

The Laws of Motion

by
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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Dreamy, bleached-out POV shots of a FIGURE moving through streets/parks, randomly touching PEOPLE as he passes.

The touch is gentle, (Christ-like), but the reactions are extreme: WOMAN at a bus stop recoils then lurches away down the street. A MAN rushing to work stops, hurls invective.

Odd music from the Figure's iPod (Shaggs/Esquivel)

INSERT MOVIE TITLE: **The Laws of Motion**

INT. UNIVERSITY/OFFICE - LATE DAY

CLOSE on a Newton's Cradle desk toy. The silver balls hang perfectly still.

EXT. IDA'S CAR/MOVING - LATE DAY

CLOSE on a front left car wheel spinning fast. White lines on the highway flick past.

INT. UNIVERSITY/OFFICE - LATE DAY

In the foreground: the Newton's Cradle, and beyond: a man's hand holding a pencil, poised & still over a stack of tests.

INT. IDA'S CAR/MOVING - LATE DAY

Foreground: a woman's hand on a steering wheel, and beyond: the view through the windshield as the car barrels forward.

The fingernails on the hand are impossibly bitten down. The hand taps restlessly in time to music on the radio.

INT. UNIVERSITY/OFFICE - LATE DAY

MORRIE, a cute but tweedy 35-year-old robotics/physics professor, sits motionless at his desk.

PAUL'S VOICE FROM DOORWAY
(jovial)
You still here?

MORRIE

Yup. Just going over some marking.

PAUL'S VOICE FROM DOORWAY

Don't work too hard.

MORRIE

I won't.

INT. IDA'S CAR/MOVING - LATE DAY

IDA-- 31 years-old, sexy, fit body-- smokes a joint and drives, wind whipping her hair around. She is watched by her PASSENGER, a cute hitchhiker, holding his backpack and a handwritten sign that says Sioux Falls.

PASSENGER

Excuse me, um, it's cool if you don't want to, but are you planning to stop for dinner or anything?

IDA

There's tons of food. Feel free...

She gestures to the back seat. There's a cooler, many bags of chips & cookies, bottled water, fruit, etc. The rest of the contents suggest the woman is living out of her car.

The Passenger grabs an Oreo and splits it in half. Ida watches with interest as he licks out the cream.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

A roast chicken lies prostrate on a platter.

INSERT TITLE CARD:

An Object at Rest Tends To Stay at Rest...

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - LATE DAY

Morrie is on the toilet, perfectly still, reading a copy of Robot Science & Technology magazine.

BETTY (O.S.)

Dinner's ready.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

A clock without a second hand reads precisely six p.m.

BETTY, 33, pretty, small-town conservative, sits across from Morrie at the kitchen table, which is set for dinner.

BETTY

Any luck?

Morrie's expression indicates No.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - LATE DAY

CLOSE-UP of a dog turd on Morrie's manicured lawn.

Morrie, perfectly still, holds a plastic grocery bag to clean it up, and stares with repressed rage at the offending blob. OFF SCREEN, the neighbor's dog barks.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Morrie and Betty lay motionless in a big comfy bed, staring straight ahead. Blue TV light flickers across their faces.

NEWSCASTER

A child safety group is calling for a ban on the sale of baby walkers with wheels. Safe Kids Canada says the devices are dangerous, and Dr. Randall Cole, Vice President of the Canadian Academy of Pediatrics, agrees...

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Ida's car barrels down the empty highway.

INSERT TITLE CARD:

An Object in Motion Tends To Stay in Motion...

INT. IDA'S CAR/MOVING - NIGHT

Ida drives, sucks the last sip out of a milk-shake, waking her Passenger. He stirs, looks at her.

PASSENGER

You don't ever sleep?

IDA

(laughs bitterly)

INSERT TITLE CARD:

Unless Acted Upon By An Unbalanced Force.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

JAY, 25-years-old, wearing a hospital gown, his head bandaged, walks barefoot down a deserted city street. A beatific smile on his face.

Jay wanders into the middle of an intersection--his exposed ass pale in street-lamp light--and lies down on the road.

He stares up at the unfamiliar angle, breathes deeply. His hands explore the unfamiliar texture of the road.

He rolls onto his stomach, sniffs the asphalt, tastes it.

In the distance we hear a car moving fast, getting louder.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - MORNING

Morrie's eyes open. A nanosecond later, a digital clock flips to six a.m. and begins to play gentle music.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - MORNING

Morrie motionless on the john, reading his Robotics magazine.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - MORNING

BETTY

Any luck?

MORRIE

No.

He pours 'All Bran' into a bowl. The phone rings.

BETTY

Who on earth..?

She answers.

BETTY

Hello? Just a moment please.

MORRIE

Hello? Yes... What?!

INT. IDA'S CAR/MOVING - MORNING

Ida's still driving, eating a sprinkle-covered doughnut. Her passenger is asleep. Ida's cell phone rings.

IDA

Shit...

She holds the doughnut in her mouth, fishes a sock out of her purse. The sock contains her cell phone which she dumps on her lap, then answers, letting the doughnut fall.

IDA

(in professional voice)

Ida Csonka Photography.

(like a little kid)

Hey! How's it going?!

(a few beats)

What..?

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Ida's car slows and pulls onto the shoulder of the road.

CLOSE UP of the front left car wheel slowing to a stop.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/DRIVEWAY - MORNING

Automatic garage door lurches into motion and slides open.

BETTY

But what about class? You can't
just take off, Morrie.

Inside is a car that doesn't get much use. It's covered in a protective tarp. Morrie slides it off, revealing a Volvo.

MORRIE

Just--can you call the school and
tell them what's going on? Or tell
Paul.

(gestures to neighbor's)

He probably hasn't left yet.

BETTY

OK. But it's just terrible
timing...

Morrie gets in the car, carefully fastens his seat-belt and adjusts the mirrors.

MORRIE

Have I missed a class in seven years? And besides, what can I do?!

BETTY

But why do you always have to deal with everything? Why can't Ida deal with something for once?

MORRIE

I told you, she's nowhere near here, OK. Apparently, she's on her way to a shoot--a big one, a paid one.

Betty pulls a face as if it's highly unlikely. She follows the car as Morrie pulls slowly out of the garage.

BETTY

How long will you be gone?

MORRIE

I don't know. I'll call you when I know what's going on.

BETTY

Drive carefully!

They kiss tenderly.

As Morrie pulls out onto the street, something occurs to Betty. She calls out but he doesn't necessarily hear:

BETTY

You're not bringing him back here, right?

Morrie drives away. Betty looks around, self-consciously; is anyone watching; did anyone hear her raise her voice?

INT. IDA'S CAR/PARKED - MORNING

Ida sits motionless in the driver's seat. She is impassive, or perhaps has a small false smile on her face, but we understand that she is deeply upset by the phone call. The phone and doughnut-remnant lay in her lap.

PASSENGER

Hey, are you OK?

No. She feels bad and wants to not feel bad. She looks him in the eye, takes his hand and guides it under her skirt.

INT. MORRIE'S CAR/MOVING - MORNING

As Morrie drives, we see that he lives in a small University town. The images convey a pleasant middle-class environment.

As he passes the University, Morrie takes a good long look at the campus Clock Tower.

NEWSCASTER ON CAR RADIO

A parent whose five-year-old daughter was almost abducted last week is asking other parents to make sure children use the buddy system in the wake of the Kimberly O'Neil murder.

INT. IDA'S CAR/PARKED - MORNING

The car is motionless on the shoulder of the road. The passenger is performing oral sex on Ida.

IDA

That feels good...yeah...

Ida spies the last remnant of the sprinkle doughnut in the folds of her skirt. She pops it in her mouth.

IDA

Mmm...that's good.

INT. MORRIE'S CAR/MOVING - MORNING

NEWSCASTER ON CAR RADIO

...a link between the abduction attempt and the slaying of--

As Morrie hits the freeway, he turns to another station. Music: a catchy pop song. Morrie turns it up. Accelerates.

He's upset, but not insensible to the pleasure of driving with music playing when you're supposed to be at work.

He moves his head a tiny bit to the music.

INT. IDA'S CAR/PARKED - MORNING

IDA

Well, goodbye.

She shakes hands with her Passenger.

PASSENGER
Thanks a lot.

IDA
No. Thank you.

Passenger smiles, gets out, closes the door.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Jay stands on the sidewalk near, not at, the hospital. His head is bandaged, his clothes splattered with dried blood.

He is looking at the sky with his head tilted. We hear the tap of a car horn. Jay doesn't respond. We hear a couple more taps. Jay keeps staring at the sky.

MORRIE
Jay!

Jay looks over. Smiles.

INT. MORRIE'S CAR/MOVING - DAY

Morrie drives. He is happy to see Jay, but very distressed to see what a mess he is. Morrie smiles, but fights tears.

MORRIE
Put your seat-belt on.

Jay balks.

MORRIE
Put it on, I'm serious.

JAY
Do you always do what the government tells you to?

MORRIE
When it prevents me from sailing head-first through a windshield, yeah.

Jay reluctantly buckles up. Morrie surveys Jay's injuries.

MORRIE
Are you in pain?

JAY
(smiling)
Yes. Are you?

MORRIE

No, Jay. But a car didn't drive
over me.

Jay takes Morrie's hand, presses it to his heart, kisses it.

JAY

It's really great to see you.

Morrie smiles at Jay. They drive in silence, calm and warm
for a bit. Then Morrie's smile fades, he pulls his hand away:

MORRIE

But I just--I don't see why you
weren't at the hospital when I got
there? Why wouldn't you wait in the
lobby--or at the front doors? It
doesn't make sense. I'm just lucky
I saw you on the street there...

Morrie sighs, pulls up in front of an apartment building on a
side street. He turns off the engine, waits for a response.

JAY

I don't live here.

MORRIE

What do you mean you don't live
here?

JAY

I don't live there any more.

MORRIE

You moved? When?

JAY

About a month ago.

MORRIE

What the hell, Jay?

JAY

I guess I wanted to see if you
would just drive here.

MORRIE

Why wouldn't I? Is it not logical
to go to the place where you've
lived for the past five years,
unless you inform me otherwise?

Jay shrugs.

MORRIE

Jesus. Are you taking peyote again?

JAY

I no longer try to heighten or dull my senses with substances, Morrie. I'm a new person.

MORRIE

Uh huh. And where does this "new person" live exactly?

JAY

In the ravine around Yonge & St.Clair.

MORRIE

In the ravine? Like a raccoon, for example, or a squirrel?

JAY

Not exactly. I have a plywood lean-to under the tracks.

MORRIE

Oh good, good, you had me worried there for a second... But that lean-to sounds nice. Nice plywood lean-to...hardwood floors...

JAY

It's all I need.

MORRIE

You can't be serious.

Jay smiles beatifically to show that he is serious.

MORRIE

I don't understand. Were you afraid to call again for cash?

JAY

No. I know you would help me. I wanted to go live in the ravine.

MORRIE

What about all your stuff?

JAY

My "stuff"? I gave it away.

MORRIE

Everything?

JAY
Everything.

MORRIE
Not the copy of Birds of America
that Dad left you?

Jay nods. Morrie winces. After a few seconds....

MORRIE
Not your card collection?

JAY
Yup.

MORRIE
But you loved that collection!

Jay shrugs, a little uncomfortable. Morrie processes the information. Starts the car.

MORRIE
I think you should come home for a
little while, Jay. What do you say?

JAY
I think that would be good.

Morrie pats Jay's shoulder with tenderness and resolve.

JAY
I really think I can help you,
Morrie.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY

Betty, wearing work clothes--skirt, pumps, blouse--hurries home, lugging heavy plastic bags of groceries.

LAURA, the neighbour (mid-30s, average), stops weeding her perfect lawn & garden when she spies Betty.

LAURA
(sympathetic smile)
Nice lunch break. Do you need a
hand?

BETTY
I'm OK, thanks. How's the little
one?

LAURA
Sleeping, thank goodness. It was a rough night.

BETTY
You should grab a nap.

LAURA
As soon as I'm done cleaning this disaster.

She gestures to the immaculate lawn.

LAURA
So, I was just speaking to Paul; he said Morrie wasn't in school...some kind of family emergency?

BETTY
Well, what else would keep Morrie out of school, right? Mr. Dedication.

LAURA
(nosiness disguised as sympathy)
So is everything OK?

BETTY
Well, Jay had an accident.

LAURA
Oh!

BETTY
It wasn't his fault. Poor thing got hit by a car.

LAURA
Oh my gosh!

BETTY
Yeah. Some creep just ran a red light--

LAURA
Unreal!

BETTY
He's OK, just banged up a bit. He's coming home for a few days until he's back on his feet.

LAURA
Oh. He can join us for dinner.

BETTY
You don't mind?

LAURA
No. Jay I always liked.
(beat)
It is just Jay coming home?

BETTY
Of course! Ida wouldn't show her
face in this town!

LAURA
You know Paul just--

BETTY
I know. And I agree.

LAURA
Boy, this family and accidents,
huh?

Betty musters a smile. We hear the sound of a baby wailing
inside Laura's house.

LAURA
Oh! Duty calls.

Betty watches, a tad wistfully, as Laura runs to her child.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Betty shoves the groceries in the fridge--lots of raw meat,
cold cuts, eggs, bacon, sausage, milk, cheese, etc.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/JAY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Betty opens the window. She quickly clears away all the stuff
that has ended up in Jay's old room, i.e., Christmas
wrapping, tax receipts, clothes for the Goodwill, etc.

She straightens a painting of a bird that is on an angle--the
bird painting is in the naturalistic Audubon style.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - DAY

Betty checks the bathroom, it's spotless. She lifts the
toilet seat: one drop of dried urine and one pubic hair.

She grabs a hunk of toilet paper, wipes it away, flushes.

She straightens another wonky print of a bird.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY

Betty hurries out of the house and back to work.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

CLOSE-UP on clock which reads: 6:01 p.m.

Betty waits alone at the table she's set beautifully for three. The phone rings. Betty jumps up to answer.

BETTY

Hello?

(turning cold)

I'm fine, Ida, how are you?

(beat)

Apparently, he's physically OK, just banged up a bit, but I don't know the details, 'cause I've just had messages from Morrie, and they're not home yet.

(beat)

Yes, he's bringing Jay back for a few days.

(beat)

Yes, I'll tell him.

We hear Morrie and Jay entering the house. Betty looks up.

MORRIE

Hello?

BETTY

OK then, bye for now.

She quickly hangs up the phone.

BETTY

Hello...

Morrie and Jay enter the kitchen.

MORRIE

Sorry we're late.

He kisses Betty. She's smiling, but annoyed.

BETTY

What happened to you guys?!

MORRIE

Didn't you get my message?

BETTY

Just that you were taking "a detour", which usually doesn't mean two hours late. Hi, Jay. Oh my gosh you got so...skinny.

She tries to hide her shock at seeing him in this state. She hugs him awkwardly, but he doesn't hug back.

BETTY

How are you? Are you hungry?

JAY

Not really.

MORRIE

Sure you are. C'mon, let's wash up.

Morrie and Jay wash their hands at the kitchen sink while Betty carries a lasagna from the oven to the kitchen table.

BETTY

This is nice, isn't it?

They sit. Betty eyes Jay's bloody shirt with distaste.

BETTY

Oh, I'm sorry, did you want to change before...?

JAY

No.

BETTY

Oh... Um, can I serve you some--

JAY

Not if that's meat lasagna.

MORRIE

Did you go veggie?

JAY

Yeah.

BETTY

I'm sorry! I didn't know.

MORRIE

It's OK, Jay can have salad and
garlic bread. You're not that
hungry, right?

JAY

Is that real Caesar, with raw egg?

BETTY

And anchovies.

JAY

I can't.

MORRIE

Well start with some garlic bread.

JAY

I'm vegan. I don't eat animal
products

MORRIE

Not even butter? Why not?

JAY

Because milk is for calves to
suckle. Animals weren't created to
serve us.

Betty jumps up (was she created to serve them?)

BETTY

Let me think... what can I fix you?

MORRIE

You sit. I'll fix something.

Morrie opens the fridge, stares at the mother-lode of meat
and dairy products Betty bought earlier.

Betty glances at Morrie's empty plate, at the clock which
reads 6:05 p.m., at Jay's bloody shirt and bandaged head.

Her world is disrupted, but she's trying to be kind. She
smiles at Jay. Jay stares back, impassive.

MORRIE

How about some porridge?

JAY

Yes. Thanks.

BETTY

Oh you can't have porridge for dinner!

JAY

Why not?

BETTY

(wrinkling her nose)
That's breakfast, not dinner.

JAY

(smiles wisely)
Until you have porridge for dinner,
Betty, you will never know truth or
freedom or God.

Betty smiles politely, then exchanges a glance with Morrie.

MORRIE

We'll get veggie stuff tomorrow.
For now porridge is fine.

Ding. The microwaved packet of instant oatmeal is ready. Morrie places it in front of Jay. Takes his seat at the table.

BETTY

Well...this is nice, isn't it?

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DUSK

A fresh dog turd on the lawn. Morrie scoops it into a plastic bag. He drops it in a trash-can beside the house, and returns to the porch where Jay & Betty are having tea.

MORRIE

(hushed/repressed)
Paul and Laura got a dog. A dog
that relieves itself on our lawn
every day

JAY

Have you said anything?

MORRIE

I can't.

JAY

Have you said: Raarrhrrr! Agga
dagga! Brrracch!!! MAHHHH!!

Shocked, Morrie laughs. Betty gives him a look: What the fuck?

MORRIE

No, I've definitely not said that.

BETTY

We can't say anything just yet.

JAY

Why not?

MORRIE

Because Paul is one of the faculty members who recommended me for tenure.

BETTY

And he's on the Board of Regents. And he golfs with the Provost.

MORRIE

And I need his support.

JAY

You don't need his support, Morrie.

BETTY

One of the Board members has it in for Morrie. So he does, big-time.

JAY

(with smiling intensity)
No, Betty, that's not what he needs.

Betty smiles politely. Morrie shoots her a look.

BETTY

OK... I'm going get those dinner dishes done.

She stands, collects the empty tea cups.

BETTY

Your room is ready, Jay. I left clean towels on the bed.

JAY

I think I'll stay in the attic.

MORRIE

Why? There's nothing up there.

JAY

There's a cot.

MORRIE

A crappy one. You'd be a lot more comfortable in your room.

JAY

I know. I want to stay in the attic.

BETTY

Well, I'd better give it a quick sweep then.

With a bright & tight smile, she goes into the house.

MORRIE

(voice lowered/intense)

You know what I really don't want to find, Jay? I really don't want to find my little brother swinging from a rafter in the attic.

JAY

I already told you, just because I was lying in the road doesn't mean I was trying to off myself. I wasn't.

(pointed)

But I'm not surprised you don't believe that.

Morrie knows what Jay is alluding to. He is equally pointed:

MORRIE

I require a scintilla of logic, Jay. Did you fall down...pass out?

JAY

No. I was lying in the road for the same reason I want to stay in the attic...to be closer to God.

MORRIE

Closer to God? That's the logic? You're not serious?

Morrie studies Jay's face. He is clearly genuine. Morrie suddenly gets that Jay is farther gone than he thought.

MORRIE

OK, if you want to bunk up in the attic with God, you go right ahead.

Jay smiles. Morrie is depressed by his brother's craziness.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Betty lies in bed, watching TV.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - NIGHT

Morrie sits on the john, his pajamas around his ankles, deep in troubled thought. Suddenly, he lets loose an enormous fart that sounds less like passing gas, and more like a valve letting off pressure.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/ATTIC - NIGHT

The room is white and bare except for a cot. Jay sheds his clothes. Then he begins to contort his face, and move his body in bizarre ways, like some kind of primal dance ritual.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Morrie enters. Betty looks at him questioningly.

Morrie nods NO, and gets into bed. Betty rubs his belly tenderly, affectionately.

She turns off the TV. Morrie turns out the light. Blackness.

Now we hear Jay's footfalls and strange sounds from above.

BETTY

What is going on up there?

MORRIE

I honestly don't know.

BETTY

What happened to you guys today?

MORRIE

Oh. Jay insisted we stop at the Go-Kart track on the way home.

BETTY

Go-Karts?! When you could've come home and made your afternoon class!

MORRIE

I know, I thought--

BETTY
We're so close, Morrie!

MORRIE
I know--

BETTY
Don't get distracted now.

JAY
Bah! Deeeeh!

MORRIE
I won't. Tomorrow, I'm going to go
in---

The phone rings.

MORRIE
(distracted)
What the hell?

Morrie flicks on the light, picks up.

MORRIE
Hello?
(beat)
Hey, Ida.

BETTY
Oh shit!

MORRIE
Did I get your message..?

He looks at Betty who mouths the word: Sorry!

MORRIE
Yeah, but it's been crazy around
here.
(beat)
Well, physically, he's not that
bad, but he's been acting really
weird.
(beat)
No, much weirder than usual. He's
on some kind of religious kick.

BETTY
(whispers simultaneously)
Vegetarian!

MORRIE
Yeah, OK. Hold on... JAY!

JAY
(mimicking his tone)
MORRIE!

MORRIE
Ida's on the phone!
(to Ida)
So are you OK?
(beat)
Good luck with that shoot.
(beat)
OK. You there? Goodnight, guys.

Morrie hangs up. Turns off the light. Blackness.

BETTY
(sighs deeply)

MORRIE
Don't worry, hon. Everything will
be back to normal soon.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - MORNING

A sunny day in the neighborhood.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - MORNING

Morrie's eyes open. A nanosecond later, the digital clock
flips to six a.m. and begins to play gentle music.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - MORNING

CLOSE-UP of the 'De-Wrinkle' setting on a shiny new dryer.
SFX: Ding.

Morrie (topless) pulls his button-down shirt out of the
dryer, admires its smooth surface, smiles a little.

He slips the shirt on as he moves to the center of the
basement and surveys a big shore-up post (house jack). He
turns it an eighth of an inch to the right.

We hear the joist/floorboards creak a bit as he does this.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - MORNING

Morrie enters, tucking in his blue shirt.

Betty and Jay sit at the breakfast table. Everything looks normal until a big mouthful of coffee sprays out of Betty's mouth, and she starts coughing/choking.

MORRIE
Are you OK?!

Betty coughs. Morrie goes to her, but she jumps up and away.

MORRIE
What's going on? Are you all right?

BETTY
(coughs)
I'm fine.

She grabs a serviette, wets it at the sink and dabs ferociously at her stained blouse.

MORRIE
(stern/fatherly)
Jay?

JAY
Oh, um I was just telling Betty that last night I asked Ida if she'd come home and see me, and she said yes.

Jay smiles beatifically.

MORRIE
Oh.

Betty glares at Morrie: Do something about this!

MORRIE
Well... A third of this house belongs to Ida. If she wants to come home, I can't exactly stop her.

Betty storms out of the kitchen into the backyard.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - MORNING

Betty is all scowl until:

LAURA
Good morning!

Betty's frown morphs into a big phony smile.

BETTY
Morning! Oh...
(genuine smile now)
How is the little angel?

LAURA
He's a bootiful boy!

Laura, bouncing her swaddled baby, approaches the mutual fence. Morrie comes bursting out of the house.

MORRIE
Listen, I'll just call her and--Oh,
morning, Laura!

LAURA
Hey, Morrie.
(sensing conflict)
How's it going? How's Jay?

MORRIE
Um, well, Jay is pr--

JAY
(interrupts)
Great! Better than ever!

They turn and see Jay, still wearing his bloody clothes, head bandaged, standing in the doorway. He comes outside.

Laura is horrified, but tries to cover.

All of Jay's responses should be delivered with pleasant equanimity and without a trace of malice.

LAURA
Welcome home! It's nice to see you!

JAY
Is it?

LAURA
(taken aback)
Of course.
(baby talk)
Do you want to meet my little guy?

JAY
(seriously considering)
Um...

LAURA
This is Brandon!

BETTY
Oh, isn't he just perfect?!

Betty and Morrie beam at the baby. Jay remains impassive.

JAY
His head's misshapen.

BETTY
Jay!

LAURA
(gasps)

JAY
He looks subnormal.

MORRIE
OK, a word inside...

He drags Jay into the house.

BETTY
Laura, I am so sorry! I think he's
a little--
(whispers)
We think there was a brain injury.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - MORNING

MORRIE
What the hell are you doing?!

JAY
Being truthful.

MORRIE
Are you trying to sabotage me?

Jay reaches out to touch Morrie between the eyes.

JAY
The truth shall make you free,
Morrie.

MORRIE
No, Jay. Tenure shall make me free.
Free to take a sabbatical, or even
a lousy vacation for the first time
in seven years, free to--

Betty opens the door, she's holding Laura's baby.

BETTY

Morrie, you're going to be late.

The door swings shut again. Morrie sighs.

JAY

If you want to do something, you should just do it. Now. Today.

MORRIE

Life isn't that simple, Jay.

Morrie pulls out his wallet, throws a bank card on the table, scrawls the PIN number on a paper serviette.

MORRIE

Do me a favour, OK? Go buy yourself some clothes, and some soy nuts or hemp or whatever the hell you eat.

He grabs his briefcase, his bagged lunch, and storms out.

Jay sits down at the table. He submerges his hand into Betty's bowl of All Bran and milk. He squeezes the bran between his fingers, really feels it in his hand.

Then he dips his wet fingers into the sugar bowl. Rubs the gritty particles between his fingers. Does it next to his ear so he can hear the sound it makes. We hear it too.

Finally, he picks up a glass of orange juice, holds it up to the sunlight coming in the window. It glows orange.

Betty enters (without the baby now).

BETTY

(softly, beseeching)

Look, Jay, I realize you're going through something...difficult. But I want you to know that your brother has worked very hard for a long time, and he's very close to achieving his goal. If you love him, you'll help him.

(beat)

Do you understand?

Jay, still holding the juice in the air with his milk-drenched, hand, smiles as if he really gets it, then gestures to the glowing orange juice and says:

JAY

Green.

End on Betty's expression of dismay.

INT. UNIVERSITY/CLASSROOM - DAY

Morrie writes the word ACCELERATION on the blackboard.

MORRIE

Acceleration, as you know, refers
to the rate of change of speed in
time.

FLASH CUT:

EXT. PARK - DAY

SEXY YOUNG WOMAN in pop-top and severely low-cut jeans,
roller-blading through park.

BACK TO MORRIE:

INT. UNIVERSITY/CLASSROOM - DAY

MORRIE

SI unit of acceleration is meters
per second squared or...

He writes: m/s^2 on the blackboard.

MORRIE

Since the Average Speed of an
object is determined by dividing
the distance that the object
travels by the time required to
travel that distance, we know that--

FLASH CUT:

EXT. PARK - DAY

Sexy woman roller-blading through the park.

BACK TO MORRIE:

INT. UNIVERSITY/CLASSROOM - DAY

MORRIE glances at his watch.

MORRIE

Oh. We're out of time.

STUDENTS jump up, exit.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Morrie sits on a bench, eating lunch. He looks at his watch. 12:35. And here she comes, the Sexy Young Woman, roller-blading. She's listening to an Ipod & grooving to the music.

As she approaches, she gives Morrie a flirty smile. After she passes, she turns and gives him another come-hither look.

His eyes follow her thonged, bum cleavage as it glides away. He takes a big bite of his peach.

EXT. CITY STREET/ATM - DAY

Jay withdraws five hundred dollars, then wanders down the street, hands a twenty-dollar bill to a PASSERBY.

INT. UNIVERSITY/CLASSROOM - DAY

Morrie sits at his desk, writing.

PAUL'S VOICE FROM DOORWAY

You still here?

MORRIE

Yup. Grant application.

PAUL, 39, (Morrie's neighbour and colleague) enters. He's clearly peeved about Jay's comments regarding his baby, but masks it under a friendly pretense.

PAUL

Spoke to Laura at lunch. She told me Jay's not doing too well. That's too bad.

MORRIE

Yeah. Thanks.

PAUL

Some kind of brain damage?

MORRIE

Well, I don't know about that. But something seems to be...awry.

(MORE)

MORRIE (cont'd)

I think he was pretty insulting to Laura today, and both Betty and I feel terrible.

PAUL

Guess he's always been kinda troubled.

MORRIE

Well...Jay was just a little kid when my parents died.

PAUL

Yeah, that's true. That would have an effect. Of course maybe Jay and your dad...and Ida...well, you know, sometimes these things run in families.

Paul makes a little 'crazy' gesture at his head.

MORRIE

(bites his tongue)
I don't know, Paul.

Paul sits down on the edge of Morrie's desk.

PAUL

So listen, about dinner on Sunday, I think Laura might be a little uncomfortable around Jay at the moment.

MORRIE

That's understandable. We can cancel. I mean, postpone.

PAUL

I don't think she wants to cancel. We arranged a sitter, and Laura hasn't really been out much since Brandon.

MORRIE

Oh. Um... OK. You know Jay probably wouldn't want to join us anyhow.

PAUL

Yeah, probably not. The boring old folks, right?
(chuckles)

MORRIE
(faux-chuckles)
Right.

PAUL
I don't get it, Morrie, how is it
you turned out so normal?

Morrie smiles/shrugs. His stomach makes a loud grumbling
sound.

PAUL
You should get that looked at.

They chuckle. Paul slaps Morrie on the shoulder, and exits.

CLOSE-UP on the silver balls of the Newton's Cradle desk toy,
which are vibrating ever so slightly.

INT. IDA'S CAR/MOVING - LATE DAY

Ida drives. The cell phone rings.

IDA
(professional voice)
Ida Csonka photography.
(regular voice)
Hey, Morrie. What's up?
(beat)
Um...why?
(beat)
But why is it bad timing?
(several long beats)
Oh my god, did Paul threaten you?!
(beat)
I see...
(laughs bitterly)
No...nothing, I just--I thought you
were one of two people in town who
actually wanted me to come home.
(laughs/fighting tears)
No, I know I know. 7 years is a
long time. (beat)
No, I know...

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

Morrie is on the phone with Ida. He gives Betty--who is
washing lettuce leaves in a colander-- a 'thumbs up' sign.

MORRIE

Well, I'm glad you understand. And you know Jay's gonna be here for a while, at least a month.

INT. IDA'S CAR/MOVING - LATE DAY

IDA

I get it, Morrie. And I'd love to accommodate you. There's just one problem.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

MORRIE

What's that?

OS Sound of a car horn being tapped twice.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/DRIVEWAY - LATE DAY

Ida's car swings into the driveway.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - LATE DAY

With cordless phone in hand, Morrie moves to the front window and peers out.

MORRIE

Oh.

Morrie hangs up the phone. Calls to his wife:

MORRIE

Betty...

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/DRIVEWAY - LATE DAY

Ida gets out of the car, stretches. She should be wearing something slightly too provocative.

Jay, walking home, catches sight of her.

JAY

Ida!

IDA

Jay!!!

Ida runs to Jay, they embrace fiercely on the sidewalk in front of Paul and Laura's house.

IDA
Oh my god, Jay, you're so skinny.
Are you all right? You look
terrible!

JAY
So do you.

IDA
I do? Really?

She self-consciously fixes her hair.

JAY
You look tired. Older.

IDA
Oh. Well, I haven't slept, I mean,
I drove all night.

Jay holds up Ida's hand, surveys the chewed fingernails.

JAY
Worse than ever.

She pulls her hand away.

JAY
You still look beautiful, Ida.

They smile, embrace again. Ida notices Laura peeking from her front window. Ida waves sarcastically. The curtains shut.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

Betty furiously tears up little pieces of lettuce and flings them into a bowl. Morrie's hands are on her shoulders.

He tries in vain to pull Betty into an embrace.

IDA
Hello..?

Betty ducks away from Morrie, keeps ripping lettuce. Ida enters with Jay in tow.

MORRIE
Hey!

IDA

Hi!

Morrie and Ida embrace, then break apart.

MORRIE

It's good to see you. God, it's
been ages.

(lying)

You look good.

IDA

I do? Hi, Betty.

BETTY

Hi, Ida. How are you?

IDA

Fine. How are you?

BETTY

Fine, thank you.

Polite smiles. Betty clearly disapproves of Ida's outfit.

JAY

You see? This is your sickness.
Thick and sick.

Jay waves his hands between Betty and Ida to indicate the
tension crackling between them.

MORRIE

Why are you still in those clothes?
I thought you were gonna buy
something to wear.

IDA

Don't yell at him, Morrie.

MORRIE

Who's yelling? I don't yell.

BETTY

He doesn't.

MORRIE

I'm just--I gave him money to get
clothes. And food. Did you get
food?

JAY

No.

BETTY

It's a good thing I stopped after
work then.

She plunges a butcher knife into a package of tofu.

IDA

Look, he'll get clothes tomorrow,
OK. Lighten up. Let's have a drink.
You got anything to drink in this
joint?

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT PORCH - LATE DAY

Ida rapidly chugs a third of a cold beer from the bottle.

IDA

Ah! That feels good.

She takes a deep drag on a cigarette. Exhales sensuously. Her
legs fidget restlessly. Jay sits beside her.

IDA

It's so weird to be back here.

JAY

Because of Gary?

Ida shrugs.

JAY

You should go see him.

IDA

(small laugh that says: I
can't)

Ida takes another pull on the bottle.

IDA

Anyway... I can't believe you
don't drink or smoke anymore!
(beat)
By the looks of it, you don't eat
either.

JAY

I take enough for nourishment.

IDA

You're not a plant, darling.

She scoops a handful of potato chips into her mouth.

JAY
I'm not an animal either.

IDA
Yes you are.

JAY
No. That is an animal...

He points at Paul's dog, taking a dump on Morrie's lawn.

IDA
(laughs)
Oh gross! Is that Morrie's?

JAY
Paul and Laura's.

IDA
Oh yeah? Scram!

Ida chases the dog away. Jokes, like a little kid:

IDA
Get off my property!

The dog barks. Ida barks back.

IDA
(Southern accent)
OK varmint, say your prayers!

She cocks an imaginary rifle and blows the dog away. For the first time, we see Jay laugh.

JAY
You're bold.

IDA
I'm starving!

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

A frying pan crammed with 3 eggs and 8 slices of bacon. Ida carries it to the table and slides the mess onto her plate. Everyone else has been eating fried tofu, vegetables & salad.

Ida eats and drinks with gusto. Jay keeps glancing over.

BETTY
I got your room ready. There are fresh towels on the bed.

IDA

Thanks. But I think I'm gonna stay
in the basement if that's OK.

Ida dips bread into an egg, brings the gooey mess to her
mouth. Jay watches, the smell of bacon testing his resolve

MORRIE

It's kind of out of control down
there.

The phone rings. Betty gets up, answers.

IDA

I don't mind. And anyway, staying
in my old room is too bizarre.
(notices Jay staring at
her bacon)
Wanna piece?

Betty takes the phone into the next room.

JAY

(salivating)

No.

MORRIE

Why is it 'bizarre'?

IDA

I dunno. Don't you feel weird
sleeping in Mom & Dad's room?

Morrie shrugs.

IDA

And this house is so wonky. It's
worse than ever. I mean, look at
your fish. Doesn't it bother you?

They look over that the goldfish bowl--the water is much
higher on one side due to the wonky floors.

MORRIE

As it happens, we've recently
installed a house jack to correct
that.

IDA

Uch, why don't you just move?

MORRIE

This house is comfortable.

JAY
Too comfortable.

MORRIE
Your "destitute = noble" equation
is annoying and misguided!

Betty returns before Jay can respond.

BETTY
That was Nancy Kennedy on the
phone.
(to Jay)
She said you gave her something
today. On Brock Street?

JAY
Nancy Kennedy...Is she the redhead
with the false bosom?

IDA
What, like, implants?

JAY
I think so.

MORRIE
I always wondered about that.

IDA
I don't remember any Nancy Kennedy.

MORRIE
You don't? The redhead?

BETTY
(annoyed)
Anyway, she said Jay gave her
twenty dollars today.
(to Jay)
She said you gave a lot of people
twenty dollars.

JAY
I don't know, is twenty-five people
"a lot of people"?

MORRIE
You gave twenty-five people twenty
dollars? I seriously hope that
wasn't my five hundred dollars?

JAY

I guess you'll be wanting this
back.

He pulls out Morrie's bank card and hands it over.

MORRIE

(sarcastic)

No, keep it. There might be someone
in town who doesn't have my money.

Betty gets up, starts clearing dishes aggressively.

IDA

Why would you do that, Jay?

MORRIE

Yeah, Jay, why would you do that?!

JAY

Because it's just not done. Because
I'm committed to doing the 'not
done'.

MORRIE

Well that's peachy. That's very
rebellious and outsider of you, but
maybe next time you could be
committed on your own dime, OK?
'Cause that money you blithely
handed away to Nancy Kennedy, who
drives a Mercedes and will never
ever have to worry about money, was
going to be used to pay off our new
washer and dryer.

Clang! Something Betty's doing at the sink makes a loud
noise.

JAY

And have your new washer and dryer
made you happier, Morrie?

MORRIE

Yes. Yes they have. And would you
like to know why?

JAY

I would like to know.

MORRIE

Because now I don't have to spend
twenty minutes before I go to work
to bust my hump all day long,
shaking and scraping soap particles
and residue off my clothing.
Because now the washing machine no
longer bumps and quakes and travels
halfway across the basement
whenever I put more than three
items in one load.

IDA

(suppressed laugh)
I remember that. It was, like,
possessed.

MORRIE

Because now the dryer is, in fact,
a dry-er, a device that removes
significant amounts of moisture
from wet clothes, and renders them
completely, not just partially,
dry. Yes, the new washer & dryer
have made me happy, Jay. I guess
that means I'm a heathen who will
never know truth or freedom or God,
right?

Morrie's stomach growls. He clutches it and leaves the room.

Jay smiles at Ida in complicity. Ida does not return the
smile. She carries her plate to the sink.

IDA

You shouldn't have done that.

She scrapes an untouched egg and several pieces of bacon and
toast into the garbage.

IDA

Morrie isn't made of money, you
know.

Surprised by the chastening, Jay leaves the room. Ida places
her empty dish on the counter for Betty to deal with.

BETTY

You're right, Morrie isn't made of
money. But he's always helped you
in the past, hasn't he? Like every
time you call? Every 6 months or
so.

IDA
Don't worry, I'll pay him back.

Betty clears Ida's dish away, rinses it.

BETTY
You can pay him back by leaving
here tomorrow morning.

Ida gasps at Betty's audacity.

IDA
(to herself)
Unbelievable!

She opens a cupboard above the fridge where the booze is .
Inside are a few dusty bottles, which she rifles through.

IDA
How many years have you been
tiptoeing around Paul and Laura?

Ida pulls out an ancient bottle of Creme de Menthe.

IDA
Holy shit, is this my parents'
Creme de Menthe? Has this been
sitting here since 1963?

BETTY
(shrugs)
It was there when Morrie and I
started dating.

IDA
Museum of natural fucking
history...

Ida puts it back. Closes the cupboard.

IDA
Look, Morrie is a good teacher.
I'm sure Paul isn't going to punish
him just because I came home to see
Jay.

BETTY
So you just came home to see Jay?

Ida doesn't answer. She picks up a banana, peels it.

BETTY

For Morrie's sake, stay away from him, Ida. Just for the next few weeks.

No response from Ida who eats her banana.

BETTY

You know Gary is finally back on his--finally feeling normal.
(accusatory/angry)
And anyway if you wanted to get in touch you should have done it two years ago. You've had almost two years to pick up a phone.

Sulky/stung, Ida drops the banana peel on the counter.

BETTY

(more to herself)
If you mess with Gary's engagement, Paul will be--well, he already is, beyond furious. That would be that for Morrie, I have no doubt.

Ida has gone completely pale.

IDA

Engagement? What engagement?

Betty is surprised/pleased that she's breaking the news.

BETTY

I'm sure you must have heard that Gary is engaged to Ellen Thomas.

IDA

What?!

Betty's smug expression assures her it's true.

IDA

Ellen Thomas...?

Stung, Ida wanders out of the room. Betty throws Ida's banana peel into the garbage, and wipes the counter clean.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - DUSK

Morrie motionless on the toilet, reading TV Guide.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/ATTIC - NIGHT

Jay doing his weird dance ritual, arms stretched up to heaven.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - NIGHT

With cigarette in hand, Ida opens a box of Gravol and eats one, two... three... four... pills. She pulls a Mickey of gin from her purse, takes a long chug to wash them down.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Shot of the house with three lights lit: the basement, second floor, attic.

The basement light glows red, the second floor light glows yellow, the attic light glows pure bright white.

Fade shot to black.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Morrie and Betty are asleep. We hear the faint sound of a car stereo out on the street. A peal of laughter now.

Morrie wakes up, goes to the window.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - NIGHT

A red Mustang is parked on the curb. Ida spills out of it, laughing, drunk and disheveled.

IDA
(suggestive)
Thanks for the bumpy bumpy ride.

She closes the door and the car drives away. Ida high-heels it across the lawn, adjusting her red mini-skirt, which has turned almost all the way around so that the zipper is in the front. She holds a purse and her panties in one hand.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - NIGHT

Morrie (in traditional pajamas, bathrobe and slippers) is waiting for Ida when she lets herself into the basement.

IDA
What are you doing down here?

MORRIE

You woke me up, Ida. What are you doing? Who were you with?

IDA

I was with...?

(tries to remember)

Will. No, Phil! I was with Phil.

Morrie, what are you wearing?

(laughs)

What is this, "My Three Sons"?

MORRIE

(surveys himself)

What?

IDA

All you need is a pipe and a folded newspaper and you're frickin' Arthur Murray, or whatever his name was.

MORRIE

Fred McMurray.

IDA

Right.

MORRIE

You know, I don't comment on what you're wearing...or not wearing.

He eyeballs her attire--no bra, the panties held in one hand.

IDA

Oh. Well. It's just sex, Morrie.

MORRIE

With a total stranger?

IDA

It's fun. You should try it sometime. Or even with someone you know.

MORRIE

Ha ha.

IDA

Sorry. I'm sorry. It's just--I think Jay's been riding you too hard, but in a way he's right. You know what they say: everything in moderation, including moderation.

(MORE)

IDA (cont'd)

You need to loosen the bathrobe a bit.

She falls drunk into a chair.

IDA

Have sex with a stranger named Bill, I mean Phil.

MORRIE

(fatherly concern)

And you need to think about your behaviour, Ida. What you're doing isn't safe.

IDA

Safe? What's safe?
(with much bitterness)
Nothing in this world is safe.

She lights a cigarette, inhales deeply.

IDA

For example: you could get tenure next week, after seven years of catching Paul and Laura's farts, and then, god forbid, get hit by a bus. Life is short. Might as well have some frickin' fun.

MORRIE

Well, life isn't all that short. The average life span of a male in North America is 70.

IDA

Yeah. And what's the average life span in this family?

Morrie chooses to ignore Ida's pointed comment.

MORRIE

Well, be that as it may, I happen to believe in science. And the odds are that I will not get hit by a bus, and that I will likely live until 70. And so I have chosen to plan accordingly. As for "fun"? Well, you and Jay can keep having fun, refusing to grow up, having regular meltdowns, camping out in ravines, driving back and forth across the country, pretending to be artists or photographers--

IDA
I am a photographer!

MORRIE
I'll keep being the one who takes
care of every thing and pays for
everything...

IDA
(softly, as if trying to
convince herself)
I am a photographer.

Ida seems utterly deflated and pathetic.

MORRIE
I know. I'm sorry.

IDA
No, I'm sorry. I'm just tired.

MORRIE
You look exhausted, what's going
on?

IDA
I haven't been sleeping.

MORRIE
Why not?

IDA
I don't know. Anyway, I'm sorry
about what I insinuated. I'm sure
you and Betty have a wonderful sex
life.

MORRIE
(indignant)
We have sex.

IDA
I know, I wasn't being sarcastic.

Pause. Ida and Morrie look at each other.

MORRIE
We have sex every Saturday night.
(beat)
Before 'Nanny 911'.

They both laugh. Ida gets up and hugs Morrie.

IDA
Poor Morrie.

MORRIE
I'm fine. I'm worried about Jay.

IDA
He'll be all right.

MORRIE
I'm not so sure. I'm afraid we may
have to... For his own safety.

IDA
(joking)
What, you're gonna have him
committed?

MORRIE
Assessed to begin with.

IDA
Oh come on! He's just weird. He's
not crazy.

Morrie looks unsure.

IDA
He's going through his: "What's-the-
meaning-of-life-Who-the-fuck-am-I?
phase" Everyone goes through it.

MORRIE
I didn't.

IDA
You didn't have the chance to.

MORRIE
...I don't know. We have to be
careful. Sometimes these things
run in families.

He makes the same 'crazy' gesture that Paul made before.

IDA
Dad wasn't crazy. He had an
accident.

Morrie clearly disagrees.

IDA
Dad was a little eccentric, Morrie,
and so is Jay.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Jay enters, opens fridge, stares inside, closes it. He finds a note on kitchen table and a hundred dollars.

Note says: Jay, please buy yourself some clothes (you're starting to give off odors/make me sick). Love, Morrie.

Jay leaves the note, goes to the basement entrance, knocks.

JAY

Ida?

He opens the door.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

JAY

Ida?

FLASH CUT:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Ida jogging through the neighborhood.

BACK TO MORRIE:

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

Jay looks around the room. It is red and womb-like and cluttered with junk. There is a strange object, completely obscured by clothes, old coats, fabric.

Curious, Jay tries moving a piece of clothing aside, which causes everything to drop off, revealing an exercise bike.

Jay then notices the new washer and dryer. He sniffs himself.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Ida jogs. When she comes to a certain intersection, she hesitates, jogging on the spot, she looks around--is anybody watching?--then makes a right turn onto Gary's street.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

Jay stands in a pair of skid-marked Stanfields, putting his clothes into the washing machine. He removes his wallet from his jeans and sets it on a shelf.

He sniffs the laundry detergent. It is good. He removes his underwear, and tosses them in too.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Ida jogs along, slows a bit and takes a good look at a small bungalow from the opposite sidewalk. She keeps jogging, but also keeps turning around to look at the house.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Morrie sits on his bench eating lunch. Here comes Roller-Blading Girl. Flirtatious as ever. And there she goes.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

Jay, naked, is digging through old board games and memorabilia in a basement cupboard.

Stashed in the back, he finds a 'Sporting World' bag. He looks inside, sees a pair of new inline skates with the tags still on. He puts the bag back in its hiding spot.

Then he unearths a video, not rewound, with the label blacked out. He tries to read what it is but can't.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

Ida jogs sweaty into the backyard. She turns on the sprinkler, strips off her shorts--she's now wearing a little jogging top and undies, and cools herself off sensuously in the water.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

Jay puts the tape into the VCR, waits for it to reveal itself. We hear audio: Wawka-chawka porno music and...

TEACHER

Drop your drawers. That's right;
now bend over, Miss Kelly. You know
what you get when you're late for
class.

Jays eyes open wider. He hurriedly shuts off the tape, and makes for the exit to the backyard.

JAY
(mutters to himself)
No desire no desire no desire no...

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - DAY

Ida is stretched out face down on a lawn chair drying in the sun, her sexy body exposed and glistening with water droplets.

Jay comes out of the basement, naked, with his cock erect.

JAY
(noticing Ida)
Oh!

At that exact moment, Laura peers over the fence.

LAURA
(gasps)
Good lord!

Ida looks up, sees Jay with a hard on. She shields her eyes.

IDA
Jay, what are you doing?!

JAY
Nothing. I was watching a video.

He goes back into the house. Ida sits up. Laughs.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/ATTIC - DAY

Jay on his cot, his arms folded over his chest like a corpse. A knock on the door. He covers his body with a blanket.

IDA
Can I come in?

JAY
Yeah.

Ida enters with a bag of cookies, and sits on the floor.

IDA
What's going on?

JAY

Nothing! My clothes are in the wash.

IDA

Oh... good, they were getting kinda ripe. So that was pretty funny, huh?

Jay shrugs.

IDA

It was funny! "Good Lord!"

They laugh. Ida offers Jay the cookies.

JAY

Animal fat. Not to mention chemicals. They even look plastic.

Ida sighs, takes one, eats.

IDA

So what's going on with you? Why were you lying in the road?

JAY

Because I'm trying to wrench myself out of automatic behavior, because I don't want to be a prisoner of society's arbitrary laws and rules.

IDA

Not lying down in traffic is hardly arbitrary, it's a rule that makes sense.

JAY

OK, I probably should've gotten up when I heard the car but, Ida, you cannot believe the spiritual rush you feel when you do something that's totally 'not done'.

IDA

So you don't have a death wish?

JAY

No! Just the opposite! I don't want to zombie through the world like an automaton: *Hi, how was your weekend? Fine, how was your weekend?*

(MORE)

JAY (cont'd)

The world of conformity and status and everybody looking at the clock to see when they're hungry, or silently staring at the elevator numbers because that's what we've collectively agreed is appropriate behavior. It's bullshit.

IDA

I understand. But you can't live totally outside the lines. Unless you wanna go be a monk on a mountain.

JAY

It's a pure life.

IDA

It's a boring life.

Ida smiles and eats another cookie, relishing it.

IDA

And God exists inside the lines too.

Jay nods No.

IDA

Yes! You gotta lighten up, honey.

JAY

No. We don't have much time here, Ida. We can't just drink & smoke and seek pleasure to distract ourselves.

Hurt, Ida gets up, brushes crumbs off herself.

IDA

Yeah well, I guess you have it all figured out: the road to happiness is to live completely outside the world you despise.

Jay nods yes. Ida exits saying:

IDA

I don't know, Jay. Maybe you just shouldn't despise everything so much.

JAY
(to himself)
But there's so much to despise.

INT. UNIVERSITY/OFFICE - DAY

PAUL
You still here?

Morrie is getting tired of this ridiculous greeting.

MORRIE
No, I'm out there. I'm cart-
wheeling down the hallway.

PAUL
(faux-chuckles)
Heh heh, funny stuff.

He enters the office.

PAUL
So you got yourself a full house?

MORRIE
Yeah. Ida showed up.
(smiles obsequiously)
To see Jay.

PAUL
Yeah. I know. Think I heard her
roll in last night. Around three.

MORRIE
Oh, sorry.

PAUL
No, I feel bad for you. A grown
woman--how old is Ida now?

Morrie mulls.

MORRIE
Oh wow, she's gonna be thirty-two
on...Sunday.

PAUL
Ew! Yikes. Phil Anderson, I'm
pretty sure that was Phil's car, he
was in my class a couple years ago.
Kid can't be more than 22 or 23.

MORRIE
(biting his tongue)
Hmm. I guess you want to cancel
dinner Sunday?

PAUL
No, no. Of course...

MORRIE
Don't worry. Ida won't be there.

PAUL
Can't imagine she'd have the gall
to contact my bro while she's here.

MORRIE
No.
(sotto voce)
I doubt it.

PAUL
Can I trust you to see that she
doesn't?

MORRIE
Um--

PAUL
Thanks, buddy!

Paul slaps him on the shoulder, exits.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

Ida cracks ice into a glass. She pours in some Sprite, pulls
the Mickey of gin from her purse. Just before dumping it in
though she reconsiders, re-caps the bottle.

She sits down at the kitchen table, deep in thought.
Suddenly, the wooden boards on the main floor emit a creaking
POP.

IDA
What the fuck?

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - LATE DAY

Jay, still naked, fiddles with the house-jack, turns it a
quarter inch to the right.

The dryer in the background suddenly DINGS.

Jay goes to get his freshly washed clothing. It's hot & fluffy & smells wonderful. He presses it to his face. Inhales deeply.

For a few moments, Jay finds something good inside the lines.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - LATE DAY

MORRIE
God damn it all to hell!

An uncharacteristic outburst as Morrie spies a fresh turd on his lawn.

BETTY
(whispering)
Shhh! Morrie!

MORRIE
Well, this is twice already today!

BETTY
(whispering)
I'll clean it up after dinner. Come on...please?

Betty & Morrie, with bags of Chinese take-out, enter house.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

Morrie, Ida, Jay and Betty at the table, eating Chinese food. Ida eats huge amounts, Morrie is moderate, Jay is ascetic.

MORRIE
You didn't buy clothes.

JAY
I washed these.

MORRIE
Well, it's a start.

They eat in silence until Jay lets out a huge belch.

MORRIE
Jay!

IDA
(laughs)

JAY
What?

MORRIE

Why do you have to be rude?

Jay rolls his eyes. Betty gives Morrie a look, prompts him:

BETTY

This weekend...

MORRIE

Oh yeah. So you guys, Betty and I would like to buy you a fancy dinner Sunday night at Ray & Jeri's!

IDA

Ooh yum! Sunday, huh?
(coily, thinking it's
about her birthday)
What's the occasion?

MORRIE

We have to have Paul and Laura over.

IDA

Oh. You want us to clear out.

MORRIE

It's been planned for a while. We have to do it.

Jay scoffs/smirks at this perceived obligation. As he exits:

BETTY

We do. It's our turn.

MORRIE

(to Ida)
You don't mind, do you?

IDA

I don't mind. I just--God, I can't stand those two!

Ida exits. Betty clears dishes. Morrie's stomach growls.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DUSK

LOCKED-OFF DISSOLVE:

LATE DAY giving way to night. The three lights come on: the basement, main floor, attic.

Fade this shot to black.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - MORNING

The clock radio flips to 8:00 and begins to play gentle music. Confused, Morrie wakes up and turns it off.

MORRIE

You set the clock for 8 on a Sunday?

Betty jumps out of bed, ties on her robe.

BETTY

We have to shop, clean, marinate, prepare. I'd like to pick up some cut flowers. And wash down the deck chairs. C'mon, sweetie. They're gonna be here at six-thirty!

She pulls the duvet off Morrie, who lies fetal, clutching his stomach.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Classical music up as we see a fast-motion montage of Betty and Morrie preparing to have the neighbors over for dinner--a seemingly monumental affair in which every cranny must be vigorously scoured & every radish rosette meticulously carved.

Morrie and Betty's car pulling out, and then pulling back in, they unload bags and bags of groceries.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - DAY

Betty scours a bathroom.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY

Morrie mows the lawn.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Betty washes the kitchen floor.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Morrie vacuums the between the couch pillows.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Betty husks corn.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Morrie chops and squeezes limes for Margaritas.

The shots end at 5:00 p.m. in:

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - LATE DAY

Morrie and Betty strip off their cleaning clothes. As Betty passes Morrie on her way to the bathroom, he grabs her, pulls her close. They kiss. He kisses her some more.

BETTY
(flirty/remonstrative)
Morrie!

MORRIE
What?

BETTY
I have to get ready.

MORRIE
We have time.

BETTY
I don't want my face to get all
scratched up.

MORRIE
I shaved this morning.
(jokey)
With the Mach III

BETTY
It's still scratchy. I don't want
to be all red, and them knowing...

MORRIE
So we'll do it another way.

He turns her around, bends her over the bed, dry humps her doggy style. While he does this she says:

BETTY

But I have to chop the vegetables
still. We can do it later tonight,
OK?

She wriggles out of his grasp and leaves frame. Morrie sighs.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - LATE DAY

A piece of celery is raked through a bowl of smoothed dip.

Betty instantly grabs a knife and smooths it over. Jay
crunches the celery he just dipped.

MORRIE

How's \$150.00?

Morrie has his wallet out, he hands money to Ida.

IDA

It's too much, Morrie.
(she takes the money as
she says this)

MORRIE

It's fine. Have a nice dinner.

Now Jay rakes a carrot stick through the dip. Betty
immediately smooths it.

IDA

Thanks. Are you sure?

MORRIE

Sure I'm sure.

Jay sticks a broccoli flower in the dip. Betty smooths it,
blocks the tray with her body and says:

BETTY

Well, have a good time, you two!

Everyone says bye. Jay and Ida exit. The clock reads 6:09.
Morrie & Betty are ready with twenty minutes to kill.

Betty straightens a wonky picture on the wall.

Morrie grabs a blue taco chip, eats it.

BETTY

Eat the other chips, we don't have
enough.

MORRIE

We have a whole other bag.

BETTY

Not the blue ones!

Betty picks up a chip crumb that fell on the floor. Morrie falls into a chair, exhausted. He opens his arms...

MORRIE

C'mere...

Betty checks the clock: It's 6:10 p.m. Plenty of time. She sits on his lap, takes a deep breath, smiles, relaxes.

Cross dissolve to clock reading: 6:30. They sit in separate chairs now, waiting, expectant.

Cross dissolve to clock reading: 6:45 p.m. They're slumped at the table. Betty rubs her sore neck.

BETTY

Where the fuck are those assholes?!

Doorbell rings.

BETTY

Oh! Start the drinks, Morrie!

She jumps up runs out of the kitchen.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT PORCH - LATE DAY

Laura and Paul wait on the porch.

PAUL

If the slut or the freak are here--

Betty swings open the door, a huge smile on her face.

BETTY

Hi!

PAUL

Howdy neighbour!

LAURA

Sorry we're late!

BETTY

Don't be silly! Come on in.

They move past Betty who closes the front door.

EXT. CITY STREET - LATE DAY

Ida, with her camera, wanders around town with Jay.

IDA
Are you hungry yet?

She turns the camera to Jay--CLICK-- photographs him.

JAY
I don't feel like going to Ray &
Jeri's.

IDA
What do you want to do?

CLICK-- she takes another photo of Jay. End of the roll.

JAY
I don't know. Something else.

IDA
Like what?

They wander back towards Ida's car.

JAY
Like... Let's walk into people's
houses, yell: "Fantastic Bastard"
and walk out.

Ida gives him an 'as if' look.

JAY
Come on, Ida. I want to do
something I've never done before.

Ida glances over at Jay, considers.

IDA
Well...have you ever spied on
anyone before?

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - LATE DAY

Morrie, Betty, Paul and Laura drink Margaritas/eat
appetizers.

PAUL
So I look over, and the kid is,
like, covered--head to toe--in
strained carrots. Ten seconds I
didn't have my eye on him!

Laura/Betty/Paul laugh genuinely. Morrie fake-laughs.

MORRIE

Can I top you up there, young lady?

LAURA

Just a splash. These are good!

BETTY

Real limes. That's the key.

MORRIE

Well, time to fire up that barbie.

As Morrie and Paul futz with the barbecue, we hear:

GILLIAN

Hello..? Anyone here?

GILLIAN, a 20-year-old urban hippie-child with a backpack, wanders into the yard. She looks frightened. She's holding a crumpled piece of paper with an address scrawled on it.

GILLIAN

Oh hi. Sorry.

MORRIE

Can I help you?

GILLIAN

I need to find Jay. Is Jay here?

Betty tenses up.

MORRIE

Um, Jay's not here right now.

GILLIAN

(huge sigh)

Oh God!

BETTY

(fake cheerful)

Why don't you pop around tomorrow?
We'll give him a message. Whom
should I say--

GILLIAN

His wife.

A small collective gasp.

GILLIAN

But I can't pop around tomorrow. I just hitched from the city. And anyway, I have to see him tonight.
(suddenly frantic)
It's really really important!

BETTY

I'm sure whatever it is, it can wait until to--

Gillian bursts into tears, sobs:

GILLIAN

No! You don't understand! The cops want his DNA! I think they think he's involved in the Kimberly O'Neil murder!

A bigger collective gasp.

MORRIE

What? That's absurd! Why would they think that?!

GILLIAN

'Cause they said he got arrested last week for touching a little girl.
(sobs)

Huge collective gasp. Laura spits out a lime seed.

INT. IDA'S CAR/PARKED - NIGHT

Ida and Jay are slumped down in the seats, staking out Gary's bungalow. Lights on in the house, but no sign of life.

Ida is gobbling a Peanut Buster Parfait. Jay doesn't eat.

IDA

You must think I'm a real sicko.

JAY

No.

IDA

Is this the most illicit thing you've ever done?

JAY

Hardly.

Ida spills a blob of chocolate syrup on her shirt.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Gillian sits at the abandoned patio table, vacantly munching chips and dip, and draining the various glasses of leftover margarita. Her mascara has run all down her face.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Betty is hopping around, comically hysterical. Even though she's going nuts there's something cute/endearing about it.

BETTY

She can't stay here, Morrie! It's already a madhouse. Oh god oh god oh god oh god!!

MORRIE

Calm down! She'll just stay until we talk to Jay and get this cleared up.

BETTY

There's nothing to clear up. We're fucked. Totally fucking fucked! Do you know how many years I've been kissing their asses?! ARRRGGH!

She flings herself on the bed & a moment later, springs up.

BETTY

And for what? For what?! Did you see their faces as they ran out of here? We're pariahs. Fucking fucked pariahs!

MORRIE

OK...the big issue here right now is Jay--

BETTY

(hopping around)
NO! The issue is me! I'm the issue for once! I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW MANY EGGS I HAVE LEFT!

MORRIE

Just breathe, Betty. Calm down.

BETTY

(hyperventilating)

NO! I'm not calming down! I'm going to my sister's. I'm going right now. Don't even try to change my mind!!

Betty scoops a ridiculous handful of underwear from the dresser drawer & runs out of the room.

MORRIE

Are you taking the---

BETTY

And I'm taking the car!!

Morrie rubs his growling belly.

INT. IDA'S CAR/PARKED - NIGHT

Still staked out. The telephoto lens trained on Gary's house.

JAY

I don't think he's in there.

IDA

Is she in there is the question.

Jay is bored.

JAY

I'm sure it's safe to go home now.

IDA

You never know...I don't want to wreck their good time.

She says this while staring at the house, as if she would like to wreck Gary and Ellen's good time

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Morrie smiles awkwardly at Gillian. Everything's been cleared except for the margarita pitcher/glasses. A very pregnant pause.

MORRIE

So... how long have you and Jay been... married?

GILLIAN
(proudly)
Six months and three days.

MORRIE
Hmm.

GILLIAN
But it's not going so good.

MORRIE
Well...all married couples have
difficulties.

GILLIAN
Yeah. He stopped having sex a
couple months ago.

MORRIE
(too-much-detail smile)
Oh.

GILLIAN
Then he wouldn't talk or make any
sounds except grunting for, like,
two weeks...

MORRIE
Hmm.

GILLIAN
And then he moved into the ravine.

MORRIE
Well--ahem--that's maybe more
difficult than most.

GILLAN
I really, really, really miss him.
(beat)
I'm pretty sure he never killed
that kid.

Morrie smiles weakly. Gillian drains her margarita.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Ida's car pulls into the driveway. Morrie swings open the
front door as Ida and Jay make the front porch.

MORRIE
It's late, where were you?!

IDA
It's eleven. What's the matter?

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Morrie, Jay and Ida sit around the kitchen table.

IDA
I just--I don't understand any of
this. You have a wife?

JAY
(agitated)
Where is she anyway?

MORRIE
Passed out in your old room. But
that's hardly the matter at hand.

IDA
Well, I'm sure Jay didn't touch any
little girl.

She looks at Jay. He just stares at the table.

IDA
Did you?

JAY
Do you think I did?

IDA
Of course not!

JAY
Do you?

MORRIE
(sighs)
I don't know, Jay.

Jay gets up.

JAY
I'm going to bed.

IDA
No. We have to sort this out!

As Jay exits, Morrie becomes The Dad.

MORRIE
Jay! Get back here this instant!

IDA

Fuck.

MORRIE

You see? I'm telling you, Ida. Jay has officially... disconnected.

IDA

No.

MORRIE

Yes.

IDA

(helpless/childlike)

So what are we supposed to do?

MORRIE

I guess we'll have to call the police. And find a doctor.

IDA

A shrink?

MORRIE

No, a podiatrist. Of course a shrink. This is serious. I don't want another 'situation' in this family.

IDA

"Situation"? Are you talking about dad's accident?

MORRIE

I'm talking about dad's suicide.

IDA

Uch!

MORRIE

I've been up there three times over the years.

IDA

Not this again--

MORRIE

There's no way that Dad could've fallen out of there, OK?

IDA

He fell.

MORRIE

I know you'd like to believe that. But it's not rational.

IDA

I don't care what's rational...

MORRIE
He wasn't even teaching that
morning--

IDA
He wouldn't have left us...

MORRIE
There was no reason for him
to be on campus!

IDA
He wouldn't have left mom!

A stand-off. They stare at each other and then sigh, depleted
by the same old argument.

IDA
(childlike/pouty)
God, I wish they were here.

The tension eases. Morrie stands, adopts a fatherly posture.

MORRIE
(gently)
Time for bed, Ida, it's late.

Ida stands up, obeying, docile now.

IDA
(softly)
I thought of something a few weeks
ago that never occurred to me
before.

MORRIE
What?

IDA
Remember the last time we went to
Florida? After dad....

MORRIE
Yeah.

IDA
I think mom already knew she was
sick at that point.

MORRIE
No way.

IDA
Yeah. Remember how tired she was on
that trip?

MORRIE
She was grieving.

IDA

I think it was more than that.

(a few beats)

I think she went through it alone
for quite a while. She didn't want
us to have to deal with it so soon.

Morrie thinks it over. Fights tears. Shakes his head.

IDA

What?

MORRIE

Something she said that last
week...

(beat)

That she and dad would be watching
us, and that he said he knew we
were going to make them proud.

Ida fights tears.

MORRIE

So much for that.

(composing himself)

Anyway...I'll make some calls
tomorrow on my lunch hour. Don't
worry about it, I'll handle
everything.

He kisses the top of Ida's head in a fatherly fashion &
exits.

Ida fishes a box of Gravol and a Mickey of gin out of her
purse. There's about two ounces left.

IDA

Happy birthday to me.

She crunches a couple pills and drinks the rest of the gin.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - NIGHT

Ida enters, takes off her blouse and jeans, pulls on a pair
of sweat pants and a sweatshirt.

Of course she can't sleep so she gets on the exercise bike,
and turns on the TV, flips around. Nothing. She sees that the
VCR is on. She hits play. We hear:

TEACHER

You're a naughty little girl,
aren't you? You know what happens
to naughty little girls?

Ida gasps and turns off the tape.

IDA

Oh my god, Jay...

She jumps off the bike, paces. She grabs a fat joint from her
cigarette pack, searches in her discarded jeans for matches.
As she does this, she notices the big blob of Peanut Buster
Parfait on her discarded blouse.

Ida, with the joint behind her ear now, throws her clothes
into the washing machine. She notices a wallet sitting on
the shelf above the machine.

Ida opens the wallet. We see various pieces of Jay's ID in
the card-holding section. Then Ida opens the bill fold, no
cash, but we see the edge of a card.

We see Ida's face as she pulls the card out and looks at it.
At first she appears puzzled, but then she smiles.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Ida is running up the stairs to the second floor.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ida knocks on the door.

IDA

Morrie. Morrie...?

She opens the door. No Morrie.

IDA

Morrie, where are you?

MORRIE

(whispering)

Shhh! What is it?

Ida goes over to the stairway that leads to the attic room.
Morrie is camped on the landing outside Jay's door.

IDA

(whispering)

What are you doing up there?

MORRIE
(whispers)
I don't want him to...

Morrie uses his fingers to mime little legs running away. Ida rolls her eyes.

MORRIE
(whispers)
What are you doing?

Ida silently gestures for him to come down. He shakes his head no, gestures for her to come up. Like little kids.

Big brother wins. Exasperated, Ida tiptoes up to the landing. She smiles, waves the wallet. They speak in hushed whispers.

MORRIE
What is it?

IDA
Look. I found in Jay's wallet...

She pulls out the card to show to Morrie. It's a Wayne Gretzky rookie card. From Jay's beloved collection.

MORRIE
So..?

IDA
So he didn't give everything away.
He couldn't! Because somewhere
inside he's still Jay. Still
connected.

As Morrie sceptically studies the card, Jay, in his underwear, opens the door. Morrie hides the card. Ida hides the wallet.

JAY
(agitated/whiny)
What are you guys doing?

IDA
Um...we just remembered it's my
birthday. And I was hoping, as a
special birthday gift...that
um...you guys would smoke a joint
with me.

She grabs joint tucked behind her ear. Jay is tempted.

IDA
Self-control doesn't equal self
realization, you know.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ida, Morrie and Jay at the table. The light above the stove illuminates the room. The kitchen feels cozy and dream-like.

Ida flicks the Zippo and a flame leaps up, lighting her face as she sparks the joint and inhales.

IDA
(holding breath/smiling)
Just like the old days.

JAY
Yeah, except in the old days you
guys'd be in the basement burning
incense so Mom & Dad wouldn't know.

IDA
(exhales/laughs)

MORRIE
(faux joviality)
And in the old days, none of us had
been arrested for touching a little-
-

IDA
Morrie!

MORRIE
We have to deal with this!

Jay gets up to storm out. Ida catches hold of his arm.

IDA
Wait. Please!
(to Morrie)
Can we just--can we not talk about
that right now? Can we not just
chill for, like, ten minutes?

MORRIE
(sighs)
...Fine.

IDA
(to Jay)
Here. C'mere...

This sequence should be shot in a poetic fashion. It's a metaphor for the siblings breathing their unique qualities into one another. Together they represent the psyche in balance: The Id, the Ego, the Super Ego.

Ida puts the joint backward in her mouth, holds Jay's head between her hands and blows a super toke into his mouth.

IDA
(to Morrie)
Your turn...

Ida blows a super toke into Morrie's mouth.

Jump cut to Jay blowing a super toke into Ida's mouth.

Jump cut to Morrie blowing a super toke into Jay's mouth.

Jump cut to Jay blowing a super toke into Morrie's mouth.

Jump cut to Morrie blowing a super toke into Ida's mouth.

End sequence with Jay coughing, smiling, stoned.

IDA
I think we need to do a birthday
toast. Let's see what we got.

She opens the cupboard, sees the bottle of Creme de Menthe.

IDA
Yeah! Time to kill this sucker!

She takes a swig. Bleh. She puts the bottle on the counter and fishes a tub of vanilla ice cream out of the freezer.

MORRIE
(stoned/giggly)
You know what's funny?

JAY
(goofy smile)
What?

MORRIE
My wife is gone, and your wife is
upstairs sleeping.
(giggles)

JAY
Yeah. My wife.
(giggles)

Ida pours the entire jumbo bottle of Creme de Menthe on top of ice cream in a blender. Hits 'blend'.

IDA

God, how can you have a wife? Why didn't you tell us?!

Ida looks for glasses. Only two left in the cupboard. She checks the dishwasher. Dirty. She pours soap, starts it.

JAY

There's nothing to tell. She wanted to get married, so I married her. It's meaningless to me.

IDA

Really?

MORRIE

She seems sweet.

JAY

Yeah. But she's a ditz.

IDA

Don't say that about your wife!

JAY

Why not? It's true.

IDA

"Sometimes kindness is wiser than truth."

JAY

Is that Khalil Gibran?

IDA

No. It's Columbo.

MORRIE

As in Lieutenant?

IDA

Yeah. For some reason I always remembered that line.

Jay snorts. Ida pours 2 drinks in glasses and one in a mug.

IDA

OK...

She hands them out. Morrie raises his glass.

MORRIE

To Ida.

JAY

Happy birthday, sis.

They clink and drink....mmmmm.

MORRIE

Like Shamrock Shake for adults!

IDA

Mmm! Remember those?

JAY

Hey, this has milk.

IDA

Relax. No cows died to make it.

Jay sips. Gets a big green moustache.

JAY

It's been months since I've had animal.

Morrie's stomach groans.

MORRIE

(giggly)

Yeah, well it's been months since I've had a bowel movement.

IDA

Are you serious?

MORRIE

Well, a real one, yeah. And about two weeks since anything.

IDA

Oh that's not healthy.

JAY

You need to eat more fibre.

MORRIE

Fibre? The only fibre I haven't eaten is Phentex yarn.

IDA

(laughs)

I know what you need, Morrie. You gotta move it around...

She drains her drink, exits. Jay and Morrie drain their drinks and follow. Morrie, tipsy, stumbles on his way out.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON an record album featuring smiling Hungarians in native costumes.

CLOSE ON needle dropping on the scratchy record.

IDA

C'mon, Morrie. You remember how...

Ida and Morrie dance a traditional Csarda--it starts off slowly then gets faster and faster.

Eventually, Morrie spins off to the side & Jay takes over.

Now Morrie eyes his old collection of vinyl. Hmm....

Jump cut to: a mid-eighties rock song ('Peaches' by the Stranglers? 'Tame' by the Pixies?)

Morrie moves/sings/air guitars to the music.

Jump cut to later: Lots of albums strewn on the floor.

Another, more mellow, song. Morrie sways with his eyes closed, a joint in his mouth, endearingly bad interpretive dance.

Ida is on the futon, her foot moving jittery to the beat.

Jay sits on the exercise bike, pedaling to the music and watching porn with the volume down.

Ida gets up and surveys the house-jack. She adjusts it a quarter of an inch to the right.

Then she goes for a cig. Pack's empty. She rummages through her purse. With car keys in hand, she gets up and exits.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Ida heads for her car.

INT. IDA'S CAR/PARKED - NIGHT

Ida checks the glove box and finds smokes. She lights one, drums her hands impatiently on the steering wheel.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jay wanders up from the basement (we still hear music below). He opens the fridge (he's got the munchies), stares. There's a bag of mini-carrots next to the bowl of marinating steaks that never got cooked after Paul & Laura split.

Jay bends in/reaches for the carrots, but gets a big whiff of raw garlicky meat. His nostrils flare.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Ssssss. Flames leap up as a juicy steak gets tossed onto the barbecue grill. Jay stares intently at the meat. Waits.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - NIGHT

'Bdump bdump' sound of needle skipping at the album end

Morrie is watching the porn tape and obviously getting aroused. With resolve, he stands and turns off the TV.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jay looks in the cupboard for a plate. No go. He opens the dishwasher. Steam pours out from the recently completed cycle. He bends into it, inhales. He pulls out a plate, marvels at its cleanliness and warmth, presses it against his neck/chest.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Morrie, stoned/invigorated, exits in his PJs. As he weaves drunk down the driveway, Ida pokes her head out of her car.

IDA
Hey, where you going?

MORRIE
Gotta see my woman. Bring her home.
(beat)
You should sleep.

IDA
I wish.

MORRIE
Since when do you have trouble sleeping?

IDA
Um...since a couple years ago.

MORRIE
Whoa! So ever since Gary's--

IDA
No. Since before that...Since I left.

MORRIE
(mulling it over)
I thought you wanted to leave?

IDA
I thought so too...

She looks at Morrie; he realizes she regrets having left.

MORRIE
You're not going to see him...

Ida shrugs.

MORRIE
Jesus Ida, can't you wait a month?
I'll have tenure in a month!

IDA
And Gary will be married in a month!

MORRIE
Are you even serious about this? I mean, settling down here before was just too dull for you...not enough "fun". Well guess what? Life with Gary now would be a lot less fun than it was two years ago.

IDA
You think I don't know that?
Anyway I've had it with fun. Fun isn't even fuckin' fun anymore!

MORRIE
(glances at Paul's)
Shhh!

IDA
Christ, Morrie. How long are you gonna let Paul bully you? He's been bullying you since you were five.

Morrie sighs. His stomach makes a big sick noise.

IDA
(softly/compassionately)
Remember those purple-nurples he
used to give you?

MORRIE
Remember the bruises?
(a few beats)
OK let me talk things over with
Betty.

Annoyed, Ida starts doing up her window.

MORRIE
It concerns her too, you know.

The window is up. Morrie sounds muffled through the glass:

MORRIE
We haven't had a vacation since
1999.

He stares beseechingly for a few seconds, then moves off.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jay finishes his steak, chawing at the bone like a hungry animal. He drops the stripped bone on the plate.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jay approaches his old bedroom. He opens the door a crack, sees his wife's bare calves splayed across the bed. He pushes the door open wider, revealing his wife asleep on her stomach, her naked ass to him.

End on Jay's face surveying the flesh, hungrily.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Morrie walks through the eerie and empty streets. He stops in front of Betty's sister's house.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Muffled rock'n'roll leaks out of Ida's car.

INT. IDA'S CAR/PARKED - NIGHT

Ida listens to aggressive music & mutters to herself. With determined self-righteousness, she starts the car/pulls out.

EXT. BETTY'S SISTER'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Morrie throws a pebble at the guest-room window. No response.

He looks around the yard and finds a little rubber chew toy. He flings it at the window. It lands with a diminutive squeak. No response. He picks it up and throws it again. Squeak.

INT. BETTY'S SISTER'S HOUSE/DAUGHTER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Betty, wearing earplugs, sleeps in the lower bunk. ANGELA, five-years-old, sleeps in the upper bunk.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/JAY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jay and his wife lie in bed post-coital. She touches the bandages on his head which have come uncoiled a little.

GILLIAN

It's like having sex with the mummy.

(mimes a monster action)

Graagh!!

Gillian laughs. Jay smiles tolerantly.

GILLIAN

Oh pooks, I missed you so much. Did you miss me?

JAY

(thinking it over)

Not really.

Gillian pulls away, pouts.

JAY

I thought we were going to be honest with each other? Don't you want me be to truthful?

She flips her back to him. Obviously not.

EXT. GARY'S STREET - NIGHT

Ida's car pulls up across from Gary's bungalow. She kills the engine and stares at the house.

EXT. BETTY'S SISTER'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Morrie throws the toy again. Squeak. No response.

Morrie sees the kids' trampoline in the yard. He drags it to the window, climbs on, starts jumping higher and higher.

INT. BETTY'S SISTER'S HOUSE/DAUGHTER'S ROOM - NIGHT

From inside we see Morrie bouncing up and down past the window. Angela wakes up and screams:

ANGELA
Ahhhhhhhhh!!

Betty bashes her head on the bunk as she lurches upright.

BETTY
What?! What is it?
(sees Morrie)
What the...?!

Betty gets up, comforts the girl.

BETTY
It's OK, honey, it's just Uncle
Morrie. Go to sleep, sweets.

EXT. BETTY'S SISTER'S HOUSE/BACKYARD - NIGHT

Betty opens the window. Morrie is still bouncing.

BETTY
(whispers)
What on earth are you doing?!

MORRIE
I need to talk to you.

BETTY
You're in your pajamas? Please go
home before somebody sees you!

MORRIE
But I need to talk--

She watches him bounce for a few seconds. She sighs.

EXT. BETTY'S SISTER'S HOUSE/FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Betty and Morrie sit on the front stoop. (Betty should appear very soft and vulnerable throughout this scene).

MORRIE

I want you to come home.

She doesn't answer. He takes her hand.

MORRIE

I love you.

BETTY

I love you too.
(sighs)

MORRIE

Don't worry, it'll be fine.

BETTY

I don't care anymore. I just want to start a family, whether you get tenure or not.

Morrie shifts in his seat, uncomfortable.

MORRIE

I thought we agreed we should have a stable, secure environment before we embark on that.

BETTY

But I don't want to wait any more. I just--I want to be a mom...

He doesn't respond. He looks troubled. Betty studies him.

BETTY

Oh my gosh, Morrie, please don't tell me this whole thing has been an excuse.

(frightened)

Don't you want to have children with me?

MORRIE

Of course I do! I swear! I'm just-- I'm scared, Betty.

BETTY

I have a decent job. We'll get by.

MORRIE

It's not that. It's this whole Jay business. I mean, first my father... now my brother...

He makes the 'crazy' sign.

MORRIE

(more to himself)

Maybe if there were some kind of prenatal screening. Unfortunately, you can't screen for that---

Tears stream down her face as she pulls her hand away.

BETTY

That's right, Morrie, you can't plan and control and figure out everything...(stands up) Sometimes you have to have a little faith.

MORRIE

Betty...wait.

She's gone. Morrie stares into the messy/happy front yard. A couple of still shots of the children's toys out there:

A plastic pool with a ball floating in it / A bike with streamers on the handle bars. / A doll with a sweet face.

Morrie gets up. Exits.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Morrie strides through town in his pajamas/slippers. Everything looks eerie in street-lamp light.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAWN

Morrie stands at the base of the clock-tower, looking down. He lies down on the pavement and looks up at the tower. He feels the asphalt with his fingers, breathes deeply.

Suddenly, a bird lands close to Morrie and looks at him for a long moment. The bird has a worm in its beak.

The bird flies to the top of the clock tower and appears to disappear into the bricks on the facade. Morrie sits up.

INT. UNIVERSITY/CLOCK TOWER - DAWN

Morrie huffs up the last few stairs, catches his breath.

He hears a tiny: peep. Morrie moves toward the sound...peep.

Morrie leans out far over the wall, it's dangerous and we feel it---he peers at the source of the sound: a tiny hole in one of the clock tower's bricks.

Inside the hole in the mortar is a nest. Parent bird feeds the worm to the baby.

Morrie straightens back up. Thinks it over. He mimes the 'leaning over' action he just did. He thinks again.

Morrie looks out at the town, smiles to himself.

Even though it's highly unlikely that his father met his demise in this way 20 years ago, Morrie now has the 'scintilla of logic' the scientist requires to make a leap of faith.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/JAY'S BEDROOM - DAWN

A sketch of a blue jay, wonky on the wall.

Jay and his wife, asleep, spooning.

EXT. GARY'S HOUSE - DAWN

Ida is leaning on her car, absently chewing her fingernails.

A newspaper sits outside Gary's front door.

Ida checks her watch. 6:00 a.m. As if on cue, the front door opens, and there is GARY --35-- in a wheelchair.

He leans down and tries to grab the paper. His arms move, but the fingers of the hands are only semi-functional. There are a number of deep scars across his handsome face and neck.

With difficulty, Gary scoops the paper. Then he looks up and sees Ida. A supremely tense moment.

She approaches, stops at the foot of the porch.

IDA
No, don't get up.

Surprised by her macabre/audacious joke, Gary laughs, shakes his head. They look at each other for a few moments.

GARY

You want to come in?

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - MORNING

Morrie strides up the driveway and onto the path leading to the porch. He suddenly turns and stares at where Ida's car was, and should still be. He frowns.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - MORNING

MORRIE

Ida?

Morrie comes down the stairs. No Ida.

Morrie sits on the edge of the bed and massages his belly.

Then he notices Ida's giant purse on the floor. Open. The mickey of gin and a bevy of prescription bottles are visible.

Morrie contemplates his sister's mental state.

INT. GARY'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Ida on the couch, sipping coffee. She is nervous and inordinately smiley. Gary sits opposite. It's a room full of books and comfortable furniture. Not conservative, but not hip or artsy in any way.

IDA

You took down the photos I did.

GARY

Well...

Gary shrugs, as if to say: what the hell do you expect?

IDA

You look good.

GARY

(small cynical laugh)

IDA

You do.

(few beats)

You look really good.

GARY

How's your bro?

IDA
Who, Jay?

GARY
I heard he was cracking up a bit.

IDA
Yeah... But you know, who isn't
cracking up a bit?
(laughs)
I know I am.

Gary doesn't laugh. He looks at her coldly as if to say: "I'm not. I'm just fine, thanks." An uncomfortable silence.

IDA
So listen, there's something I have
to tell you...

GARY
Don't worry about it.

IDA
No, it's important. Please?

Gary sighs.

IDA
Well, the thing is...a couple
months after I left... Well...you
know, I realized that I shouldn't
have. I mean, I was thinking about
coming back. I was just about to
call you, and then... you know.
And then I was afraid to come back.
I thought you'd think that I came
back just because of that. Out of
guilt or pity or something. And I
thought you'd hate that. That it
would doom us. You know?

Long silence as Gary takes this all in.

GARY
The funny thing is, I thought for
sure you'd come back after. Every
time the door to my room opened, I
expected it to be you.

IDA
I know. I should have. I wish I
had.

GARY
I was really looking forward to
telling you to piss off.

IDA
Oh.
(bitter laugh)
Yeah, I guess...

GARY
Anyway, Ida, what's done is done.
Life goes on.

Brief silence.

IDA
So...Ellen Thomas, huh?

GARY
Yup.

IDA
That's kind of hard to believe.

Gary shrugs.

IDA
We used to joke about her.

GARY
Times change. She happens to be a
very nice young woman.

IDA
She's nice, yeah. And she's
certainly young. What is she now,
24, 25?

GARY
28.

Brief silence.

IDA
You know she'll never make you
laugh.

GARY
I know she'll never make me cry.

Ida nods, processes, tries to contain her emotions, but
eventually dissolves into sobs--tortured animal sobs.

Gary watches her for a long while, but eventually goes over to comfort her.

GARY
Hey, shhhh....it's OK...I don't
blame you, you know.

She moves closer, grabs his arm, kisses his hand, presses it to her cheek. He doesn't pull away but doesn't react to it.

IDA
Mm, you smell so good.

She maneuvers herself onto his lap.

IDA
Am I hurting you?

GARY
I couldn't tell ya.

IDA
Sorry. That was stupid.

Gary notices Ida's ravaged fingernails.

GARY
You still doing that?

IDA
(small laugh)

She looks at his fingernails, which are fine.

IDA
Hey, you finally stopped!

GARY
Yeah. Paralysis really helps curb
nail-biting.

Ida buries her face in Gary's neck. Sighs deeply.

IDA
I'm so sorry...

GARY
It's not your fault, Ida.

After a bit of silence:

IDA
(muffled/in a tiny voice)
I love you.

Gary tries not to show any emotion. He doesn't respond.

IDA
...do you hate me?

GARY
You know I'll never hate you.

Ida breathes a sigh of relief, and then falls fast asleep on Gary's shoulder. She goes totally limp.

GARY
Ida?

She starts snoring a bit. He holds her for a while, being careful not to move and wake her.

He tries, unsuccessfully, to read his paper with her on him.

Eventually, he attempts to ever-so-gently hoist her onto the sofa. He gets her half on there, but then she slips down onto the floor. THUNK. But she doesn't wake up.

For the first time in two years Ida is in a deep slumber.

Gary watches her for a few long moments as if he's trying to decide something.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

A beam of sunlight pierces a crack in the curtains and nails Morrie right in the eye. He wakes up disoriented on the basement futon, squints at the wall clock. It's 11:06 am.

MORRIE
Fuck

Morrie bolts out of bed and up the stairs.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - DAY

Morrie runs in, madly stripping off his pajamas.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Gillian makes coffee. Jay's head rests on the messy table.

Morrie dashes in, buttoning his shirt.

MORRIE
Have you seen my keys?!

JAY
(hungover)
Shhh.

MORRIE
Uch!

He scans the table, finds the keys and runs out.

MORRIE
Don't leave, Jay! We need to talk!

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/DRIVEWAY - DAY

Morrie hits the button for the automatic garage door. It opens to an empty garage. Betty took the car to her sister's.

MORRIE
Shit!

Morrie is wild-eyed, thinking. He dashes back into the house.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

Morrie pulls out the Sporting World bag from the closet and upends the never-been-used inline skates.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY

Morrie bursts out of the house, on roller-blades. He skates awkwardly away with his briefcase in one hand.

INT. GARY'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ida is still asleep on the floor. (Gary has left the room).

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - DAY

Morrie blades madly to school.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Jay and Gillian are at the table, drinking coffee and reading the paper like a middle-aged, middle-class couple.

GILLIAN
More coffee, hon?

JAY
No, thanks.

GILLIAN
Something to eat?

JAY
No. I think I'd like to take a
bath.

EXT. UNIVERSITY/BUILDING - DAY

Morrie skates to an entrance and disappears inside.

INT. UNIVERSITY/HALLWAY - DAY

A COUPLE STUDENTS rubberneck Morrie as he blades past them to his classroom door and disappears inside.

INT. UNIVERSITY/CLASSROOM - DAY

Morrie, all sweaty, glides to his desk and bumps to a stop. Only one student remains: a STUDIOUS-LOOKING ASIAN GIRL.

MORRIE
(panting)
Thanks for waiting...
(panting)
...sorry I'm so...

The student checks her watch, gets up and exits.

Morrie slumps into his chair, panting. He finds some serviettes in his desk and wipes his face.

PAUL
(false jocularly)
Hey, look who finally made it in!

Morrie tries to muster a smile as Paul enters.

MORRIE
Rough morning.

PAUL
I can see that.

MORRIE
Car trouble.

PAUL
Really? Too bad.
(beat)
So listen...a couple of things,
guy.

MORRIE
Yeah?

PAUL
First of all: Jay. I feel I should
tell you, that as responsible
citizens, Laura and I concluded
that we needed to alert the
authorities as to his whereabouts.
Just in case.

MORRIE
(angry)
I see.

PAUL
We felt it was our duty, Morrie.
(beat)
Someone has to protect the innocent
and vulnerable from attack.

Morrie nods, biting his tongue.

PAUL
Now, about Ida.

MORRIE
What about her?

PAUL
(repressed rage)
Do you know where she was this
morning?
(beat)
I'm pretty sure she was at Gary's.
I drove by on my way in and I saw
her car parked on his street. I
would have stopped, but I didn't
want to be late for class.

MORRIE
My lateness this morning was
totally unavoidable. It's never
happened before and it won't happen
again.

PAUL

Your lateness is a secondary matter.

MORRIE

Well what do you want me to say, Paul?

PAUL

(angry but repressed)

You said-- you said before you were going to ensure that Ida stayed away from Gary. I'm just--I have to say I'm extremely disappointed. I trusted you, Morrie, and you didn't deliver. It just--it says a lot about your character and your ability to deliver.

Morrie gets the threat. Still:

MORRIE

Look, I'm sorry but I can't control Ida. She's an adult. And so is Gary. Even if Ida went to see him, I'm sure he can handle it.

PAUL

(furious)

No, he can't handle it! She is poison to him. She already destroyed his life once.

MORRIE

OK, you know what? I'm getting tired of Ida being blamed for what happened to Gary.

PAUL

(gasps)

Oh really?

MORRIE

Yes, really. Gary chose to get hammered and then drive his car a hundred miles an hour. How is that Ida's fault?

PAUL

He wouldn't have done it if she hadn't taken off on him like some...some wanton slut.

MORRIE

OK don't talk about my sister that way.

PAUL

Oh come on, Morrie, you know it's true. Ida's always been the town tramp.

Morrie, breathing fast, jumps up and gives Paul a vicious purple nurple. As he twists, he says:

MORRIE

Take that back.

PAUL

Owww! What the--?

Morrie twists harder. The roller-blades give him a pleasing height advantage.

MORRIE

I SAID TAKE IT BACK!

PAUL

(yowling in pain)
Owww...fine...I take it back!

Paul jerks away as Morrie lets go.

PAUL

You're fuckin' psychotic, pal! Just like the rest of your sicko family!

Morrie fake-lunges toward Paul, who lurches away frightened.

PAUL

What the fuck?!

As Paul flees the room, Morrie spits his quote back to him:

MORRIE

"Someone has to protect the innocent and vulnerable from attack!"

Totally surprised by himself, Morrie collapses on the edge of his desk and catches his breath.

After a few moments, he looks down at his roller-blades, then checks his watch.

Morrie pushes hard off the desk and glides to the door. He's feeling exhilarated and manly.

We notice the Newton's Cradle desk toy, which is click-clicking as the balls bounce back and forth.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - DAY

Water churns in the Jacuzzi tub where Jay and Gillian soak.

GILLIAN
This is, like, so regal. I feel
like a queen.

Jay is digging it big-time.

JAY
Mmmm...

INT. GARY'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ida, asleep, rolls over and clunks her head against the coffee table. She stirs and sits up. Remembers where she is.

IDA
Hello...?

INT. GARY'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Ida walks down the hall and into the empty kitchen.

Through the sliding doors she spies Gary having lunch outside with ELLEN THOMAS. Ellen is very plump and very pretty. She's wearing bad Lenscrafter glasses.

Ida freezes. Ellen and Gary laugh about something.

Suddenly, Ellen shields her eyes and squints at the kitchen.

ELLEN
(low audio)
I think Ida's up.

Ellen smiles and waves. Gary gestures for her to come outside.

Ida takes a deep breath and exits to the backyard.

EXT. GARY'S HOUSE/BACK PATIO - DAY

ELLEN
Hi, Ida! How are you?

IDA
Hey, Ellen.
(to both)
Um, sorry about that. I guess I
nodded off for a bit...

GARY
No worries.

ELLEN
(big smile)
Would you like some coffee? Are you
hungry?

Ellen--the epitome of nice--seems stressed. Ida is deeply
uncomfortable and confused by the dynamic.

IDA
Um, no...I gotta--I have to run.

ELLEN
Oh.

GARY
Are you sure?

IDA
Yeah.

ELLEN
Well... it's nice to see you.
(beat)
You look good!

Ida's hair is all askew, her mascara has run and she has
indentations on her face from sleeping on the floor.

IDA
Thanks.
(beat)
Congratulations on your...

ELLEN
Oh thank you! Thanks!
(beat)
And you too...I mean, I heard you
were a big photographer now.

IDA
Oh...no.
(laughs)
Not really.

GARY

I heard that too.

IDA

Oh well...I've kind of been exaggerating to Morrie about stuff.

GARY

Oh yeah?

IDA

I still take photos...and exhibit here and there. But as far as paying the bills... mostly I survive by doing these glamour shots of transvestites.

GARY

Seriously?

IDA

Yeah. I did one for a friend, and then word just spread.

GARY

Well, that's all right.

ELLEN

Yes. That sounds interesting!

IDA

(to Gary) Anyway...I should go...

ELLEN

Oh wait. I have something for you.

She stands up, finds her purse and fishes out an envelope.

ELLEN

If we'd known you were going to be in town we'd have sent it earlier.

She hands the envelope to Ida and then returns to her seat.

Ida looks at the wedding invitation in her hand. Tries hard to smile instead of cry.

IDA

Thanks.

ELLEN

I really hope you can make it.

IDA

It's nice of you to offer...but I'm
sure I'll be gone by then.

(laughs)

Anyway, I don't think Paul and
Laura would approve.

ELLEN

Well, it isn't Paul and Laura's
wedding, is it? So tough titties
for them.

(to Gary)

Right, Sweets?

GARY

Exactly right.

They smile warmly at each other.

IDA

I really have to run...

EXT. GARY'S HOUSE - DAY

A few seconds of the front of Gary's house, then pow: Ida
bursts out of the front door and bolts across the lawn, down
the street, and right past her car. All adrenaline and agony.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Morrie is seated on his usual bench. He checks his watch.
12:30. And here she comes: Sexy roller-blading girl.

This time when she passes, Morrie leaps up and follows. She
glances back, flirty/amused, as he struggles to gain
momentum.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Ida enters from a side street, still running full tilt but as
she moves across the grass and through the trees she begins
to gradually decelerate.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Morrie speeds up, gains momentum on his roller-blades.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Ida slows to a walk and then comes to a complete stop in the middle of one of the park's many paved paths.

She stands for a moment, thinking. Then she lies down in the middle of the path. She breathes deeply, looks up at the clouds and the trees, feels the asphalt with her fingers.

We see her anguish slowly dissolve into stillness.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Jay and Gillian in Morrie/Betty's bathrobes. Jay opens the fridge and stares inside.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY

A local police car trolls down the street and pulls into the driveway.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY

Jay puts a jar of pickles on the counter, fishes one out.

DOORBELL RINGS. Jay looks down the hall. Through the window he spies a MIDDLE-AGED FEMALE COP and a VERY YOUNG MALE COP.

JAY
(quietly)
Uh-oh spaghetti-o...

GILLIAN
Holy shit, Jay...
(shrieks)
RUN!!!!

The male cop cups his hand on the window and peers in, just in time to see Jay bolt out the back door.

YOUNG MALE COP
(low audio)
HEY!

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY

The Female Cop runs back to the car, the Male Cop chases Jay on foot.

EXT. PAUL & LAURA'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY

Laura is gardening when Jay vaults over the fence and plummets into her flower bed.

LAURA
(small scream)

He tramples a bunch of flowers on his way to the opposite fence and into the next backyard.

LAURA
Hey!

Now the cop comes over her fence. He tramples some more flowers in his pursuit of Jay.

LAURA
(gasps)

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S BACKYARD - DAY

Jay races through the next yard and vaults over the fence. The cop enters, draws his gun while chasing Jay.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Ida lies motionless in the middle of the path.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Morrie speeds quickly behind Roller-Blading Girl.

EXT. ANOTHER BACKYARD - DAY

Jay is chased by the Cop who stumbles/trips, his gun goes off, shooting a Greek-style garden sculpture in the face.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET/PARK - DAY

Jay runs out from behind a house. He bolts down the street and across it, and runs into the heavily treed park.

EXT. PARK -DAY

Roller-Blading Girl leads Morrie to a secluded spot. She slows to a stop, steps off the paved path into a wooded nook.

Morrie comes to a stop, breathing heavily. He leans on a tree for support. He looks at her come-hither face, at the glisten of perspiration covering her body.

He advances tentatively. She moves close.

MORRIE

Hi...um--

The girl makes the sign for 'shhh'. She reaches for his zipper. Shocked, he struggles for balance.

MORRIE

Oh! No! I don't think we
should...Um, Miss, excuse me, stop--

She goes down on him.

MORRIE

Miss... ahhhhh
(overcome, he sighs with
pleasure)

A few seconds later, Jay streaks by in Morrie's bathrobe.

Shocked, Morrie looks at him as if to say: JAY?!!

Jay keeps running, but looks back as if to say: MORRIE?!

Now the young cop runs by. He does a double take, but keeps pursuing Jay.

With a suction-y POP, Morrie pulls his penis out of Roller-Blading Girl's mouth.

ROLLER-BLADING GIRL

Hey--

MORRIE

Sorry.

Morrie stuffs his penis in his pants as he hobbles quickly back to the paved path.

MORRIE

I have to go. Plus I love my wife.
(calling out)
Sorry! Thanks!

Morrie skates quickly away on the path that swoops gradually toward the direction in which Jay was heading.

EXT. PARK -DAY

Jay bolts through the wooded area.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Morrie blades quickly along the path.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Ida lays motionless, staring up at the clouds.

EXT. PARK - DAY

STRANGE MUSIC UP AND UNDER...

An OVERHEAD SHOT from high in the sky. We see the siblings converging on the spot where Ida lays.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Jay runs through the wooded area.

EXT. PARK -DAY

Morrie is going too fast to stop when he shoots over a little hill and spots someone ahead, laying across the path.

MORRIE

HEY!!!

ANGLE ON:

Ida turns her head and sees Morrie speeding toward her.

She gasps, jumps up and leaps off the path.

Jay bursts out of the treed area and runs into Ida, pushing both her and himself directly into Morrie's path.

They all collide in a spectacular crash (slow motion?)

STRANGE MUSIC ENDS

A few moments of the sibs laying scattered on the ground.

Now they start to stir and sit up as the cop bursts from the trees and pulls his gun on Jay.

YOUNG MALE COP
(panting heavily)
OK...good...don't move.

IDA
Hey, he's not moving. Can you put
the gun down?!

YOUNG MALE COP
Ida?

Ida squints at the young cop.

IDA
Will?

He smiles and blushes deeply. All self-conscious and nervous.

YOUNG MALE COP
It's Phil. How are you doing?!

Ida shrugs. Aside from the mussed hair and raccoon mascara,
she's now bruised and bleeding.

YOUNG MALE COP
I had a really great time the other
nigh--

BAM Phil shoots Jay in the upper arm. Ida screams.

YOUNG MALE COP
Damn!

INT. HOSPITAL/WAITING ROOM - LATE DAY

Morrie is on a pay phone.

MORRIE
Can you tell Betty what's going on
when she gets back?
(beat)
And tell her that I love her, OK?
And...that I want to impregnate
her. Yes. As soon as possible.
Right. OK, thanks Alice. We'll
have to have a barbecue or
something soon. OK.

Morrie hangs up the pay phone he was using and returns to
where Ida is seated, reading a magazine.

They are both banged up, but Morrie fared worse. He has stitches on his face, bandages on both knees (where the pants ripped), and on his arms/wrists where the skin scraped away.

He's removed the roller-blades and wears green paper slippers.

TWO METRO COPS (not the local cops from earlier) appear from inside the emergency ward and leave the hospital.

A few moments later, Jay emerges and smiles at his siblings.

INT. TAXI/MOVING - LATE DAY

Morrie, Ida and Jay ride home in a taxi.

MORRIE

So what did they say?

JAY

Just to keep it clean. He barely grazed me.

MORRIE

No, I mean the cops. What did the cops say?

JAY

Oh. They asked me some questions and took a DNA swab.

(beat)

I'm not some big suspect, you know. They're taking DNA from everyone and their grandma.

MORRIE

Yeah, well everyone and their grandma didn't get arrested last week for...

(aware of taxi driver)

...you know what.

JAY

That was a misunderstanding.

IDA

Oh Jay. Won't you tell us what happened last week?

JAY

I touched a little girl.

The DRIVER checks Jay out in the rear-view mirror.

JAY

But it's not what you think.

MORRIE

Well what was it then?

JAY

I had this idea...

Cut to bleached out footage from opening sequence in film. A figure moving through crowds, touching this person and that.

JAY

I decided I was going to touch people. Just go out in public and touch them, nothing harmful or hurtful. I wanted to break down spatial barriers and see what would happen. Like when you get on an empty subway car and sit right next to the only person on there?

(laughs)

Anyway, most of the touches were sort of interesting, but then one time in the park, I saw this kid...

EXT. PARK - DAY

A LITTLE GIRL sitting on a bench. Jay sits beside her. He gently touches a Band-Aid just above her knee. She smiles up at him. He smiles back.

Suddenly Jay is punched in the head by the girl's MOTHER--a mountain of a woman. Jay falls violently off the bench. The Mother kicks his head in a cyclone of protective female rage.

The little girl watches, confused and terrified.

INT. TAXI/MOVING - LATE DAY

MORRIE

Holy shit, you could have been killed.

JAY

Luckily someone intervened. But then the cops came. I had to go to the hospital and get stitches. Mama bear gave me a concussion, so I had to stay up all night. That's why I went for a walk... which was when I got run over.

IDA

So you were kind of out of it when
you lay down on the road?

JAY

Maybe a little.

IDA

Sure you were. You see! Jay's OK.

Morrie doesn't look entirely convinced.

MORRIE

Well I'm delighted you're not a
child molester. That's swell. But
you can't just go around touching
people.

JAY

People need to be jolted.

MORRIE

No. Life is tough enough without
being 'jolted' by strangers. What
with all the missed buses & overdue
tax returns & evil bosses & melted
down hard-drives, they have to be
touched by a stranger too?

(beat)

Not to mention the overhanging
threat of terrorist attacks...bird
flu, global warming... Cancer...

The siblings look at each other, then away.

MORRIE

And on top of it all the total
randomness of a pitiless universe--
you step a half an inch to the left
or the right and the whole world
changes in an instant...

Morrie's talking about their dad, and they know it.

MORRIE

Life is bloody hard, Jay. People
don't need to be jolted.

(upset)

They need to be... comforted.

Jay turns his head to hide his tears (he finally understands
he's being too hard on everybody, including himself).

JAY

Maybe...

Ida, in the middle, takes her sibling's hands and holds them.

The cab pulls to the curb in front of Morrie's. He pays the now thoroughly depressed driver.

MORRIE

(smiling to driver)

Have a nice evening!

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - LATE DAY

The sibs exit the taxi and are heading for the house when Morrie spots a fresh turd on his lawn.

MORRIE

OK, you see? This is what I'm talking about. This is exactly what I'm talking about.

This...this...

(primal scream)

Arrggghh!

Morrie doubles over and clutches his stomach. He looks surprised, then gets an odd little smile on his face. He walks quickly to the middle of Paul and Laura's lawn.

EXT. PAUL & LAURA'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - LATE DAY

Morrie undoes his pants, pulls them down, and squats.

IDA

Oh my god. Morrie! Yes!

(laughs/cheers)

Oh my god! Go!!!!

Ida half hides her eyes. Jay cheers/applauds.

We just see Morrie's face as his first bowel movement in two weeks erupts spectacularly onto the pristine lawn. It's more cathartic than an orgasm. Hallelujah.

MORRIE

Aaahhhhhh.....

JAY

Yeah. Fucken-Ay! You go!

Paul & Laura's dog appears in the front window of their house and starts barking at Morrie who has just finished.

MORRIE
(large satisfied sigh)

Morrie pulls up his pants. He's buttoning them as Laura appears at the window to see what's up. She's holding the baby, and can't really tell what's going on.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - LATE DAY

Morrie strides back toward his house. Ida and Jay follow:

IDA
I can't believe you did that!

JAY
That was awesome!

IDA
Uch, but you reek!

The door closes. A few moments of stillness. Then:

EXT. PAUL & LAURA'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - LATE DAY

Laura comes out of her house to investigate. She moves tentatively across the lawn, just as Betty pulls in next door in the Volvo.

Now Laura spies the giant pile of crap and figures it out.

LAURA
(hysterical.)
Ahh!!! Oh! Oh my gosh!! Oh!!!

Betty jumps out of the car and rushes toward Laura.

BETTY
Are you OK?!

Now Betty sees it.

BETTY
Ew! Uch!

LAURA
Morrie did that!

BETTY
Pardon?

LAURA
Morrie just did that on my lawn!

BETTY

No!

LAURA

Yes! Morrie did that.

BETTY

You mean..?

LAURA

Yes! I saw him, Betty! Morrie shat on my lawn!!

BETTY

No.

LAURA

And he attacked Paul this morning!

BETTY

What?

LAURA

He went crazy at school and attacked Paul!

BETTY

He did?

Betty realizes full well that Morrie's not getting tenure.

LAURA

Yes he did! He's sick, Betty.
Morrie is sick!

(beat)

Now I'm not blaming you, but I'll tell you one thing: I'm not cleaning that up. Either Morrie is cleaning it up or you're cleaning it up!

Laura crosses her arms over her chest.

LAURA

And I'm talking in the next ten minutes, Betty!

BETTY

Oh fuck off, Laura.

LAURA

(gasps)

What?!

BETTY
I said: Fuck Off.

Betty walks away toward her house.

BETTY
You're cleaning it up!

Laura's mouth hangs open.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BEDROOM - LATE DAY

Morrie comes out of the ensuite bathroom, showered, in a towel, just as Betty enters the bedroom.

MORRIE
Hey.

BETTY
Oh my gosh...

She sees all his stitches, scrapes and bruises.

MORRIE
It's been kind of a strange day.

BETTY
I know. Laura was just telling
me...

They stare at each other for a moment. Morrie waits for Betty to tear into him, but instead she starts to laugh.

Now Morrie starts to laugh. Now they both begin to laugh hysterically. They clutch each other and fall onto the bed.

Eventually the fit subsides. Then it starts up again. Then it subsides again. Morrie puts his hand on his stomach.

MORRIE
I feel better.

BETTY
Me too.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/KITCHEN - NIGHT

A large platter of burnt pancakes.

Betty, Morrie, Ida, Jay and Gillian seated around the table.

GILLIAN

I wanted to have dinner ready, but
this is the only thing I really
know how to make...

MORRIE

That was very thoughtful of you.

Morrie helps himself and passes the unappetizing platter.

MORRIE

(to Jay)

It looks good, doesn't it?

Jay doesn't answer. Ida jumps in:

IDA

Looks great.

GILLIAN

It was really nice to cook for
someone else again!

Everyone begins to eat the horrible food.

GILLIAN

How are they?

Morrie washes down a mouthful with a swig of water.

MORRIE

Mmm. Yum!

BETTY

Very...fluffy.

Gillian smiles.

GILLIAN

(to Jay)

Do you like them? Is it OK?

This is what she really cares about. Morrie and Ida look at
Jay, awaiting his painfully truthful answer. Jay struggles.

GILLIAN

(smile fading)

We could order something...

JAY

(lying)

No. They're good. I like them.

He forks a chunk into his mouth.

JAY
Mmmm. Delish!

Gillian glows with pleasure.

Morrie exchanges a look/smile with Ida. He knows now that Jay is going to be OK.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - NIGHT

All three levels of the house are lit up. Fade to white.

EXT. VOLVO - DAY

Close on a car wheel spinning fast.

INT. VOLVO - DAY

The back seat is full of luggage. Betty is in the passenger seat, studying a road map.

Morrie, wearing a T-shirt and sunglasses, is tapping his fingers on the steering wheel in time to the radio music.

He smiles a bit as his foot presses down on the gas pedal and the town retreats in the rear view mirror.

EXT. GILLIAN & JAY'S TORONTO APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Long-shot of a bus pulling up in front of the building. Jay and Gillian get out and enter the building together.

EXT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/FRONT PORCH -DAY

Ida's hair is done up, and she has make-up on. She's wearing a bathrobe and sitting on the porch in the sunshine.

She has given herself a pedicure and has toilet paper between her toes. She brushes clear nail polish onto her fingernails, caps the bottle and waves her hands to dry them.

Now she closes her eyes and sits perfectly still in the sun.

CLOSE ON Ida's hand. Her fingernails have grown considerably. We see that the nail polish is a bottle of 'Stop 'n Grow'.

INT. MORRIE'S HOUSE/BASEMENT - DAY

A fancy cocktail dress is laid out over the easy chair.

A large wrapped wedding gift with a big bow.

A wedding card laying open. The unsigned card has the message: Wishing you happiness, today, tomorrow & ever after.

Camera pans up from the card past the house-jack to a framed photo on the wall of Ida, Jay and Morrie as kids.

Jay sits on Ida's shoulders, Ida sits on Morrie's shoulders. All are smiling and have their arms out to balance perfectly.

Pull back to reveal the framed photo wonky on the wall.

Now we hear a creaking/popping of hardwood as the house-jack finally does its job.

The photo shimmies a little and then settles to a perfectly level position as the house itself shifts back into balance.

FADE SLOWLY TO BLACK