

There Goes My Hero

written by  
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**OPEN ON:**

Black screen with white text that reads:

An (Almost) True Story

**FADE IN.**

**EXT. THE ELECTRIC EYE - EVENING**

SUPER: 1971

The sign atop this long, flat bar is neon and reads "The Electric Eye." Other than the sign, there are no other lights or signs and the windows are blacked out. Loud Southern Rock blares from inside. Trucks and cars fill the parking lot. They're dirty, rusty, covered in primer.

A BIKER, 40s, with a long beard and a denim vest that says "The Wolf Pack" on the back parks his Harley at the end of a row of hogs.

He opens the door and a wild party can be seen inside, with a band rocking in the back, people playing pool and darts, women chasing men and men chasing women.

**INT. THE ELECTRIC EYE - CONTINUOUS**

The bar is decked out in Southern memorabilia, with Confederate flags and such all around the room, but NOTHING to do with country music. This is a biker bar.

Everyone in the bar, which is packed, is SUPER white. The men are mostly bikers, mostly have beards and grease-stained denim on.

The band on stage finishes their song. The lead singer, TOM, mid-20s, looks exactly like Tom Petty with a beard.

TOM

We are the Road Dogs and we will be  
back after a couple of shakes and  
couple a tokes! Stay tuned...

The crowd roars. The jukebox comes on, playing nothing but Southern Rock.

Bursting through the office door is a force of nature, CASH, a white man in his early 30s. He has a long black beard that reaches his belt.

He wears a top hat, a black cape with red lining and carries a white-tipped magician's cane. It isn't Halloween, nobody else in the bar is in costume.

Cash has white powder on his nose and he is manic.

He beelines to the band.

CASH  
Fucking hell, guys, that was  
amazing!

He hands each of the band members a small baggie of cocaine, making no effort to hide it.

When he gets to Tom, Tom refuses.

TOM  
No thanks.

CASH  
You sure? No cost for the band.

Tom frowns.

TOM  
I said I'm alright.

Cash glares at him.

CASH  
I guess you ARE, aren't you?

A short blonde woman, MARY, late teens, runs up and kisses Tom. She pulls him away and as she goes, she and Cash make eye contact and she lingers, with a smile.

Cash turns towards one of the band members, BEN, late 20s, the lone beardless member of the band.

CASH (CONT'D)  
Who the hell was that?

Ben is clearly high.

BEN  
Who, that? That was Tom, man, you  
know Tom.

Cash smiles. It's a bit creepy.

CASH  
Nah, man, the GIRL.

BEN  
Oh, her? That's Tom's latest...  
uh... whatever?

CASH  
Thanks.

BEN  
Cool, let's go party.

Ben flips the baggie of coke in front of Cash's face.

CASH  
Yes, let's.

Cash claps Ben and another band member on the shoulders and walks towards the office with them, staring after Mary the whole time.

She looks back and they make eye contact before she walks outside.

**EXT. THE ELECTRIC EYE - LATER**

Behind the Electric Eye, various people are passing a series joints around a barrel fire.

Mary sits on a stool playing an acoustic guitar and raging along with a Janis Joplin tune. She's good. She finishes the song and Tom kisses her on the cheek.

TOM  
Beautiful, as always, babe.

MARY  
Thanks.

Tom goes inside. Mary puts the guitar in its case.

Cash slips out of the shadows and into Mary's life. He puts his arm around her shoulder.

CASH  
How are you, sweet thing?

MARY  
Oh... I am great. Smash... is it?

CASH  
It could be.

She smiles at him.

CASH (CONT'D)  
It's Cash.

He holds up a handful cash and tosses the money in the air.  
Random bar patrons pick it up.

MARY  
You're silly.

CASH  
That IS what they say about me.  
That I'm silly.

MARY  
That's not what I heard them saying  
about you.

CASH  
What did you hear?

MARY  
I can't say in mixed company.

CASH  
Maybe we should spend some time  
alone? In... unmixed company.

Ben lingers nearby. Eavesdropping.

MARY  
What would we do? If we spent  
time... alone?

Tom comes back outside.

CASH  
Why don't I show you?

He offers her his hand.

At first, she hesitates.

Tom glares at them from across the bar, getting more and more  
bouncy and riled up.

Mary takes Cash's hand and follows him inside.

Tom starts to follow.

TOM  
Mary?

Ben puts his hand on Tom's shoulder and stops him from  
following.

BEN

Don't...

Mary looks back at Tom and makes eye contact. She smiles as she walks back inside with Cash.

BEN (CONT'D)

She ain't worth it.

TOM

I'm so sick of American girls.

Ben claps his hand on Tom's back.

BEN

Yeah. Wait a second...?

They walk away.

**INT. THE ELECTRIC EYE - LATER**

Cash has a bed in his office inside the Electric Eye.

Cash and Mary sit in the bed, naked with dirty sheets across their laps.

Cash snorts a line of coke off of a vinyl record and passes it to Mary.

She hesitates at first, but leans down and takes a snort. She feels the rush and smiles.

She sets the record down as Cash climbs under the sheets to play some more.

She screams with joy.

Tom Petty's "Listen To Her Heart" plays:

YOU THINK YOU'RE GONNA TAKE HER  
AWAY/  
WITH YOUR MONEY AND YOUR COCAINE/  
YOU KEEP THINKIN' THAT HER MIND IS  
GONNA CHANGE/  
BUT I KNOW EVERYTHING IS OKAY/  
SHE'S GONNA LISTEN TO HER HEART/  
IT'S GONNA TELL HER WHAT TO DO/  
SHE MIGHT NEED A LOT OF LOVING/  
BUT SHE DON'T NEED YOU.

**EXT. TALLAHASSEE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - DAY**

SUPER: 1972, Nine months later

(Music continues).

Mary sits up in a hospital bed, screaming. She is having a baby. The doctor, DONALD, is a red-headed man in his 40s with a deep beard.

DONALD  
Up the epidural, this baby is way  
too big.

The anesthesiologist adjusts the epidural.

Mary gradually calms down.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - LATER**

A nurse, BETH, 30, walks into the waiting room.

BETH  
Miss Moon?

An older dark-haired woman, CARA, stands up from one of the waiting room chairs. She is alone. Cash is nowhere to be seen.

CARA  
I'm Miss Moon.

BETH  
The baby is fine and Mary is  
sleeping.

CARA  
Is everyone okay? Can I see them?

Beth shakes her head.

BETH  
Everyone's fine, but they're all  
sleeping right now and they need  
the rest.

Cara frowns.

BETH (CONT'D)  
I just came out to get the last  
details for the birth certificate.

Cara, able to be helpful, brightens up.

CARA  
Okay.

BETH  
What is the baby's name?

Cara frowns at the word "name."

CARA  
They call him Freedom.

Beth frowns.

BETH  
His name is Freedom?

CARA  
Yeah.

BETH  
Really?

CARA  
Yeah.

Beth writes the name down.

BETH  
And what is the father's name?

Cara's face fills with disgust.

CARA  
His name WAS Cash.

Beth starts writing.

BETH  
I'm not even going to ask. What's  
his last name?

CARA  
You'll have to ask her...

She gestures towards Mary's room.

BETH  
Of course.

Beth starts writing as she walks away.

**EXT. NORTHWOOD MALL - DAY**

SUPER: 1977



Cash and Mary pull up to the Northwood Mall in a cherry red '66 Chevy SS convertible with a white top. The top is down and young FREEDOM, now 5, crawls around in the back, not strapped in.

The convertible stops outside the door for the Leon County Public Library, Northwood Branch. Mary opens the door and hops out.

She grabs Freedom by the hand and helps him out of the car. She kneels down to his level and straightens his shirt.

MARY

I so proud of you. You know that, right?

Freedom nods his head.

MARY (CONT'D)

Good. You know the deal, right?

He nods again.

MARY (CONT'D)

No, I want you to tell me.

Freedom pouts.

FREEDOM

Go to the library. Stay there until the clock says four.

Mary nods her head.

MARY

And which one is the four?

He holds up his Mickey Mouse watch and points to the number four.

MARY (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Perfect. And what's next?

FREEDOM

Go to the daycare center. Stay there till you pick me up.

Mary nods.

MARY

Yes. You will always be the smartest little man I know.

Freedom smiles weakly.

Cash waves from the car.

CASH  
Check you later, little dude!

Freedom raises his little hand to wave to his father.

Mary gets in the car and blows Freedom a kiss.

CASH (CONT'D)  
Peppy and Garry said to meet them  
at the Roadway Motel!

MARY  
Shit yeah!

CASH  
We're probably going to need a  
babysitter tonight.

Cash pulls away from the library.

MARY  
Tina can pick him up, she's  
studying or some shit.

CASH  
Call her from the motel.

Freedom stares after them until they are long gone.

He looks at the door to the library, then Freedom walks away,  
headed into a convenience store across the street.

**INT. SUWANEE SWIFTY CONVENIENCE STORE - MOMENTS LATER**

As Freedom walks into the store, he pulls a dollar bill out  
of his pocket.

The STORE CLERK, 50s, looks over his glasses at Freedom and  
then goes back to stocking the hot dog station.

Freedom walks towards the other side of the store towards the  
candy aisle. He starts looking at various Jolly Rancher stix,  
collecting 10 of them of varying flavors, but mostly grape.

He walks to the end of the candy aisle and turns towards the  
comic book rack.

Two boys, RICHIE and STEVE stand next to the rack. The boys are his age. Richie is chubby with red hair and red cheeks. Steve is Black with close-cropped hair.

Steve stands where the store clerk can't see him.

Richie looks around nervously as he puts a folded issue of Superman down his pants.

STEVE  
(to Freedom)  
What are you looking at, weirdo?

Richie slaps Steve on the shoulder.

RICHIE  
Let's get out of here.

Steve points at Freedom.

STEVE  
You'd better watch out.

The boys rush out of the store.

The clerk follows, yelling at the boys. Freedom stares after them.

**INT. LEON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER**

Freedom sits at a table by himself, thumbing through a Superman comic. He's bored.

Suddenly an alarm near the front door goes off. A LIBRARIAN, 60s, comes to see what's happening.

LIBRARIAN  
You set off the chip! Come over here and let's check you out.

The TEENAGE GIRL who set off the alarm follows the librarian to her desk.

Freedom, who was staring at them the whole time, leaves the comic and a stack of others on the table. He walks back to the comic book section.

He flips through various comics, not interested in any of the usual stuff.

Eventually he comes across something called "Weather Witch Comix," an R. Crumb-style underground book.

On the cover is a stunning Black woman, the WEATHER WITCH, who wears a cape and a black costume similar to Storm of the X-Men.

Freedom picks up the comic and the Weather Witch winks at him from the cover.

He flinches, but he doesn't let go of the comic.

The Weather Witch subtly points her finger to the alarm-sticker that is on the front of the comic.

Freedom looks at the librarian who is busy with the teenage girl.

He looks at the comic and the Weather Witch even more clearly points at the sticker and smiles.

Freedom rips the corner of the comic with the sticker off. He sticks it inside a Judy Blume book on the shelf and stuffs the comic inside a Trapper folder.

He peeks at the librarian again. She's now on the phone. The teenage girl sits nearby, crying.

Freedom quickly sticks the folder and the comic in his backpack and runs out of the library.

The alarm doesn't go off.

He doesn't look back.

**EXT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: 1978

Freedom stands with a group of kids playing tetherball.

Richie is the current champ.

COACH JACKSON, a Black man in his 50s, supervises the kids. He is overweight, wears a Lillian Elementary School polo shirt that is skin-tight and even tighter coaches shorts. A whistle hangs around his neck.

COACH JACKSON

Alright, who is up next? Freedom?

Coach Jackson chuckles and the other kids laugh. Jackson jiggles when he laughs.

Freedom shakes his head and blends into the crowd.

STEVE

I'll play!

Steve steps forward and faces off against Richie.

Richie serves and Steve bats it back to him.

Richie hits the ball slightly higher than last time.

Steve grins as the ball comes back down in his direction. As it arrives, he hits it as high as he can and Richie can't reach it to defend.

Steve hits it again and again. Richie never has a chance.

RICHIE

Dick!

Steve grabs the ball. He has won. The kids all laugh. Even Coach Jackson giggles.

Freedom looks around at everyone, his eyes rest on Coach Jackson.

COACH JACKSON

(under his breath)

That's what I'd call an ass-whopping!

Steve and Richie point and laugh at Coach Jackson, who enjoys himself. The other kids all explode.

Freedom smiles like the Mona Lisa. He laughs as well. A little.

**EXT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: 3 weeks later

The same group of kids is outside playing box hockey.

On one side is the tallest kid in the class at nearly 6', DAVID, an almost muscular kid despite his youth.

David holds the stick above his head having just defeated Steve.

The other kids cheer him on.

COACH JACKSON

Freedom, get up here!

Freedom shakes his head.

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)

C'mon.

The coach waves his arm at Freedom. Richie pushes him forward. Freedom gestures towards his left ankle, while slightly limping.

FREEDOM

I can't, my ankle feels sprained.

The kids all laugh.

DAVID

(so Coach can't hear him)

Punk.

COACH JACKSON

Not today it doesn't.

Richie pushes Freedom again, Steve joins in.

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)

Boy, you'd better get in here  
before I send you to the  
principal's office!

The kids laugh. David makes evil faces at Freedom.

Freedom walks up to the box and takes the hockey stick from Coach Jackson, who holds the ball over the box.

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)

Get ready!

David eagerly gets into position. Freedom does so reluctantly.

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)

Set!

David mouths "I'm gonna kick your ass" silently to Freedom.

Coach Jackson drops the ball:

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)

Go!

Freedom looks down and takes control of the ball.

David reacts, but he's too slow, and Freedom guides the ball into the next box.

David moves quickly and smacks the ball away from Freedom.

The ball bounces off the center wall and back towards the goal.

David is caught off-balance, he wasn't ready for the rebound.

Freedom, who WAS paying attention, quickly scores.

The kids all go "oooooh." A few laugh.

David is angry.

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)  
Oh-oh, looks like we got a little  
game here!

**CUT TO:**

Coach drops the ball again, this time David pays attention. He gains control of the ball, uses his superior size to quickly move to the next box and flips a shot that scores.

He high fives another tall kid near him.

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)  
Never mind!

Everyone laughs with relief.

**CUT TO:**

Coach drops the ball again. David controls it, but a quick move by Freedom makes the ball ricochet and he maneuvers it back into the center box.

DAVID  
Shit!

David is fast, but Freedom is faster. He guides the ball into the last box.

David jabs with his stick but misses the ball. He knocks Freedom's stick out of his hand. The ball rolls slowly toward David's goal.

FREEDOM  
(under his breath)  
Dick.

Everyone turns to watch the ball go into the hole except David. The kids go crazy.

DAVID  
What did you say?





**INT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY**

Freedom sits outside the principal's office with a bandage on his forehead. The swelling is still very obvious.

The door to the principal's office is cracked open enough that Freedom can hear what is said inside. Through the crack, PRINCIPAL HENDERSON can be seen. Henderson is a bald Black man in his 50s with glasses.

PRINCIPAL HENDERSON  
Thank you for joining me today,  
Miss...?

MARY (O.S.)  
It's not like you gave me a choice.

PRINCIPAL HENDERSON  
Ah, yes. Well, we need to have a  
chat about your son... uh...  
Freedom.

MARY (O.S.)  
Oh hell, what's the little sh...  
what's he done this time?

Freedom unzips his backpack and he rummages around inside. He pulls out the Weather Witch comic book with the torn corner.

He starts flipping through the pages.

PRINCIPAL HENDERSON  
Today, Freedom is in my office for  
using inappropriate language.

MARY (O.S.)  
Well, what'd he say?

Weather Witch moves, catching Freedom's eye. He turns the page.

PRINCIPAL HENDERSON  
I don't, uh, actually want to  
discuss that topic today, I want to  
talk about Freedom's overall  
direction.

MARY (O.S.)  
What?

Principal Henderson shuffles some papers.

Freedom reads the comic. In this issue, Weather Witch battles some KKK members. He hunches over, studying every panel and word bubble.

PRINCIPAL HENDERSON  
So, we're confused. See here? His I.Q. score is 143. That's in the top 1% of all students.

MARY (O.S.)  
He's always been really smart.

PRINCIPAL HENDERSON  
But he has behavioral... problems. We've actually had some experts come in to evaluate Freedom.

MARY (O.S.)  
(worried)  
Experts?

PRINCIPAL HENDERSON  
Yes. And he very clearly has some kind of developmental... delay. Some of the experts say they're familiar with other kids like Freedom. But they don't know what it is yet and there isn't any kind of treatment plan. For now.

If Freedom hears what is said about him, he doesn't react.

He finishes the comic with a big smile.

Then he starts reading it again, from the beginning.

#### **INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

Freedom is home alone. He walks into his parents' room.

He walks to his dad's night stand. On top of it, he sees a jar of change labeled "Pot Money," a cloudy mirror with a little bit of coke and a rolled-up dollar bill on it, three lighters, rolling papers and "Steal This Book," by Abbie Hoffman.

Freedom picks up the book and looks at it for a second. He opens it up, but quickly closes it once he sees no pictures.

He takes a few quarters from the Pot Money jar and puts them in his pocket.

He opens the bottom drawer of the night stand

Jackpot.

His dad's collection of Playboy magazines sits inside.

The first one he picks up has Barbi Benton on the cover, he lifts it like a holy document.

Freedom walks over and sits on the bed to look at the magazine. As he sits, a car horn blares outside and he jumps.

Holding the magazine, he peeks out of his parents' bedroom.

Nothing.

He walks quietly to his parents closet and goes inside, shutting the door behind him.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Cash pulls into the driveway in his convertible.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Freedom peers lovingly at the centerfold.

Next to him sits a hydroponic pot set-up, where Cash grows three plants. The lights for the weed are the only light in the closet.

Freedom hears the front door slam.

He drops the Playboy and panics. He looks around for a place to hide, but can't find one.

He slips behind a row of coats and stands still, his pajama pants with booties still visible.

**CUT TO:**

Cash walks into his room and stops when he sees the drawer with the Playboys open.

He immediately opens the top drawer to the night stand.

His coke is still there. So is the cash. He sighs.

He shuts the drawer.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom's POV, through the slats of the closet door.

Cash walks straight for the closet and opens the door.

His anger is so visible his forehead scrunches up.

CASH  
What in the highway to hell are you  
fucking doing?

Cash snatches the Playboy and rolls it up.

He lunges for Freedom's wrist, but Freedom pulls it away.

CASH (CONT'D)  
God dammit!

Cash grabs him by the shirt, pinching his chest.

Freedom cries out.

Cash doesn't say another word as he yanks the boy out of the closet.

He starts smacking Freedom on the butt with the rolled-up Playboy.

Each time Freedom dodges or misses, Cash starts swinging harder.

Finally, Cash tosses him toward the bed.

Freedom collapses to the floor.

CASH (CONT'D)  
Take your pants down!

Freedom starts shaking his head.

Cash comes closer and raises the Playboy.

CASH (CONT'D)  
Do it now or I'll whop you upside  
the head!

Freedom slowly stands up and pulls his pajama pants down.

Cash sits on the bed and grabs Freedom and bends him over his lap.

Cash peels back Freedom's underwear so that his butt is exposed.

He spanks Freedom with the magazine.

Freedom screams.

Cash spanks him again.

Freedom reaches back and tries to block the next blow. His father restrains him.

And then hits him again.

Freedom's butt is red now and has several paper cuts. He sobs loudly.

Cash spanks him again.

EXT. FLEA MARKET - DAY

SUPER: 1979

Freedom walks with Mary through the Tallahassee Flea Market.

MARY

I'm going over to the food shack  
and get me a drink. Go over there  
and pick yourself out something.

She points to a stall with buckets filled with unwrapped action figures. She hands him a dollar. He smiles and runs off.

Mary hurries towards her drink, waving to a couple of biker-looking guys, GARRY and PEPPY, both 30s, white, dirty and heavily-bearded. The bikers stand near the food shack, which is nothing more than a standard outdoor shed with a grill just outside the door.

Garry grills barbecue chicken as he waves to Mary.

MARY (CONT'D)

Hey, Garry, you ugly old bald-headed pervert!

Freedom digs through buckets of old, broken or terrible toys with indifference.

WEATHER WITCH (O.S.)

(softly)

Freedom.

He doesn't really hear the voice, but he moves towards it. A rack of videos. Low-rent stuff. Even for a flea market.

WEATHER WITCH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(louder)

Freedom!

Freedom stops at the last tape, a Betamax. He pulls it out.

It's a copy of "Weather Witch: The Movie." The cover has a big picture of Weather Witch punching Hitler. At the top of the box is a big orange sticker that says \$1.

She begins talking.

WEATHER WITCH (CONT'D)  
Hello, Freedom. It's nice to  
finally meet you.

She smiles warmly.

WEATHER WITCH (CONT'D)  
It's okay, you can talk to me. No  
one will hear you.

He frowns.

FREEDOM  
H-how?

WEATHER WITCH  
Oh, don't worry about that. Let's  
go home and we can talk some more.

FREEDOM  
How?

Weather Witch points at his hand. In it is the dollar his mother gave him.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom puts the tape into a Betamax hooked up to a small black and white TV.

Weather Witch appears on the screen in live action.

WEATHER WITCH  
Hello, Freedom? How are you?

FREEDOM  
How is this happening?

She waves her hand at him.

WEATHER WITCH  
Don't worry about that. I'm here to  
help you.

He frowns.

FREEDOM

Why?

She puts her hands on her hips and stands at attention.

WEATHER WITCH

I'm a hero. That's what heroes do.

FREEDOM

How?

WEATHER WITCH

Do you want to be a hero, too?

Freedom smiles.

FREEDOM

Of course!

WEATHER WITCH

Here's how I always think about what it means to be a hero.

He nods his head.

WEATHER WITCH (CONT'D)

You have to have a code.

FREEDOM

A code?

WEATHER WITCH

A moral code.

FREEDOM

What's that?

WEATHER WITCH

A set of rules.

Freedom frowns.

WEATHER WITCH (CONT'D)

(laughing)

I'm with you. Rules usually suck. But this is different. You get to make these rules FOR yourself.

FREEDOM

But I don't know any codes. I can't think of any.

WEATHER WITCH  
You don't have to. They already exist.

FREEDOM  
I don't understand.

WEATHER WITCH  
All the rules already exist. You just have to find them.

FREEDOM  
Where are they?

WEATHER WITCH  
Everywhere. In comics. In movies. In books. On TV. Stand-up comedians talk about them. Teachers...

Freedom mimes throwing up.

WEATHER WITCH (CONT'D)  
(laughing)  
...don't worry, you'll like teachers later on. Well, SOME teachers.

Freedom frowns.

WEATHER WITCH (CONT'D)  
Nobody knows all the rules. You have to find as many as you can.

FREEDOM  
How will I know when I find one?

WEATHER WITCH  
You'll know because the good rules help people, they make as many people as possible better off.

FREEDOM  
Are there a lot of rules?

WEATHER WITCH  
Yes.

FREEDOM  
How will I remember them all?

Weather Witch grins.

WEATHER WITCH  
I've got an idea for that.



**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Freedom sits at the desk in his room. He writes on an index card with a Sharpie.

On the wall above him are eight index cards stuck with multicolored push pins. The cards read:

**#1: STEALING IS OKAY.**

**#2: YOU ARE SMART.**

**#3: CALLING PEOPLE "DICK" IS FUNNY.**

**#4: LAUGHING IS GOOD.**

**#5: PEOPLE WHO HATE WILL KILL.**

**#6: WHEN YOU GOTTA GO, YOU GOTTA GO.**

**#7: READ COMICS.**

**#8: DON'T LOOK AT NAKED WOMEN.**

The camera stays on the cards while Freedom continues writing. He finishes the next card and posts it to the wall:

**#9: WATCH MOVIES.**

He sits down again and starts writing another while the camera stays on the cards long enough to read them all.

**#10: LIKE WEIRD STUFF.**

Freedom sits down and starts writing again.

**INT. ALBERTSON'S GROCERY STORE - DAY**

**SUPER: 1980**

Freedom walks around the corner of the toy aisle and sees David, Steve and Richie near a rack of G.I. Joe toys. They stuff action figures down their pants and stash the torn packages back on the shelf where they can't be seen.

They look up and see Freedom.

DAVID

Freak.

Steve punches David's shoulder.

STEVE

C'mon, let's get out of here!

RICHIE

Yeah!

The boys run away as Freedom stares after them.

He looks down at the toys and sees that somebody dropped a Snake Eyes action figure.

Freedom looks around and sees nobody.

He picks it up and quickly puts it in his underwear.

He looks around again and doesn't see anyone.

He walks away.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom walks out the door.

STORE CLERK (O.S.)

Hey!

Freedom freezes.

Caught.

He turns around and no one is there.

He looks across the store at the other exit and sees David and the other boys. The STORE CLERK, and older man, walks slowly after them. Several other store employees circle around the boys.

David catches Freedom's eye and scowls at him.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DUSK**

SUPER: 1981

Cash pulls into the driveway outside their house in the convertible, top up. He, Mary and Freedom wear bathing suits and are coming back from the beach.

Freedom lays in the back seat, napping with a towel over him. He's smiling as he dreams.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Cash, Mary and Freedom carry their beach items up to the front door, but notice it's already open.

CASH  
Hold on a second.

He holds Mary back and walks into the house.

A few seconds later he comes back out.

CASH (CONT'D)  
These motherfuckers!

MARY  
Watch your mouth!

He ignores her as he walks out into the street.

Up and down the street, people stare out their windows or turn on the lights. Many were already watching.

CASH  
Fuck each and every one of you  
motherfuckers in the ass!

Mary pushes Freedom towards the house.

CASH (CONT'D)  
I know you did this! I know each  
and every one of you fuckers was a  
part of this!

Mary and Freedom walk into the house, which is devastated. Windows and mirrors are broken, couch cushions are spread across the room and torn, the TV is smashed, food and possessions are scattered everywhere.

Spray-painted on the walls are various words: Freaks, Weirdos, Hippies Suck! and Go Home!

Mary starts crying. Freedom walks into his room to see everything has been destroyed. Toys are broken, books are torn, the cards have been ripped up. Across the wall where the cards were are spray-painted the words "freak" and "fag."

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - LATER**

A police car, lights flashing, sits outside the house.

Cash is outside talking to two police officers, GOOD COP, who is Black, and BAD COP, who is white.

Mary cleans things up while Freedom peers through a hole slashed through the screen door.

CASH  
So you're saying you ain't gonna do  
shit?

The Bad Cop puts his hand on his holster.

GOOD COP  
Calm down sir...

BAD COP  
Yeah.

GOOD COP  
I already told you we were going to  
file a report.

CASH  
I told you I know who did it!

Cash waves his hand up and down the block at the neighbors,  
who still look out their windows. A few sit on their porches,  
so they can hear better.

GOOD COP  
Do you have any evidence that these  
people did it? Did you see them?  
Did anyone else see them?

CASH  
God dammit! I told you they're all  
in on it!

BAD COP  
Sir, I'm getting tired of warning  
you to calm down.

He unsnaps his holster.

GOOD COP  
If any evidence turns up...

CASH  
What the hell kinda evidence am I  
gonna find?

GOOD COP  
That's not my... uh... area of  
expertise.

CASH  
Well, then who the hell!

Bad Cop takes several steps closer to him.

GOOD COP

Sir, can we come in and take a look around?

A switch flips inside Cash, he's as conciliatory as possible.

CASH

Oh, I'm sorry, officers. Really. You're right, go file your report and we'll be fine.

GOOD COP

What about your neighbors?

CASH

Ah... uh... they... uh... we... I mean, I did it.

BAD COP

What?

CASH

Yeah, I got ahold of some bad stuff, I mean... uh... some bad moonshine! It made me go crazy.

Bad Cop snaps his holster.

CASH (CONT'D)

Thank you for everything officers, I'll let you know if I come across any further evidence.

BAD COP

That's what we thought.

He starts walking back to the car.

GOOD COP

Oh, and, a little advice. If you can't get along with your neighbors, maybe you're living in the wrong place.

He starts walking towards the car.

CASH

Yeah, you know what, that's great advice. I'll look into that right away.

GOOD COP

You have a good night now, hear?

He closes the car door with an unfriendly grin.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Freedom fills the last of four big garbage bags with a Stretch Armstrong, who has been eviscerated. Almost nothing is left in the room. He has a few items of clothing sitting on a broken shelf and a few unscathed or barely broken toys.

The bed was slashed and no pillows or sheets are left.

Freedom leaves the spray paint on the wall.

He sits on the bed, tears in his eyes. A spring boings back into place, making him jump off the bed. He falls over and spills the last unfinished trash bag. Out of it falls the Sharpie and index cards.

He grabs the Sharpie.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Freedom has re-written the old cards, EXCEPT that #1 has been changed to:

**#1: STEALING IS OKAY IF YOU DON'T GET CAUGHT.**

Card #3 has also been changed:

**#3: NAME-CALLING IS FUNNY.**

A new card has been added:

**#11: DON'T TALK TO STRANGERS.**

Freedom finishes writing on another card, which says:

**#12: PROTECT YOURSELF.**

The cards begin to obscure the word "fag" on the wall.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

Freedom proudly stands in the mirror, dressed in full tights and cape as the Weather Witch.

Mary walks in the room.

MARY

Oh, dear. Are you sure this is the costume you want to wear?

He proudly nods his head.

MARY (CONT'D)

Okay, well, get your backpack, it's time for school.

**EXT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LATER**

Mary pulls off as Freedom walks up to the school, late. Only a little BOY and a little GIRL, both younger than Freedom, are still outside, both running for the front door.

One of them sees Freedom and stops in her tracks. The other does, too.

They start laughing and pointing at Freedom in his Weather Witch costume.

GIRL

What are you wearing?

They go inside, Freedom follows.

The camera stays outside and pans over to peer into Freedom's classroom.

Through the window, a teacher can be seen writing something on the chalkboard. Only a few of the kids in the class wear costumes. The viewer can hear nothing inside, only the chirping of birds and the ebb and flow of traffic.

The door opens and Freedom walks in.

The teacher stops to look at him. The whole class bursts into laughter. Some kids point and a few stand up.

The teacher covers up a snicker.

Freedom sits in his chair while the hilarity continues.

**INT. CASH'S CAR - LATER**

Cash drives while Freedom sits in the back and cries.

CASH

What in the highway to hell was your mother thinking?

Freedom doesn't respond.

CASH (CONT'D)  
Seriously. I mean, you... you don't  
know any better. But her? What the  
fuck was your mom thinking?

Freedom stares out the window.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - LATER**

The car pulls up next to the house.

Cash reaches across the seat and opens the passenger door

CASH  
Get out.

Freedom struggles to get out of the car. His cape gets caught  
on the door and rips.

CASH (CONT'D)  
God dammit! Get the fuck out!

Freedom falls onto the grass, his cape ripping off as he  
falls.

Cash shuts the car door. He grabs the cape and throws it out  
the window.

He drives off. Forever.

Freedom stares after him, waiting to see if he'll come back.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

A new card has already been added:

**#13: DON'T WEAR GIRLS' CLOTHES.**

He finishes writing the next card and pins it to the wall:

**#14: DADS CAN LEAVE, BUT MOMS DON'T.**

He gets up and walks to the other side of the room while the  
camera stays on the cards.

Freedom comes back with a wall-sized map of the U.S. He pins  
it over the top of the cards so no one can see them.



**INT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY**

Freedom sits in the back row of a classroom, all the seats filled. Steve, Richie, David and Melody are all in this class.

MISS RICHARDS, 40s, dark hair and unfashionable polyester pantsuit, writes on the chalkboard.

Freedom raises his hand. He clearly needs to pee.

At first the teacher doesn't see him as she keeps on talking...

MISS RICHARDS

Okay, after President Lincoln was assassinated, which was his own fault...

This time Miss Richards DOES see him, but she keeps on talking. Freedom picks his puffy vinyl jacket partially off the floor. The top half covers his crotch and the rest covers his large backpack.

MISS RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Andrew Johnson became the president. After him...

She turns back around to the board and keeps writing.

Melody sits next to Freedom. She turns and smiles at him. He returns the smile weakly.

FREEDOM

Miss Richards!

She stops and drops her head with a sigh before turning around.

She walks over towards Freedom, pushing her way down the crowded aisle.

("Another Brick in the Wall" by Pink Floyd plays, rising to the "Hey, teacher, leave those kids alone" refrain while all other audio drops out).

She leans over and clearly starts berating Freedom, who stays as rigidly as possible while she yells, not crying.

Melody looks down at his backpack. She sees a little bit of urine start to leak past the edge.

The teacher continues to scream.

Melody knocks her backpack over, covering Freedom's urine.

The teacher continues to scream.

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY**

SUPER: 1983

Freedom walks up a hill away from a bus stop as his school bus pulls away. Half a dozen other kids depart from the bus stop.

Freedom carries a junior-size aluminum baseball bat on his shoulder.

A thin row of trees lines the hill. Two girls who got off the bus, SUMMER and CRISSY, run along behind the trees. They have rocks in their hands.

Summer throws a rock and it lands near Freedom.

He looks over towards the girls, who giggle. He keeps walking.

Every few steps, another rock lands near him. Both girls throw them.

Summer throws a rock that hits Freedom on the leg. He spots her do it and the girls run off.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom turns the corner onto his street and Summer and Crissy stand right in front of him.

SUMMER

What are you gonna do, freak boy?

Both girls hold up rocks to throw at him, arms cocked.

CRISSY

Yeah!

Freedom drops his backpack and brandishes the baseball bat.

Both girls throw their rocks. Summer hits him in the head.

He reaches up to wipe a bit of blood off his forehead.

Freedom looks up at Summer.

He grips the bat and swings it really hard, as hard as he can.

The girls are far enough away, but the bat still catches the tip of Summer's finger and she screams out.

The girls run away.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Freedom walks up to the front door of his house.

CRISSY (O.S.)

There he is!

Crissy comes around the corner, leading Summer, who sobs and holds her finger, and AUTUMN, Summer's older sister, a brunette who is in high school.

Autumn marches towards Freedom and snatches the bat out of his hand. He tries to hold on, and it falls to the ground with a clang.

Crissy grins. A lot.

AUTUMN

Who the hell do you think you are?

FREEDOM

I... I don't...

CRISSY

That's him! He's the one who hit a girl with a bat!

AUTUMN

What kind of person hits a girl with a bat?

Crissy crosses her arms. Summer's crying has receded. She's even smiling a little.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

Get down on your knees and apologize right now.

Freedom starts to cry. He falls to his knees.

Autumn gently grabs Summer's arm and makes her stand in front of Freedom.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

You could've really hurt her! You could've sent her to the hospital!

FREEDOM  
 (sobbing)  
 I know. I know.

AUTUMN  
 Tell her you're sorry!

FREEDOM  
 I'm sorry! I'm sorry!

AUTUMN  
 Beg her for forgiveness!

Freedom puts his hands together and looks up at Summer.

FREEDOM  
 Please! Please forgive me!

AUTUMN  
 And say you'll never do that again!

FREEDOM  
 Never! Never!

SUMMER  
 It's okay.

Summer almost seems embarrassed.

The girls turn and walk away quickly.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom walks home from a nearby basketball court, dribbling a ball as he goes. He's pretty good with his right hand, but useless with his left.

The ball bounces off his foot and into the grass on the side of the road.

He walks over to get it.

When he stands up with the ball, he can see directly into a woman's bedroom window.

The woman is shirtless and is about to unfasten her bra.

She stops when they make eye contact. She starts covering up her chest as she runs to close the windows.

Freedom runs.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - LATER**

Freedom sits on the couch. Mary paces back and forth in front of him, smoking.

MARY

What the hell are you, some kind of pervert?

FREEDOM

No...

She blows a big puff of smoke.

MARY

We can't have any of that! Not in my house! You get your ass in bed!

Freedom jumps up off the couch.

FREEDOM

No! Tonight is the new George Carlin special! You said I could watch it!

MARY

That was before you started being a pervert!

FREEDOM

Bitch!

Mary smacks him in the face.

MARY

Go to your room!

Tears in his eyes, Freedom runs to his room.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

Revised cards have already been added:

**#1: WHOOP! GOLDBERG SAYS STEALING IS OKAY, YOU JUST GOTTA STEAL FROM THE RIGHT PEOPLE.**

**#3: NAME-CALLING IS MEAN.**

**#8: DON'T GET CAUGHT LOOKING AT NAKED WOMEN.**

And new cards have been added:

**#15: TEACHERS SUCK.**

**#16: NEVER HIT A WOMAN.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#17: NEVER CALL A WOMAN A BITCH.**

**EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY**

Freedom walks up the hill from the bus stop. This time, Steve, David and Richie get off the bus, too.

Freedom walks up the hill, looking over his shoulder to see the other boys follow.

When they are far enough up the hill that they don't see anyone else from the bus, the boys start gaining on Freedom.

DAVID

Hey, yo, Freedumb... That's such a DUMB name...

The other boys laugh.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Is that an American name? Are you from here?

FREEDOM

Y-yes. I was born here.

RICHIE

(laughing)

Did he just say he was born queer?

The other boys burst into laughter.

STEVE

Yeah, I've been wondering about that?

RICHIE

Me, too.

DAVID

Are you gay?

FREEDOM

N-no. I have a girlfriend.

RICHIE  
Bullshit!

The other boys all crack up.

DAVID  
Prove it.

FREEDOM  
I... I can't... She... uh... lives  
in Canada.

The guys burst out in another round of laughter.

STEVE  
That's the oldest story in the  
book, man.

RICHIE  
Yeah, what else you got?

DAVID  
I think he's a queer.

Steve holds David back.

STEVE  
No, no, no. Let the man speak. He  
says he's not gay and I, for one,  
believe him.

DAVID  
He'd better not be.

David actually smacks his fist into the palm of his other  
hand.

RICHIE  
Yeah. Try again, queerbait.

FREEDOM  
I... I...

He perks up.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
I'm in love with Melody!

The boys explode in laughter and start to walk away.

STEVE  
This guy's not gay!

DAVID

Yeah, he's a fucking idiot.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom is home alone. He walks into his parents' bedroom.

He goes to his mother's night stand.

On top of the night stand sit a half-filled Bloody Mary, a half-filled pack of Merit cigarettes, a pile of various pills, and an ashtray filled with cigarette butts and roaches.

Freedom isn't interested in anything on the table.

He opens the bottom drawer, which is filled with Cosmopolitan magazines and copies of the National Enquirer.

He digs through the drawer slowly and finds a manila folder. He pulls it out of the drawer and looks inside.

The first thing is his report card for the year, divided by 9-week increments. Most of the grades are "S" for satisfactory. All of the Language Arts grades are "E" for excellent. His physical education grades are all "N," for needs improvement or "U," for unsatisfactory.

The next paper is the results of his standardized test scores from the year. Pretty much all of the academic rankings put him at or just below or above his grade level.

Next to English, the grade level says "College."

The next paper says "Psychiatric Evaluation" at the top.

Freedom's eyes focus on the paragraph that says: "...on standardized tests, subject scores high in masculine traits. But he also scores almost equally high in feminine traits. The clinical term for this identity is 'androgynous.' Now this doesn't mean...."

He hears a car honk outside and quickly closes the folder, puts it in the drawer and runs back to his bedroom, slamming the door behind him.

The room is like a giant collage, starting from the side of his bedroom where the bed is. It isn't complete and the wall opposite his bed is where the cards are pinned behind the map.



The collage is made up of images of bands, album covers, movie posters, covers from Rolling Stone and Spin and various other cultural icons. They are diverse, leaning in to what Freedom likes (horror, sci fi, rap, alternative, comics), but not excluding any genre or type of person. The room's images are more from male creators than female, but not by a lot. The mix is about half white and half Black, with smaller images of Hispanic/Latino performers, Asian or Asian-American and a few Native American.

Beneath the empty wall is a desk. The desk is covered with comic books and D&D books and dice (but none of the little lead figurines, just the books and dice) and other assorted nerdery. Including the Snake Eyes action figure he stole earlier.

A cassette rack on one wall is filled with the same artists that are seen around the room. His boombox sits on the floor.

He flops onto the bed and covers his head with a pillow.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Mary walks into Freedom's bedroom.

MARY

Boy, you need to clean up this disgusting room. It smells like boy in here.

Freedom sits on the floor watching the Weather Witch on television.

Mary walks over to the TV and turns it off.

FREEDOM

Hey! I was watching that!

He stands up, but she stands in front of the television.

MARY

I need to talk to you...

FREEDOM

But I want to watch!

MARY

Two of your little friends are coming over to stay the night.

Freedom freezes.

FREEDOM  
F-friends?

MARY  
Yes, Steve and his brother, uh...

FREEDOM  
Keith?

MARY  
Yes?

FREEDOM  
Why?

He starts pouting.

MARY  
Their mother had to work late and I offered to watch them.

FREEDOM  
You're staying home tonight?

MARY  
No, I'm headed down to Kent's to meet Garry. I'm headed out right after those boys get dropped off.

She walks out of the room.

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Hello Bloody Mary!

Freedom collapses on his bed.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - LATER**

Steve and his younger brother KEITH, who is brown-haired and a couple of years younger than Steve, sit on the couch flipping through comic books.

Steve scans Weather Witch. He throws it at Freedom's feet.

STEVE  
This shit is stupid. Freedumb, put this shit on your boombox.

Steve tosses Freedom a cassette.

Freedom looks down at it, it's the Beastie Boys, "Licensed to Ill."

From below him, Weather Witch speaks to him from the comic book's cover.

WEATHER WITCH

You are definitely going to enjoy this. Not my thing, but, well, it's definitely your thing.

Freedom looks over at the other kids.

STEVE

Well, play it.

He puts it in the tape player and pushes play. "Rhymin' and Stealin'" explodes through the speakers.

Steve gets up and walks to the fridge.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What kind of drinks you got?

FREEDOM

We've got Sunny D, purple stuff...

Steve laughs.

STEVE

Bingo!

Steve opens three twist-off bottles of beer and walks back into the room.

KEITH

Sweet!

Steve hands the first one to Keith, who immediately takes a swig. Steve takes a matching swig out of one beer and hands the other to Freedom.

Freedom takes it and stares at it.

STEVE

It's a beer.

Steve takes a sip of his.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You drink it.

Freedom lifts it up and smells it. He flinches.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Dude's over here sniffing it.

KEITH  
Hahaha, what?

STEVE  
You have the "Freedom" to drink it.

He uses air quotes.

Freedom takes his first drink.

He frowns and then burps.

Everyone starts laughing.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - LATER**

Freedom is passed out on the couch, six empty beers on the coffee table.

Steve and Keith walk down the hall to Freedom's bedroom.

STEVE  
C'mon. Let's see what kinda shit  
this freak has.

KEITH  
I'll bet he has a closet full of  
dresses.

They both laugh as they go into the room. Keith turns on the light.

STEVE  
Shit, not bad.

KEITH  
Who knew the retard had such good  
taste?

Keith starts looking at various books and comic books on the shelves. Steve starts opening drawers.

Keith comes upon an orange notebook labeled "Welcome to the Beehive."

KEITH (CONT'D)  
What is this shit?

He opens it up and starts flipping through it. Steve walks into the closet.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
Hey, this shit is actually pretty good.

Steve comes out of the closet.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
It's like the rules for a game.  
Like D&D or some shit?

Steve snatches the notebook from Keith.

STEVE  
Gimme that!

He starts looking through it.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Damn, I would watch this movie.

KEITH  
Let's take it!

STEVE  
Hell yeah, we can send it off to  
Hollywood!

He folds it up and puts the notebook in the back of his pants.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Let's get outta here.

KEITH  
We're gonna be rich.

They walk out of the bedroom and past the sleeping Freedom.

They leave the house and don't even shut the front door.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

New cards have been added:

**#18: DON'T BE GAY.**

**#19: YOU ARE NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE.**

**#20: PEOPLE HATE WEIRDOS.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#21: FIND A WAY TO FIT IN.****INT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY**

In the school gym, all the kids in Freedom's class sit and wear re-used caps and gowns.

Freedom sits alphabetically between two students who ignore him by talking to the kids on either side.

Kids around him laugh and wave to people in the crowd.

Freedom overhears two girls sitting in front of him. One is a BLONDE GIRL and the other is an ASIAN GIRL.

ASIAN GIRL

My family couldn't make it. How do you know where your parents are sitting?

BLONDE GIRL

They gave us these slips with their seat numbers on them. My parents are in A4 and A5, see!

They look up at the blonde girl's parents and wave. The parents wave back.

Freedom looks down at his ticket and then looks at two seats in the section across from the blonde girl's family.

The seats are empty.

He turns his gaze back to the stage as the alphabetical roll call gets to the letter J.

**INT. MANTICORE MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: 1984

Freedom stands in front of the desk of MISS COBB, 50s, a Black woman. The room is a science lab, with two-person stations throughout the room.

MISS COBB

Young man, how many times do I have to tell you to make yourself presentable when you come to my class?

Freedom shrugs his shoulders.

Several classmates chuckle, but Miss Cobb shoots them a look that silences them.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
When you come to my class, you need to be prepared to learn in a civilized environment.

From the back of the classroom, some kid goes "oh shit." The class bursts into laughter.

Miss Cobb glowers at them.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
Pop quiz! Clear your desks and get out one blank piece of paper.

The kids groan and whine as they comply.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
And you, young man. When you come to my class, make sure you wear a shirt that is clean. That doesn't... smell. And for the love of the almighty, comb your hair.

Freedom pointlessly musses his hair.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
Now go sit down and take this quiz. Up front, at the empty station.

He sits down and takes out his paper and pencil, Miss Cobb doesn't wait for him.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
Write your names and first period on your papers.

Freedom starts writing his name.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
Question number one. What is the chemical formula for salt.

David raises his hand, but goes ahead and speaks anyway.

DAVID  
Do you mean table salt?

Several kids giggle.

MISS COBB  
Yes, I mean table salt. Question  
two...

The students collectively groan.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
What is the chemical formula for  
water?

In walks CHASTITY, a girl who somehow is already a redneck.  
Damn, she has a lot of hair.

She sits down next to Freedom and pulls out paper and pencil.

CHASTITY  
What are we doing?

FREEDOM  
Pop quiz.

Miss Cobb walks across the room.

MISS COBB  
Question number three. How many  
elements are on the periodic table?

Chastity writes her name on her paper and numbers it one to  
5.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
Question number four. What is the  
chemical symbol for hydrogen?

Chastity looks over at Freedom's paper and copies down ALL  
the answers.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
Question number five. What is the  
chemical symbol for oxygen?

Miss Cobb walks back from the other side of the room and  
addresses Chastity.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)  
You came in late, let me read you  
the first two questions.

CHASTITY  
I already got 'em.

Miss Cobb frowns.



MISS COBB

How?

CHASTITY

(pointing at Freedom)

He gave 'em to me.

MISS COBB

(to Freedom)

Is that true?

Freedom shakes his head.

Miss Cobb grabs Chastity's quiz.

MISS COBB (CONT'D)

Chastity, see me after class.

Everyone else, put your papers on my desk.

CHASTITY

(under her breath)

Thanks for nothing, dick!

**INT. MANTICORE MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM - DAY**

SUPER: One week later

The gym is filled with three classes worth of students. Three teachers, including Coach Jackson, supervise.

Many of the kids are dressed in costumes, it's Halloween.

Freedom has been reading a lot of D&D books, so he's here as a zombie paladin. An inexpensive, home-made zombie paladin.

COACH JACKSON

Okay, everybody up here for the costume contest.

Most of the kids dressed in costumes go up and stand in a line in front of rest of the class. Freedom stands second from the end of the line.

COACH JACKSON (CONT'D)

First up, we got Melody, and what are you dressed up as today, Melody?

MELODY

I am Wonder Woman!

A smattering of polite applause.

COACH JACKSON

Next up is, uh, Freedom. What is this you are wearing?

FREEDOM

I am "It, the Zombie Paladin!"

COACH JACKSON

Looks more like something that rhymes with IT to me.

A few people applaud, but a group of girls led by Chastity start booing him mercilessly.

Freedom stands there, taking the boos. Only Melody looks at him with sympathy.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

New cards have been added:

**#22: BRUSH YOUR HAIR.**

**#23: DON'T CHEAT.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#24: BE CAREFUL OF PEOPLE WHO WANT THINGS FROM YOU.**

**INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY**

SUPER: 1985

Freedom sits in the back of the bus, where only the cool kids and the Black kids sit.

No one sits next to him, despite some of the other seats being filled with three kids.

The BUS DRIVER is a Black man in his mid-20s. He's playing AM 1270 on the radio. The RADIO DJ introduces the next song.

RADIO DJ

Oh yeah, Tallahassee, you're going to love this new one! It's off of the latest album by RUN-DMC! It's called "Proud to be Black."

(Run-DMC's "Proud to be Black" plays. )

Freedom stares at the speaker in the ceiling of the bus, enraptured.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom sits on the couch in the living room watching Family Ties, wearing loose shorts and a t-shirt.

The front door opens and his mother comes in with a 6'6" white redneck named RUBEN, with prematurely white hair and a white beard, as he's no older than 40.

He wears greasy mechanics' clothes with his name on the tag.

Mary goes straight for her bedroom.

MARY

Ruben, grab the vodka!

Ruben goes into the kitchen and grabs the vodka from next to the fridge and follows Mary. He stops in front of Freedom and looks down at him in disgust.

He takes a swig of the vodka and wipes his mouth.

RUBEN

Let me tell you a little story.

He takes another sip of vodka.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

Once upon a time, there was a little boy named Freedom. A dumb name, but it was HIS name.

Freedom pulls a pillow onto his lap and hugs it.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

So this kid Freedom dies and he's in Heaven. Saint Peter greets him and takes him on a tour. Well, they arrive in a room with a massive wall of clocks and all of them are rotating at different speeds.

Ruben takes a big gulp of vodka.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

Each of the clocks has somebody's name under it. Some of them are moving slowly. Some moving pretty fast. A few aren't moving at all.

(MORE)

RUBEN (CONT'D)

Well, the kid, he asks Saint Peter, what are all these clocks? Saint Peter turns to the kid and says that these are everybody's MASTURBATION clocks. And the speed of the hand going around the clock is based on how often the person masturbated in real life.

Ruben takes a last swig of the vodka and puts the cap back on it.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

So the kid asks Saint Peter, he says, "where's my clock?" And Saint Peter says, "it's in the kitchen, we use it as a fan."

Ruben walks towards Mary's bedroom.

RUBEN (CONT'D)

Hey, Mary! Show me them titties!

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Freedom bolts awake as he hears his mother scream.

He scrambles out of bed and runs into the living room.

Mary and Ruben argue, scream and yell.

Mary tries to slap Ruben, but he lifts the much smaller woman up into the air and slams her against the wall.

Freedom runs into his bedroom and grabs his baseball bat.

He runs straight at Ruben, who drops Mary and turns to face the boy.

Freedom swings the bat, but Ruben grabs Freedom's arms and keeps the bat from connecting.

Ruben picks up Freedom and throws him into the wall as Mary screams at him.

Freedom passes out.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - LATER**

Two sheriff's cars sit outside the front of the house, lights blazing.

Neighbors stare out from windows up and down the street.

Ruben is in handcuffs and Mary rages at both him and the cops.

Freedom stares out at them from inside the house.

Ruben is put into the back of the car and it drives away.

Mary walks back by him, crying and continuing to rant and rave about Ruben.

MARY

That motherfucker, if he ever...

FREEDOM

Mom?

MARY

...by god I will...

Freedom tugs on her shirt.

FREEDOM

Mom?

MARY

What the hell...? Oh. What is it?

FREEDOM

Is he going to jail?

MARY

No, since this is a "domestic dispute," the pigs can't really do anything except make him sleep somewhere else tonight.

Freedom tears up again.

FREEDOM

Does that mean he's coming back?

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

A revised card has already been added:

**#16: NEVER HIT ANYONE.**

And new cards have been added:

**#25: LISTEN TO RAP.**

**#26: DON'T PRETEND TO BE SOMETHING  
YOU'RE NOT.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card a pins it to the wall:

**#27: MEN CAN BE EVIL.**

**INT. MANTICORE MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY**

Freedom limps on his left foot up to the field where his classmates are dressed for P.E.

Coach Jackson stands at the head of the students. He's dressed exactly the same as he was at Lillian Elementary, except his new polo shirt says Manticore Middle School.

Freedom limps directly up to Jackson.

FREEDOM  
Coach, coach.

He turns around and looks directly at Freedom. His jaw drops.

COACH JACKSON  
(under his breath)  
Not this motherf...

FREEDOM  
Coach, my ankle hurts. I twisted  
it.

COACH JACKSON  
Don't even try it Freakdom, go  
dress out!

He stands there for a moment and then turns and limps away on his RIGHT ankle.

He passes by Steve, who stands at the end of the student calisthenics line.

STEVE  
C'mon, man!

FREEDOM  
What, you don't believe me?

STEVE  
Not if you're saying it's your  
right ankle.

Freedom looks down at his ankle and then limps towards the locker room on his LEFT ankle.

COACH JACKSON  
Alright, 20 jumping jacks!

He blows his whistle and the kids begin.

**INT. MANTICORE MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM - MOMENTS LATER**

After P.E. class, the kids are in the locker room, sweaty and changing clothes.

A few of the taller kids shower, but the younger kids are too shy.

Freedom puts his clean shirt on, while he's sits on the bench.

He drifts off in thought, not knowing that he's staring right at David, who wears only his boxers.

DAVID  
You want to stare at my dick, why don't you come over here and suck it?

Freedom snaps out of his daze and gets up and walks out of the locker room while everybody laughs at him.

**INT. MANTICORE MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: 1986

Freedom sits in an office across from PRINCIPAL YOUNGBLOOD, a white man in his 30s with bushy brown hair. He stares at Freedom with a somber look on his face.

YOUNGBLOOD hesitates to speak.

PRINCIPAL YOUNGBLOOD  
Son, there's really no other way to say this, but Sheriff Kingsley called me to let you know that your father has been found.

Freedom grips his chair, his knuckles white.

PRINCIPAL YOUNGBLOOD (CONT'D)  
Apparently, he was killed in  
Atlantic City, in some kind of  
shootout with... well, I've already  
said more than I should've...

Freedom starts to cry.

PRINCIPAL YOUNGBLOOD (CONT'D)  
We called your mother to come pick  
you up, but, well, she's not going  
to make it. You'll have to go back  
to class and ride the bus home as  
usual.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom walks into his art class. The students draw bowls of  
fruit that sit in front of them. Each table seats four  
students.

Freedom sits at the only table that isn't completely full.  
His drawing is average.

Several kids at the next table talk about Freedom, assuming  
he can't hear them.

BLONDE GIRL  
He's so weird.

BRUNETTE GIRL  
I hear he's gay.

Steve sits at their table.

STEVE  
Nah, he's just a weirdo.

Steve tosses a balled up piece of paper across the room and  
it hits Freedom in the back of his head. He flinches.

BRUNETTE GIRL  
That's not what Crissy said. She  
said she knew he was gay because  
she saw...

The teacher, MR. HENRY, 40s, white male, balding, fading,  
shushes the kids.

MR. HENRY  
Okay, everyone, pencils down, time  
to stop drawing and turn in your  
paper. Make sure your name is on  
your paper.



Mr. Henry walks towards Freedom and puts his hand on Freedom's drawing. Freedom isn't done drawing.

FREEDOM  
I'm not GAY!

He takes the pencil and stabs Mr. Henry in the hand. The teacher screams.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom sits across the desk from Principal Youngblood.

PRINCIPAL YOUNGBLOOD  
I understand that the other children have been saying negative things in your general direction. But that doesn't excuse violence, so I'm going to have to suspend you for one week. I will have your teachers gather up your work for the week and you can do it from home.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

Revised cards have already been added:

**#16: VIOLENCE IS BAD.**

**#18: ONLY TELL PEOPLE YOU TRUST THAT YOU ARE GAY.**

And new cards have been added:

**#28: BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU STARE AT.**

**#29: DON'T FAKE INJURIES.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#30: DON'T DO DRUGS.**

**INT. MANTICORE MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY**

Freedom sits in a classroom with the other students. MISS SHARON teaches. She's a white woman in her mid-20s, with short cropped hair, glasses and dressed in an affordable blouse, slacks and comfortable shoes.

MISS SHARON

Okay, students, as promised, I will now read the best haiku of the ones submitted.

She picks up a piece of paper and begins to read.

MISS SHARON (CONT'D)

I am... so very sorry... for what I have done... I hope I can give you your... freedom.

She puts the paper back on her desk.

MISS SHARON (CONT'D)

That was very nice, Freedom. If you don't mind, I would like to keep a copy.

Most of the students are mildly impressed. A few even smile.

STEVE

Freaking Shakespeare over here?

DAVID

Fag.

The class breaks up into laughter.

MISS SHARON

David, go straight to the principal's office. Now!

She points out of the room as David high-fives his way out.

**EXT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NIGHT**

Freedom walks back from the basketball court, dribbling the ball. Steve and Richie walk nearby.

They take a shortcut through the front sidewalk of the Lillian Elementary School. Freedom stops dribbling, but keeps following slowly.

Steve and Richie start checking the doors to the building, which are all locked.

Except the one to the main office.

RICHIE

Yo, Steve, this door is open!

Steve looks at Freedom.

STEVE

C'mon!

Richie and Steve go inside. Freedom hesitates, then follows.

He sees that Steve and Richie have gotten into the boxes of Girl Scout Cookies that just came in for this year's sale.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Dude, Samoas are the best cookie ever!

RICHIE

You ARE crazy. Thin Mints all the way!

Freedom grabs a box of Samoas and opens it. He eats a cookie.

RICHIE (CONT'D)

Check this out! There must be, like \$35 here!

STEVE

Nice. We can get pizza and beer!

RICHIE

How the hell are we going to buy beer?

Richie starts taking various little knickknacks off of the desks.

Steve considers a stapler.

STEVE

Dude, all you have to do is go to one of the Piggly Wiggly stores on the county line and find some poor dude to buy you some beer. You give him a little extra so he can get himself some and bingo!

Freedom has gone further into the office and sees a typewriter. An electric Courier.

Jackpot.

Steve and Richie are on the other side of the office, behind the lead secretary's office. Steve sees a flashing alarm light on a box labeled Sonitrol.

He puts a finger over his lips and points it out to Richie, who flinches.

Steve grabs Richie's shirt and quietly drags him towards the front door.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
 Hey, man, we're... uh... gonna go outside and smoke. Grab like one last thing and meet us outside when you're done.

Richie grabs a box of fund-raising chocolate bars. Then grabs another.

Freedom ignores them.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
 Freedom?

Freedom caresses the keys of the typewriter.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
 Who the heck steals a typewriter?

RICHIE  
 Dude, you are SO weird.

They go outside. Freedom reaches down to unplug the typewriter.

**EXT. LILLIAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER**

Freedom walks outside, struggling to carry the heavy typewriter.

WHITE MALE COP  
 Freeze!

A short WHITE MALE COP points a service weapon directly at Freedom. He looks in the other direction to see an even shorter BLACK FEMALE COP also pointing her weapon at him.

He drops the typewriter and puts his hands up.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE POLICE DEPARTMENT - LATER**

A quick montage shows Freedom getting photographed, getting fingerprinted, talking to two cops and sitting alone and sad on a chair waiting to be picked up.

Garry walks in and talks to the police officers.

Then he walks over to Freedom.

GARRY  
 Hey, little man. Your mom is, shall  
 we say, incapacitated. I'm going to  
 give you a ride home.

Freedom stands up and they walk out of the station.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Freedom is in his bed. He can't sleep. The clock says 4:03  
 a.m.

The front door to the house opens and Mary and Garry come in  
 loudly.

Garry heads straight for Mary's bedroom.

GARRY  
 (laughing)  
 I'm gonna go ahead and start  
 without you.

Mary stops in the door of Freedom's bedroom. She holds a  
 Bloody Mary and smokes a Merit Lite.

She stands there staring at him. Freedom is on his side with  
 his back to her. His eyes open.

She takes a puff.

She exhales.

MARY  
 You are such a disappointment.

She walks away.

MARY (CONT'D)  
 Hey, Garry! Wait for me!

She drops her glass in the hallway and it breaks on the  
 hallway floor. She laughs and stumbles away.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

Revised cards have already been added:

**#1: DON'T STEAL.**

**#15: SOME TEACHERS SUCK.**

**#22: BRUSH YOUR HAIR. KEEP IT BORING.**

**#25: LISTEN TO ALL KINDS OF MUSIC.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#31: WRITE MORE.**

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: 1987

Freedom sits in a portable classroom with the other students. At the head of the class is COACH GILLESPIE, late 30s, a tall man with grey hair wearing a whistle around his neck.

He holds a stack of papers and calls out students alphabetically.

COACH GILLESPIE  
(with a chuckle)  
I always love this freaking name...  
Freedom!

Freedom takes the paper from the coach and looks at it. He got a B. He smiles.

Melody leans over to talk to Freedom.

MELODY  
How'd you do?

He shows her.

MELODY (CONT'D)  
Wow! That's great! I got an A+.

FREEDOM  
Uh... wow... great job.

MELODY  
I thought you had dropped this class?

FREEDOM  
No.

Her jaw drops.

MELODY  
But you haven't been to class in five weeks? How'd you get a "B"?

FREEDOM

I don't know.

MELODY

Well, that took a lot of courage to skip class. My parents would kill me if I missed one day. You must be pretty smart.

He shrugs his shoulders.

MELODY (CONT'D)

Hey, what are you doing tomorrow during second lunch?

Freedom perks up.

MELODY (CONT'D)

I'm helping out Locke Club with recruiting! You should stop by the table and join.

**EXT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: Second lunch, the next day

In front of the cafeteria stand a row of tables with the insignia of various clubs.

At the Locke Club table sit Melody and an Half Japanese/Half Mexican boy, ANDY, who wears a Locke Club shirt and a name tag that also reveals he is the club's president.

Everyone is smiles as Freedom fills out the membership form.

**EXT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: 1988

Freedom and the other new Locke Club initiates are on their backs in the school parking lot, surrounded by the older Locke Club Members.

The existing Locke Club members are armed. Some have ketchup bottles, others have mustard. Some have bags of flour, others have soda cans they are shaking up.

ANDY

Alright you rookie dirtbags!

Andy holds a bag of dirt.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Your initiation begins now!

Everyone proceeds to make the new recruits the most disgusting things on campus. Outside of the cafeteria.

**CUT TO:**

Andy and Steve sit on floats in Andy's pool, sipping beers.

Freedom, still covered in all the goop and crap from the beginning of the initiation, mows the yard. The VERY large yard.

**CUT TO:**

Andy and Steve take turns using a high-powered hose with an advanced nozzle to blast the goop off of Freedom. He struggles to remain standing.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom, in a Locke Club t-shirt and dry boxers (and nothing else), prances across a golf course, holding up a Playboy centerfold and showing it to various golfing foursomes and running off. Andy and Steve chase after him, laughing.

**CUT TO:**

All of the initiates sit in a row at a table. Above the table hangs a student-made banner that reads "Locke Club OysterFest!" Dozens of other students and adults are watching.

Andy speaks through a megaphone. Before him is a table filled with oyster shells. David and Steve wear gloves and hold knives. They've been shucking.

The crowd cheers.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Okay, the winning bid was 16 oysters!

The crowd cheers louder.

Andy pours the last oyster into a big cup. The crowd goes nuts.

ANDY (CONT'D)  
Alright, Freedom, you are up!

He stands up from the table and takes the oyster cup from Andy.



The crowd starts chanting "Chug! Chug! Chug!"

Freedom slowly and sloppily drains the whole cup, messing up his shirt. The crowd loves it.

Freedom stands up and waves at everybody.

Then he walks to the edge of the table and vomits in the grass.

The cheers turn to reactions of disgust.

CRISSY

Gross!

**EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY**

Freedom walks out of the courthouse wearing a suit. With him is Garry, who also wears a suit, with his beard and long hair well-groomed.

They get to the bottom of the courthouse steps and Garry stops him.

GARRY

Alright, this is it, little man.

Freedom stares at him.

GARRY (CONT'D)

It's a total bummer that your mom OD'd. Man, she was a hot...

He sheepishly stares down at his feet.

GARRY (CONT'D)

And sorry that your DAD left.

He puts his hand on Freedom's shoulder.

GARRY (CONT'D)

You know, so, I'm legally like your uncle or your godfather or some shit like that, but, hell, I figure, you've been taking care of yourself long enough...

He reaches in his pocket and pulls out a \$20 bill and sheepishly hands it to Freedom.

GARRY (CONT'D)  
 Well, I'm gonna be on my way. Gotta  
 move along to Baton Rouge. Got some  
 work on an oil rig.

Garry hands him a set of keys.

GARRY (CONT'D)  
 You already have these, I guess,  
 but I won't be needing them  
 anymore, now that, well, your  
 mom... I guess the house is pretty  
 much all yours at this point.

He waves at Freedom.

GARRY (CONT'D)  
 Alright man, catch you on the  
 flipside.

Garry turns and walks away.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

Revised cards have already been added:

**#14: PARENTS LEAVE.**

**#30: DO THE RIGHT DRUGS.**

And new cards have been added:

**#32: JOIN CLUBS.**

**#33: SAY HELLO TO PEOPLE WHO SAY HELLO  
 TO YOU.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card a pins it to the wall:

**#34: TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.**

**EXT. CAPITOL STADIUM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits in the concrete bleachers at Capitol Stadium,  
 dressed in a red and white Tallahassee High School  
 Conquistadors t-shirt.

Steve hands him a can of Coke.

STEVE  
Here, hit this.

Keith laughs.

Freedom takes the can and takes a big swig.

RICHIE  
Whoa, man! Sip, sip, pass!

Freedom hands it to Richie. He burps.

Everybody laughs at him.

KEITH  
(laughing at Freedom)  
God dammit.

Freedom holds a small red and white plastic football with a Conquistador on it. Most of the crowd also has the giveaway ball.

Freedom throws it up in the air and catches it.

Richie finishes off the spiked Coke.

Freedom throws the ball and catches it.

RICHIE  
(behind Freedom's back)  
Watch this.

Freedom throws the ball up in the air.

Richie steps over and catches it.

Freedom stands up.

FREEDOM  
Hey!

Freedom tries to grab the ball back.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
That's mine!

Richie throws the ball to Keith.

KEITH  
Come get it, Freakdom!

Keith runs up the bleachers and Freedom chases.

He gains on Keith, who tosses the ball back down to Richie, who is also now on the same set of steps they are.

Freedom turns to chase after Richie.

FREEDOM

Gimme!

Richie throws the ball back up to Keith. People around them start to laugh more and more. Ignoring the football game.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)

(almost crying)

Gimme! It's mine!

He runs back up the stairs towards Keith, but he trips and falls face first into the bleachers.

The crowd stops laughing and gives a big groan. Even the football players turn to look.

Freedom turns around and sits on his butt in the aisle.

He bleeds from his cheek, which is starting to swell and bruise.

STEVE

Give him the fucking ball, you idiots.

A BLACK GRANDMOTHER with white hair sends her younger grandson ANDRE, 10, over to help Freedom up.

BLACK GRANDMOTHER

Y'all leave that boy alone! Andre, go help him up.

Keith tosses the football at Freedom and it hits him in the back of the head.

FREEDOM

Oww!

Scattered laughs.

MELODY

You guys are children. Grow up.

Andre picks up the football and gives it back to Freedom.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

SUPER: 1989

Freedom walks down the hallway towards David, who talks to two senior girls, a BRUNETTE GIRL and a BLACK GIRL.

David makes eye contact with him.

DAVID  
(under his breath)  
Watch, this little retard is going  
to beg me for a ride home.

Freedom hesitates at the word "retard."

BRUNETTE GIRL  
Why?

BLACK GIRL  
What's that all about?

Freedom walks the rest of the gauntlet towards David and the girls.

DAVID  
He lives down the block from me.

FREEDOM  
Hey, David?

DAVID  
What's up, man?

Freedom looks at the girls, but he doesn't speak to them and they don't speak to him.

FREEDOM  
So you know...

DAVID  
Yeah?

FREEDOM  
It's like a mile and a half walk...

DAVID  
Sure.

The girls giggle.

FREEDOM  
...and it's rainy and hot  
outside...

DAVID  
Definitely.

FREEDOM  
...so I was wondering...

DAVID  
Naw, man, I can't.

The girls laugh, as do several other kids nearby.

FREEDOM  
...if you could... oh.

DAVID  
I've gotta take my mom to church.  
She's like 80 or something.

David and the girls walk away.

BLACK GIRL  
Who goes to church on Tuesday?

They all laugh.

**INT. TACO BELL - DAY**

Freedom sits in the lobby of Taco Bell, across from SCOTT, 30, a white man dressed in a Taco Bell manager's uniform. In front of Scott is a Taco Bell application with Freedom's name on it.

SCOTT  
Alright, this is a pretty good application. Your grades are good enough. Why don't you come in at opening time on Sunday and we can start training you?

FREEDOM  
Great! Thank you!

He grins.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

All the Locke Club members sit in a classroom, wearing their Locke Club t-shirts. It's meeting time.

ANDY  
Okay, and the last thing we need to figure out for the Bash is who is going to bring cups. Anyone?

Freedom slowly raises his hand.

FREEDOM

I can! I work at Taco Bell!

Steve and David start clapping and others join in. The applause continues until the whole room stands in thunderous ovation.

Many of them laugh.

ANDY

Oh-kay, I guess you have the Freedom to get us cups for the bash.

The applause and laughter continues while Freedom grins like an idiot.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

A revised card has already been added:

**#18: DON'T TELL PEOPLE YOU ARE GAY.**

And new cards have been added:

**#35: DRINKING AND DRUGS ARE DIFFERENT.**

**#36: PEOPLE AREN'T NICE.**

**#37: DON'T TALK TO CO-WORKERS ABOUT YOUR BOSS.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#38: WHEN ARE PEOPLE MAKING FUN OF YOU?**

**INT. CAPITOL STADIUM - NIGHT**

Freedom walks towards the stadium's restrooms, beneath a scoreboard that says Tallahassee 27, Panama City 3. He is happy, despite being bundled up on the cold game night.

He walks into the men's room to see David and Richie inside at the urinal.

FREEDOM

Hey, guys, what's up?

They both look at him weird.

RICHIE  
Dude! Men don't talk to each other  
while they are peeing!

STEVE  
Yeah, this is still the 80s and I'm  
STILL down with the ladies.

They both crack up. Freedom goes into a stall.

**INT. CAPITOL STADIUM - MOMENTS LATER**

Freedom walks out of the bathroom and runs into Steve, Keith,  
David and a few others.

FREEDOM  
Hey guys!

A few guys smirk.

KEITH  
Hey, can I come to the party with  
you guys?

DAVID  
Naw, man, we gotta stop and get  
condoms.

FREEDOM  
That's fine, I have a condom.

He pulls out his leather wallet to show them the condom ring  
pushing through the wallet.

The guys laugh.

DAVID  
Naw, we're good, man.

STEVE  
How old is that thing?

Freedom puts his wallet away.

FREEDOM  
Can I come along?

DAVID  
Naw.

STEVE  
See, the thing is Free, can I call  
you Free?

(MORE)



STEVE (CONT'D)

The thing is we all have dates. And this party is ONLY for people who have dates.

KEITH

Yeah, you got a date, Free?

Everybody except Freedom cracks up.

They all start to walk away, leaving Freedom behind.

STEVE

Maybe next time?

They all laugh as they walk out of the stadium.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

Freedom sits in his homeroom class. The teacher, MRS. MOCK, 40s, with short hair, a bright green sweater and black slacks walks in.

The students are chatting as Mrs. Mock puts her bag down at her desk and pulls out a stack of papers.

MRS. MOCK

Good morning, students. Okay, calm down, calm down. The first announcement today is don't forget to buy your Bunnygrams, this is the last day. And remember they will be given out Friday before the Spring Fling Dance, so make sure to treat your sweetheart...

Freedom has a big smile on his face.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER**

Mrs. Mock sits at the table with Katey. The sign says Bunnygrams cost \$5.

MRS. MOCK

Well, hello Freedom.

FREEDOM

Hello.

KATEY

Hi! My name's Katey. I'm your class treasurer. Can I get you a Bunnygram today?

Mrs. Mock smiles at Katey.

MRS. MOCK  
You pay for them today and we'll  
deliver them 7th period.

Freedom tosses a crumpled \$10 on the table.

Katey starts writing on a clipboard.

KATEY  
Okay. One Bunnygram?

She looks up at him.

He nods. She starts writing again.

KATEY (CONT'D)  
Paid for by Freedom. Who is the  
recipient?

Mrs. Mock picks up the ten and starts to happily uncrumple it.

FREEDOM  
Uhh... It's for... uh... Melody.

Katey looks up at him like he's crazy.

KATEY  
Are you...

Mrs. Mock shoots her a look. She looks back down at the clipboard and starts writing.

Mrs. Mock hands Freedom his change.

MRS. MOCK  
Why, thank you, Freedom.

#### **INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT**

The gym is set up for the casual Spring Fling Dance. The room has an Easter-y theme, without anything religious.

Kids fill the dance floor, dressed nicely, but mostly in jeans and collared shirts or nice, but not fancy, dresses. There are a few exceptions, including a guy dressed in full top-hat and cape.

Freedom wears a mismatched blazer and slacks. The tie, which is too short, doesn't match, either. He is, however, carrying a single rose.

He walks confidently into the room. A few people even catch his newfound confidence.

He walks straight up to the edge of the dance floor and starts to scan it.

He stops and his jaw drops.

He sees Melody on the dance floor, embracing and making out with JOE, a super handsome point guard on the school's moderately successful basketball team.

Freedom drops the rose to the gym floor.

**EXT. LOCKE CLUB BASH - NIGHT**

SUPER: 1990

Locke Club is holding a big bonfire and party in the back yard of club president Andy's parents' house. Everyone from school is there, popular to unpopular kids. Even a few teachers have shown up, but they aren't chaperones.

Most people ignore Freedom as he walks by. A few wave or say hi. A few laugh or chuckle at him.

Freedom makes a beeline for the keg.

Melody pumps herself a beer into a red Solo cup.

MELODY

Hey, Freedom! I didn't think you were going to make it tonight.

FREEDOM

Changed my mind.

He smiles.

MELODY

Oh, if you don't want beer, there is a table over there with vodka and bourbon.

FREEDOM

Thanks.

Freedom makes his way over to the table and starts to make himself a screwdriver. He pours more and more vodka into the cup. Making it way too strong.

He takes a sip and almost chokes.

He takes another sip.

Freedom goes back and looks for Melody, but she's moved on.

Freedom wanders around the party, getting pretty far away from the drink table, looking for Melody. He sees a few kids that kind of wave at him.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
Have you guys seen Melanie...

He burps.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
I mean... haha... Melody.

They all shrug. He continues to wander around the party and ends up behind the main house, where he finds Andy and Steve and a few other guys.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
Hey! You guys like to party!

Steve takes a hit off of a joint and passes it to Andy.

STEVE  
(while exhaling)  
'Sup.

FREEDOM  
Hey, I know what that is!

He takes a sip from his drink and burps. Everybody chuckles.

ANDY  
Yo man, hit this!

He offers the joint to Freedom, who clumsily grabs it.

FREEDOM  
How do I do it?

STEVE  
You smoke it.

FREEDOM  
How much?

ANDY  
(giggling)  
As much as you can.

Freedom puts it to his mouth and inhales.

He immediately coughs. Every laughs.

He tries again. He manages to keep it in this time.

STEVE

There you go.

Other nods and comments of assent.

FREEDOM

I don't feel anything.

ANDY

(giggling)

Have some more!

Freedom puts the joint up to his face and sucks down the last half of the joint, to the point where he burns his hand and drops the roach.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Dude, I saw your mom pick you up that one time. She's smoking!

Freedom starts to wobble. He drops his cup, spilling his screwdriver.

DAVID

(arriving)

Dude, you guys fucked up the retard!

ANDY

Can I get your mom's phone number?  
I'd love to give her a RING!

Massive laughs. Like Def Comedy jam laughs.

From Freedom's POV, he starts to groggily blink as the screen goes black.

DAVID (O.S.)

Andy, go get your dad's camera!

ANDY (O.S.)

Sweet!

The footsteps of Andy running into the house while the others laugh.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

New cards have been added:

**#39: LEARN MORE ABOUT FUCKING.**

**#40: DON'T COPY MOVIE STARS WHEN IT  
COMES TO HITTING ON WOMEN.**

**#41: DON'T DRINK ON CAMPUS.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#42: DON'T DRINK TOO MUCH.**

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

Freedom sits on the floor of his living room, watching MTV.

MC Hammer's "U Can't Touch This" ends.

MARTHA QUINN

That is MC Hammer's "U Can't Touch  
This," based around a sample from  
Rick James.

Freedom turns off the TV. He crosses to his dad's old album collection. He flips through until he finds Rick James.

He puts it on and "Superfreak" starts playing.

Freedom flips the album cover over and reads the back.

He stops at the special thanks. He sees "Cash Cooper."

He grabs several other albums, all with psychedelic covers.

On each one, he sees his dad's name in the thank you section.

Album after album after album. Big stars and small. Hits and misses.

Cash Cooper was the constant.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the hallway desk where a landline phone is.

He opens a book called the "Tallahassee High School Directory." He flips through until he gets to the page with Katey's name.

He dials the number and waits.

It rings.

It rings again.

Finally, Katey answers.

KATEY

Hello?

Calling Katey to meet her and say hi.

FREEDOM

Hi.

KATEY

Hello? Who is this?

FREEDOM

Freedom. We met at...

KATEY

I know who you are. How'd you get my number?

He looks down at the directory.

FREEDOM

School directory.

KATEY

Oh. Uh... Why'd you call?

FREEDOM

I... um... I just called to say hi.

KATEY

Hi?

FREEDOM

Hello.

KATEY

Uh... Hi.

FREEDOM

Hi.

KATEY

Well... thanks for calling. I gotta go do homework. Uh... thanks for calling.

She hangs up.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

Freedom walks into the building and almost bumps into Melody and Joe. Joe gets excited.

JOE  
Freedom!

FREEDOM  
Hey... uh... Joe. Melody.

MELODY  
Hi, Freedom.

Joe laughs as he talks.

JOE  
I heard you called Katey last night?

Freedom frowns.

FREEDOM  
Y-yeah...

Melody slaps Joe on the shoulder.

JOE  
You should ask her to prom!

FREEDOM  
(defiantly)  
I'm gonna.

Melody pulls him down the hall, as they both laugh.

MELODY  
You're mean!

JOE  
You're laughing!

Freedom stares after them.

Other kids giggle at him as they walk by.

**EXT. DUCK LAKE PARK - DAY**

The kids play football in a field that sits between a parking lot and a lake. Overall, the field is about a third of the size of an actual football field.



Freedom lines up as one of the many wide receivers. Steve quarterbacks his team. The other team has players that include David, Richie, Andy and Keith.

The ball is snapped and Steve drops back. He makes a throw to Joe, but it goes a little too high and into the water. Joe falls into the water.

Everyone laughs and cracks up.

Joe grabs the ball and runs back to the line of scrimmage. He pushes Steve out of his way.

JOE  
You can't throw. My turn.

STEVE  
Alright man.

The teams line up. Keith lines up across from Freedom.

KEITH  
I'm gonna bust you up!

Freedom ignores him.

The ball is snapped. Keith plays kinda close to the line of scrimmage, ignoring Freedom, who runs straight past him.

Joe lofts the ball up and it land perfectly in Freedom's hands.

He bobbles it for a bit, but brings it in for a touchdown.

**CUT TO:**

Joe drops back and gets blitzed. He scrambles from the pocket. Freedom is wide open about 10 yards away.

Joe looks straight at him and checks off, makes an terrible pass that gets picked off by David and returned for a touchdown.

**CUT TO:**

Joe has an easy throw to a wide-open Freedom again, but throws an incomplete pass instead.

Freedom throws his hands up in frustration.

**CUT TO:**

Keith is QB for the other team and he throws a wobbly pass that is just about to be intercepted by Joe.

Freedom comes out of nowhere to get the interception and Joe gets tangled in his feet. Freedom maintains his balance and returns the interception for a touchdown as Joe falls to the ground.

**CUT TO:**

The winning team celebrates as Freedom's team walks off the field dejected.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
63-42, bitches!

Freedom walks off the field alone. The other guys rib Joe.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at his phone, Tallahassee High School directory open before him.

FREEDOM  
Hi, Katey.

KATEY  
Uhh... who is this?

FREEDOM  
It's me.

KATEY  
Me, who?

FREEDOM  
Don't make me say it.

KATEY  
I don't know who this is.

Freedom frowns.

FREEDOM  
It's Freedom.

A silence.

KATEY  
Oh.

His shoulders slump. He pauses a beat.

FREEDOM  
I was wondering...

He pauses.

KATEY  
Yeah? You still there?

FREEDOM  
Would you go to prom with me?

KATEY  
Ohhh, I'm so sorry! I already have  
a date. I'm going with Steve.

He says nothing.

KATEY (CONT'D)  
Hello?

He says nothing.

KATEY (CONT'D)  
Okay, well, thanks for asking me.  
I'm flattered. I have to go now. I  
have homework to do.

Freedom holds the phone to his head tightly as the line goes  
dead.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

New cards have been added:

**#43: LEARN HOW TO DANCE.**

**#44: CARPE DIEM.**

**#45: POPULAR KIDS ARE ASSHOLES.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card a pins it to the wall:

**#46: BE GOOD AT SPORTS.**

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

Freedom stands in his bathroom and stares into the mirror. He  
has a large zit on his cheek.

FREEDOM  
Fuck!

He opens up the medicine cabinet and looks through it, checking out a couple of bottles.

He finds a bottle of his mom's foundation and pulls it and a cotton swab out.

Freedom takes the swab and puts make-up on it. He covers the zit up with foundation. He adds some more, smudges it, tries to blend it in.

He stops and stares at his face.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
Fuck! No one will notice.

He trudges into the kitchen and opens the fridge. He pulls out a Yoo Hoo and walks away.

The camera stays on the fridge and focuses on a note from the school which says "School Pictures May 5!"

The calendar next to it says May and the 5th is circled.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

Freedom sits in his home room class, the make-up on his face obvious, although nobody can see the zit.

Steve and Richie walk in and stop in front of Freedom's desk for a second and stare at him.

RICHIE  
(under his breath)  
Is he wearing make-up?

STEVE  
Damn, even that's too freaky for me.

Steve and Richie go sit down.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY**

The entire 208-person senior class sits in the auditorium, as do many family members. Above the stage hangs a big sign, made by the students, that says "Senior Superlative Day!"

MR. SKELTON, the school's principal, a man in his early 50s, athletic, with black hair and mustache, presides. David and a tall, athletic Black girl, KATINA, stands next to him. They hold certificates that say "Most Athletic."

MR. SKELTON  
Congrats to our best senior  
athletes! Great job, David and  
Katina!

David and Katina wave to the audience, who applaud loudly.

MR. SKELTON (CONT'D)  
Next up, we have some of the more  
fun ones. First up is "Best Make-  
up." Oh boy.

The audience laughs a little bit.

MR. SKELTON (CONT'D)  
David and Katina, tell us who the  
winner is.

Mr. Skelton steps aside as the students come back to the  
podium.

KATINA  
Well, David here just told me there  
are actually two winners!

Mr. Skelton looks at his clipboard, puzzled.

DAVID  
Yeah, Katina, you can read the one  
on the card and then I'll say the  
other one.

Katina shrugs.

KATINA  
And the winner is....

She opens the card.

KATINA (CONT'D)  
...of course, Shelly!

SHELLY, who does have really great make-up, stands up to  
cheers and walks toward the stage.

DAVID  
And now...

He starts to giggle as he speaks.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
The best make-up for a dude...

Katina looks at him. Shelly stops on the stairs in shock.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
 The award goes to...  
 (beat)  
 Freedom!

The usual suspects laugh. Many people gasp.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
 Hit it!

Katina puts her hands up and walks away from David.

KATINA  
 I had nothing to do with this!

The video screen starts playing behind David.

Mr. Skelton watches bewildered as the video starts to play.  
 He looks down at his clipboard.

The video begins to play. It's a grainy video from the Locke  
 Club Bash.

FREEDOM (O.S.)  
 (drunk and slurring)  
 Hey! Hey! I got something to...  
 what was it? I got something to  
 say!

He weaves in and out of the shot. He vomits.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
 My name is Freedom! Freedom! Not  
 Freakdom! Not freak...

He falls to the ground in the video and vomits again.

VOICE (O.S.)  
 Dude, he's passing out!

ANOTHER VOICE (O.S.)  
 This shit is hilarious!

Laughter. The video goes black.

Mr. Skelton runs out onto the stage waving his clipboard.

MR. SKELTON  
 That was TOTALLY inappropriate...

Some of the crowd laugh.

The camera pans around towards where Freedom was sitting.

When it gets to the aisle, all that can be seen of Freedom is his backside as he explodes through the auditorium doors and out of Tallahassee High School.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

New cards have been added:

**#47: DON'T INSULT PEOPLE.**

**#48: DON'T WEAR MAKE-UP.**

**#49: PEOPLE SUCK.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#50: DON'T ASK PEOPLE OUT IF YOU DON'T KNOW THEM.**

**INT. NORTHWOOD MALL - NIGHT**

Freedom walks slowly through a nearly-empty Northwood Mall. Barely shuffling his feet. Shops are getting ready to close up.

Freedom sees that Sam Goody closes an hour later than the rest of the mall.

He walks inside and goes directly to the alternative rock section. He starts browsing.

LIZ PHAIR (O.S.)

Hey man.

Freedom looks around for the voice but doesn't see anyone. He goes back to browsing.

LIZ PHAIR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Down here!

He looks down at the cover of "Exile in Guyville," by Liz Phair. The black-and-white Liz Phair talks to him.

LIZ PHAIR (CONT'D)

Take me home with you! I promise you'll love it!

Freedom looks around the store, but nobody else hears her.

He picks up the tape and takes it to the register.

**CUT TO:**

Headphones on, Freedom unwraps the cassette.

LIZ PHAIR (CONT'D)  
You are NOT going to regret this.

He puts the cassette in the player and hits play.

(Music starts. The song "6'1" starts playing)

Freedom immediately smiles and starts bobbing his head to the music.

**EXT. FSU QUAD - DAY**

SUPER: 1991

(Music continues.)

The quad outside the FSU library is filled with students, broken up into small groups of eight.

Freedom stands in a group led by a HAPPY SORORITY GIRL, 19, who wears a sorority shirt.

HAPPY SORORITY GIRL  
Okay everybody, thank you once again for joining us at FSU freshman orientation! Let's do a bit of an icebreaker. Turn to the person next to you. Introduce yourself and learn one special thing about your partner!

Freedom turns to face WHITNEY, 18, who has short blonde hair.

She smiles. He smiles back.

FREEDOM  
Hi.

WHITNEY  
Hi, I'm Whitney!

She wears FSU football gear and is very bouncy.

FREEDOM  
They call me Freedom.

She tilts her head to the side.



WHITNEY  
Really?

                  FREEDOM  
Yep.

                  WHITNEY  
That's your real name?

                  FREEDOM  
Yep.

                  WHITNEY  
No way! You're lying.

                  FREEDOM  
Not at the moment I'm not.

They both laugh, although Whitney's laugh is nervous.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom takes one last look in the mirror.

                  FREEDOM  
Not too bad.

By now his complexion has cleared up and his hair is clean and he looks pretty good.

**EXT. AIRPORT DRIVE - NIGHT**

Freedom walks down a busy residential street carrying a six-pack. This area is filled with college housing and at least seven houses in three blocks are currently hosting parties.

He walks into the first one. The camera stays outside.

Freedom walks back out holding only a red solo cup. He burps.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom walks into the second party house.

He walks back out with a bottle of beer. He burps.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom vomits by a stop sign.

**CUT TO:**

He walks into a third party, the camera follows him this time.

Freedom makes his way out to the keg where he sees Steve standing by the keg with CHARLIE, 22, a shorter Black guy with black horn-rimmed glasses and a big black beard.

STEVE  
Holy shit, look who it is!

FREEDOM  
Hey...

Steve hands him the beer he just pumped and starts pumping another one.

STEVE  
Hey, this is Charlie!

CHARLIE  
'Sup man.

FREEDOM  
Hey.

They shake hands and everybody drinks beer.

STEVE  
So you stayed in town, too?

FREEDOM  
Yeah.

STEVE  
(to Charlie)  
Freedom here and I went to high school and all that.

CHARLIE  
Dude, your ACTUAL name is Freedom?

FREEDOM  
Yeah.

CHARLIE  
That is totally bad ass!

STEVE  
Right!

He finishes his beer and starts pumping another one.

CHARLIE  
How you liking the party?

FREEDOM  
It's cool, it's just so far away.

STEVE  
Exactly. I hate driving on nights  
like this.

He holds up two fresh beers, then hands one to Freedom.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
We'd party over at our place, but  
it's way too small.

CHARLIE  
Yeah. We're over off of the  
parkway.

FREEDOM  
Where?

STEVE  
Out by Mom and Dad's Italian.

FREEDOM  
Shit. I live right there.

He smiles.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
And I have a house.

Steve and Charlie look at each other and then grin.

They start screaming and hugging Freedom, who is put off by  
the body contact.

STEVE  
Looks like we got ourselves a new  
best friend!

CHARLIE  
Yeah!

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

SUPER: 1993

Tonight, Freedom hosts the party. A few dozen students mill  
about his house.

Cypress Hill's "I Want to Get High" plays as Freedom flits  
through the room, a red Solo cup to light his way.

Freedom walks up to a couple of people he knows, including Steve and Charlie.

CHARLIE

Yo, man, so what's up with this new girl?

STEVE

Yeah, are you and Whitney a thing now?

FREEDOM

She's pretty cool, but I don't think we're going to keep seeing each other.

STEVE

Why not? She's hot as hell.

Whitney walks up behind Freedom, but he doesn't see her.

FREEDOM

She has this friend who I think I might get along with better.

STEVE

Dude, you're an idiot.

CHARLIE

What are you going to do?

Freedom finishes up his beer.

FREEDOM

Well, I'll keep seeing Whitney and if that doesn't work out, I'll give her friend a shot.

WHITNEY (O.S.)

No you won't.

Freedom turns around to see Whitney, who starts to cry. She walks away. Behind Freedom, Charlie and Steve quietly giggle.

He goes into his bedroom and flops on the bed. One of the new things on his collage wall is a Rolling Stone cover with a picture of Liz Phair on it.

She starts talking.

LIZ PHAIR

Hey man!

He looks up at her.

FREEDOM  
Hey, Liz Phair.

LIZ PHAIR  
What's got you down?

FREEDOM  
Women. As always.

Liz Phair laughs.

LIZ PHAIR  
Well, what happened this time?

FREEDOM  
I said something stupid.

LIZ PHAIR  
Been there. Got the tote bag.

FREEDOM  
Lost another one.

Liz Phair frowns.

LIZ PHAIR  
Another what? Woman? Oh, shit...

He waits.

LIZ PHAIR (CONT'D)  
Listen to me.

FREEDOM  
I AM listening to you.

LIZ PHAIR  
No. LISTEN to me.

He sits up.

FREEDOM  
What are you talking about?

He looks over at his boombox, which has started playing Liz Phair's "Exile in Guyville."

LIZ PHAIR  
Listen.

"Johnny Sunshine" plays.

**EXT. FSU CLASSROOM BUILDING - DAY**

Freedom sits awkwardly, sweating, in a circle with other students on a hot August day. PROFESSOR DONALDS sits in the best spot, the one with the shade.

To Freedom's left sits RASHEIKA, a Black woman in her early 20s who dresses like she's a big fan of De La Soul. Across from him, next to the professor are a SNOOTY KID, 20, white male wearing shorts and a James Joyce "Ulysses" t-shirt, possibly home-made, and a WISPY GIRL, 19, also very white, dressed in flowing robes of some kind. There's a hula hoop in her future.

Everyone holds a copy of a short story that Freedom wrote called "In the Still of the Night."

Snooty Kid monologues while Wispy Girl cheers him on with occasional "yeahs" and "I agrees" and "that was my thought." They are clearly fucking.

SNOOTY KID

And that's why I was bored,  
personally speaking. I don't mean  
to harsh anyone else's take on it,  
but it just seemed to me like some  
white boy shit..."

Notably, Snooty Kid is Dan Quayle-level white himself.

WISPY GIRL

Yeah.

Freedom glares at Snooty Kid's designer shades, which hide his shade quite nicely.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

New cards have been added:

**#51: SOME PEOPLE WILL TRY TO TRICK  
YOU.**

**#52: DON'T TELL PEOPLE YOUR FEELINGS.**

**#53: DON'T LET PEOPLE SEE YOUR ROOM.**

**#54: WEAR ARMOR.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card a pins it to the wall:

**#55: DON'T SAY CREEPY THINGS.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card a pins it to the wall:

**#56: DON'T LISTEN TO YOUR COMPETITORS.****EXT. FSU CLASSROOM BUILDING - DAY**

Freedom walks out of Professor Donalds' class. Rasheika runs to catch up with Freedom. She taps him on the shoulder.

RASHEIKA  
Hey, Freedom?

FREEDOM  
Hey... uh...

RASHEIKA  
Rasheika.

FREEDOM  
Rasheika.

He gets it right. She smiles faintly.

RASHEIKA  
I just wanted to say that those kids don't know what they're talking about.

FREEDOM  
Oh, THEM.

He points his head back at the classroom.

RASHEIKA  
They just don't have any life experience. They can't imagine things that they haven't lived.

FREEDOM  
Yeah?

RASHEIKA  
Well, I liked your story. I thought it was very well-written and it seemed plausible to me.

FREEDOM  
Thank... thank you.

RASHEIKA

Like the only thing was like it was  
SO action-packed that there wasn't  
any contrast. If there's nothing  
but action, all the action is  
boring, you know?

He nods, clearly getting it. But he doesn't say anything.

RASHEIKA (CONT'D)

Off to class, bye!

She's not bothered by it. She's used to his silence by now.

**INT. FSU CLASSROOM BUILDING - DAY**

MISS ELLIOTT hands paper back. She is 30, a short-haired,  
unshaven-armpit teacher in a kinda overalls-dress combo, with  
muted earth tones making up her entire palette.

MISS ELLIOTT

And for the first time in my five  
years of teaching this class, the  
highest grade on the term paper  
goes to one of our MALE students.

She hands a paper to one of the women in the class. Only two  
men are in the 40-person class.

MISS ELLIOTT (CONT'D)

Freedom got a 98 on this paper and  
he smashes the curve for the whole  
class.

Several good-natured groans.

The woman sitting next to him, JESS, 20, black curly hair,  
short, wearing a Star of David around her neck, speaks to  
him.

JESS

Hey, Freedom.

He looks over at her. The attraction between them is instant.

FREEDOM

Hi... uh...

JESS

They call me Jess.

He laughs.



FREEDOM  
Well, they call me... uh...

BOTH  
...Freedom.

JESS  
Yes, I know.

He looks down at his paper.

JESS (CONT'D)  
Can I read it?

He looks up.

FREEDOM  
Read what?

She nods at the paper.

JESS  
That.

FREEDOM  
My paper?

He clutches it a bit closer to his body.

JESS  
It sounds very interesting.

He hesitantly hands it to her.

FREEDOM  
Uh... sure.

He puts his head down on the desk.

Jess starts reading.

**EXT. FSU CLASSROOM BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER**

Jess and Freedom stand outside.

Jess hands him a piece of paper.

JESS  
This is my number.

FREEDOM

Awesome! Oh! Uh... this Friday! I'm having a party! At my house! You should come!

JESS

Sure. Call me.

FREEDOM

Awesome! Yes! Yes... Wait? How will I call you.

She nods at the piece of paper in his hand.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)

Duh-yu-yeah!

He smacks his own head and drops the paper, which starts to blow away in the wind. He chases it.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)

I'll call you!

She giggles and starts to walk away.

He continues to chase the paper, but he's starting to lose ground...

#### **INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

A group, mostly men, drink out of Solo cups and watch the NBA Finals.

The O.J. Simpson chase breaks into the coverage.

Meanwhile, Freedom and Jess are in the back of the room, far from the TV, chatting. Jess sits on Freedom's lap, sipping from a glass of wine.

JESS

So, Free, what is your purpose in life? Why are you here?

He hands her the weed pipe and exhales, coughing a little bit.

FREEDOM

Wow, that's a little intense for a first date.

She takes a hit on the pipe, he sips from her wine glass.

They try to exchange the pipe and wine, but their arms get tangled. A little wine spills onto Jess' neck.

Freedom leans in to kiss her neck and his lips get close enough to almost touch her skin.

She shivers slightly.

He pauses.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
 Sorry, I realize I just assumed and  
 I don't want to do that.

His breath on her neck makes her breathe heavily.

FREEDOM (CONT'D)  
 Do you mind?

She rises and falls in his lap as he breathes.

She takes a deep breath.

JESS  
 No, I... ummm...

He licks the wine off of her neck. From the spot it splashed onto her skin slowly down to where the last wet drop remains.

JESS (CONT'D)  
 Oh my.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom lays on top of Jess on her bed. She rips his clothes off and he nuzzles the other side of her neck.

JESS (CONT'D)  
 Yeah... yeah... keep doing that.

He does.

She moans.

Suddenly she sits up and pushes him off of her.

JESS (CONT'D)  
 Hey. Wait a second, Free.

He sits up.

FREEDOM  
 Uhh... sure. Are you okay?

She pushes the hair out of her face.

JESS  
Oh, I'm VERY okay.

FREEDOM  
Good.

He smiles and leans in to kiss her.

JESS  
No. Wait.

FREEDOM  
Sorry.

JESS  
Don't be sorry, I just want to warn  
you, that we can't have  
intercourse.

Beat.

FREEDOM  
What can we do?

JESS  
Anything else you want.

He thinks for a second.

FREEDOM  
Anything?

JESS  
(smiling seductively)  
Yes...

He reaches up and pulls her underwear off from under her skirt.

He lifts up her legs and starts kissing his way up her leg.

JESS (CONT'D)  
Oh, fuck yeah!

She tilts her head back and moans.

Liz Phair's "Flower" begins to play and continues throughout the sex scene.

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: 37 minutes later

Jess screams in orgasm, crying his name.

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: 5 minutes later

Jess has another orgasm.

JESS (CONT'D)  
More! More! More!

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: 3 minutes later

JESS (CONT'D)  
Holy fuck, that was intense!

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: 1 minute later.

JESS (CONT'D)  
Oh!

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: 1 minute later

JESS (CONT'D)  
My!

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: 1 minute later

JESS (CONT'D)  
God!

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: However many minutes later she needed

Jess jumps up onto her knees and pushes Freedom onto his back.

JESS (CONT'D)  
(with an evil grin)  
My turn!

She rips his boxers off.

His head goes back in joy.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

*(Music ends.)*

The phone rings in Freedom's hallway.

He shuffles his way towards the phone. VERY hungover.

He picks up the phone.

FREEDOM

Yeah?

JESS

Hey, Freedom.

He perks up a little bit.

JESS (CONT'D)

It's me, Jess.

FREEDOM

I know. Last night...

JESS

Sorry, Freedom, let me stop you there.

FREEDOM

I...

His shoulders slump.

JESS

Last night was wonderful. You're a great guy. Which is why I don't think we can see each other again.

He says nothing.

JESS (CONT'D)

See, my boyfriend... my ex-boyfriend... I mean he was my ex... anyway, Roger! You met him last night?

He says nothing.

JESS (CONT'D)

Well he got really jealous last night when he saw how much fun you and I were having and...

FADE OUT.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

New cards have been added:

**#57: DON'T BE MACHO.**

**#58: ARGUMENTS LEAD TO COPS BEING CALLED**

**#59: WOMEN HATE PAULY SHORE.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card and pins it to the wall:

**#60: BE LESS INTENSE.**

**INT. FRATERNITY HOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom cautiously walks up to the front door of a frat house. He rings the doorbell.

It opens up and Keith stands at the door.

KEITH

Holy, shit! What the fuck are you doing here Freedom?

Freedom says nothing.

FREEDOM

I go to school here.

KEITH

Yeah, sure. C'mon in, I guess. Who the fuck cares! It's a party!

Freedom walks in.

KEITH (CONT'D)

Keg's out back, fucker!

Keith walks away from Freedom.

Freedom wanders toward the back of the house, largely ignored by the partygoers.

He joins a group of guys at the keg and starts to pump himself a beer.

He turns around and the group of guys behind him drink their beers while watching a porno movie. One scene has just ended and the next starts.

SHORT DUMBASS FRAT GUY  
I need to see some tit-tays!

The scene starts and it's a big-breasted, big-haired blonde woman having sex with a Black guy.

RACIST DIPSHIT FRAT GUY  
Now that right there, that I don't like. I don't mind Black people, but I don't want to watch that.

FUCKING IDIOT FRAT GUY  
That's just like the election.

RACIST DIPSHIT FRAT GUY  
Get that shit off the TV!

Short Dumbass Frat Guy goes over to the TV.

FUCKING IDIOT FRAT GUY  
Yeah, that shit is just like Clinton. Like I guaran-dam-tee that if Clinton wins, there's gonna be a race war.

RACIST DIPSHIT FRAT GUY  
Damn strait!

Freedom chugs his beer.

Short Dumbass Frat Guy changes the TV to FSU football highlights, which elicits a cheer from the frat boys, one and all.

SHORT DUMBASS FRAT GUY  
Hey, who's your favorite player on this team?

RACIST DIPSHIT FRAT GUY  
Minority Sawyer!

FUCKING IDIOT FRAT GUY  
Why do you call him that? He's white? He's not a fucking minority.

RACIST DIPSHIT FRAT GUY  
Cuz! Not only is he damned near the only white guy on the team. He's the only white receiver in America.

SHORT DUMBASS FRAT GUY  
White receiver? WR? White receiver? WR? Get it? WR?



They all break up into laughter. Except Freedom, who pretends to drink beer out of his long-empty cup.

A muffled sound comes from Freedom's pocket. His pocket is actually wiggling.

He looks down.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his Liz Phair cassette. She starts talking to him.

LIZ PHAIR  
You have GOT to get the fuck out of  
here!

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

SUPER: 1994

We see Freedom's hallway phone, but he isn't there.

The phone rings.

It rings again.

As it rings a third time, Freedom comes out of the bathroom to get the phone. The toilet refills as he tightens his belt.

He answers the phone, but we can only hear him.

FREEDOM  
Hello.  
(beat)  
This is him.  
(beat)  
Yes.  
(beat)  
No.  
(beat)  
No. No. No.

He hangs up the phone and starts to cry.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - LATER**

Freedom sits in his bed writing on a pad of paper. He's jotting down random thoughts while watching the news.

The news can be heard, but the camera stays on Freedom's face.

NEWS ANCHOR

Reported drug smuggler Cash Cooper  
of Toronto was found dead in  
Atlantic City this weekend.

Freedom looks up at the TV.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Cooper formerly lived in  
Tallahassee and has surviving  
family, a son, in the area. The  
murder was believed to be the  
result...

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Freedom sits at his desk writing.

FREEDOM (V.O.)

Dear mom and dad, goodbye. I'm  
sorry. I'm sorry for your lives.  
I'm sorry for this world. I'm sorry  
for those who abused you. I'm sorry  
for those who abandoned you. I'm  
sorry for mental illness. I'm sorry  
for drugs. I'm sorry for guns. I'm  
sorry for not being who you wanted  
me to be. I'm sorry for you never  
having the chance to be who I  
needed you to be.

He's crying at this point, but has it under control.

FREEDOM (V.O.)

And that's the last time I'll ever  
say I'm sorry to you. Goodbye. Your  
son, Freedom.

He puts his pen down.

He picks the letter up and carefully folds it.

He picks up an envelope and slowly slides the letter into the  
envelope.

He carefully licks the envelope and seals it.

On the front, he writes "Mom and Dad" and sets it on his  
desk.

**INT. POOR PAUL'S POURHOUSE - NIGHT**

Freedom is inside a dirty basement bar filled with collegiate energy and décor. Lots of beer signs. Lots of football signs. Pool tables, darts, a few video games.

Freedom plays Area 51 by himself, a half-empty pitcher of beer sits on a stool beside him.

SANDY (O.S.)  
Nice shooting.

Freedom turns to see Sandy, a transgender woman in her early 20s of mixed race.

Freedom smiles at her.

FREEDOM  
Thanks.

SANDY  
Buy a girl a drink?

He continues shooting for a second, misses the ALL the zombies.

Freedom looks at Sandy.

He looks back at the game and fires once more.

He reaches to put the gun back into the holster, but misses. It clatters to the floor.

He doesn't care.

Freedom follows Sandy to the bar.

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: One drink later

Sandy laughs so hard she snorts.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
Wait, wait, wait!?! How can you be  
submissive but not be into pain and  
humiliation?

Freedom shrugs.

**CUT TO:**

SUPER: Two drinks later

Sandy leans in closer and closer as she talks to Freedom.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
Yeah?

Beat.

FREEDOM  
Yeah.

He leans in and kisses her hungrily.

She kisses back.

A lot.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

Revised cards have already been added:

**#14: PARENTS LEAVE.**

**#18: DON'T TELL PEOPLE YOU ARE  
BISEXUAL.**

**#32: ONLY JOIN ORGANIZATIONS THAT KEEP  
ASSHOLES OUT.**

**#35: DRINKING AND DRUGS AREN'T  
DIFFERENT**

**#45: "GREEKS" ARE ASSHOLES. FUCK  
FRATERNITIES.**

A new card has been added:

**#61: DON'T BE RACIST.**

Freedom finishes writing a new card a pins it to the wall:

**#62: DON'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DRUNK  
GIRLS.**

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

One of the larger parties ever held at Freedom's house, tonight is the "6 Degrees of Kevin Bacon" party, where everyone wears costumes related to Kevin Bacon, his movies or the movies of other people that have starred in movies with Kevin Bacon (up to 1994).

Freedom is dressed as a giant slice of bacon.

The party is wild. It's already messy, cups and trash everywhere. People fill the house well beyond a rational capacity.

One kid steals a rare coin off of a bookshelf.

Another kid knocks over a photo of Freedom's family when he was young. The glass breaks.

Freedom doesn't care, though, because Sandy just arrived. She's dressed up as Kevin Bacon's ROTC character from "Animal House."

FREEDOM

Hey. I hear that at least one person at this party might be an undercover cop. Word on the street is that there's a subtle clue in his costume.

Sandy laughs politely.

SANDY

Don't worry.  
(pantomiming Kevin Bacon  
from "Animal House")  
All is well!

Freedom laughs.

FREEDOM

Can I get you a drink?

SANDY

Of course.

FREEDOM

Tequila sunrise if I remember correctly?

SANDY

Give Polly a cracker.

She smiles and they walk to the bar.

**CUT TO:**

The party has mostly cleared out and Freedom and Sandy make out. They have been making out for quite a while and are starting to become a little less than dressed.

Steve comes stumbling in the back door, closing it and stumbles into a pile of beer cans.

Freedom and Sandy try to appear like they've just been talking. They fail.

STEVE

Sorry, sorry. Hey, you guys...

Shit-eating grin.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You guys don't do anything I WOULD do.

They laugh nervously.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Get it? Because... you get it. Everyone else is cleared out. I'll lock the door behind me.

FREEDOM

Thanks, Steve!

Freedom leans in and kisses Sandy on the neck.

SANDY

(moaning)

Yeah, thanks, Stewie or whatever your name is...

They start kissing again.

Freedom's hands start to slowly move up Sandy's legs.

Sandy freezes.

She puts her hands on his and stops him.

SANDY (CONT'D)

We need to have the conversation first.

Freedom pauses.

FREEDOM

About what?

SANDY

I'm not like other girls you've dated.

FREEDOM  
I know.

SANDY  
Do you?

FREEDOM  
(indignant)  
Yeah.

SANDY  
You REALLY do?

He leans in and kisses her.

She moans.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

SUPER: Two months later

Freedom and Sandy are naked under the sheets, kissing after just having had sex.

SANDY  
Can I ask you a question?

FREEDOM  
Of course.

SANDY  
Have you ever said "I love you"?

Beat.

FREEDOM  
No. I don't think so.

She sits up and looks him in the eyes.

SANDY  
Never?

FREEDOM  
No.

SANDY  
Why not?

FREEDOM  
It's hard.

SANDY  
Say it now.

He doesn't.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
Even if it's a lie, just say it. I  
want to hear you say those words.

He doesn't.

**INT. BROTHERS - NIGHT**

In a wonderfully diverse gay club for the mid-1990s, a flamboyant drag queen, MADAME CHABLIS (A LADY never tells her age), leads the night's proceedings.

MADAME CHABLIS  
Okay, ladies AND ladies. How are  
you bitches doing tonight?

The crowd cheers wildly. Everyone is having massive fun.

Except Freedom.

He walks outside.

Sandy slams the rest of her drink and slams the glass down on a table.

SANDY  
Dammit!

**EXT. BROTHERS - MOMENTS LATER**

Freedom leans against a wall. Moping.

SANDY  
What the hell was that shit?

FREEDOM  
Nothing.

SANDY  
Nothing hell! We're missing the  
damned show!

FREEDOM  
I wanted to spend time with you  
tonight, not at some show.

Sandy takes a deep breath.



SANDY

Okay, that's enough of that. I'm going to go back inside and you need to find other activities for the night.

FREEDOM

What? Why?

SANDY

I have limits. You have exceeded them.

FREEDOM

What does that mean?

SANDY

I respect myself. I will not waste my time with someone that doesn't respect me or themselves.

FREEDOM

But I...

SANDY

Shut up for a second.

He starts to speak, but thinks better of it.

SANDY (CONT'D)

I am not willing to be with someone that only thinks of me as a way to prove that he's not like the other white guys.

He looks down.

SANDY (CONT'D)

I don't care about how you compare to the other white guys. I only care about how you treat me. And that hasn't been great.

She walks up to him and puts her hand on his face. He pouts a little less.

SANDY (CONT'D)

You don't know who you are or what you want. I know what I'm looking for. I know what I want. I know what I deserve.

She kisses him on the cheek.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
Give me a call when you figure it out.

Freedom looks up, tears in his eyes.

FREEDOM  
Do you hate me?

SANDY  
Of course not. It's not that big a deal, it's only been a couple of months.

She kisses him on the cheek again.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
But you're gonna hate yourself for a while.

She walks back towards the bar.

SANDY (CONT'D)  
But don't dwell on it.

She goes inside.

**INT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

We see the phone in Freedom's hallway, but he isn't there. It rings once.

He walks in from the kitchen and picks up the phone.

FREEDOM  
Hello?

JESS  
Hey, Free, this is Jess.

He is happily surprised.

FREEDOM  
Hey.

JESS  
It's been a while.

FREEDOM  
It has been a long time.

JESS  
What are you up to tonight?

FREEDOM  
I don't have any plans.

JESS  
Come out and play with me at Late  
Night?

FREEDOM  
Sure. When?

JESS  
8:30? Ish?

FREEDOM  
Great!

He hangs up the phone. Grinning.

**INT. LATE NIGHT LIBRARY - NIGHT**

Freedom and Jess stand at the bar in the quite loud Late  
Night Library. The bartender hands them two drinks.

Freedom leans in to whisper into Jess' ear.

FREEDOM  
It's loud in here, let's go out to  
the patio where we can hear each  
other.

JESS  
Sure.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom and Jess are outside where it is quieter. A few other  
people are outside, too, smoking or chatting.

Freedom takes a sip of his drink and sits at a picnic table.  
Jess joins him.

JESS (CONT'D)  
You're graduating this semester,  
right?

FREEDOM  
I am.

He takes a sip of his beer.

JESS  
What are you doing next?

He takes another sip and looks at her with distress.

FREEDOM

I got into a writing program with a paid internship.

JESS

(smiles)

That's great! Where is it?

FREEDOM

It's in... uhh... New York.

She smacks him on the shoulder.

JESS

New York! That's the big time!  
Congra....

Her eyes nearly bug out of her head as she takes a sip of her drink.

JESS (CONT'D)

Holy shit! You own your house,  
right?

FREEDOM

Yeah, my dad bought it with his...

BOTH

...drug money?

JESS

That story was so freak... I mean  
weird.

He smiles.

JESS (CONT'D)

Hey! So! I had this idea!

FREEDOM

Sure.

JESS

So. You're going to the Big Apple.  
And I just got accepted. Here. For  
film.

He's super excited.

FREEDOM

That's great!

JESS

I was thinking. I mean, I was wondering... maybe I could rent your house? While you are in the Apple... the BIG Apple...?

FREEDOM

That's a great idea! I don't want to lose the place.

JESS

And I need a place! I can keep it clean and you can store all your stuff here! I can even make upgrades!

He pauses for a second. She bounces with excitement while she waits.

FREEDOM

Sure.

She squeaks.

She jumps up and kisses him.

He kisses back.

She grabs his hand and they go to the bedroom.

**EXT. FREEDOM'S HOUSE - DAY**

Freedom and Jess lay naked under the covers, post sex. Both are very happy.

FREEDOM

Hey. What would you say if I skipped out on the Big Apple and stayed here with you?

She frowns.

She sits up and ties her hair behind her head.

He sits up as well.

She looks him dead in the eye.

JESS

I'm going to tell you this with all the love in the world...

He nods.

JESS (CONT'D)  
Don't ever do that again.

FREEDOM  
What?

JESS  
I barely know you. Asking me that is not nearly as romantic as you think it is. Asking me to change my entire life and offering to change your entire life because we had sex... sure, great sex... but sex just the same.

Freedom's eyes tear up, but he doesn't cry.

FREEDOM  
Sorry.

She gives him a sympathy kiss.

JESS  
You don't have to be sorry. Just don't do it again.

FREEDOM  
It's what Sam Malone would've said.

JESS  
Exactly.

They kiss for real.

**INT. FREEDOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Freedom sits at the desk writing.

Revised cards have already been added:

**#18: PEOPLE CAN MIND THEIR OWN FUCKING BUSINESS.**

**#39: LEARN MORE ABOUT SEX.**

**#52: BE CAREFUL IN TELLING PEOPLE YOUR FEELINGS.**

Freedom finishes writing the last card and pins it to the wall:

**#63: BE PATIENT.**

Freedom takes out an older Nikon. He takes a picture of the cards.

He starts pulling out the pins and taking each of them down and putting them in a box.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom puts the last few strokes of paint over the word "fag" and the wall is clean.

The Weather Witch movie is already in the box with the complete set of cards. Freedom picks up the Weather Witch comic book.

WEATHER WITCH

This is it, isn't it?

FREEDOM

It is.

She smiles.

WEATHER WITCH

You find your code?

FREEDOM

I did. Thank you.

WEATHER WITCH

It was my pleasure.

He puts the comic book in the box.

He picks up the Liz Phair cassette.

LIZ PHAIR

Hey man!

FREEDOM

Hi, Liz Phair.

LIZ PHAIR

Why so down?

FREEDOM

I've got to leave you behind. I don't really have room for cassettes any more. Sharing a tiny space up in NYC.

LIZ PHAIR

Congrats! That's awesome!

FREEDOM

Yes, but I can't bring anything with me, really. I wish I had some CDs, my new roommate has a CD player.

LIZ PHAIR

Don't worry, Freedom. I have CDs.

He smiles.

LIZ PHAIR (CONT'D)

Look me up at your local CD shop when you get to the city.

FREEDOM

Will do.

He puts the cassette in the box.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom picks up the letter to his parents.

He holds on to it for a few seconds. Tearing up.

He kisses the letter.

He puts it in the box.

He tapes the box shut.

**CUT TO:**

Freedom carries the box into the attic and puts it with a big stack of other boxes, each neatly labeled. The last box is labeled "Exiled in Guyville."

**CUT TO:**

Freedom walks into the living room, which is now filled with Jess' boxes and belongings. She sits on the couch, sweaty and tired.

Freedom joins her on the couch.

JESS

Well?

FREEDOM

It's all yours.

JESS

Thanks.



She leans over and gives him a little peck on the cheek.

She hovers for a moment.

She leans in and gives him a real kiss.

He finally relaxes.

JESS (CONT'D)  
(smiling)  
You want to spend your last night  
with me?

FREEDOM  
Yes. I absolutely want to do that.

She kisses him again.

Jess gets up and runs towards the bedroom, ripping her shirt  
off.

Freedom wipes a tear away from his eyes.

Then he runs after her, picking up her shirt as he goes.

**INT. TALLAHASSEE REGIONAL AIRPORT - LATER**

Freedom walks through the concourse door and onto the plane,  
but the camera doesn't follow him.

An airline employee closes the door behind Freedom.

SUPER: The end...

**FADE OUT.**