She starts sobbing. Arnie holds her again until she stops.

LEIGH (CONT'D)
It's just...
(blurting out)
You care about that car more than
you care about me!

ARNIE
That's...
(smiles, shakes
his head)
Leigh, that's crazy.

LEIGH
Is it?
(sniffs)
Who do you spend more time with?

ARNIE
(gently)
Come on. You'll catch a cold.

Arnie leads her back to Christine. They get in on Leigh's side. Once again, they disturb the Man in the next car... only slightly.

Leigh still seems upset.

ARNIE

I thought girls were supposed to be
jealous of other girls. Not cars.

LEIGH

(self-consciously)
This car's a girl.

ARNIE

Come on...

LEIGH

Then why don't you call it
Christopher?

Leigh slaps the seat hard.

ARNIE

Cut it out, Leigh. Don't.

LEIGH

Don't like me slapping your girl?

Her venom has hurt Arnie. He withdraws, holds the steering wheel firmly, lovingly. Their long silence is made stranger by the mix of the MOVIE SOUND TRACK and the FALLING RAIN.

ARNIE

(staring ahead,
without feeling)

Seems like nobody likes my car these
days.

Leigh feels badly. Arnie just stares ahead at the drive-in screen. The two lovers are separated by the long expanse of the front seat, Leigh right up next to her door, Arnie slid fully into his corner.

As Arnie seems to lose himself in the movie, Leigh deals with the awkwardness by taking a sip of her soft drink, then unwrapping her silver-foiled hamburger and chomping on it.

Arnie doesn't even seem to notice Leigh anymore. He stares out the windshield, through the drizzle, to the screen.

The windshield wiper on Arnie's side stops straight up. The rain accumulates on the windshield, blurring Arnie's view of the screen.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

Once again, he struggles past his speaker-laden door, goes outside to loosen the wiper.

He doesn't see Christine's dashboard lights suddenly come on. But Leigh does, and they glow with a brilliance never seen before.

She is taking another bite of hamburger when it happens. The light from the dash is eerie. It makes it harder for her to see Arnie as he tries to manually fix his wiper blade. Leigh chews. We watch the muscles in her throat grow tense. There is a catch. Her eyes react first, as if she is still staring at the light, but more so. ~~She isn't staring. She's choking.~~ She can't breathe. She looks desperately to Arnie, who seems to be having trouble outside with the wiper blade. It won't budge.

65 LEIGH

65

is terrified. She gags loudly as she sinks in the seat. She is turning red. Her eyes are bulging hideously. She needs to scream, but only a pitiful gurgling sound will come out. She thrashes.

~~Christine's RADIO COMES ON, playing Robert & Johnny's WE BELONG TOGETHER.~~ Leigh's chest heaves spasmodically as she claws at her throat.

66 ARNIE

66

notices something wrong inside. He sees Leigh pitch across the seat. He stops working with the windshield wiper, heads back to his door.

ARNIE

Leigh... are you...
(seeing her choking)
What the hell?!

He tries to get in, but his door is locked.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Leigh!

67 LEIGH

67

is on the verge of succumbing when her door flies open, a gust of air and rain blowing across her as the Man from the next car reaches in, firmly pulls her from the ~~BLARING RADIO and bright lights of the dash.~~ The lights dim to normal.

68 LEIGH'S POV

68

Christine recedes, Arnie helplessly working his way around her hood, as strong arms surround her. She can see the Man's hair tangling with her own as his hands go directly under her breasts. He crushes her.

ARNIE

(hurrying toward them)

What are you doing?! Get your hands off her!

69 LEIGH

69

cries in pain as the Man clasps his hands together in a knot, pops up one thumb, drives it painfully into her breastbone. She cries in pain at the bear hug, but a chunk of meat and bun flies out of her mouth with the force of a projectile. It lands on the ground, wet and slimy. She gasps for air.

ARNIE

Leave her alone!

MAN

(relaxing his grip)

Are you okay? Are you all right?

With a backdrop of happy singing and dancing on the drive-in screen, Arnie reaches Leigh, puts his arm around her in a possessive gesture, embarrassed that he was of no use to his girlfriend. He looks confused, as though he doesn't really appreciate what just happened. Leigh, still drawing convulsive breaths, tries to speak.

LEIGH

(to Man)

You saved my life.

Arnie begins to understand. He swallows his pride and looks to the Man.

ARNIE

(to Man, insincerely)

Thanks.

70 LEIGH

70

leans her hands on her knees, draws in more air. Color has left her face. She looks up to the Man. She grows faint.

LEIGH

Yes... thank you...

71 LEIGH'S POV - MAN FROM NEXT CAR

71

MAN

Hey, that's okay.

Everything goes blurry as Arnie puts an arm around her.

72 EXT. HER FRONT YARD - LEIGH'S POV - NIGHT/RAIN

72

The blurriness clears up, turns into an image from within Christine of Arnie getting out of the parked car. His door is open. He walks around to her side, opens her door. Christine is left IDLING smoothly.

ARNIE

Are you gonna be all right?

73 LEIGH

73

can't stand to be in Christine. She is in such a hurry to get out, she exits awkwardly, still weak, somewhat dizzy.

LEIGH

I'm fine now.

ARNIE

You scared me when you fainted like that.

LEIGH

(growing bold)

Then get rid of that car.

Arnie is astounded. His jaw falls open.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

~~And if you want to go someplace with
me, you better get in the car
going to ride in that car again.
It's a deathtrap.~~

ARNIE

~~Look. Don't blame Christine for
your choking.~~

LEIGH

(angry)

~~I'm going to say this once, and then
I'm not going to say it ever again.~~

(almost crying)

~~It happened, Arnie. When I choked...
something happened. Everything got
bright... those wipers... they
stopped.~~

(CONTINUED)

Leigh looks to Arnie as though accusing him of something.

ARNIE
(trying to be
gentle)
What are you saying?

LEIGH
I could have died, Arnie. And you
didn't even help.

ARNIE
My door was locked!

LEIGH
You didn't want that man to help
me, either. *

ARNIE
He looked like he was attacking
you. I didn't realize he was doing
the Heimlich maneuver. I could've
done that.

LEIGH
But you didn't! Arnie, when you're
with that car... you're not you.
It's like you're not Arnie
Cunningham.

ARNIE
You're upset.

LEIGH
Aren't you?
(wiping her tears)
And there are other things. That
radio. All it gets is those old
songs.

(sniffs)
~~And sometimes when we're making out,
it just stalls. As if the car were
jealous, Arnie!~~
(pause)

That car is... bad. God damned car!

She drops her purse, spilling its contents. Arnie tries
to help.

LEIGH (CONT'D)
Leave it alone! I'll get it!

(CONTINUED)

73

CONTINUED: (2)

73

She picks up the purse, collects the spilled contents. It would be a serious moment, except that she drops her purse again. She sneaks a glance at Arnie, whose defensive facade cracks at her klutziness. She tries to ignore him, picks up the items. He stoops to help, whispers in her ear.

ARNIE

Y'know what I think? I think
you're just sexually frustrated.
When you lost your grip on me...
(hides a smirk)
...you lost your grip on reality.

Leigh angrily pushes Arnie away, onto the curb.

As he recovers, a light goes on over the front porch of Leigh's house.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Oops.

The two youngsters pick themselves up, make themselves presentable, and Leigh heads for her door.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Leigh. I'm sorry.
(pause)
Can I at least call you tomorrow?

LEIGH

(after hesitation,
unsure)
I don't know...

She hurries into her house. Arnie hurries back to Christine.

He finds her stalled. He gets in her.

74

INSIDE CHRISTINE - NIGHT

74

Arnie tries to start her up. The engine FIRES, misses. RAIN PELTS the windshield. He keeps trying. The STARTER WHINES on and on.

ARNIE

(whispering)
Come on.
(later)
Come on, Christine.
(after a pause)
Come on, baby. Please. It's all
right. Everything's the same.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

The ENGINE CATCHES. The heater comes on, then the wipers. Arnie turns on the headlights, caresses the steering wheel, looks into the green light of the dash instruments.

ARNIE (CONT'D)
(relieved)

Okay.

On the RADIO, Dion and the Belmonts do I WONDER WHY. Arnie pulls out, relaxing as he drives away.

75 CHRISTINE

75

WHOOSHES down the road, her tail lights becoming little red pinpricks in the night. I WONDER WHY FADES in the distance.

76 EXT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT/RAIN

76

The place is dark and deserted. Christine's headlights wash onto the large garage door, and it RATTLES open. On the RADIO, the preceding song ends, and screamin' Jay Hawkins takes over with:

HAWKINS (V.O.)

(on radio)

I put a spell on youuu...
because you're miine...

Arnie and Christine disappear into the garage, the automatic door coming down behind them. CAMERA DRIFTS to a car parked in the darkness outside Darnell's. Its door opens and closes, illuminating for a brief second the figures of Buddy Repperton and Don Vandenberg. Behind them, parked further down the street, another set of car doors open, briefly illuminating Moochie Welch and Rich Trelawney.

77 ARNIE

77

exits Darnell's through a small door beside the huge automatic one. He double-checks the lock, finds it satisfactory, and walks into the darkness.

When he is gone, we hear the SOUND OF A WINDOW BREAKING.

78 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE

78

In the silence of the empty garage, under a combination of mercury vapor light and moonlight playing on Darnell's piles of auto parts and his many mechanical carcasses, Moochie Welch pries his way through a freshly broken window, clambers across a dangerous ledge, drops to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

78

CONTINUED:

78

He finds a button beside Darnell's office, pushes it. The big door RATTLES open, revealing Buddy, Rich, and Don, each carrying implements of destruction: chains, tire irons, a sack of sugar. When Moochie joins them under the weird light, they take on the appearance of the four horsemen of the apocalypse. They make their way to Stall Twenty. Each one wears gloves.

79

STALL TWENTY

79

Moochie peers in, gives a rotten-toothed grin to his companions.

The four hoods stand facing a beautiful but passive Christine. They look to Buddy for the cue to begin. Appreciating the gesture, Buddy steps forward, SLAMS a tire iron into one of Christine's headlights, SHATTERING the glass.

Don whips his chain into the other headlight, SMASHING it.

Rich goes right to the gas tank, pisses in it, while Moochie SMASHES the driver WINDOW with his wrench.

On the other side, Don SMASHES the passenger WINDOW with his chain.

Meanwhile, Buddy has opened the hood, stood on the engine, forced the hood back against the smashed windshield, breaking its hinges. He takes the air cleaner off, starts cutting hoses.

Don uses a jackknife to slit the leather upholstery of Christine's front seat. Moochie is poking out the glass on the dashboard instruments.

The RADIO comes ON, playing little Richard's KEEP A-KNOCKIN'. But it only lasts a few seconds before Don and Moochie double-team it with their tools, sending SPARKS flying, KILLING the MUSIC.

Around back, Rich Trelawney finishes pouring sugar into the gas tank, begins slitting Christine's tires, watching them flatten.

The boys work with a fervor that approaches perverse sexuality. They work up a sweat as they proceed to rape Christine.

Moochie lowers his pants and squats over the dashboard as Buddy hammers away at everything smashable under the hood.

Arnie and Leigh walk in the sunshine down the street. They are talking quietly, and he finally takes her hand.

ARNIE

Do you mind?

LEIGH

(unsure)

No...

ARNIE

I don't want to get you in trouble with your parents.

LEIGH

They didn't say I couldn't see you. They just said I couldn't ride in your car.

ARNIE

And, of course, you didn't object.

LEIGH

Let's not fight...

Arnie leans over, kisses her lightly. She lets him.

ARNIE

Well, we'll only be a minute. I just have to get my wallet out of the glove compartment.

LEIGH

(making peace)

I know. That's okay.

They reach the large door to Darnell's garage. Arnie embraces Leigh more firmly, kisses her hard. During their passion, he manages to push the button on his transmitter, and the garage DOOR RATTLES open.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

How'd you do that?

ARNIE

We did it. Animal magnetism.

She smiles, and they hurry in. As they head toward Christine, the door lowers again.

CAMERA PRECEDES Arnie and Leigh as the garage door closes behind them. Arnie pulls Leigh closer to him. He takes her hand again.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

ARNIE

Y'know, I've been thinking... maybe we should apply to the same colleges next year.

LEIGH

(noncommittally)

Oh, really?

ARNIE

Yeah, I mean, if we both got accepted by the same school, we could take that as a sign of fate, y'know? Then you'd have me to help you through the math courses, and if I needed --

Arnie stops cold. He sees something ahead. His smile erodes.

LEIGH

Arnie...?

Arnie just stares ahead in horror. He squeezes Leigh's hand with no awareness that he is nearly crushing the bones.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Arnie, what's wrong? Arnie... Ow!

Arnie loses any awareness that Leigh even exists. He runs ahead toward Stall Twenty, thumping his leg against a bumper of a Chrysler, spinning away, almost falling, catching himself, and running forward again. He stops in front of the broken chain, stares in horror at the destruction.

82 ARNIE'S POV - CHRISTINE'S REMAINS

82

She is damaged practically beyond recognition. Even her body has been punched through by tire irons. Her front bumper hangs to the ground. Total devastation. The engine is useless.

83 ARNIE

83

looks like he is having a heart attack. Leigh approaches from behind, her hand still sore, still unaware of the damage. When she sees it, she blanches.

Arnie's Adam's apple lurches up and down as he tries to swallow back a moan. His throat locks solid, every muscle standing out, each cord standing out; even the blood vessels are prominent. His eyes bulge in horror.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH

Arnie, who did it?

Arnie has shut Leigh out of his life for the moment. There is nothing in his world but Christine, and she lies in ruins. He stumbles around her, broken glass gritting under his heels. He has the bearing and the manner of an old man about to die. His face is distorted in anguish. Leigh is frightened, for him and of him. He seems to be having a convulsion.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Arnie...?

He is frothing at the mouth. Leigh overcomes her abhorrence of him to reach out to him. She touches him. The sudden jerk of his head throws spittle from his mouth. The rage in his eyes sends chills of terror through Leigh.

ARNIE

(not his own voice)
Don't touch me, shitter! This is what you wanted, isn't it!?

LEIGH

(terrified)
Arnie... no...!

ARNIE

(with an ungodly shriek)
Shitters!

Arnie unleashes his fury at Heaven and Hell, but the only one present to absorb it is poor Leigh.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

I'll get you goddamn shitters...!
If it's the last thing I ever do!

He shrieks in the voice of another, the sound frightening Leigh, the sight of Arnie's furious bulging eyes and frothing mouth repulsing her and causing her to fall back away from him, scared to death.

Arnie throws his convulsing body onto Christine, sobbing and clawing and hugging at her remains.

Leigh looks on in shock.

Michael and Regina look to each other for assistance, find none. Arnie stares at his untouched dinner plate. Long silence.

(CONTINUED)

REGINA

Arnie, I'm sorry.

ARNIE

(nearly inaudibly)

... Sorry...

REGINA

Yes. I... that is, we --

ARNIE

It's your fault! If you hadn't been so damned selfish that you wouldn't let me keep my own car in your precious driveway, it never would have happened.

REGINA

Arnie, that's not fair!

ARNIE

It is fair!

MICHAEL

Your mother's right, Arnie.

Arnie chills Michael with a contemptuous stare.

REGINA

(eyes moistening)

Can't we even talk about this... like rational human beings?

ARNIE

One of them took a shit on the dashboard of my car. How's that for rational, Mom?

Regina crumbles into tears with this news. Michael tries to comfort Regina.

MICHAEL

Let's tell him what we've --

Regina just sobs louder. Michael looks on helplessly. He finally turns to Arnie.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Your mother and I have decided to help you buy a new car --

ARNIE

That's just what everybody wants, isn't it? Well, fuck that. I'm fixing up Christine.

(CONTINUED)

Arnie knocks over his chair as he gets up from the table and stalks out. Michael quickly follows. CAMERA MOVES with them into the hall as Michael catches him by the elbow, wheels him around.

MICHAEL

Look, mister. You've been disrespectful to us once too often. Now march back into the kitchen and apologize to your mother right now.

ARNIE

(his voice not
his own)

Take your mitts off me, motherfucker.

Michael is so astonished by his son's nerve that he doesn't notice the odd quality to his voice. Michael slams Arnie against the wall, knocking a picture to a table lamp below it, knocking the lamp to the floor, where the BULB EXPLODES.

Both father and son are surprised, but Arnie takes advantage of the diversion, ramming Michael across the hall, pinning him in a military-style pressure-point death grip. Michael becomes pale immediately. He is unable to utter a sound. When both know who is in control, Arnie speaks.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

(his voice not his own)
I'm hitting the sack.

With that, Arnie releases his petrified father, turns, and walks alone down the hall, then up the stairs. Michael just looks after him and trembles.

87 INT. HOSPITAL - SECOND FLOOR SUN ROOM - DAY

87

Dennis exercises his good right leg with sandbags, his left still extended in a full leg cast. Several older MALE PATIENTS seem to be enjoying a San Francisco 49ers football game on the color TV in the room as much as Dennis is. Two of the men are playing checkers. An older woman is doing a newspaper crossword puzzle.

Everyone in the room wears either a cast, a sling, or a neck brace. Dennis' own neck brace is gone, his head bandage much smaller now. At a high point in the game, Leigh ducks into the room. Dennis doesn't see her at first. She watches him for a moment, then he notices Leigh standing in the doorway, looking out of place.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

(delighted)

Leigh!

LEIGH

(shyly)

Hi, Dennis.

Dennis pulls his robe a little tighter, kicks the sandbag off his foot, grabs his crutch, and gets up.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

Oh, don't get up.

DENNIS

That's okay. I'm getting good at this.

(awkward pause)

What are you doing here?

LEIGH

I need to talk to someone... and
you're Arnie's best friend. At
least, he says so.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

On the television, another big play takes place. The other patients are excited by the action. Dennis misses it.

DENNIS

This isn't the place to talk.

CUT TO:

88 HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

88

Dennis hobbles down the hallway on crutches. Leigh is at his side, watchful for any possible slip. Others pass by during the scene.

LEIGH

~~I think he's losing his mind.~~
~~Dennis. He really thinks he can fix~~
~~that car.~~

They hobble a few steps.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I wish someone would just come along
 and smash it flat. *

DENNIS

(smiling
 sympathetically)
 You don't like Christine, hunh?

LEIGH

I don't like what she's doing to
 Arnie.

(aware of saying
 "she")

Listen to me. Now I'm calling it a
 "she." I sound like him.

Dennis doesn't like what Leigh seems to be leading up to.

DENNIS

(uneasily)
 What is happening to Arnie?

CAMERA PRECEDES them out of the hallway and into Dennis' room.

LEIGH

Can't you see it?

DENNIS

(putting down his
 crutches)
 No. He never comes by anymore.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH
(the words pouring
out)

Well, that's part of it. He never has time for anyone anymore he's always either at Darnell's or on his way to Darnell's or coming back from Darnell's too tired to do anything except talk about what he has to do next on his car or what he's doing next for Darnell he doesn't have any energy at all he falls asleep in study hall his grades are slipping I've already given up on Arnie and me but I can't stop worrying about what's happening to him he's going through so many changes I hardly recognize him anymore and I can't take it much longer -- !

Dennis interrupts her with a gentle touch to her shoulder.

DENNIS

Leigh...?

Leigh catches her breath.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Would you help me get my leg up on the bed?

Leigh becomes aware of how out of control she was, gives a slight and embarrassed laugh, helps Dennis over to the bed.

She eases him onto the mattress, awkwardly takes his cast and helps him achieve leverage as he gets it on the bed. He tries not to show his pain.

LEIGH

Does that hurt?

DENNIS

(falling in love)

No.

Dennis and Leigh just look at each other for an awkward moment.

89 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

89

Christine lies battered in Stall Twenty. Her crumpled hood is open, and Arnie's legs can be seen extending under the front grill from his position on a mechanic's dolly under the engine.

(CONTINUED)

There is spotty progress on her restoration: a shiny new grill, a brand new radio antenna, a new front tire (the other one is still flat), and a flawlessly-refinished fender where jagged punched holes used to be. Christine's RADIO plays the instrumental tune, RUMBLE, by Link Ray.

As Arnie works to the music, CAMERA SLOWLY CRANES OVER Christine's engine compartment, revealing Arnie's face amidst a tangle of shredded rubber hoses, frayed electrical wiring, and punctured metal pipes. The engine looks hopelessly demolished. Arnie's face looks weary, his eyes bloodshot, his skin stained by grease and oil. But he looks optimistic. He patiently rearranges the damaged remnants of the engine into their respective locations, a seemingly useless activity. As he works, he talks, gently, as a lover would to his loved one.

ARNIE

We'll make it better, hunh?

(more work)

They can't hurt us anymore. Not if we work together.

(after still more work)

We'll show those shitters what we can do.

CAMERA FOLLOWS as Arnie abruptly pulls out from under the chassis, climbs off the mechanic's dolly, and straightens the kinks out of his back. He gives a weary sigh, leans over for a rag, wipes the dirt and grease off his hands.

He leans against the corrugated tin wall, looks expectantly to his O.S. car. The SOUND OF POPPING METAL, SIZZLING GRIME, and unidentifiable "RUBBER GROWTH" combine in a weird cacophony to draw him closer to the engine compartment.

As the NOISE SUBSIDES O.S., Arnie leans over the engine, looks in.

The black rubber hoses glisten, clean and new. The colorful strands of electrical wiring are restored to perfect condition. The chrome pipes, the gray steel of the engine block gleam with a nearly blinding brilliance.

leans over Christine's shiny new carburetor, sees his distorted reflection in the metal.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: 91

Buoyed by the magic, he bends to Christine's smashed headlight, carefully pulls away a few remaining splinters of glass, and doesn't wait to see the results.

He bends to the shredded front tire, brushes some debris away from the bent rim, then moves on to a jagged puncture in the side panel.

The POPPING OF GLASS AND METAL attracts his attention, and he stands, hurries back to the front of the car.

92 ARNIE'S POV - CHRISTINE'S HEADLIGHT 92

It is restored to perfection.

93 ARNIE 93

backs up a bit, positions himself directly in line with the new lamp, looks straight ahead with a fervor akin to sexual arousal.

ARNIE

Okay...
(as if she's doing something dirty)

Show me.

Arnie's face is bathed in white light from the headlamp, yielding his features stark and garish. His arousal is at its peak.

As Arnie stares into the beam of light, it begins to move, ever-so-slightly, until it becomes apparent that it is rising above his eye level.

Arnie lowers his leering gaze to what is happening.

94 ARNIE'S POV - CHRISTINE'S DAMAGED TIRE 94

The final shreds of rubber fall back into place as the tire completes its restructuring. Its growth is elevating the chassis to its proper position.

95 ARNIE 95

is pleased. The RADIO continues playing RUMBLE.

96 INT. MICHAEL AND REGINA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 96

Regina is wide awake in the dark room, illuminated only by moonlight. Michael stirs, awakens.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

MICHAEL

What's the matter?

REGINA

(getting out of bed)

I think Arnie's having another dream.

Michael rolls over, buries his head in his pillow.
Regina exits.

97 HALLWAY

97

Regina walks to Arnie's door, which is tightly closed.
She turns the knob, opens the door, peers in. She is
startled.

98 REGINA'S POV - ARNIE'S BED

98

Arnie is moaning in his sleep. He is sweating profusely,
his pillow drenched. He appears to be having a
nightmare.

99 REGINA

99

turns on the hall light, lets it spill into the room, a
wedge of amber light cutting across Arnie's face. She
walks closer, stands beside his bed for a moment. She is
filled with a mother's concern as Arnie tosses rest-
lessly. She touches his chest, pats him gently, restores
him to a more tranquil state of sleep, never waking
him. With a quiet sigh, she turns and exits the room.
Arnie sleeps soundly.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

100 EXT. HIGHWAY EXIT RAMP

100

Moochie Welch gets out of a truck, waves his thanks to the
driver, and cuts down an embankment to a secondary road
below.

101 MOOCHIE

101

walks along the secondary road, amused by the way the
orange street lamps alternate projecting his shadow:
ahead of him, behind, lengthening, shortening, growing
bold, then weak, all depending on his relation to the
lamp posts. He hums softly to himself as he walks.
Across the street is a rather nondescript factory.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

Moochie stops short, stops humming, hears a CAR RADIO playing Thurston Harris' LITTLE BITTY PRETTY ONE.

102 MOOCHIE'S POV

102

Straight ahead, beyond his forward-projecting shadow, sits a 1958 Plymouth Fury in restored condition. Red and white. It is on his side of the road, parked just beyond a corner curb stone, one of its front tires hidden by the curb. Exhaust curls out of its twin pipes and hangs in the air. Its shiny chrome grill is highlighted by flecks of orange from the street lights. Its engine runs softly, a low-grade growl. The driver is not visible from Moochie's angle. All he sees is the reflection of an overhead street light. Headlights are out. The RADIO PLAYS.

103 MOOCHIE

103

takes a deep breath, starts walking again, cautiously, in the direction of the car. As he gets closer to it, he stops again.

Moochie licks his lips, looks to his left, sees an impossibly steep embankment. He looks to his right, sees the factory, with its monolithic concrete walls, its various dark alleys and loading docks seemingly carved out of the heavy slab of a building. But it's a long run to the concrete.

He takes a few steps closer to the car.

MOOCHIE

Hey, Cunningham.

No response. Just the IDLE of Christine's ENGINE. Her tires roll a few inches forward, the road GRAVEL CHATTERING as it is picked up by the tread, then dropped on the other side.

MOOCHIE (CONT'D)

That you, Cunningham?

Moochie takes one more step, scrapes the cleat of his railroad boots along the cement. His carotid artery pounds in his neck. He nervously looks around for anyone. No one is there. He turns back to the car.

MOOCHIE (CONT'D)

You ain't mad, are you?

Christine's headlights come on, pinning Moochie in harsh white light.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

Moochie's lip trembles. He turns and runs.

Christine peels out, her TIRES SQUEALING, leaving black slashes of rubber on the pavement as she jumps the curb and continues toward Moochie, two wheels above the curb, two wheels on the blacktop.

Her undercarriage SCRAPES and SHRIEKS and shoots off swirls of SPARKS beneath her.

Moochie runs for his life, but Christine swallows him up.

He hits the gutter, the SPARKING UNDERCARRIAGE passing over him by fractions of an inch. He cuts his chin on the blacktop.

Moochie looks up, tries to scream, but doesn't have time.

Christine whips into reverse, barrels back at him with the same relentless speed.

Moochie rolls out of the gutter, up onto the sidewalk.

Christine misses him by inches again. Moochie runs for the factory.

Christine backs off the curb, backs up into the road, her chassis now level, her ENGINE IDLING once again. Her high beams come on.

104 MOOCHIE

104

makes it to the factory wall, looks left and right to determine the nearest alley he can escape to. He decides for the dark indentation sixty yards ahead. He runs for it.

105 CHRISTINE

105

REVS her ENGINE, jumps into drive, jumps the curb, SQUEALS toward the factory wall, follows Moochie's path toward the alley, her headlights baking the concrete walls and throwing a hideous shadow of Moochie before him as he runs.

106 MOOCHIE

106

makes it to the alley as Christine misses him by a yard. She whips into reverse. He starts down the alley, only to discover it is a dead end. It seems to be designed for forklift loads.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

There is a loading dock about seven feet high right behind him. A sign reads: FORKLIFTS ONLY. Moochie tries to reach the loading dock, but he doesn't have the strength to pull himself up. He is too short and too weak.

107 CHRISTINE

107

shines her headlights into his eyes, ROARS forward. It looks like it's all over for Moochie. He closes his eyes in fright. But then it's quiet again. Moochie opens his eyes to see that Christine cannot fit in the narrow alley. Half of each headlight is blocked off by the narrowness of the indentation.

Although Christine is close enough to Moochie that he can feel the warmth of her engine, he is ecstatic that he has been saved. The killer car won't fit!

108 MOOCHIE

108

gets braver. He pulls out the same knife he had used to slash Christine's seats, brandishes it in the harsh headlight beam.

MOOCHIE

You're a dead man now.

109 CHRISTINE

109

responds by REVVING her ENGINE HIGHER than ever.

110 MOOCHIE

110

blanches, drops his knife, tries in vain to climb to the out-of-reach loading dock platform.

111 CHRISTINE'S

111

rear tires spin and smoke, making very little progress forward.

Her headlights crush against the too-narrow opening of the alley walls. One headlight pops out with a CRUNCH, then the other.

112 MOOCHIE

112

faces his conqueror in horror.

113 SMOKE RISES 113

from Christine's rear end as her TIRES BURN AND SPIN. She inches forward, the CRUNCH OF METAL indicating slow and painful progress.

Christine's side panels shear off at the mouth of the alley.

114 MOOCHIE 114

is pinned at the waist by Christine's grill, her chrome indenting his palpitating stomach.

MOOCHIE
(crying)
Nooooo!

115 CHRISTINE 115

With a final thrust, the car's rear wheels spin into smoke. The rear bumper lurches forward about a foot, cutting Moochie's death SCREAM in half as we hear his upper torso THUD onto the hood.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

116 INT. DENNIS' HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY 116

Dennis is dozing in front of a Thanksgiving Day football game on his television set.

SUPERIMPOSE: November 23

*

Arnie sneaks in, quietly closes the door behind him, reaches into a paper bag he has carried in, empties it onto Dennis' bed tray: two pewter candlestick holders, two candles, two large stuffing-filled turkey sandwiches, a fine glass beer stein, and the first of six cans of beer.

When he lights the candles, Dennis stirs. When he SNAPS open the pop-top on the beer, Dennis opens his eyes.

ARNIE
I was sitting around the table, and
Regina was carving this big turkey,
and for some strange reason, I
thought of you.

DENNIS
(drowsily)
I thought I was dreaming.

ARNIE
Where's your family?

(CONTINUED)

DENNIS

They were here this morning. Where have you been, asshole?

Arnie unwraps a turkey sandwich as he talks, pours himself a beer.

ARNIE

Hey! Did you hear about Moochie?

DENNIS

(with distaste)

Yeah.

There is silence between the two friends for a moment.

ARNIE

Makes ya kinda feel sorry for the bastard, y'know?

Dennis nods.

DENNIS

So... how ya been?

ARNIE

Anh... so-so. Leigh's been on the rag alot lately...

Dennis can't detect whether Arnie is making a pointed comment or not, but he feels guilty.

DENNIS

How's Christine comin'?

ARNIE

Cherry. I've spent a shitload of money on her, and she's perfect now.

DENNIS

(surprised)

I thought she was totaled.

ARNIE

(evasively)

Once I cleaned up the broken glass, it wasn't so bad.

(pause)

At least they didn't touch the engine.

Dennis doesn't believe Arnie, tries to deal with him carefully.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: (2)

116

DENNIS

(low key)

I thought they did.

ARNIE

Naw. Cut a couple hoses, that's all.

DENNIS

I'll betcha a hundred bucks it was
Buddy Repperton.

ARNIE

Maybe...

DENNIS

What if you fix it up again and they
just do it again?

ARNIE

They won't do it again.

DENNIS

What do you mean?

ARNIE

I'll be parking it at home, that's
what I mean.

(grinning unnaturally)

What did you think I meant?

DENNIS

Nothing.

ARNIE

When are they gonna spring you outa
this joint?

DENNIS

They say January. I say Christmas.

ARNIE

You'll do it. Look, I gotta move, my
man. Hope you didn't think I could
hang around all day.

DENNIS

That's you, always in demand.

(rapping his cast
with his knuckles)

Sign this, Arnie, would you?

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: (3)

116

ARNIE

Ya already got one.

DENNIS

Yeah, but you didn't write anything clever.

Arnie takes a pen off Dennis' tray, signs: FOR DENNIS GUILDER, THE WORLD'S BIGGEST DORK. ARNIE CUNNINGHAM.

ARNIE

Okay?

DENNIS

Thanks. Stay loose, Arnie.

ARNIE

You know it. Happy Thanksgiving.

Dennis smiles. Arnie exits. After a moment, Dennis scoots up in bed, leans over his cast. He twists it to reveal Arnie's previous autograph.

117 DENNIS' POV - ARNIE'S TWO AUTOGRAPHS

117

They are so different as to appear written by two different people.

118 DENNIS

118

just stares at the signatures. He is stunned.

119 EXT. ROCKBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

119

~~Arnie sneaks out a back door of the high school, makes his way across the parking lot to a beautifully restored Christine. As he is getting in, he is startled by a voice.~~

JUNKINS (O.S.)

Clean machine!

Arnie looks to the next car to see civil-servant-looking RUDOLPH JUNKINS, 45, getting out of his unmarked car.

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

They let you out early?

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED:

119

ARNIE

Yeah, that's right.

Arnie starts to get in his car, but Junkins steps closer.

JUNKINS

Arnold Cunningham? I'm Rudolph
Junkins. State Police. Detective.

ARNIE

Look, I'm just missing a study
hall. I gotta get to work.

JUNKINS

Relax, I'm not the truant officer.
(pause)

You do nice body work, Arnie. I
thought this thing was totaled.

ARNIE

Who told you that?

JUNKINS

Everybody. Local police, your mom
'n' dad. Your girl. Cute girl.

ARNIE

It wasn't anywhere near as bad as it
looked.

JUNKINS

Report said they punched holes in the
body. I'll be damned if I can see
the fill.

ARNIE

You can if you look for it.

(points to a spot)

There... and there. I've been lucky
with parts. I replaced the entire
back door on this side. See the way
the paint doesn't quite match?

JUNKINS

Nope.

(pause)

Hell of a job. Hell of a job, Arnie.

ARNIE

Thanks.

Arnie gets in the car, starts her up, takes comfort by
grasping the wheel. He is anxious, wants to leave.

(CONTINUED)

But Junkins walks around to the front of the car, stands in Arnie's way, inspects the front end very carefully, acting merely as a sincere admirer. Arnie doesn't buy it. He SHUTS OFF the ENGINE, gets out of the car, follows Junkins around.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

What can I do for you?

JUNKINS

I really like this shade of red. You don't see it in the new cars, do you?
(getting no answer)

Didn't think they still made this shade.

(still no response)

Do they? Do they still make this shade?

ARNIE

(hiding his annoyance)

They must. I bought it, didn't I?

JUNKINS

(innocently)

Where?

ARNIE

Baker Auto. Out on Route Five.
Okay?

JUNKINS

Still got the receipt?

ARNIE

Tossed it out.

JUNKINS

Still, they have the paperwork.

ARNIE

I paid cash.

JUNKINS

But your name'll be on the invoice.

ARNIE

It was part of a big order for my boss. Will Darnell.

JUNKINS

(momentarily stumped)

Y'know, it's funny.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

(squats, examines
headlight)

Usually, when somebody trashes a car,
we get photographs.

ARNIE

Oh, hey, they didn't really trash it.

JUNKINS

That's not what Leigh said. She was
so shaken up giving me all the
details, she broke down in tears.
Sounded trashed to me.

ARNIE

Well, it looked pretty bad at first.

JUNKINS

Broken glass all over the place, she
said.

(pause)

Must be hard to find a windshield
like that.

ARNIE

Not if you know where to look. You
wouldn't believe the shit Darnell's
got out back there.

JUNKINS

(dryly)

Lucky for you.

Junkins notices that as Arnie begins to squirm, he seeks
the comfort of Christine, calming himself by touching her
and holding on.

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

I understand ah, one of the
perpetrators... well, defecated on
the dashboard. I would've thought
you'd be mad as hell. I would've
thought you'd report that.

ARNIE

(after a pause)

Shit wipes off.

JUNKINS

Boy, I wish I had your temperament.

The two stare each other down.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: (3)

119

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

Moochie Welch kind of got wiped off,
didn't he?

ARNIE

I dunno.

JUNKINS

You don't?

ARNIE

No.

JUNKINS

(smiling)
Scout's honor?

ARNIE

I'm not a scout.

JUNKINS

(humor gone)
The boy was cut in half. They
scraped up his legs with a shovel.

ARNIE

(with intentional
cruelty)
Isn't that what you're supposed to do
with shit? Scrape it up with a
shovel?

JUNKINS

(angry)
Don't get smart with me. Your
girlfriend is a hell of a lot more
convincing than you are.

ARNIE

She's not my girlfriend. And since
when is it a crime to fix up your car
if someone busts it up?

JUNKINS

Since never.

ARNIE

Then get off my back.

JUNKINS

(following Arnie to the
car door, regaining
his cool)
You look like a smart kid. I think
you know more than you let on.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: (3)

119

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

(hands Arnie his card)

Call me when you want to get it
off your chest.

Arnie puts the card in his pocket, gets in Christine.
Junkins leans in Arnie's window, offending him by
touching Christine.

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

I hear your dad reported the
incident to the police over your
objections.

(pause)

Why didn't you want it reported?

ARNIE

Because I thought that would be
the end of it. I thought they'd
lay off.

JUNKINS

Yeah. That's what I thought you'd
say.

(stops leaning, stands)

So long.

Arnie STARTS Christine, GUNS her ENGINE, and drives out
of the parking lot. Junkins just looks on, disturbed by
the encounter.

120 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

120

Arnie's face and hands are covered with grease from
working on Christine. He turns off the light in Stall
Twenty, walks to Darnell's office, unlocks the office
door, crosses in the darkness to a desk, turns on a
gooseneck lamp, dials the phone in the stark light.

INTERCUT WITH:

121 LEIGH IN BED

121

Leigh fumbles in the dark for her RINGING PHONE.

LEIGH

Hullo...?

ARNIE

Leigh? I have to talk to you. I
have to see you.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

121

LEIGH
(snapping on her
bedside light)
Arnie, it's after midnight.

*
*

ARNIE
Please. I'll come right over.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH

No!

(pause, more subdued)

My folks'll get mad.

(hesitantly)

They don't want me to see you
anymore.

ARNIE

Don't you mean you don't want to see
me anymore?

There is a long silence before Leigh can overcome her
sadness and give Arnie a careful answer.

LEIGH

Arnie... I care a lot about you... I
always will.

ARNIE

I love you, Leigh.

He begins to panic at the silence from the other end.
Leigh doesn't know what to say.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

I think we deserve one more try.

(long desperate silence)

I want to make things right between
us.

(another long silence)

Don't you?!

(still no answer)

Will you give me a fucking yes or
no?!

LEIGH

Arnie, don't do this to me... It's
late. I'm half-asleep.

ARNIE

Bull shit! Why don't you just level
with me? You've had it, right?

LEIGH

Arnie, let's talk about this sometime
when we both feel better about --

ARNIE

(hanging up)

Fuck you, bitch!

He is immediately sorry he hung up. In panic, he picks
up the phone.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED: (2)

121

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Leigh...?!

A DIAL TONE is his only greeting. He hangs up, looking like a lost soul.

122 OMITTED
thru
125

122
thru
125

126 EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

126 *

Buddy Repperton and Rich Trelawney leave the store with a couple bottles of Texas Driver fruit wine. *

SUPERIMPOSE: December 16 *

As they walk toward Buddy's Camaro, Rich Trelawney eyes an underaged high school girl leaving with a bag of Frito-lites and a People magazine. Buddy hands Rich one of the wine bottles. *

BUDDY

Wanna do the honors, Mess-sewer?

Rich screws off the cap, takes a swig, hands the bottle to Buddy who also takes a swig. Rich watches the young pretty get in her parents' Honda. *

TRELAWNEY

Like to bring her along.

BUDDY

She don't exactly look the type for a Jackson Browne concert.

By now, the girl is driving away. Rich looks disappointed.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Ya gonna give 'er your ticket?

TRELAWNEY

(lewdly)

I'd let her earn it.

BUDDY

Bullshit. Let's get Vandenberg.

Rich and Buddy get in the Camaro. Buddy STARTS his ENGINE. The Rolling Stones' BEAST OF BURDEN plays on the RADIO. Buddy flicks on his headlights, shifts into reverse, and pulls out. *

127 DRIVING SHOT - BUDDY AND RICH

127 *

In the background, another set of headlights comes on, with extremely bright high beams glaring into Buddy's car. Buddy flicks his mirror to Night-setting. Rich turns around, stares into the following car's high beams, offers up his middle finger.

TRELAWNEY

Ass-hole.

They drive a while. The following car cannot be identified, but it stays with them, about fifty feet back. Buddy gets impatient.

BUDDY

Watch this.

Buddy pulls over to the side of the road.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

We'll give this ass-hole some of his own medicine.

Trelawney grins, takes another swig of Texas Driver. They are surprised to see the car behind them come to a stop, too. Buddy sits there for a moment, waiting. The other car waits, too. Buddy reaches in front of Rich, opens his glove compartment, takes out a lead-filled club, hefts it, drops it on his seat.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Watch this.

Buddy starts backing up toward the high beams. Trelawney grins.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

This turkey picked the wrong guy to mess with.

TRELAWNEY

(losing his grin)

He's backin' up, too.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED: (2)

127

Buddy whips into forward, peels out, fishtails away from the headlights behind him, takes an immediate sharp right, SCREECHING his TIRES, then an immediate sharp left, SCREECHING them again.

BUDDY

He's gonna be backin' up his own tailpipe in about two minutes.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

Buddy continues to maneuver skillfully through three more turns, Rich's smile starting to be replaced by a sickness to his stomach, the kind commonly felt by people who sit in the suicide seat of a maniac. A moment later, Buddy and Rich are driving alone, no sign of anyone following them. Buddy reaches his hand out for the Texas Driver. Rich hands it to him, and he takes a deep swig.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

If Don hasn't closed the pumps yet,
maybe we can get some free gas.

They drive on. A moment later, the high beams reappear behind them. Buddy floors the Camaro.

BUDDY (CONT'D)

I'll kill that bastard.

Trelawney looks scared.

Don Vandenberg is shutting the lights off over the pumps. A service area garage door is open. Don's car sits high on a hydraulic lift. Don turns off the office lights, leaving only the lights in the lift area still on. SCREECHING TIRES get his attention as Buddy's Camaro SQUEALS into the station. Buddy's door flies open. He looks very agitated. Rich hops out of the passenger side. Buddy has his club.

BUDDY

Some shithead is following me. I
just hope he comes in here.

A bright headlight beam swings into the station, illuminating Buddy, his friends, and his car with an unnaturally bright and harsh light. Buddy hefts his club. Rich and Don just stare as they see what car it is: a pristine 1958 Plymouth Fury, red and white. The RADIO plays Bo Diddley's WHO DO YA LOVE.

It doesn't stop. It doesn't even slow down. It rams Buddy's Camaro, driving it like an accordion into the wall of the Texaco station.

Don and Rich scatter out of the way. Buddy just stands there, looking foolish with his lead-filled club in his hand, his car a hunk of scrap metal. The Fury isn't hurt. It backs out of the mass of crumpled metal, its driver not visible to anyone, and backs up to the road, its bright lights still shining on Buddy. It idles ominously.

(CONTINUED)

DON
(incredulously)
Is that Cunningham?

BUDDY
(in a feeble voice)
It couldn't be.
(even more feebly)
Look at my car...
(gathering his anger,
crooking his finger
at Christine)
Come on, prick! We're not through.

Don and Rich scurry to the lift area, stand behind a concrete door frame, watching the showdown in awe.

BUDDY
(at Christine,
with insane rage)
Come on!

Christine IDLES a bit longer, then REVS her engine. Her TIRES SQUEAL, she lurches forward, directly at Buddy. He stands firm for approximately one-half second before bailing out, rolling out of the way as Christine barrels once again into his wrecked Camaro, driving it between the double doors of the service area, driving it right over Rich Trelawney, who is killed instantly, and toward Don Vandenberg, who appears safe until the Camaro is pushed into the lift, wrecking its hydraulics and lowering Don's car instantly onto his skull, then his pelvis, then his knees.

Then it EXPLODES, engulfing the service area in an oven of flame.

Buddy just watches from in front of the station. He is in shock. He is roused out of his shock by fear.

129 BUDDY'S POV - THE INFERNO

129

Out of the flames, slowly, deliberately, like a fire-eating and fire-eaten dragon, emerges Christine, totally engulfed in flames. She is a ball of fire, and she moves right toward Buddy.

130 BUDDY

130

drops his lead-filled club, runs past the pumps. Christine follows, levelling the pumps and setting off the fuel they contain as she proceeds on toward her victim.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

130

CAMERA PRECEDES Buddy as we get a good look at his fear. He is sucking in air as he runs faster than he has ever run in his life. Behind him, the rest of Vandenberg's Texaco station goes up in one final EXPLOSION, as the underground gasoline storage area is hit.

One car-sized ball of flame follows Buddy, finally overtakes him, swallowing him up so easily that his body hardly makes a thud as each axle runs over him.

As the ball of flame that is Christine disappears into the dark night, Buddy's mutilated body burns in the foreground.

131 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

131

Will Darnell shuts off his office lights and starts to lock up when the automatic garage DOOR RATTLES open, much to his surprise. He is about to say something, but he refrains when he sees what comes in.

132 DARNELL'S POV - CHRISTINE

132

The Plymouth enters, recognizable only in form, not color. She is charred black. Even her windshield is opaque with black soot. She makes her way to Stall Twenty, whose doors are already open.

133 DARNELL

133

just stares for a moment. He is puzzled. He hears Christine's ENGINE CUT OFF. He hesitates about approaching the bizarre-looking car. Instead, he unlocks his office door, makes his way to his phone, all the while keeping his eyes on Christine. He dials, waits.

DARNELL

(on phone)

Henry, this's Will. Listen, did Cunningham get there?

(pause)

Order's okay? Good. Ah, he was driving my Caddy, right?

(pause, puzzled)

Okay, thanks. Take it easy.

He hangs up, stares out at Christine.

134 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

134

Darnell comes back out of his office, quietly walks toward Stall Twenty. He carries a 12-gauge shotgun.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

As he approaches, he can hear Christine's ENGINE TICKING as she cools down. He sees no sign of anyone, but hefts his shotgun as though he intends to use it, if necessary. It is impossible to see inside the charred automobile.

DARNELL

Okay, Jack. Come on out. Ride's over.

There is no response. Darnell looks nervous. He looks around, sees no one in the deserted area, looks back toward Christine.

She just sits there, black and silent.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

(hiding his fear)

If I have to come in and get you, it ain't gonna be pleasant.

Still no response. Darnell can't back down now. He inches closer to the car.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Why'n't you do us both a favor and just step on out?

Darnell slowly moves for the driver door, keeping shotgun ready for a blast. His hand goes to the handle. He finds it too hot to touch.

DARNELL (CONT'D)

Jesus!

Darnell scans the stall for an oil rag, finds one, uses it to open the Fury's door. As the door slowly opens, Will Darnell's eyes widen.

135 DARNELL'S POV - INSIDE CHRISTINE

135

The car appears empty. Smoke hangs over the dashboard and seats, the interior appearing baked from the heat.

136 DARNELL

136

is puzzled, and scared.

DARNELL

What the...?

(CONTINUED)

He instinctively looks over his shoulder, sees no one. He just stands there, neither daring to move nor knowing what direction to take. He listens. The ENGINE TICKS slowly. Darnell readies his gun, peers back inside the car, tries the back seat. No one.

Christine's seats are warm, not unpleasant to the touch. Darnell finds himself examining the upholstery with his hand. The exploration soon becomes a caress. He squeezes in behind the wheel, a considerable task, considering Darnell's girth. He sits in the car, enjoying the comfortable seat, despite the squeeze. He notices that the radio dial is illuminated. He looks to the dash. The dash lights become illuminated, grow brighter and brighter. His eyes reveal his fear. He strains to squeeze back out when the RADIO VOICE comes on.

RADIO VOICE

Relax. Sit back. You are tuned to
KDIL. All music. All the time.
Forever.

Darnell is scared out of his wits. He goes for the open door, but it SLAMS closed. MUSIC STARTS PLAYING on the RADIO: IT WILL STAND, by the Showmen.

Darnell tries opening the door, finds it locked. In a panic, he SHOOTS his SHOTGUN, blasting out the driver window. He uses the gun barrel to knock the jagged pieces of glass out of the way. Meanwhile, the RADIO gets louder and louder, painfully loud. The dashboard lights get brighter and brighter, glowing lurid green.

whimpers, tries to squirm out from behind the wheel, but he is pinned. Then, the CLICKING starts as the front seat moves forward, notch by notch, compressing Darnell's chest harder and harder against the inflexible steering column. We hear the CRACKING OF PLASTIC MIX with the CRACKING OF BONE as Darnell tries to scream. But his lungs are punctured, rendering him incapable of anything more than a pitiful wheeze.

The MUSIC CONTINUES, not so painfully loud from a distance. It ECHOES out of the stall, through the dark and empty garage as CAMERA PULLS BACK, STOPS at a distance. From here, the MUSIC sounds harmless.

139 EXT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - DAY

139

Sunrise bathes the rusted building in blue hues. Several cars are parked outside the garage, two of them police cars. The huge automatic door is closed. Signs are plastered over it, unreadable from a distance.

140 DRIVING SHOT - APPROACHING DARNELL'S GARAGE

140

Arnie drives up in Darnell's dusty Cadillac. Its back seat is full of auto parts and accessories, some boxed, some loose. He is puzzled by what lies ahead of him. He slows to a stop, tries his remote-control garage-door opener. Nothing happens.

He gets out, CAMERA FOLLOWING him to the door, where he reads: CLOSED PER ORDER ROCKBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT. Arnie sees that a padlock has been applied to the bottom of the door, keeping it down.

Anxious, he walks around to a less prominent door, gets out a ring of keys, tries three before the door opens. Arnie enters the garage.

141 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE

141

Arnie is surprised to see plainclothesmen and policemen in the office. He looks to Stall Twenty and is even more surprised.

142 ARNIE'S POV - STALL TWENTY

142

It is teeming with plainclothesmen, policemen, and lab specialists in white coats. We do not get a view of Christine.

143 ARNIE

143

tries not to panic, hurries toward the stall, is met by Junkins.

ARNIE

What's going on?

JUNKINS

You tell me. Where were you last night?

ARNIE

(unsure whether to answer)

Home. Why? What are you doing to my car?

(CONTINUED)

143 CONTINUED:

143

JUNKINS

You didn't go out at all?

ARNIE

'Course I went out. I got Darnell's car outside with a load of parts.

(fishes in his pockets, gets sarcastic)

You want the receipt?

JUNKINS

(calling Arnie's bluff)

Yeah.

Arnie has it, hands the crumpled paper to Junkins.

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

(while inspecting the receipt)

Why are you just showing up now? Why didn't you unload the stuff last night?

ARNIE

Because I was tired, that's why!

(uneasy pause)

Look, ask my mother if you don't believe me. Why do you keep butting in on my life?

JUNKINS

Because we found Will Darnell dead in your front seat.

Arnie is shocked. He pushes past Junkins to Christine, where lab specialists comb her for evidence. This is our first glimpse of the car in this scene, and she is spotless and clean. No sign of charring. No hint of baked upholstery. No odd driver window. Arnie reels from the news, and from the pain of having others touch Christine.

ARNIE

Why...?!

JUNKINS

I was hoping you could answer that. Somebody saw your car cruisin' behind Buddy Repperton last night.

(MORE)

*
16

(CONTINUED)

143 CONTINUED: (2)

143

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

(pause)

Oh, yeah. He's dead, too. So are Don Vandenberg and Richard Trelawney. The Trelawney kid was the hardest one to identify.

(pause)

I guess nobody'll be trashing your car anymore.

Arnie looks genuinely confused. His anguish is believable.

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

I suppose all this is news to you...?

Arnie looks to Junkins with tears in his eyes. We cannot tell whether they are for Darnell or his poor manhandled Christine. No one is finding anything worth reporting to Junkins.

ARNIE

Honest, Mister Junkins. I don't know what's going on. I swear I don't.

JUNKINS

(sarcastically)

Right.

(pause)

Why don't you tell me what you do know...? Before things get worse.

Arnie tries not to show how afraid he really is.

ARNIE

All I know...

He sneaks a glance at Christine.

144 ARNIE'S POV - CHRISTINE

144

Somehow, the car looks ominous... as though it is watching him.

145 ARNIE

145

is shaken at the sight, continues to Junkins.

ARNIE

All I know is I've got a Cadillac out front full of parts and I'm supposed to be in school in a half hour.

(CONTINUED)

JUNKINS

We'll take care of the Caddy. I don't want you touching it.

ARNIE

How did he die?

JUNKINS

(pitifully)
Which one?

ARNIE

Darnell.

JUNKINS

He was crushed to death. Kind of like he'd been in a waffle iron. Whoever did it put him in your car afterwards, 'cause the seat wasn't messed up a bit. Thank God for small favors, anyway, hunh?

(ignores Arnie's stare)

By the way, somebody tampered with your odometer. Your mileage is lower than last time I saw you.

ARNIE

(in a daze, mumbling)

It just does that. It's broken like that. It goes backwards.

JUNKINS

Better fix it. That's against the law.

Arnie just stares at Junkins for a moment, then turns and starts away.

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

Wait a minute.

Arnie stops. Junkins joins him, gestures that they should walk together toward the exit.

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

(quietly)

I checked out your story about Baker Auto. They have no record of selling anybody any body paint like yours.

Arnie just keeps walking, not knowing what to say. He is sweating.

(CONTINUED)

JUNKINS (CONT'D)

I found out something else, Arnie. That nice red paint...? It's called Autumn Red. No other cars come that way.

(pause)

You can't get it anymore, Arnie. Nobody makes it. Nobody sells it..

ARNIE

(bluffing)

I guess I was lucky.

JUNKINS

Your luck's about to run out, kid.

Arnie looks at Junkins questioningly.

ARNIE

I don't know what this has to do with any --

JUNKINS

Lemme put it this way: whatever cut Moochie Welch in half left its mark. There was paint imbedded in his pelvic bone. You know how hard something has to hit a man to imbed paint in his bones?

(pause)

It was Autumn Red paint.

ARNIE

(frightened)

I was home in bed that night, and I can prove it.

JUNKINS

I know. And you can prove where you were last night. But somewhere... you're lying.

ARNIE

No, I'm not.

JUNKINS

And I hope, for your sake, Arnie, that when I get the truth -- and I will get the truth -- that it comes from you. Otherwise, you're gonna be in one hell of a mess.

They have reached the exit door. Arnie, flustered, has trouble opening the door. He slams it in Junkins' face..

Junkins heaves a sigh, heads back toward the investigation.

146 INT. LEIGH'S KITCHEN - CLOSE ON TV SET - NIGHT

146 *

Donny and Marie are doing something cute on their New Year's Eve Special. CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal Leigh as she reaches for the phone, dials it, waits for an answer.

*

SUPERIMPOSE: December 31

*

LEIGH
(on phone)
May I please speak to Dennis?

147 OMITTED
thru
149

147
thru
149

150 INT. DENNIS' FAMILY ROOM

150 *

He and Ellie are playing Risk. Ellie has the phone in her hand, hands it to Dennis with a teasing look. Dennis wears a splint.

ELLIE

It's a girl...

DENNIS

(ignoring Ellie's
wanton stare)

Hello?

(pause, pleasantly
surprised)

Hi, Leigh! Happy New Year... almost.

He throws an army at Ellie.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Nothing much. I'm about to attack Irkutsk from Kamchatka with thirty armies. Our folks are at a party, so my sister and I are fighting for world domination. She's pleading for mercy.

ELLIE

I am not.

INTERCUT BETWEEN Leigh and Dennis, as necessary.

As Leigh talks, Dennis realizes the seriousness of her request. He signals Ellie to stop fooling around, and she does.

LEIGH

My parents went out, too.

(pause)

Dennis, can I come over there...?

I need to talk to you.

DENNIS

(eyeing Ellie)

About Arnie?

LEIGH

No.

(pause)

About Christine.

Dennis looks surprised. So does Ellie.

151 INT. DENNIS' LIVING ROOM

151

WAP! Dennis plunks two pieces of plaster onto his coffee table: chunks of his discarded cast. CAMERA reveals Leigh sitting on Dennis' couch, her coat folded beside her. Dennis nervously repositions two soft drinks on the coffee table, struggles with his crutches in an attempt to sit gracefully on the couch beside Leigh. His awkwardness amuses Leigh, and she smiles.

*
*
*
*

DENNIS

What's so funny?

LEIGH

(smiling)

You look like a stork on those things.

DENNIS

(blushing)

Flattery will get you everywhere.

There is an awkward moment as neither knows what to say next.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

You first.

Leigh nervously bites her lower lip. Dennis looks at her too long, and she blushes.

LEIGH

I'm afraid for Arnie.

DENNIS

I thought you wanted to talk about Christine.

LEIGH

What do you know about that car?

DENNIS

The guy who owned the car before Arnie...

(pause, swallow)

His daughter choked to death in that car.

LEIGH

How do you know that?

DENNIS

LeBay's brother sold Arnie the car. The guy's a jerk. He just came out and told me.

(shaking his head)

He seemed really glad to get rid of it.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED: (2)

151

LEIGH

Maybe he was just making it up.

DENNIS

Nobody made up Moochie dying. Or Repperton... or Vandenberg and Richie Trelawney.

LEIGH

Or Darnell...

(shaken)

Or me. If it weren't for that man at the Drive-In...

(looks away, unable to continue; then back to Dennis)

I think I was supposed to be next or somethin'.

Dennis puts his arm around her. She lets him hold her. After a silent moment, she looks up to him. They kiss. Tentatively, but tenderly.

DENNIS

Arnie would never do that in a million years.

LEIGH

(with difficulty)

I don't think he's Arnie, Dennis.

Dennis reaches for the two pieces of plaster, flips them over. *

DENNIS

Recognize this? *

Leigh examines a piece of plaster with writing on it.

LEIGH

Is this a joke?

DENNIS

The first time he came to see me in the hospital, he signed my cast.

(hands her another chunk)

I had him sign it again on Thanksgiving.

Leigh lays the two pieces side by side on the coffee table. CAMERA reveals them to be gross mismatches. Not even close.

152 LEIGH

152

looks at Dennis questioningly.

DENNIS

I've known Arnie since kindergarten.
He's changed a lot this year... but
you don't change the way you write
your name.

LEIGH

It's the car. I swear it's that car.

DENNIS

Maybe. I'm going over to Arnie's
tonight for New Year's.

LEIGH

(alarmed)

Dennis, I wouldn't.

DENNIS

We do it every year. His folks'll be
there.

(pause)

I'll get him alone. I'll talk to
him. Maybe he'll have something to
say.

LEIGH

What if he doesn't? What if that
car... y'know... doesn't let him...?

DENNIS

Then we destroy it.

LEIGH

(putting on her coat)

How?

DENNIS

Very carefully. We have to do a
better job than Buddy did.

153 EXT. DENNIS' HOUSE - NIGHT

153

Dennis stands in his doorway with the porch light on as
Leigh says good-night, hurries down the walk, across the
street toward her car. CAMERA STAYS WITH her.

Around a distant corner comes a set of headlights. Leigh
is startled by their glare as she fumbles for her keys,
finally lets herself into her car.

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED:

153

As the Other Car approaches, the sound of 50's rock 'n' roll RADIO MUSIC GROWS LOUDER. Leigh ducks below her seat-back, out of sight, as Christine pulls into Dennis' driveway, playing Chuck Berry's MAYBELLENE.

154 DENNIS

154

peers out his window, pulls on a jacket, disappears from the window, reappears at his front door, zipping up his jacket. He then starts down his front steps on his crutches. Arnie remains in the car.

ARNIE

Dennis, my man...! You really operate on those babies.

DENNIS

Yeah, I manage.

(hobbles to
Christine)

I see we have the old rustbucket tonight.

ARNIE

(with a strange edge)

Oh-oh. Watch what you call my car. She's very sensitive.

DENNIS

Is she?

(taking Arnie's
silent hint)

Sorry, Christine.

ARNIE

That's better.

Dennis gingerly gets in Christine's passenger side, depositing his crutches in the back seat.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

Let's motorvate!

Christine pulls out with a SQUEAL OF her TIRES. Dennis is somewhat jolted by the fast start.

155 LEIGH

155

rises into sight in her parents' CAR, STARTS IT UP, pulls a U-turn to drive off into the night in the opposite direction Christine has taken.

CHRISTINE - Rev. 6/9/83

156 DRIVING SHOT - NIGHT

Arnie reaches under his seat, finds a can of beer, pops it open, starts quaffing. He is driving too fast, but Christine holds the road.

ARNIE

Help yourself, Dennis.

DENNIS

I'll wait 'til we get to your house.

ARNIE

Don't hold your breath, pal. The fossils are having their asshole university friends over. I thought we'd just cruise the New Year in.

(takes a big drink)

Have a beer. Don't be shy. My car is your car.

Dennis pops open his own beer, uneasy at Arnie's comment.

ARNIE (Cont'd)

A toast. Death to the shitters in 1979.

DENNIS

(lowering his
beer can)

I can't drink to that.

ARNIE

Well...what can you drink to?

DENNIS

Uh...I dunno...how 'bout to friendship?

ARNIE

Friendship. That's a good one.

They click their beer cans together. Arnie downs his beer in one long draught. He crimps the empty can and tosses it out the window.

ARNIE (Cont'd)

(as he throws)

Right up the little tramp's ass. Hand me another one, would you?

DENNIS

You gonna be able to drive?

CHRISTINE - Rev. 6/9/83

156 CONTINUED: (2)

Arnie is too impatient to wait for Dennis to give him a beer. He reaches under the seat himself.

ARNIE

Don't worry....
(meaningful glance)
Besides, Christine's in control now.

DENNIS

What do you mean?

156A CLOSE - ARNIE'S FOOT ON HIGH BEAM SWITCH

as he flicks it on.

156B - EX T. LOW ANGLE - CHRISTINE (2ND UNIT)

as her brights come on.

156C EX T. ROAD AND CHRISTINE (TEST STOCK)

The road is transformed into a wide slice of daylight, surrounded by darkness. It is as though Christine sees everything, even at night.

156D CLOSE - DENNIS

He is awestruck. Christine's ENGINE WHINES INTO HIGHER RPM'S. The speedometer shoots up to 105.

156E EX T. ROAD (TEST STOCK)

As Christine comes toward CAMERA. Her high beams like lasers in the night.

156F INT. CAR - DENNIS

DENNIS (Cont.)

(getting up his nerve)
Arnie, you're driving too fast.

156G CLOSE - ARNIE'S FOOT

as he flicks the high beams off.

156H ARNIE

ARNIE

(calmly)
It's all right, Dennis. It really is.
(pause; smiles)
Christine and I can light up the world together.

36H (CONTINUED) (3)

DENNIS

If you don't pull over, I'm gonna get sick. I mean it, Arnie.

ARNIE

Just don't get any on the seats. Christine hates that.

Arnie rolls down his window, tosses out his second can, reaches down for another, taking his eyes off the road, his hands off the wheel.

DENNIS

Jesus, Arnie!

Dennis grabs for the wheel, but Arnie firmly takes his hand, prevents him from touching it. No one is steering, but Christine holds her course straight down the road.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE - Rev. 6/9/83

156H CONTINUED: (M)

ARNIE

I want you to see this. Now this is great alignment. You just don't find this anymore.

Dennis weakly sits back. Arnie gently releases his grip, once again puts his hands back on the wheel. Christine cruises.

ARNIE

(continuing)

Don't be scared.

DENNIS

I'm scared for you, man. For what's happened to you. It's this car.

ARNIE

I know you're jealous, Dennis. But we'll always be friends. As long as you stick with me. You know what happens to shitters who don't...

DENNIS

What does happen?

ARNIE

Let's not kid each other.

DENNIS

Who are the shitters?

ARNIE

All of them, Dennis.

DENNIS

Look, Leigh is on your side, Arnie.

Arnie finishes another beer, doesn't seem at all drunk. He starts to reach under the seat, but Dennis anticipates this, gets a beer for him, afraid he'd otherwise take his hands off the wheel again. Christine is going fast enough to pin the speedometer. But the ride is smooth.

ARNIE

Don't you like this beer? I thought you liked beer.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE - Rev. 6/9/83

156H CONTINUED (5)

DENNIS

Did you hear what I just said?!

ARNIE

Let me tell you something about love,
Dennis.(gulps down a good
portion of his beer)It has a voracious appetite. It eats
everything: friendship, family...
everything. It kills me how much it
eats, Dennis. But I'll tell you
something:

(pause)

If you feed it right, it's a
beautiful thing.

(pause)

And that's what we have.

They rapidly overtake a lone car on the highway, passing
it in seconds.

ARNIE (CONT'D)

When someone believes in you, man,
you can do anything. Any fucking
thing in the universe. And when you
believe right back in that someone
...watch out, world. Nobody can
stop you, then. Nobody. Ever.

DENNIS

(hesitantly)

You feel this way about Leigh?

ARNIE

Fuck, no. I'm talking about
Christine. No shitter ever came
between me 'n' Christine. Watch
this.Before Dennis has time to react to Arnie's announcement,
Arnie swerves the steering wheel sharply, throwing Christine
onto the wrong side of the highway. Dennis is nearly scared
to death.

157 DENNIS' POV - AN ONCOMING CAR

A car is now approaching them in a head-on collision course.
The driver lays on his HORN.

CHRISTINE - Rev. 6/9/83

158 ARNIE

Just grins as he forces them to ditch to the side of the road, deftly swerving out of the way at the last split-second.

ARNIE
(scorning his victim)
Chicken-shit.

Dennis is too weak to respond, exhausted from fear. Arnie is much more chipper. He gets out another beer, swigs it down.

ARNIE (Cont'd)
Nothing finer than being behind the wheel of your own car...except maybe pussy.

Dennis remains silent, looks at Arnie in disbelief.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

159 EXT. BABY BEEF BURGER - DAY

Dennis's car is parked, his RADIO playing Kenny Loggins' WHENEVER I CALL YOU "FRIEND". Dennis and Leigh come out of the burger joint with a bag of food, Dennis already munching on a burger.

SUPERIMPOSE: January 3, 1979

Leigh shows concern for him as he walks gingerly to the car, his splint now replaced by an Ace Bandage, which is bunched tightly at his left knee beneath his trousers. He no longer uses crutches. Leigh gets in the car, slides across the seat and opens Dennis' door as he hobbles over to it. He carefully gets in.

LEIGH
(referring to
his knee)
Careful...

Dennis' appreciation for her concern shows on his face.

160 INSIDE DENNIS' CAR

He settles in behind the wheel. He looks to Leigh tenderly.

DENNIS
I wish I'd met you first.

(CONTINUED)

160

CONTINUED:

160

Leigh shyly touches his hand.

LEIGH

Me, too.

DENNIS

At least then you'd be out of it.

LEIGH

But you wouldn't.

DENNIS

(with a shrug)

Arnie's problems have been the story of my life.

(touches Leigh)

We can't get anybody else mixed up in this.

(pause)

My father keeps asking questions. I wanna tell him, but I'm afraid if I do... he'll just go on the list: Moochie, Repperton and his friends, Darnell...

LEIGH

And maybe us.

(pause)

You know what gets me? The list. It isn't Arnie. It's that car. It's evil.

As they continue, the car in the space behind theirs pulls out and exits the parking lot. Right behind it, revealed only by the first car LEAVING FRAME, is Christine. Her ENGINE IDLES, her grill faces Dennis' car. She moves into position. They don't see her.

DENNIS

(his eyes agreeing)

If anybody heard us, they'd lock us up.

They both look around self-consciously.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

We can't tell anybody what we're doing.

LEIGH

Are you afraid?

DENNIS

(after thinking about it)

I won't be if you won't.

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED: (2)

160

He puts down his burger. She puts down hers. They move closer, embrace, kiss tenderly. They like how it feels, and the kiss becomes more passionate. *

Arnie gets out of Christine, heads toward the Duster.

Leigh sees him first, in the vanity mirror.

LEIGH
(breaking the kiss)
Oh... Dennis...!

She and Dennis turn, still clutched in an embrace.

161 THEIR POV - ARNIE

161

He stands trembling, his expression a pallid grimace of hate.

162 ARNIE'S POV - LEIGH AND DENNIS

162

They separate immediately. Dennis starts to get out of the car.

LEIGH
Dennis, no!

But Dennis gets out, struggling with his still fragile leg.

DENNIS
Arnie!

163 ARNIE

163

runs back to Christine. He opens her door, turns at Dennis' next call.

DENNIS
(continuing)
Hey, man!

Arnie's head jerks up. His eyes are wide and blank and glaring.

ARNIE
(cold as death)
You shitters!

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

163

DENNIS

Arnie, wait a minute!

But Arnie jumps in his car and SLAMS her door. Christine's ENGINE SCREAMS, and she ROARS forward, her rear tires smoking. She heads right for Dennis. His leg buckles, and he falls back into his Duster, bumping his hip on the wheel and HONKING the horn.

Christine is now parallel with Dennis' car. Arnie whips her into reverse, but before he can back up, Dennis spitefully opens his door right into her paint job. Christine backs up, a long and jagged line gouged into her body as she SCRAPES by Dennis' open door. Dennis extends his arm out the open door, gives Arnie the finger.

Leigh pulls Dennis back into the car.

A crowd of passersby stops to stare at the confrontation.

When Arnie sees the witnesses, he just SQUEALS further back, SHIFTS INTO FIRST, and PEELS OUT of the parking lot, fishtailing as he goes, smoke rising from Christine's tailpipes.

164 INSIDE DENNIS' CAR

164

Leigh examines Dennis' game leg.

LEIGH

Are you okay?

Dennis nods, grimacing in pain, pale from the close call.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

What do we do now?

DENNIS

Now we end it.

They both look frightened at the thought.

165 EXT. ROCKBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

165

CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN ON Dennis Guilder as he scrapes a message into Christine's hood with his car key. Jagged words: DARNELL'S/TONITE. He works surreptitiously, looking around for witnesses, being careful in the presence of the unpredictable Christine.

As he finishes, his Plymouth Duster pulls up, Leigh at the wheel. He gets in, being careful with his leg, and they pull out of the parking lot as the SCHOOL BELL RINGS and students start exiting the building.

166 EXT. DARNELL'S GARAGE - NIGHT

166

CAMERA EXPLORES the area in the silence of the night. Street lamps illuminate the automotive carcasses in the junkyard next door, the huge '60's-vintage Caterpillar bulldozer seeming to stand guard over the refuse.

NOISES emanate from the giant garage door in front of Darnell's garage. As CAMERA MOVES CLOSER, Dennis and Leigh can be seen stooped at the base of the door. She holds the padlock as he hacksaws it off. A new sign has been posted: CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. The padlock gives way, and Dennis tries the big door. It doesn't budge.

DENNIS

On three, give it all you've got.

Leigh nods.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

One... two... three!

The door comes loose, sending Dennis down onto his injured leg. He is in agony.

LEIGH

Dennis, are you all right?

DENNIS

Help me up.

Dennis and Leigh cautiously peer into the dimly lit garage. CAMERA FOLLOWS them in. The place is even more a shambles than when Darnell was alive. A big pile of rubble sits where the card table once was: unwanted flat tires, bent and rusted bumpers, parts boxes, a lifesize cheesecake girl advertising spark plugs. The tire rack over Darnell's office is nearly empty. The office door is ajar.

Stall Twenty is empty.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

(referring to the
deserted stall)

That's where he kept it.

(pause; scanning
the garage)

Looks like they looted the place.

LEIGH

(afraid)

We better get started.

Dennis limps for the open door, trying to downplay the pain in his leg. Leigh stays by him, knowing full well the implications of his injury.

(CONTINUED)

166 CONTINUED:

166

LEIGH (CONT'D)

You're not gonna be able to work the clutch, are you?

Dennis shrugs, feigns confidence, but isn't very convincing. He can barely walk.

Leigh hangs back for a moment, scans the garage floor, spies an O-Cedar mop, grabs it, and catches up to Dennis as he steps into the darkness outside the garage.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

(referring to the mop)

You'll need this.

And they are gone.

167 EXT. AT THE JUNKYARD

167

The old bulldozer sits prominently amidst abstract piles of truck and auto wreckage. Its gigantic blade is serrated and rusty, each protuberance big enough to slice a man in half. It has an enclosed canopy, and in the dimness of the night, we cannot see inside.

A moment later, it STARTS UP, noisier than a fleet of badly tuned stock cars. Smoke rises from its smokestack; dust rises from all around it, as though the earth were shaking to the rhythm of its poorly timed pistons.

The cab door opens, and Dennis reaches out for Leigh, who materializes from behind a gigantic earth-mover tire. She climbs onto the dozer's push arm, steps cautiously onto one of its earth-clogged track shoes, and allows Dennis to pull her inside. The cab door SLAMS closed.

168 INSIDE THE BULLDOZER

168

Dennis, despite his pain, is proud of his accomplishment and of his choice of weapons. He tries out the giant responsive blade.

DENNIS

(shouting over the loudly knocking engine)

Whattaya think?

LEIGH

(worried about his leg)

Try it.

(CONTINUED)

168 CONTINUED:

168

Dennis stomps on the clutch, feels a searing pain shoot through his body, and GRINDS THE GEARS HORRIBLY trying to get into first.

Leigh hands Dennis the mop. He places its wide sponge end on the clutch, tries its action, finds it satisfactory. Leigh is relieved.

169 INT. DARNELL'S GARAGE

169

The monster BULLDOZER RUMBLES LOUDLY toward the huge door. The ENGINE'S LOUD BELLOWING IS AMPLIFIED BY THE GIANT TIN STRUCTURE. The Caterpillar lurches forward into Darnell's garage with a series of neck-snapping jerks, its tremendous power obviously being guided by a novice.

Once inside, Dennis steps on the brake, and the DOZER STALLS.

Dennis leans over the bulldozer's instrument panel, carefully refastens a pair of wires hanging below the starter button. They spark, giving him a jolt and startling Leigh. He tries again, this time without incident. He pushes the ignition button, and the DOZER STARTS UP once again.

Dennis maneuvers the giant dozer just to the left of the large entrance door, out of sight of anyone approaching the garage from the street. He TURNS OFF THE DOZER.

By now, his left leg is swollen around the bandage, the material of his jeans stretched tight over the thigh. Leigh sees tears in his eyes, gives him a hug.

DENNIS

I was just thinking about the first time I came here with Arnie. He was such a loser, then.

(looking into
Leigh's eyes)

God, I wish he still was.

Leigh says nothing. They sit close, remaining silent.

LEIGH

(after a pause)

What if he doesn't come?

DENNIS

Christine will.

A moment later, headlights flare past the open garage door, spilling across the concrete floor, illuminating the debris for an instant.

(CONTINUED)

Dennis and Leigh grow tense until the light has passed.

LEIGH

I feel creepy, Dennis.

DENNIS

You'd better get in the office. And keep your head down. When you hear me start this thing up, that's when you reach out and hit the button.

(touching her knee)

Then just be sure to stay out of sight.

Leigh leans her head on Dennis' chest. He touches her hair. They wait.

LEIGH

Let's get this over with.

Dennis nods. Leigh starts to get out. Outside, the wind picks up. Leigh stops getting out.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

I think I heard something.

Afraid, they both listen. They hear nothing, say nothing.

Another car goes by, this time more slowly. All they see is the spill of its headlights, then it is gone.

LEIGH (CONT'D)

What if he's out there... just waiting...?

DENNIS

(not so sure)

He'd come in...

Leigh starts down again, afraid.

LEIGH

Dennis, will this work?

DENNIS

Give me a kiss.

(leans over;
kisses her)

Be careful.

LEIGH

Kill it, Dennis. Kill it for what it did to Arnie.

Dennis nods uneasily, his hand gripping the blade control lever tightly.

(CONTINUED)

Leigh crosses the garage. Dennis focuses on the lovely motion of her hips as she walks. He hears the HOLLOW CLICK OF HER BOOTS on the oil-stained cement floor, the soft WHISH-WHISH of her jacket against her blouse. He tunes in to those subtle sounds, then detects one other. He freezes in fear.

Leigh stops halfway to the office door, petrified by the sound of an APPROACHING ENGINE.

Dennis looks on with urgency, his hand quietly finding its way to the dozer's starter button.

The headlights pass by. Just another stray motorist.

Both Leigh and Dennis relax.

She is about thirty feet from the office door when the RATTLING SOUND is heard.

She is confused to see the large garage door closing.

Dennis' eyes widen.

From the corner of Darnell's garage, from beneath the pile of rubble just beyond the office area, a blinding pair of twin beams suddenly comes on, the blazing light splaying through portions of old tires, refracting through broken glass, bouncing off rusty chrome, bringing to life the nearly-forgotten pile of debris as the unmistakable WHINE of Christine's ENGINE precedes her EXPLOSION OUT OF THE RUBBLE by only an instant. The light, the noise, the flying debris combine to leave Leigh both vulnerable and immobile.

Dennis sees Christine come flying at Leigh, whose silhouette catches the scattering beams of light as her eyes stare into them. She is momentarily dazed. Dennis STARTS THE DOZER.

DENNIS

Leigh!

Christine comes in angling for Leigh, hitting a corner of Darnell's pre-fab office, digging out a great clout of dry wood and splinters from the wall. There is a METALLIC SCREECH as part of her right bumper pulls loose. Sparks cascade across the floor while her TIRES SCREAM violently as she leaps at Leigh, smoke rising from the new black marks on the concrete.

Leigh grabs hold of the angled struts supporting the tire storage rack, swings her legs up out of the way of Christine's front end just as the killer car SCRAPES along the wall directly below her.

(CONTINUED)

Safe by a fraction of a second. Two old tires tumble from the shelf above Leigh and bounce crazily on the cement. Leigh's head smashes back against the wall. She is dazed by the hard blow.

Christine's momentum brings her CRASHING into the first Stall on the office side of the garage. She quickly reverses, all four tires laying rubber and spewing smoke as her front end disentangles itself from the punctured corrugated metal.

The huge door finishes closing. Leigh hangs there, head down, dazed by the blow to her head. She is bleeding.

Dennis lets the clutch out. The bulldozer rolls, its giant METAL CLEATS DIGGING INTO THE CONCRETE FLOOR. He maneuvers the dozer to create a protective wall between Christine and Leigh, SLAMS on the brakes just in time to avoid crushing Leigh. The huge DOZER STALLS. Now Christine's ENGINE IS THE ONLY SOUND in the garage.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Leigh! Leigh, run!

She looks at him groggily. Sticky braids of blood appear in her hair. She is bleeding profusely, and she is dazed. She lets go of the strut, lands on her feet, staggers, falls to one knee.

Christine, her hood crimped and torn from her first hit, shows bright metal through the broken paint. Her hood and grill take on the look of shark's teeth. She deftly maneuvers around the hulking bulldozer to attack Leigh from the other side.

Dennis opens his cab door, but everything is happening too fast for this to help.

Christine comes for Leigh.

Leigh gets up, takes two wobbling steps, falls back behind the bulldozer's massive blade just as Christine swerves and strikes the immovable wall of yellow steel, SLAMMING the dozer door shut.

Dennis is thrown by the impact. He STARTS THE DOZER'S ENGINE again. It TURNS OVER, COUGHS, STALLS. His mop is on the clutch.

Christine backs up, cuts hard to the left, out of Dennis' sight, around the back of the Caterpillar. Dennis cranes his neck to look behind him as Christine's TIRES SCREAM. With Leigh behind the dozer's blade, Christine is attacking the dozer on its left side.

(CONTINUED)

Dennis is jolted again, Christine driving the dozer's blade closer to Leigh, narrowly missing her.

Barely conscious, Leigh simply wanders off, holding both hands laced to the back of her head. Blood trickles through her fingers. To Dennis' horror, she is walking into the clear.

Dennis rams the mop down into the clutch once again, STARTS THE DOZER ENGINE.

Christine's TIRES SCREECH backwards away from the stricken dozer. She is about to try a wide turn around the Cat, to get a shot at Leigh.

Dennis deftly swivels the dozer just in time to catch Christine's mudguard with one of the serrations on the giant blade. The dozer pushes Christine across the floor, sideways, SLAMMING her into a far wall.

The driver side door pops open, revealing Arnie behind the wheel. He has the look of a stark raving madman. The CAT STALLS.

Leigh screams, turns and runs for Darnell's office, blood spattering behind her in large drops. Her jacket collar is soaked with blood.

Christine backs up, LAYS RUBBER, leaving a SCATTER OF GLASS behind as she pulls free of the dozer's grip. She pulls around in a tight circle to go after Leigh, centrifugal force SLAMMING her driver DOOR SHUT again.

Christine REVS HER ENGINE before pouncing on Leigh.

Dennis pushes the ignition button once more, reinforces the dangling wires hanging below the instrument panel, babbles an indecipherable prayer. The CATERPILLAR'S ENGINE COUGHS. Dennis lets the clutch out and steps on the gas as Christine leaps forward. The dozer hits Christine's mudguard, SMASHES her against another wall. More GLASS BREAKS.

Arnie, behind the wheel, grins at Dennis with hate.

The giant BULLDOZER STALLS AGAIN.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Goddam fucking sonofabitch bastard
asshole shithead.

Dennis tries the IGNITION again, careful with the gas, so he won't flood the engine.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED: (5)

169

Meanwhile, Christine backs out from between the dozer blade and the wall, leaving a twisted chunk of her red body behind, baring her right front tire.

Dennis GETS THE DOZER GOING, finds reverse, looks down to the far end of the garage to see the battered Christine, all her headlights out, her windshield hopelessly smashed. Her bent hood seems to sneer.

Dennis turns, sees Leigh in Darnell's office, blood still pouring out of her head. Her eyes widen and point past Dennis as she hears Christine's ENGINE WHINING from the far end of the garage: it grows STEADILY LOUDER AND LOUDER. Leigh's lips move soundlessly in terror.

Dennis turns to see what she is seeing.

170 DENNIS' POV - CHRISTINE

170

ROARS straight up the empty floor, gaining speed. Her hood is uncrimping, straightening out and down to cover the motor cavity. Her two headlights flicker, then come on with renewed brightness. Her mudguard and the right side of her body reknit themselves, red metal appearing from nowhere and slipping down into smooth curves to cover the right front tire and engine compartment. The tire that had been pulled off its rim looks as good as new.

171 DENNIS

171

is terrified. He mumbles to himself.

DENNIS

God help us.

172 CHRISTINE

172

aims directly for the wall between the garage and the office.

173 DENNIS

173

lets the mop handle off the clutch fast, lurching the giant yellow dozer forward, just failing by a fraction of a second to block Christine's path. She never slows.

174 IN THE OFFICE

174

Leigh stumbles backward at the sight of the oncoming car. She falls over Darnell's chair, hits the floor, disappears behind his desk, exactly at the moment of impact.

175 CHRISTINE

175

hurtles full speed at the office wall, Arnie's contorted mouth issuing a final, bone-chilling, blood-curdling kamikaze cry as the Fury CRASHES through the wall, causing Darnell's huge GLASS window to EXPLODE inward. Deadly GLASS FLIES EVERYWHERE, impaling objects throughout the office. The car keeps moving.

176 LEIGH

176

is alarmed at the sound of Christine's relentlessly REVVING ENGINE. She rises from under the SPLINTERING DESK. It is a terrible mistake, because in that same instant, Arnie's body, still shrieking hatred, is sheared as he flies through the remnants of Christine's jagged windshield. He lands with FORCEFUL IMPACT on Leigh, toppling her to the floor. His face and hands are imbedded with tiny fragments of glass, which he presses into her face and hands as he tries to clutch her in a final death embrace. His chilling cry slowly falls to silence.

Leigh, her arms and face lacerated with a hundred tiny scratches, pulls herself from the clutches of Arnie's corpse, runs screaming for the office door.

177 DENNIS

177

looks on in horror as he sees Christine now operating on her own malevolent power. Her RADIO comes alive with Bo Diddley's MUMBLIN' GUITAR.

DENNIS

Leigh, no!

He slams down on the clutch with the mop handle, and it SNAPS in two.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

Ohhhh shit!

As Christine reverses away from the broken window, Dennis stamps on the clutch with his left foot, ignoring the pain, bracing his leg with one hand as the other works the gearshift.

Leigh tears the office door open and runs out.

178 CHRISTINE

178

turns toward her, its smashed snarling snout sighting down on her.

179 DENNIS 179

REVS THE CAT'S ENGINE AND ROARS at Christine, STRIKING HER HARD, rams the gearshift into reverse, backs up ten feet, stamps the clutch again, RAMS back INTO FIRST. Christine REVS HER ENGINE, tries to pull away along the wall. But Dennis cuts to the left and HITS her again, crushing her almost wasp-waisted in the middle. DOORS POP OUT OF THEIR FRAMES at the top and bottom.

180 CHRISTINE 180

refuses to die. Her ENGINE REVS ANGRILY.

181 DENNIS 181

gets into reverse again, the pain in his leg now extending through his whole body. He sets his sights on one final penetration of Christine, adjusts his serrated dozer blade for the fatal thrust.

182 CHRISTINE'S 182

damaged body lunges down the side of the garage, SPRAYING TOOLS AND JUNK-METAL, PULLING OUT STRUTS and DUMPING THE OVERHEAD SHELVES, which hit the concrete with FLAT CLAPPING SOUNDS.

183 DENNIS 183

stomps on the clutch again and floors the CAT'S ACCELERATOR, then hangs onto the wheel as the huge BULLDOZER CLATTERS violently toward Christine, HITTING her on the right side and SMASHING her body clear off her rear axle, driving it into the door, which RATTLES NOISILY. Dennis is driven up over the instrument panel by the impact, then dumped back into his seat, gasping for air. Now he sees Leigh cowering in a far corner, her hands covering her face in fear.

184 CHRISTINE 184

is STILL RUNNING. The misshapen car drags herself slowly toward Leigh, like an animal wounded in a trap. As she moves, she slowly begins regenerating. A tire POPS full and new, the radio antenna springs back into shape, the metal grows around her ruined rear end. She is on a slow but steady crawl toward Leigh, clouds of exhaust puking out her rear-end at Dennis, whose DOZER NOISILY IDLES, his access to Leigh blocked by the living carcass of the killer car.

is crying, his chest heaving, his leg throbbing.

DENNIS

Stay dead!

He tries his leg on the clutch once more, but it is useless. His muscles are shot, his bones searing with pain. He braces his leg with both hands and jams it onto the clutch. His vision goes hazy, but he RACES THE ENGINE, gets FIRST GEAR once more, charges the dying car from behind.

As the Cat moves up on Christine, Dennis raises the dozer blade high above Christine's slowly-regenerating trunk. As the dozer HITS Christine squarely in the rear end, Dennis abruptly drops the giant blade onto her trunk, its yellow-and-rust steel CLEAVING deeply through it, slowing the Fury's progress, but not stopping it. Now the evil car is dragging the dozer with it, inch by inch!

The Plymouth's gas tank RUPTURES, and there is an EXPLOSION. Dennis shields his face from the fire, ignores the pain in his immensely swollen leg, climbs down from the Cat, and runs around the flaming car, reaching Leigh, who stares hysterically at Christine's looming front grill only a few feet in front of her.

Christine sits there, her ENGINE RUNNING CHOPPILY, MISSING, FIRING AGAIN, THEN DYING. HER RADIO DIES, too.

Her odometer reads 00000/1.

The BULLDOZER'S RUMBLE is the ONLY SOUND LEFT.

Dennis helps Leigh up, limps with her away from Christine, taking a wide path toward the door.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

We have to get out of here before she blows.

As he speaks, they see that the flames have died in Christine. He just stares for a moment.

The BULLDOZER STALLS, its big blade buried deep into Christine's soot-charred trunk.

Dennis and Leigh collapse in each other's arms, locked in an exhausted embrace.

reveals the widespread destruction throughout the garage. The two vehicles' carcasses sit in silence. No one moves.

187 DENNIS

187

weakly turns, examines the wounds on Leigh's head. He glances over at Christine, her battered chassis lying still.

LEIGH
(weakly)
Dennis, are you all right?

Dennis limps over to the dozer, rests his throbbing leg by sitting on a protruding chunk of yellow steel.

DENNIS
(whispering)
Do I look all right?

LEIGH
(letting the tears fall)
No.

DENNIS
I love you.

She hugs him clumsily. He looks to Christine.

188 DENNIS' POV - CHRISTINE

188

She hardly looks like a car anymore.

189 DENNIS

189

wonders aloud what he is thinking, barely audible to Leigh.

DENNIS
Why didn't she burn?

Then they hear it happen before they see it.

190 THEIR POV - CHRISTINE

190

Her dented door breaks the silence of the garage with a QUIET PUNK! PUNK! PUNK! as the metal undents itself. The door becomes whole again. A new rear axle seems to grow where one belongs, and the car slowly rises from the floor in the process.

The trunk regenerates, new red metal growing over the rusty yellow dozer blade, encasing it as though it were built to be there.

stare in fear. Their eyes widen, then bulge. He pulls her with him onto the bulldozer.

DENNIS

You run the gas. I'll run the clutch.

LEIGH

(in a hissing whisper)

No... no... no.

They watch a moment longer as Christine begins her slow recovery to fighting strength.

DENNIS

(urgently)

It still isn't done. Just a little more.

LEIGH

I'll try.

Dennis REVS UP THE BULLDOZER once again. As she red-lines the engine, he raises the blade, STRIDENT SHRIEKS OF TEARING METAL accompanying its lifting of Christine's rear end off the concrete floor of the garage before the BLADE RIPS THROUGH THE TRUNK TOP, then BASHES DOWN ONTO IT once again.

They repeat the process, sloppily lifting and DROPPING CHRISTINE'S CHASSIS onto the garage floor.

DENNIS

(to Leigh)

Now!

He pops the clutch, Leigh FLOORS THE GAS, and the Caterpillar dozer forges ahead, CRUMPLING Christine as it slides her toward a wall, then MASHES her into it, alternately raising and lowering her angry remains, smearing her red paint against the drab concrete wall of the garage.

They repeat the process, RAMMING, lifting, CRUSHING, PENETRATING until the haunted car is mangled into oblivion.

A SIREN can be heard in the background as Dennis and Leigh continue to finish the deed, oblivious to anything but the need to destroy Christine.

LEIGH

(finally)

Is it good enough?

DENNIS

(still crushing)

Not yet.

(CONTINUED)

191 CONTINUED:

191

And they continue to crush the pieces into smaller and smaller ones.

192 EXT. AUTO REPROCESSING YARD - DAY

192

Dennis, wearing a new cast on his leg, supported by crutches once again, stands beside Leigh, whose facial scratches are healing. Together, they watch an auto compacter CRUSH a barely identifiable mass of red-and-white metal into a small, dense square. Detective Junkins is with them.

JUNKINS

Cheer up. You two are heroes.

DENNIS

(with no emotion)

Yeah? A hero could've saved Arnie Cunningham.

LEIGH

We didn't do so hot.

JUNKINS

Some things just can't be helped. Some people, too.

DENNIS

(unconvinced)

Yeah...

As the junkyard magnet comes down, picks up the square of compacted steel, and deposits it amidst a pile of blocks from other cars, MUSIC can be heard, as if coming from the crushed debris: George Thorogood and the Destroyers' BAD TO THE BONE.

Dennis goes white. Leigh clutches him with fear. Junkins looks puzzled.

Then, from behind the scrap pile, a yard worker emerges. He wears a hard hat, carries a lunch pail in one hand, a huge portable radio (a ghetto blaster) in the other.

He can't understand why Dennis and Leigh look at him as though he's a ghost or something. He looks at them as though they're nuts, picks out a slab of concrete for a seat, and opens his lunch pail.

Dennis and Leigh look at each other, rather embarrassed at what obviously passed through their minds. Junkins follows as they turn to leave, Leigh putting her arm around Dennis.

(CONTINUED)

LEIGH

God, I hate rock 'n' roll.

CAMERA HOLDS a moment on the rubble. In the mottled sunlight, the crushed block of red-and-white steel appears to give a barely perceptible twitch.

Probably just the light.

CUT TO:

193 A BRIGHT RED SCREEN

193

CREDITS ROLL as BAD TO THE BONE plays at FULL VOLUME.

FADE OUT.

THE END