

# JACK & BOBBY

**"Pilot"**

**Written by  
Vanessa Taylor**

**Story by  
Greg Berlanti & Vanessa Taylor**

**Based on a concept by  
Scoop Cohen & Brad Meltzer**

*Planned - Tale  
Cohen*

**Berlanti-Liddell Productions  
Thomas Schlamme Productions**

**Production Draft  
February 12, 2004**

Jack & Bobby - "Pilot" - 2/12/04 - Production Draft

JACK & BOBBY

~~Jack & Bobby~~  
"Pilot"

SETS

INTERIORS

Nondescript Documentary Background - Day  
Car - Day  
Circuit City - Day  
McCallister House - Day & Night  
    Kitchen - Day  
    Jack & Bobby's Room - Day & Night  
    Grace's Room - Night  
    Grace's Study - Day & Night  
Lecture Hall - Day  
Truman High School - Day  
    Cafeteria - Day  
    Hallway - Day  
    Classroom - Day  
    Another Hallway - Day  
    Administration Office - Day  
Faculty Residence - Night  
Administration Building - Day  
    President's Private Office - Day  
Hospital - Day  
    Room - Day  
    Hallway - Day

EXTERIORS

Hart Street - Hart, Missouri - Day  
Hart Street - Day & Night  
Plains State University - Establishing - Day  
    Campus - Day  
Truman High School - Day & Night  
    Eighth Grade Lunch Benches - Day  
    Football Field - Night  
    Bleachers - Day & Night  
    By the Bonfire - Night  
Faculty Residence - Night

TEASER

FADE IN:

Before we are anywhere, we are ON:

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOS, in succession, famous ones of famous Presidents: ~~FDR at Yalta~~, JFK with Bobby during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Johnson, head in hands, during Vietnam...

SABLE (V.O.)

The greatest of the American Presidents were inarguably people of extraordinary strengths and weaknesses... Complicated individuals undertaking an impossible task. How could a single image ever be expected to tell their story?

1 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. DAY.

1

A MAN, late 60s, with a craggy face, equally enamored of his topic and the sound of his own voice, expounds from his chair.

SABLE

Since the first presidential photograph was taken, of James K. Polk in 1848...

A SUPER identifies: "Presidential Historian, Victor Sable."

SABLE (CONT'D)

...each President has had one defining image associated with him or her.

A second SUPER locates us at: "Harvard University, 2059."

SABLE (CONT'D)

These images are fascinating because we know, or think we know, the President's preoccupations in that moment: the outcome of the Second World War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, ending the Vietnam conflict...

Now photos of Presidents we don't recognize: a tall man with a grave expression giving a press conference...

~~SABLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)~~

... Spencer Harvey's resignation in the wake of corporate scandal...

... a woman stepping off an airplane...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

1

SABLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
President Helman's first visit to Asia  
after the Plague of 2018...

Another MAN rails at the gathered members of Congress.

SABLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Arthur Branford's desperate struggle to  
extricate this country from the War of the  
Americas.

...last, we FREEZE on the B&W photograph of a man (late 40s)  
shot from BEHIND as he sits near the back of a makeshift stage.  
We can't make out his face as he's slightly hunched over, head  
in hands, praying, thinking, something... A SEA of PEOPLE  
await whatever he's about to say.

SABLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
No documentary of President McCallister's  
administration could be complete without  
mention of this photo. Taken just before  
his election in 2040, it tells the story  
of a fiercely determined man on the cusp  
of wresting victory from the jaws of near  
certain defeat.

CUT TO: one last photo: BLACK AND WHITE, a boy running.

SABLE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Whether it tells the whole story, well,  
that's another question altogether,  
isn't it?

And the picture comes alive. The image morphs to COLOR as the  
boy cruises into town, his breath visible in the cold  
Midwestern air. A SUPER informs us we are in: "HART, MISSOURI,  
PRESENT DAY."

The boy, now passing the ancient mom-and-pop shops you see in  
college towns, is JACK MCCALLISTER, 16, track star, big  
brother, beleaguered son. Meanwhile... *dear*

2 INT. CAR. DRIVING. SAME TIME. *dear*

2

GRACE MCCALLISTER talks animatedly as she drives.

GRACE  
...which is how we know that we as a  
country do not value intellect...

PAN OVER to SEE the unlikely audience for said tirade, her  
thirteen-year-old son, BOBBY. Smallish, geekish, adorablisth. *dear*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

2

GRACE (CONT'D)

We value capital and power and influence.  
This is why we as a nation are -- and for  
the foreseeable future, will continue to  
be -- chronically stupid...

She pulls the car to a stop.

3

EXT. HART STREET. CONTINUOUS.

3

Grace steps out of the Volvo without so much as a hiccup in  
her fluent tirade. Bobby struggles to keep up.

GRACE (CONT'D)

You understand that you, as my son, and  
the son of your father -- a man of  
brilliance and academic integrity -- have  
a duty not only to pursue your education  
but also... not to become a mindless  
blithering moron like the rest of the  
country.

(beat)

And your brother Jack's friends.

4

INT. CIRCUIT CITY. SAME.

4

Inside, Jack lobbies phlegmatic sales clerk JUSTIN.

JACK

So she'll come in --

JUSTIN

Get a birthday present.

JACK

Not just a present. She has to buy a TV.

JUSTIN

What if she wants something else?

JACK

She's coming specifically to get the TV.  
All you gotta do is not let her get off-  
track, alright?

JUSTIN

I was salesperson of the month July and  
August, I think I can handle it.

Off Jack, far from convinced,

5

INT. CIRCUIT CITY. DAY.

5

Grace strides down the aisle with Bobby in tow.

GRACE

...of course the idea that we're stupid because we sit around watching TV all the time is just as simplistic as the idea that kids shoot other kids because they witness violence in the media... But, what is clear is that the majority of television caters to the majority of Americans and is, as a result, garbage.

BOBBY

It's mainly the news we're interested in.

One aisle over, Jack has been lurking and is now (unseen by Grace) neck-and-neck with Bobby, nodding approvingly.

GRACE

Are you sure you want the television?

Jack's having a heart attack: this is the nightmare moment he's been dreading. He stares daggers at Bobby.

BOBBY

Yes.

GRACE

Well, it's your birthday. Your mind...

They arrive at the TV section where Justin waits.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Hi. Are you the responsible agent here?

JUSTIN

This is my... section...

GRACE

Good. We're interested in purchasing a...

But before she can finish, something distracts her and she drifts purposefully from the televisions to... a SYNTHESIZER.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Hmm. Now what's this...

She goes over to it as Jack motions to Justin to get her under control, but the guy never knew what hit him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

5

GRACE (CONT'D)  
Bobby, look at this... It's got a tutorial system. It'll actually teach you to play...

Jack glares at Justin, who catches himself in time to offer:

JUSTIN  
You know, I've got a great deal on a twenty-seven-inch flat-screen over here if you want to just take a --

GRACE  
It does all the instruments. You could compose a whole symphony on this, Bobby.

She's lost in the joys of the synth. Bobby looks helplessly at Jack, who's exasperated but not surprised.

BOBBY  
But Jack and I talked about getting the TV. That way I could watch the Cartoon Network and Jack could watch --

Grace stops, takes Bobby's shoulders in her hands.

GRACE  
Bobby. Do you know why I never learned to play the piano? Because when I wanted to learn, I was already sixteen and I thought I was too old. But when I was twenty, I still wanted to learn, and I could have, in those four years. But again I thought I was too old, then when I was twenty-five... You see what I'm getting at. The time is now. You're young enough, something you learned to do right now, you could be a grand master at by the time you're thirty.  
(beat)  
It's your decision.

SMASH CUT TO:

6 INT. CIRCUIT CITY. DAY.

6

Grace, Bobby following, heads back down the aisle as Justin carries the synth to the check-out line.

JUSTIN  
You want me to carry this out to your car?

GRACE  
No, thank you. My son can carry it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

6

JUSTIN

It's pretty heavy, I don't think he --

GRACE

No, my other son.  
(to boys)

I'm going to the office to grade papers.  
See you at home, Jack.

Jack pops up from behind a shelf as Grace exits, leaving her sons in the wake of her force of will.

JUSTIN

You want it gift-wrapped, man?

As Jack glares at Justin then at Bobby, shaking his head.

SABLE (PRELAP)

Much has been documented about President  
McCallister's childhood.

7

INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

7

SABLE

But nothing written will ever answer the most interesting questions. Was it clear already in the boy growing up the struggle to take place between his noblest ambitions and his basest flaws? Was the man, so often referred to as the "Great Believer," a believer from the beginning?

8

EXT. HART STREET. DAY.

8

Jack and Bobby walk home, Jack carrying the huge box.

BOBBY

It could be cool. I could be in a band.

JACK

Yeah? With who?

BOBBY

Warren.

JACK

You need more than two people for a band, dumbass.

BOBBY

It could be cool, I mean if I got to play really well...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

8

JACK

That's not the point. You could learn to twirl a baton by the time you're thirty, or water ski, or tame lions. Who cares? The point is it's not what you wanted. It's what she told you you wanted and you agreed like you always do.

BOBBY

...Not always.

They're now passing the university president's "cottage" -- an ornate brick manor set against the lake, a Midwestern Tara.

Jack spots a pretty BLONDE GIRL on the steps, reading. From across the street Jack watches the house. A MOVING TRUCK unloads out front. He motions to Bobby.

JACK

(giving Bobby the synth)  
Hold this...

Jack moves closer to get a better look.

BOBBY

That's where the college president lives. The new one's moving in. Mom says he's a "money-grubbing whore."

JACK

Shut up.

BOBBY

Is that his daughter?

JACK

How should I know? Have I seen anything you haven't?

BOBBY

Are you coming? Jack?

Bobby starts to sway under the weight of his "gift."

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Jack...

Jack snatches the gigantic box and steadies Bobby before resuming walking. Bobby falls in step.

JACK

C'mon, already.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

8

They resume, receding from us down the tree-lined street.

SABLE (V.O.)

If we could see into his boyhood years and watch him become the man he became, would we have known then that we were in the presence of greatness? Could we have seen it?

END OF TEASER.

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

9 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE. 9

We return to our documentary to meet an African-American, 60, impressive, a MAN of stature and gravity with a sly grin.

MARCUS

I've known the McCallister family the longest of anybody...

SUPER: "Marcus French, Senior Counsel to the President."

MARCUS (CONT'D)

I met Jack when we were thirteen. He was my best friend. He was... well, he was everything you wanted to be, and you loved and hated him for it. And Bobby, well, Bobby was different. Guess someone had to be, mother like that...

10 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY. 10

Grace packs items in a sack lunch: Laughing Cow cheese, water crackers, Mandarin orange slices. Not the usual lunch of an eighth-grader. Jack searches for a bowl until finally, giving up, he takes one from the dishwasher and washes it.

JACK

You know, you're supposed to be able to eat off the plates after they've been in the dishwasher.

GRACE

Intuitive, Jack.

JACK

Maybe if you ever got a real repairman. It's been broke for two weeks.

GRACE

It's "broken," as you know, not "broke" and I'm calling today. Where's your brother? He'll be late on his first day. Bobby!

11 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. JACK & BOBBY'S ROOM. DAY. 11

BOBBY (O.S.)

Houston, this is Magellan 3, do you read?

We enter on:

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

JACK'S SIDE OF THE ROOM

A shrine to normalcy. Sports crap mostly, some music posters. Somehow the room is darker as we move onto:

BOBBY'S SIDE OF THE ROOM

...which is a horrific mess. Space mess. The lair of a budding mad scientist. A model galaxy dangling overhead. Star charts on the wall. NASA shuttle models on a bookcase.

BOBBY (O.S.)

...we've lost power in one of our thrusters. Do you copy?

MOVE ONTO Bobby, joystick in hand, staring intently at his computer. On his head, he wears a homemade facsimile of an astronaut's headset.

BOBBY

Roger that, Houston, we continue our approach...

ON THE SCREEN we see the simulated terrain of the Red Planet as Bobby touches down on Mars.

GRACE (O.S.)

Bobby!

BOBBY

Coming!

But he doesn't, not yet. This is his sanctuary.

12 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

12

Grace comes to sit next to Jack at the table.

GRACE

Now, listen, Jack. Your brother's first day at the high school is bound to be difficult. I want you to look out for him.

JACK

Only so much I can do...

GRACE

I'm serious. You have to protect him. That's what brothers do. Alright?

Bobby comes tromping down the stairs at that moment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

12

BOBBY

I landed successfully on the Red Planet with only two-thirds of my thrusters operational.

JACK

Wow.

Graces glares at Jack, pulls something from behind the table.

GRACE

Bobby, I have something for you...

She now reveals a LEATHER SATCHEL, with some wear on it.

GRACE

It was your father's...

Bobby's eyes light up. Jack's roll.

GRACE

Back when he was a graduate student, doing research in... Peru. I was waiting for college, but I thought you might like to have it for your first day. For luck.

BOBBY

Thanks, Mom.

JACK

Gonna be late.

Jack puts his stuff away as Grace hands Bobby a letter.

GRACE

Your note to get out of gym. Don't lose it. And call me on my cell if you have any questions or concerns or if you just want to talk. Have you got your inhaler?

Bobby fishes in his pocket, holds it up. A HONK from outside and Jack grabs his bag as if to go by himself.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Uh -- not so fast. You will take your brother.

JACK

Marcus has the truck, there's no room in there and --

GRACE

You will take. Your brother. Got it?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

12

Jack exits. Bobby trundles behind him. Grace sighs, watching.

MARCUS (PRELAP)

Well, yeah, I guess with the names "Jack" and "Bobby" the political career wasn't entirely unexpected....

13 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

13

MARCUS

...but I don't think that's what she had planned for them. I always assumed their names were an ode to her chosen profession. Grace was a highly regarded history professor at the University. A brilliant woman, eccentric... lonely.

14 EXT. PLAINS STATE UNIVERSITY. ESTABLISHING. DAY.

14

The imposing brick structures of the foremost university in the state. The graceful greenery of the main quad. Academe.

GRACE (V.O.)

As you will all recall from your own experience of the Great Depression...

15 INT. LECTURE HALL. DAY.

15

Grace lectures to a packed hall. She's confident, charismatic, one might almost say... presidential.

GRACE (CONT'D)

No, you weren't born yet. But can any of you tell me you haven't lived through a time of financial volatility, punctuated by revelations of corporate corruption, coupled with intense unrest abroad?

(beat)

That time is today. That time is also 1929. Past is present. Is future. Whether these, the dark hours of the dawning century are a portal to a nation-sweeping despair similar to that we experienced in the thirties, or a pathway to an age of invention and technological advances, who can know for certain -- Who can look into the future and see which way the road will bend? And who are the leaders who will determine whether we emerge from these days of strife and chaos into light or darkness?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15

The students listen, rapt, as fascinated and alive as Grace herself. She checks the clock.

GRACE (CONT'D)

End of History for next time. And... drop your papers in the box.

As Grace gathers her stuff, a good-looking male UNDERGRAD, TIM LESCHLY, brimming with charm and self-confidence, stops.

TIM

Professor McCallister. I wanted to talk to you.

The students file out behind them. Tim begins to explain.

TIM

This weekend I got back together with a woman I dated two years ago. It was insane, we didn't leave her room the entire weekend it was like a movie, it was crazy. That's never happened to me before, it kinda caught me by surprise. You get it.

He smiles, confident that he's charmed and appealed to her.

GRACE

Yeah, I get it.

She picks up the last of her things.

GRACE

You thought that because I seem moderately in the know you could utilize your lost weekend to give yourself an unfair advantage over other students. You've bravely committed yourself to spontaneity, Mister Leschly. Now take it a step further and realize that everything of value has its cost. In this case the cost is one third of your grade. In truth, I applaud your impulse. I just can't give you class credit for it.

Tim gathers what's left of his pride and leaves. Grace goes back to the podium to get her stuff, to find the next professor, MERLE HORSTADT, has overheard the exchange.

HORSTADT

Sharpened your rapier wit on the stone of another youthful mind, have you, Professor McCallister...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

15

GRACE

You can't ever let the blade dull, Merle.

HORSTADT

I trust I'll be seeing you at the New President's Mingler on Friday...

GRACE

Mmm, sign me up to press the flesh with the money-grubbing whore.

HORSTADT

Spofford sent a memo. You've not, perhaps, checked your box?

GRACE

Exactly when did cocktails with social-climbing buffoons become mandatory?

He smiles as she alights.

HORSTADT

See you there, Grace. Don't forget, it's potluck...

16 EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. EIGHTH GRADE LUNCH BENCHES. DAY. 16

Bobby and best friend WARREN FEIGHT make their way to a bench. Bobby struggles to keep his satchel up his arm.

BOBBY

So I asked and they don't even have a Space Club here yet --

WARREN

Maybe you should lose the bag.

BOBBY

The lady in the office told me if we can get fifteen signatures we can start one...

An EMPTY MILK CARTON flies across their path, onto the edge of Warren's tray. He flicks it off like it was a grenade.

WARREN

It's gonna be like this for five years. The untouchables, the outcasts...

BOBBY

No it isn't.

He starts toward a group of guys, the cackling center of which is bully RICH WOLF.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

16

WARREN

Yes it is, it's --  
(noticing he's gone)  
Bobby.

Warren, dying inside, waits for the storm, as:

BOBBY

(to Rich)  
Here. You missed the trash.

RICH

I thought your little buddy was the  
trash.

BOBBY

Well he's not.

RICH

Hey, aren't you the kid who had a pass in  
gym? What are you too good for it?

BOBBY

I'm asthmatic.

For a fleeting second it seems like Rich might sympathize.  
And then we remember, this is eighth grade.

RICH

You're a wheezer, huh? Can I call you  
that? Wheezer?

Warren approaches. It's his turn to save Bobby now.

WARREN

I found us a bench, Bobby. C'mon.

Rich sees the paper in Bobby's hands.

RICH

What's that, Wheezer? Your doctor's note?

BOBBY

It's a petition.

RICH

Yeah? For what?

WARREN

Oh, god.

BOBBY

Space Club. You can sign if you want.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

16

RICH

Sweet. If I sign up, can you guarantee I'll be as lame and pathetic as you and your fat friend here?

As Rich and his posse get up and leave he broadcasts:

RICH (CONT'D)

Hey guys, don't miss sign-up for Loser Club next week. Oh, wait, you two are already in it, right?  
(to the cronies)  
Let's go smoke cloves.

WARREN

Great. Now we're marked men.

BOBBY

We were already marked. He threw that thing at you.

WARREN

Just, put away the petition, okay?

BOBBY

Only if you sign first.

Off Warren, held hostage by Bobby's persistence.

MARCUS (PRELAP)

Focus, McCallister. Focus...

17 INT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. CAFETERIA. DAY.

17

Same school, different world. Jack sits across from MARCUS (here in the present, aged 16) at the POPULAR TABLE. Jack's presently distracted by something one table over.

MARCUS

I'm saying we get in there early with book report requests in Hiller's class, we can pull the easiest books.

*teacher*

JACK

Yeah, sure, Marcus.

MARCUS

Hey, I'm not carrying your ass again like in Tate's class last year.

JACK

Yes you are. You always do.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

17

MARCUS

I know. It's my lifetime role... What are you staring at?

He looks over and now sees what's got Jack so mesmerized: it's the blonde girl from the teaser, reading quietly.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

New girl. Of course. What was I thinking. That's--

JACK

Courtney Benedict. *clear*

MARCUS

Yeah. You met her yet?

Jack shakes his head. OTHERS chime in: ?

LIZ

Molly Jordan met her in chem. Said she was a total bitch.

JACK

She's probably shy.

LIZ

More like full of herself.

NICK

You would be, too, if your dad was the president of the university.

JACK

Or you'd move around a lot. Not have many friends...

LIZ

You just like her because she's cute...

JACK

(getting up)

Hear a lot of people talking about her, don't see anyone talking to her.

18 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

18

MARCUS

All the McCallisters -- had that thing: knowing what you want and going after it with no hesitating or equivocating.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

756  
0548

CONTINUED:

18

MARCUS (cont'd)

Jack had it in spades, whether it was track or getting a grade he thought he deserved or going after a girl.

(grinning)

Usually it was a girl...

19 INT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. CAFETERIA. RESUMING.

19

Jack now hovers over Courtney as she writes in a journal.

JACK (O.S.)

What are you writing?

COURTNEY

(looks up)

Nothing.

JACK

Doesn't look like nothing.

COURTNEY

Just... thoughts.

INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

20

MARCUS

And then it was one girl in particular...

21 INT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. CAFETERIA. RESUMING.

21

JACK

You're new here, aren't you? I'm Jack McCallister.

COURTNEY

Courtney Benedict.

JACK

Nice to meet you, Courtney. I know it's tough being the new kid. Why don't you come sit over at our table?

COURTNEY

Over there? No thanks.

JACK

C'mon, what's so scary about a table of people you don't know?

She casts a good long look. And then one at Jack.

COURTNEY

You really want to know?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

21

JACK

Yeah. Sure. Lay it on me.

COURTNEY

Let's see... there's that jock in the middle who can't get the 200 SAT points for spelling his name but thinks he's god's gift because he's the quarterback of the football team and he gets laid whenever he wants to, and the girl next to him who's got antennae for ears and just waits all day like a... fax machine waiting to hear mean crappy things about other people that she can exaggerate to even meaner, crappier things because she likes the attention, there's that guy on the end who thinks he's funny and always carries the joke one step too far because he doesn't know what it's like to have someone laughing at you and then there's the worst one of all... The guy who thinks he can play both sides and act like he's all Mister Regular and he "gets it," gets what it's like to be an outsider or gets what it is not to have friends or gets, whatever he gets to impress girls but he only gets it 'til the minute they give it up and then suddenly, surprise, he doesn't have time to get it anymore.

(beat)

Should I go on?

Jack may have just fallen in love.

JACK

If you did, you might mention that Nick has dyslexia, so he won't even be taking the regular SAT because he needs the non-timed one and you might know that he works with a tutor four days a week just to keep his grades up to C's. Or that Liz, when she's not saying mean crappy things about people, works at her parents' store every day after school since her father filed for bankruptcy last year.

COURTNEY

Really.

JACK

(shaking his head)

No, I made it up. But it coulda been true.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

21

JACK (cont'd)

Listen, there's this bonfire tomorrow night. It's a pep rally for the fall teams.

COURTNEY

School event... sorry, no.

JACK

It'll be fun. Life-altering, really. And I'd like you to come. In fact, we can--

BOBBY (O.S.)

Jack!

At the worst possible moment, of course, Bobby comes up, exuberant per usual, still holding his petition.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Jack. Hey. This is where you guys sit, huh? We're out on the benches. They're okay. I like it better in here.

(to Courtney)

Hey, I'm Bobby. Jack's brother.

COURTNEY

Hi. Courtney.

BOBBY

I know, you're that girl we saw --

JACK

Bobby.

BOBBY

Remember, Jack? Yesterday. By the President's cottage. I asked if she was his daughter and you --

JACK

Bobby.

Jack glares. Even Bobby realizes what he's done.

BOBBY

Um, I was just coming in here to get signatures for Space Club. You guys wanna sign? I only need fifteen names and I already have three... if they count the janitor.

JACK

Space Club.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

21

COURTNEY

I'll sign.

Beaming, Bobby hands one over.

BOBBY

Thanks.

Courtney offers the pen to Jack who takes it, flashing Bobby a look of annoyance.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Sweet. Only ten left.

Mercifully, the BELL RINGS before Jack implodes.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I better go. Do you know where "R-12" is?

JACK

Upstairs. Past the chem labs.

BOBBY

Okay. Bye, Jack. Bye, Courtney.

He leaves. Jack looks ashen.

JACK

My brother has no "off" switch.

COURTNEY

I think it's charming.

JACK

I think one day it's gonna cause World War III. Luckily, he wouldn't even notice...

COURTNEY

I better get to class.

She gets up, but turns before she leaves.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

So... I'll see you at the bonfire.

Off Jack, not quite believing, then believing, then thrilled,

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

22 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. GRACE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

22

Bobby sits on Grace's bed, which is also covered with clothes.

BOBBY

I thought you hated faculty parties.

GRACE (O.S.)

Yes, well... There comes a time in the affairs of man when he must take the bull by the tail and face the situation. And they're making me go.

She emerges from the closet with a mish-mash of outfits.

GRACE

What did you like with the red skirt again?

Bobby pulls a rust-colored top from the pile.

BOBBY

This.

She grabs the top, heads back into the closet.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

So anyway, Warren's freaked. He thinks we're gonna be geeks in high school...

GRACE (O.S.)

All the best people are.

BOBBY

He's afraid people will make fun of us or something.

GRACE (O.S.)

All the greats have been laughed at, Bobby. Doesn't matter. You have to have the courage of your convictions.

Grace emerges from the closet in a much better outfit.

BOBBY

I don't think Warren thinks that.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

22

GRACE

Warren's not like you. He's weak. He's a conformist, susceptible to peer pressure, unexceptional. This is why Warren, while a very sweet boy, will grow up to be an accountant. Boots or pumps?

BOBBY

Boots.

GRACE

Your father had a saying about weak men... that they're loyal to whomever keeps them fed.

BOBBY

I thought he said "weak men are the bane of the earth and the strong its salvation."

GRACE

He said that, too.

She looks at herself in the mirror, decides she's pleased. Seeing Jack in the hallway, she exits. Bobby follows.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Jack. I've got the "New President's Mingler" tonight, so you stay here with your brother and order a --

JACK

No way, I have a party tonight -- the pep rally --

GRACE

At school? That's perfect. Bobby, you go with Jack --

JACK

He can't come with me.

BOBBY

Why not?

JACK

Because. You can't. He can't.

GRACE

You'll have to do better than circular logic, Jack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

22

JACK  
I told this girl --

GRACE  
What girl?

BOBBY  
Is it Courtney Benedict?

GRACE  
Benedict? Not any relation to the money-grubbing whore...?

JACK  
If you mean President Benedict, yes. She's his daughter.

GRACE  
President pro-tem Benedict and she's not for you.

JACK  
Well I like her and I'm going.

GRACE  
Then you're taking your brother.

JACK  
No, I'm not. I won't let him wreck my whole night because you don't like Courtney's dad --

BOBBY  
It's okay... I'm in the middle of an emergency approach anyway, I wanna finish it. Really. I'd rather stay here.

Grace flashes Jack a look: now look what you've done.

GRACE  
There're leftovers in the fridge from the history department happy hour. Cheese and cold cuts...

JACK  
Nice dinner.

GRACE  
It's European. Now go on, both of you. I need some private time before I go.

Grace watches their door shut before slipping into:

23 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. GRACE'S STUDY. CONTINUOUS. 23

A shrine to books, learning, the arcane, the life of the mind, in short, Grace. She shuts the door behind her, reaches into her desk, pulls out a JOINT and lights it.

24 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. JACK & BOBBY'S ROOM. MOMENTS LATER. 24

Bobby sits glued to his computer screen, headset on, while Jack gets ready to go out.

BOBBY

Why's she have to smoke that stuff?

JACK

I don't know. Why do you care?

BOBBY

She's different after.

JACK

Yeah, bearable.

Jack notices as Bobby starts miming the pushing of buttons.

JACK

Bobby, you gotta drop that Space Club thing. It's a reputation killer.

BOBBY

Why? Lots of people do clubs.

JACK

Yeah. Like Spanish Club or yearbook. Not... Space. Nobody's into Space.

BOBBY

That's why you start the club, to get people interested.

JACK

No one's gonna be interested.

BOBBY

But how do you know if --

JACK

(short)

I just know.

BOBBY

You always say go after what you want. I want to start a space club.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

24

JACK

I mean something normal, okay? Go after something normal. Man, don't you ever get tired of it?

BOBBY

Of what?

JACK

Of... not being like anybody else?

Per usual, Bobby seems impervious to the criticism.

BOBBY

I'm not like you, Jack. And maybe I'm not like a lot of other people. But that doesn't mean there's not other people like me.

Bobby puts his headset back on. Jack watches for a moment.

JACK

Look... Get ready, I'll take you to the thing.

Bobby looks up, surprised, not getting it.

BOBBY

You sure?

He nods and Bobby, grateful, gets up.

BOBBY

Awesome. So, what do they burn at a bonfire anyway?

JACK

Eighth-graders.

Off Bobby, not entirely confident that he's kidding,

25

INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

25

ON an attractive BLONDE with a Southern accent (57), a cross between Ann Richards and Christie-Todd-Whitman.

KAREN

It's well-known that I had virtually no interest in the position of Vice President. The post had all but vanished under the previous two administrations.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

25

KAREN (cont'd)

So when Governor McCallister, as he was then, approached me about it, I just said "no thank you" and figured he'd move on.

SUPER: "Karen Carmichael, Former Vice President."

KAREN

Needless to say I underestimated his powers of persuasion.

26

EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD. NIGHT.

26

CHEERLEADERS, JOCKS, and the rest of the STUDENT population rally for the "Truman Senators." Marcus and Jack survey their kingdom as they approach the BONFIRE. Bobby follows.

MARCUS

How long do we have to cart Jimmy Neutron around?

BOBBY

Don't worry, I'm only hanging with you dork-a-saurs until Warren comes.

MARCUS

Jack, can I kill him? Please?

JACK

No. We're supposed to keep him from getting killed, remember?

But Jack has spotted Courtney.

JACK

There she is.

BOBBY

Hey, yeah, that's --

Marcus makes the save.

MARCUS

(to Bobby)

C'mon. Let's go inspect the bottoms of some trash cans, think there's some important stuff written down there...

BOBBY

Why don't you do it yourself? Oh that's right, you can't read.

And off they go, Mutt and Jeff. Courtney comes over to Jack, who's feeling uncharacteristic nerves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26

JACK

Hi.

COURTNEY

Is that it? You promised me... what was it? A life-altering experience? And all I get is "hi?"

JACK

I'm glad you came.

27

INT. FACULTY RESIDENCE. NIGHT.

27

The faculty mingler and all that entails: tweed, canapés, ~~drunk faculty members~~. Grace finishes her first drink and makes her way toward the bar where she's accosted by Merle Horstadt, the professor from the lecture hall.

HORSTADT

Professor McCallister. So good of you to drop by.

GRACE

So good of you to remind me that my departmental standing depends on it.  
(looking around)  
Has the whore made his appearance?

HORSTADT

You refer to President Benedict. Alas he has not joined us yet. But perhaps you heard as I did that our new associate professor would be here, from Dartmouth?

But Grace has had enough.

GRACE

You know, I think I might...

She starts to slip away.

HORSTADT

But my dear, the evening's just begun...

But already she's slaloming back through the room, reaching into the foyer closet for her coat and sneaking out to:

28

EXT. FACULTY RESIDENCE. CONTINUOUS.

28

Grace, coat in hand, nearly bumps into the NEW GUY, around 40, handsome, just about to enter the party.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

GRACE

Oh, sorry --

NEW GUY

Is the party still going?

GRACE

It is, I just -- Oh, you're the new --

NEW GUY

Yeah --

GRACE

-- associate --

NEW GUY

-- this is my first. Faculty party.

GRACE

Oh, god, save yourself. If you came for the entertainment you're out of luck. That windbag Benedict didn't even show and the rest have been embalmed.

New Guy's ears perk up at the mention of Benedict.

NEW GUY

That bad, huh?

GRACE

Worse. But go ahead, party-hardy.

NEW GUY

You aren't walking home are you? Alone?

GRACE

All the muggers are students. They'd be scared to attack me.

He watches her walk out to the curb.

NEW GUY

Wait. I'll walk with you.

GRACE

And miss your first faculty party adventure?

NEW GUY

(catching up)

This kinda seems like the adventure.

Off Grace, hiding her shock with a nervous laugh,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

28

KAREN (PRELAP)

The President was well-known for his relationships with women.

29 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

29

KAREN

But I wouldn't call him a ladies' man. His charisma was of a different sort. It was less overt than the media would have you believe, and less calculated. Or so it seemed.

30 EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. BLEACHERS. NIGHT.

30

Courtney and Jack sit on the bleachers. Away from the crowd.

COURTNEY

So Mr. Track Star, looks like you're missing all those cute cheerleaders shouting your name...

JACK

Not my favorite part.

COURTNEY

I thought that's why guys played sports.

JACK

You really don't think much of me... I run because when I run... everything else goes away. School, homework, my family, it's just me and the road. Probably how you feel when you write your... thoughts.

Courtney smiles at his recall of the detail.

31 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

31

KAREN

He knew how to relate to women better than men. Something to do with his mother, no doubt. I had the pleasure of meeting her once. She was... quite a character.

32 EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. BLEACHERS. RESUMING. LATER.

32

JACK

My mom's insane. Certifiable. She's the most popular professor on campus and the weirdest mom on earth.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

32

COURTNEY

That how you guys got the names Jack and Bobby?

JACK

That's nothing. We're the only family I know that doesn't have a television set.

COURTNEY

That's not so weird.

JACK

Every Tuesday night at my house is foreign language night. Between the hours of seven and eleven English is prohibited.

COURTNEY

Okay, that's a little strange.

JACK

We don't celebrate Thanksgiving out of solidarity with the Native Americans. Should I go on?

Courtney's laughing now.

COURTNEY

But I don't get it. You're so...

JACK

Normal.

COURTNEY

Seeming anyway. What's your dad like?

JACK

I don't know. He left before my brother was born.

COURTNEY

My mom died a few years ago.

JACK

How?

COURTNEY

It's a long, horrible story that I'd rather not tell at a pep rally.

Jack nods, gets it.

JACK

So now it's just you and your dad?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

COURTNEY  
And my little sister, Chloe, So, I guess we have something in common. Who knew?

*Benedict*

*Clear*

JACK  
I did.

As they continue to sit and talk. Somewhere across town...

33 EXT. HART STREET. NIGHT.

33

Grace and New Guy meander down Grace's residential street.

GRACE  
...it wasn't enough that they fired Gilkie, a man of true character, but then they go and hire President Benedict, this money-grubbing whore, this juggling chimp King Midas whose sole talent is for streamlining and revenue increase. A university is not a widget company.

*Teach*

NEW GUY  
Hardly.

GRACE  
And what has this guy ever done except make money and destroy departments, but he looks good on paper, he's got his MBA, he's got his unblemished record.

NEW GUY  
Well, what has he done?

GRACE  
I can't recite the specifics, I don't have time to memorize his CV, I've got class to teach. But I know enough to know what's in it: a vast, safe banality all the decrepit trustees can embrace. Oh, yeah, I know this guy.

NEW GUY  
Sounds like.

GRACE  
Well, this is me, thanks for the walk.

NEW GUY  
You're welcome.

CONTINUED:

33

GRACE

You know, you're the first man I've ever met at one of these things that I've enjoyed talking to.

NEW GUY

I enjoyed it, too. Maybe we could continue it, at dinner... tomorrow night?

GRACE

I don't really do that.

NEW GUY

Eat dinner?

GRACE

Date. That ship has sailed and... capsized. I have... kids.

NEW GUY

Me, too. Two. Girls.

GRACE

Well.

(beat)

Thank god for that.

(beat)

No wife to speak of?

NEW GUY

Out of the picture.

GRACE

For now.

NEW GUY

Feels pretty permanent.

(beat)

So. Are you up for another adventure?

GRACE

Okay... I'm Grace, by the way, Grace McCallister.

NEW GUY

It's nice to meet you, Grace.

GRACE

And you.

NEW GUY

Hmm...

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

GRACE  
And you are...?

NEW GUY  
Peter

(beat)  
Benedict. But my friends call me The  
Money-Grubbing Whore. See you tomorrow,  
Grace.

He leaves as Grace's face falls. And falls.

WARREN (PRELAP)  
It's like... we blew it before we even...  
did anything...

34 EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. BY THE BONFIRE. NIGHT.

34

A ways off from the action and excitement of the bonfire, Bobby  
and Warren hang out, alone.

BOBBY  
Blew what?

WARREN  
High school. The bonfire, the games--

BOBBY  
But, we're here.

WARREN  
But no one knows we're here. We might as  
well be home playing "Sim Galaxy." ?

Rich Wolf and his posse cruise by, headed for the bleachers.

RICH  
Hey, Wheezer.

BOBBY  
Hey.

Warren rolls his eyes.

RICH  
We're gonna go smoke cloves, you guys  
wanna come? Oh, that's right, you can't  
'cuz you might start wheezing, too bad...

Warren can't help himself.

WARREN  
Wait... I wanna come. I smoke...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

34

Bobby turns around, at first only confused.

BOBBY

No, you don't.

WARREN

Yes, I do. I'm gonna go smoke with those guys, Bobby.

BOBBY

Why?

WARREN

Because. I want to.

BOBBY

Fine, I'll go, too, then.

WARREN

No.

BOBBY

Why not?

WARREN

Because if I hang out with you no one else will talk to me.

Warren begins to walk with the others.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

I know this is just because you're weak, Warren. I know it's just because you're unexceptional and you're going to be an accountant...

WARREN

Just shut up, you're making it worse. I don't want to be like you and I don't want to be friends anymore.

Bobby's face is flushed as he fights back tears.

BOBBY

You don't mean that.

WARREN

Yeah I do, I mean it. Get out of here. Get away from me. You're a freak.

Bobby looks up and for once in his life his emotion comes out of his fist as he slugs Warren across the jaw.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

34

RICH

Uh-oh... looks like a geek love spat...

Warren tackles Bobby and they begin to fight, that desperate, nasty kind of fighting of two non-fighters.

A CRACK as Bobby's inhaler gets destroyed in the tussle and still the blows keep coming.

KAREN (PRELAP)

I asked him one time who he thought had the greatest influence on his life.

35

INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. DAY.

35

KAREN

Given who his mother was, I was sure it would be her. I should've known better because he always surprised me... He named his brother. Without hesitation.

36

EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. BY THE BONFIRE. RESUMING.

36

A crowd gathers as the fighting continues. Bobby's getting pummeled but he won't give up.

PAN TO WHERE Jack's just arrived, watching. Close enough to stop it, but doing nothing.

COURTNEY

Is that -- your brother?

Jack nods. Waits.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

He's getting hurt.

JACK

He has to learn to --

COURTNEY

What? Get beaten unconscious?

JACK

If I help him it'll make it worse...

COURTNEY

Yeah, for you --

She rushes into the fray.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Stop. Stop it.

(CONTINUED)

6

CONTINUED:

36

Courtney breaks up the fight. Warren rises. Then Bobby. Warren goes to join Rich and his boys. Jack comes over, standing above Bobby.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

You alright, Bobby?

BOBBY

Yeah... Thanks, Courtney.

She leaves, but not before tossing Jack the worst look he's ever seen. He watches her go, then looks at his brother.

JACK

What happened, Bobby?

BOBBY

He said he didn't want to be my friend anymore.

JACK

So you beat him up... Where's your inhaler?

BOBBY

It got...

He holds it up, it's ruined.

JACK

Great.

BOBBY

I'm sorry, Jack.

JACK

Let's go home.

With difficulty, the two of them begin walking.

BOBBY

I'm really sorry.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO.

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

37 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

37

A pale MAN, 40, dark hair, with a chiseled face. He can finish other people's sentences within the first three words and usually does. Even the President's.

ADAM.

The major thing for me coming onto the campaign was electability. I've only got so much time and credibility.

SUPER: "Adam Chassin, Campaign Strategist."

ADAM (CONT'D)

I vetted the Governor pretty carefully, checked out the demographics, weighed the issues, his... persona. But what it came down to, what it always comes down to is... desire. You can be the greatest guy in the world, but the one thing you need to win is hunger. Governor McCallister, he was hungry.

38 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

38

Jack enters, takes a bowl from the dishrack while Grace futzes with the disposal switch, hoping for a miracle.

JACK

It's not going to fix itself.

GRACE

I'm calling today.

JACK

I'll hold my breath.

Jack goes to sit with Bobby at the kitchen table.

BOBBY

Then after I got there then Warren said he wanted to go off with those guys, so --

JACK

Give up, she's not listening.

GRACE

Yes I am. Bobby, conflict is inherent in human relations. At your age, you're ill-equipped to express your feelings.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



38 CONTINUED:

38

GRACE (cont'd)  
Needless to say, Warren is even more ill-equipped. If you've done your best to speak candidly with him, then that's the best you can do.

Jack shakes his head: he knew her advice would be crappy.

GRACE (CONT'D)  
Now are you two ready? I don't want to be late. And you can tell Marcus next time I'd appreciate a little warning.

JACK  
He's not a car service.

Grace sits with them and finally turns her attention to Bobby.

GRACE  
Don't worry. It'll all work out...

BOBBY  
I just... want people to like me.

GRACE  
People love you.

BOBBY  
Real people. Other people. People I'm not related to.

GRACE  
Bobby, this conversation is not worthy of you. If Warren can't see what's superior about you, it's time for you to focus your attention elsewhere.

BOBBY  
He was my only friend.

GRACE  
You'll make other friends. Now go on...

Bobby looks to Jack who averts his eyes, not concurring. Bobby trudges up the stairs as:

GRACE (O.S.)  
What? He's just sensitive...

We follow Bobby as he heads up the stairs into the

HALLWAY

He stands near the door to his mother's study, thinking. Slowly he enters:

39 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. GRACE'S STUDY. DAY.

39

Bobby goes to the desk drawer and opens it. He finds Grace's pot box and opens that. Quickly he grabs one of the little baggies of pot and a box of rolling paper,

His hands shake a little as he slips them into his satchel. A KNOCK at the door causes him to start.

BOBBY

What is it?

JACK (O.S.)

Hurry up. I wanna get there early...

Off Bobby, scared,

40 INT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. HALLWAY. DAY.

40

Jack waits by Courtney's locker. She rounds the corner, sees him, but ignores him.

JACK

Courtney.

She opens her locker, barely listening.

JACK (CONT'D)

I know that was... crazy what happened at the bonfire. It's just my brother is --

COURTNEY

Your brother is the reason I was even talking to you, Jack. I thought anyone who was cool to their kid brother who was a little different must be a decent guy. But you weren't decent, you were horrible.

JACK

You don't know my brother. You think I'm embarrassed by him, and I am. But... I'm trying to help him. It's hard.

COURTNEY

No it isn't. You hang out with him, you're cool, people stop picking on him. Only you don't wanna spend the time. His first two days of school you were trying to hang out with me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

40

JACK

I can't change who he is, Courtney. Not with my mom around. I couldn't help him if I wanted.

COURTNEY

Or maybe that's just what you tell yourself.

(as she closes her locker)

Here's the way I see it, Jack. A few days ago we didn't even know each other -- so it shouldn't be too hard to forget that we ever did.

And she goes. Off Jack, watching. And onto...

41 EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. BLEACHERS. DAY.

41

Bobby, as he spots Warren with Rich and the gang at the benches. He steels himself, saunters over.

BOBBY

Hey.

RICH

Hey, Wheezer.

Bobby tries to think of a segue. Doesn't. Blurts out:

BOBBY

I have pot. So, if you wanna smoke it after school...

RICH

You got weed?

WARREN

You do not.

BOBBY

Shut up. I'm not talking to you.

RICH

Oh, watch it, he might get violent. So you brought it here?

BOBBY

Yeah. I brought it. The good stuff. Way better than that clove stuff you guys smoke.

Bobby pulls his mom's pot halfway out of his bag. Rich and his friends seem surprised and psyched.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

41

BOBBY (CONT'D)

If you wanna smoke it after school, meet me under the bleachers.

RICH

Alright, Wheezer. Under the bleachers. Four o'clock, okay?

BOBBY

See you there.

Bobby heads off, trying to maintain his "cool" persona.

RICH

Hey, Wheezer. Nice going.

Bobby gives a "cool" wave as he goes, feeling relieved and freaked all at the same time...

42 INT. ADMIN BLDG. PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE OFFICE. DAY.

42

Peter, hearing a KNOCK at his door, looks up from where he stands behind his desk unloading a box.

PETER

Come in.

Grace enters, ultra-professional, but Peter doesn't notice her demeanor at first, he's just happy to see her.

PETER (CONT'D)

(warm smile)

Grace.

GRACE

(brusque)

Hi --

PETER

This is great timing. I don't have my computer set up but I commandeered Debbie's before she got in to look up some restaurants. Have you been to the "Blue Heron"?

*TM  
not clear - 1 in MO*

GRACE

Yes, I have, but --

PETER

Too bad, that "flaming pasta" thing they do sounds really cool. I'll keep looking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

42

GRACE

That's really not --

PETER

I want to find a place you haven't been.  
And one with a great wine cellar--

GRACE

I can't go out with you. Peter.  
President Benedict. Whoever you are.

PETER

Oh?

(beat)

Is this something about that capsized  
boat you mentioned...?

GRACE

There are in fact numerous reasons, the  
first of them being the obvious conflict  
of interest, I would think you yourself  
would be sensitive to this as you are of  
course in a position of hiring authority  
vis-a-vis me which opens us -- well, you  
really -- up to issues of harassment.

PETER

Harassment? Grace, I can't... fire you,  
you have tenure.

GRACE

Furthermore, although we've known each  
other... less than forty-eight hours,  
already you've been dishonest with me,  
which is of course not a quality I'm  
searching for in a dating partner. Then  
there's the awkward circumstance that I  
believe my teenaged son is courting your  
daughter.

PETER

I hope you mean Courtney because if it's  
my seven-year-old, I might have something  
to say about that...

GRACE

And finally, I believe you heard my  
discourse last night on my objections to  
your ethical orientation or lack thereof  
within a professional context. I have no  
desire to reiterate what was obviously...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

42

GRACE (cont'd)

An ill-timed critique of your managerial style but suffice it to say that it runs counter to every value I hold dear and that seems to me a fairly strong obstacle to any kind of lasting romantic union -- if I were even in the market for such a thing, which I think I made clear I was not. Am not.

PETER

It was just dinner, Grace.

The simplicity of his statement makes her feel a little ridiculous.

GRACE

Well, yes of course, but that could, in certain circumstances be seen as a prelude to... to...

PETER

I heard you. Consider yourself off the hook.

GRACE

Yes. Well. Thank you. For being so gracious. President Benedict. And welcome to Plains State.

She turns to go, then...

PETER

Grace... I accept your refusal. But I'm disappointed. I really liked you.

He goes back to unpacking, leaving her to let herself out, with the sinking feeling that she just made a huge mistake, but not knowing quite what it is.

ADAM (PRELAP)

No matter how clean the candidate looks, they all have that one thing -- that one truth you hope will never surface.

43 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

43

ADAM

Maybe they sleep around, did drugs in college, cheated on their taxes, whatever that truth is, it's my job to make 'em deal with it before the press does. See, people know Presidents are all too human. They expect the flaws.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

43

ADAM (cont'd)

They just want to hear what they are  
before they vote for the guy.

44 INT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. CLASSROOM. DAY.

44

Bobby sits at his desk. An OVERHEAD projector projects math equations on the board in the semi-darkened room. Bobby takes copious notes.

One seat over, Rich Wolf does not. Nor is Rich surprised when the door opens and PRINCIPAL FARBER enters, accompanied by two security guards.

Bobby looks up and, feeling the wash of guilt particular to the first-time criminal, knows they're there for him.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Excuse me, Miss Murphy, sorry to interrupt. I need to see Bobby McCallister.

The teacher, MISS MURPHY tells him:

MISS MURPHY

Go ahead, Bobby.

Bobby picks up his book and notebook, petrified. He gets up, as other students begin to whisper.

MISS MURPHY (CONT'D)

Class. Class, let's return to problem four...

HALLWAY

Principal Farber closes the door behind them.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Bobby, could you take us to your locker, please?

45 INT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. ANOTHER HALLWAY. MOMENTS LATER.

45

He leads them down the hallway, terrified. They arrive.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Could you open it for us, please?

Bobby's hand shakes only slightly as he works the lock.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Can these men search your locker, Bobby?

(CONTINUED)

45

CONTINUED:

45

BOBBY

Okay.

Bobby's in torment as the security guys go through his stuff. Suddenly... silence after the BAG OF POT slides from his satchel. The principal holds it up.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

This appears to be marijuana.

A single tear rolls down Bobby's cheek.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Bobby, can you please explain what you are doing with marijuana in your locker?

ADAM (PRELAP)

During the campaign, the major thing of course was "the lie."

46

INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

46

ADAM

Maybe six months out, he'd told this story about his father, this esteemed professor of archaeology from Chile who eventually went back to his country and was executed there for his political beliefs. The press didn't buy it. I asked him about it myself, he convinced me it was all true, at least to the best of his knowledge. And I, well, I shoulda been more of a hardass. Thing was, I... believed him.

47

INT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE. DAY.

47

WE ARE ON Bobby, scared, anxious. PAN OVER to the chair next to him to find... Jack, with a poker face. Grace storms in.

GRACE

Bobby, what is going on? And what are you doing here, Jack?

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Professor, there's been an incident...

GRACE

What possible incident could justify you dragging me down here, Vincent?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



7 CONTINUED:

47

GRACE (cont'd)

You do understand that there are, at this moment, three hundred students watching a video on women's right to vote, we're not even up to that section yet --

PRINCIPAL FARBER

We found marijuana in Bobby's locker.

GRACE

That's impossible.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

(showing her the pot)

I'm afraid not.

It only takes Grace a second to transition from shock to the realization that the baggie is hers and he's telling the truth. She dives into assault mode:

GRACE

I see. And was this locker search part of a general search of the entire school?

PRINCIPAL FARBER

I -- I don't --

GRACE

Were you searching the lockers of the entire student body or only that of my son?

PRINCIPAL FARBER

We had reason to believe --

GRACE

Reason to believe, Vincent? So in fact you only searched the locker of my son. In a school of... fifteen-hundred kids? Does that seem discriminatory to you? I would hate to have to drag my lawyer into this but it seems clear to me that my son's rights have been violated --

PRINCIPAL FARBER

We're talking about your son having marijuana at school.

GRACE

It could have been placed there by someone else -- It could have been --

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Bobby confessed--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

47

GRACE

--I'm sure he did, given your Gestapo-like tactics--

PRINCIPAL FARBER

Bobby confessed to bringing the drugs to school... for his brother Jack.

This one stops her in her tracks.

GRACE

What?

Jack just rolls his eyes: typical. No defense for him.

PRINCIPAL FARBER

As you know, we have a zero-tolerance policy on drugs. Although Jack has no history of delinquency I'm afraid we're going to have to suspend him from the track team for the semester. In addition he'll serve a month of detention, to be completed before or after school. Since Bobby's role in the matter was less severe, we'll reserve punishment this time. But I urge you, Professor, to take a long hard look at what happened to your family today.

48

EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

48

Grace, fuming with anger, walks so quickly that both boys struggle to keep up.

GRACE

Wonderful timing, Jack. You're captain of this and king of that, like some kind of all-American automaton and your brother's first week of school you decide to become a teenager...

JACK

I just got kicked off the track team, I don't need you yelling at me...

GRACE

I begged you to watch out for him.

JACK

What? He steals your pot, I get kicked off the team and now it's my fault!

(CONTINUED)

48

CONTINUED:

48

BOBBY

It's my fault.

JACK

No! It's her fault!

GRACE

I realize it came from my drawer but I think it would be deductive to imply that --

JACK

Say something real.

GRACE

If you had just... included him, with your friends --

JACK

I can't include him in anything because he's weird. He looks weird, he acts weird. He doesn't know how to be normal.

Bobby reacts, stung.

GRACE

Normal is overrated.

JACK

Normal is how you have to be if you don't want to spend every day of high school getting beat up!

GRACE

I raised him to be special --

JACK

You raised him to be your best friend and you didn't care what it would do to him, you just wanted someone to control and agree with you and keep you from feeling lonely all the time, that's why you never cared about me, because I wouldn't do any of that--

GRACE

That's not true. I do care about you -- You have no idea the sacrifices I've made for you, for both of you --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

48

JACK

That's bullshit! You're too scared to do anything, that's why you smoke pot in the first place. You pretend we're the reason, but we're not so don't lay it on us like we should be so grateful! You didn't do any of it for us, or for him! You're just a lonely pathetic middle-aged woman hiding behind your books and your words and your freak of a teenaged son --

Grace slaps Jack. Which surprises them both. Then:

JACK (CONT'D)

One day, I'll be gone. And he'll see things for what they are. And hate you for the lies you told.

A flash of anguish passes across Grace's face as she realizes what's about to happen.

GRACE

Jack.

JACK

Go on. Tell him the truth... Tell him who our father really is.

GRACE

Jack, no...

BOBBY

What about our father?

JACK

He wasn't a professor from Chile. He was a busboy from Mexico who she met when she was a waitress, in grad school. He left because he got sick of her.

BOBBY

No... He was an archaeologist and...

JACK

He's not dead, he's just gone. And she lied to you all this time, built this fantasy life she wants you to live up to, but it's all fake.

BOBBY

It's not fake.... it's true...  
(to Grace)  
You said he was dead...

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: (3)

48

GRACE

It's okay, Bobby --

He begins to have trouble breathing.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Calm down, Bobby. Get your inhaler.  
It's okay.

Jack realizes what's happening and that the inhaler isn't there.

JACK

Calm down.

BOBBY

I... can't... calm... down... I...  
can't... breathe...

GRACE

Where's his inhaler?

JACK

He doesn't have it. We need to --

But as he looks to Grace he realizes he's lost her. In this moment, her panic envelops her, paralyzes her.

GRACE

I don't know where the... I don't have  
my...

Jack watches her decompose, her mind spinning. And realizes what needs to be done and that there's no one else to do it. He picks his brother up in his arms.

GRACE

Where are you going?

JACK

The hospital. Meet me there.

And Jack begins to run, with his brother in his arms.

49 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

49

ADAM

I asked him. A long time after, I asked him why he lied about his father. What would have been so damaging about the real story -- to me it was nothing compared to the risk of a cover-up. It was the one question he never answered.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

ADAM (cont'd)

Then a few months later I'm at a cocktail party in the West Wing, his mother is there. She starts telling this story about him, the father, about this "dig" he was on... so much pride. Like, she really believed it. Even now, when the whole world knew it wasn't true. And I got it... he never told because of her. Because it would have crushed her.

(shaking his head)

That lie almost cost him the election. And it wasn't even his lie.

50

EXT. PLAINS STATE UNIVERSITY. CAMPUS. DAY.

50

SLOW MOTION as Jack runs, not slowing, not tiring, desperate, carrying Bobby in his arms.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE.

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

51 INT. HOSPITAL. ROOM. DAY.

51

A NURSE checks the monitors at the bedside. Grace sits next to Bobby, who's still hooked up to oxygen and looking frail but much less afraid. He pulls off his mask to tell her:

BOBBY

I'm sorry I didn't tell you about my inhaler, Mom. I tried but --

GRACE

It's okay.

NURSE

Time to let Bobby get some rest, Mrs. McCallister...

BOBBY

(faint)

It's Doctor McCallister.

GRACE

I'm gonna go wait with your brother a while. You be okay in here?

Bobby nods. Grace exits.

52 INT. HOSPITAL. HALLWAY. MOMENTS LATER.

52

Grace looks down the hall toward the vending machines, where she sees Jack, fighting with one of them. He jiggles the change release, kicks the machine, hits different buttons.

GRACE (O.S.)

All you can get is milk...

He turns to see her.

GRACE (CONT'D)

I remember from the last time.

JACK

Figures.

He begins to walk back toward the waiting area.

GRACE

Jack. I shouldn't have hit you. I haven't done that since you were nine.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

JACK

When I jumped off the water tower with  
Jimmy Weyburn.

GRACE

That one you deserved. Not this one. Those things you said... were true, I guess. You know, when your father left, I could barely support you, and with a baby on the way... I was terrified. Then Bobby came and he was sick all the time, it was all I could do to keep a roof over our heads and keep him alive. As you two grew up, you were such a boy, off doing your own things, playing with soldiers and trucks and then... running. Bobby stayed close. I don't know if it's because I didn't let him get far. I know he can't... stay close anymore.

JACK

He needs his own life.

She sits beside him.

GRACE

I know. I just... I don't know how it'll be for him to adapt now. He's used to sitting in my book club and talking about Schopenhauer. He's at home there and... in space. In cartoons. I don't know where he fits in that school world. Maybe he doesn't. It was always Grace and Bobby, wasn't it? You were somewhere else, growing up on your own. It may be too late, but if it's not going to be... it needs to be Jack and Bobby now. You get it?

He thinks a moment.

JACK

You need to back off.

GRACE

I can do that.

JACK

And not question everything I do.

GRACE

Okay...

(CONTINUED)



52 CONTINUED: (2)

52

JACK

And you gotta stop... doing that stuff.

GRACE

(off Jack's look, then)

I've never exposed your brother to that --

JACK

He knows you do it.

She thinks a moment, accepting that he's right.

GRACE

My work is stressful, Jack, and raising two sons on your own, well I try not to let it show how... difficult it is but sometimes... I just need some kind of...

JACK

Escape.

GRACE

Yeah.

JACK

I don't think there can be an escape, for you, or for me, anymore. We have to just... be here. So maybe he can escape someday. For real.

Off Grace, getting it,

53 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

53

An attractive blonde with fine features (60), is speaking reflectively. If we look closely, we may almost think we recognize her.

WOMAN

When I first met Jack, I was too young to see him as a potential... anything, except a crush maybe.

SUPER: "Former First Lady, Courtney McCallister."

COURTNEY

Our relationship never really developed in the way either of us thought it would. What first love does?

54 EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

54

Marcus, Jack, and Bobby approach from the parking lot.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

MARCUS

So, what, do we have to keep hanging out with him in public view now?

JACK

Yep.

MARCUS

Maybe just to the bike racks, Jack.

BOBBY

What's wrong, Marcus, you afraid when the chicks see me they'll forget about you?

Marcus howls at this one. Notices something.

MARCUS

Hey, there's Courtney.

She's walking towards them, away from school. Jack looks less than pleased. Courtney smiles at Bobby.

BOBBY

Courtney? Hey --

COURTNEY

Guess what I heard? Truman High now has its own Space Club.

She extends a piece of paper: his petition. Signed.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

I got a couple extra signatures, in case the janitor doesn't count.

BOBBY

Thanks, Courtney. I was thinking we could hold meetings every Tuesday afternoon... or Wednesday. Or Thursday. I'm pretty much wide open.

Before he can embarrass Jack further, Marcus pulls him away.

MARCUS

Why don't you come with me, little man.

BOBBY

I don't wanna come with you.

MARCUS

Too bad. Because you know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna de-geek you.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

BOBBY

I don't need any help from you...

MARCUS

Okay, first thing... speak as little as possible...

They walk off together while Courtney reaches Jack.

COURTNEY

Hey.

JACK

Listen, it's been a crappy week, if you want to tell me again why you don't like me could we do it another time?

COURTNEY

I heard about the track team.

JACK

Yeah.

COURTNEY

Heard about your brother, too.

She pauses, uncertain how to proceed.

COURTNEY

Look, I didn't come to attack you again. I more kinda owe you an apology... do you have a few minutes?

55 EXT. TRUMAN HIGH SCHOOL. BLEACHERS. DAY.

55

Jack and Courtney sit above the track.

COURTNEY

I had a life like yours once. I mean... it looked like yours, from the outside. I was popular, at our school in Michigan. To the point where I didn't even notice it. It was just that everything kind of revolved around me. You know?

(beat)

And then one day, I was in eighth grade, I came home from school early... I remember noticing this harsh smell in the kitchen... then I heard this sound coming from the garage. Like an engine... I opened the door and there was my mom, sitting in her Mercedes Benz. Like she was going to the store or something.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

*Benedict  
from Mi*

55 CONTINUED:

55

COURTNEY (cont'd)

(beat)

She had been sad for a long time. She was always sad. Sometimes, really really sad, like she couldn't get out of bed. But I never thought --

(beat)

My friends all came to the funeral and everybody was crying, crying at school the day after... it was like they all wanted to show they were part of it or something. But once the excitement died down, once it was just that horrible day-to-day ache, nobody came around. Nobody wanted to be in our house. Now my dad makes us tell everyone she died in an accident. Like he's embarrassed. I just want people to know who she really was.

(beat)

I shouldn't have acted like you were just like those guys, because you're right, I didn't know you, don't know you. But... I'd like to know you now. If you want.

Off the two of them, sitting together,

COURTNEY (PRELAP)

Yes... I loved Jack once.

56 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

56

COURTNEY

But I could never have predicted how things would change, how the world would change. It wasn't until many years later that I really saw Bobby, that any of us did... except Jack. And Grace.

57 INT. MCCALLISTER HOUSE. DAY.

57

Bobby enters, home from school, to find Grace faithfully reading the instructions as she hooks up... their new TV.

BOBBY

What are you doing?

GRACE

Hooking up the TV.

BOBBY

Does it... work?

Grace turns it on. Picture!

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Wow. Where's the synthesizer?

GRACE

Took it back. You're more of a sax type anyway.

(beat)

Bobby. I'm sorry. I should have told you about your father. I just wanted you to have someone to look up to, something to aspire to. Do you understand?

BOBBY

No.

The kid is growing up. Pat explanations no longer suffice.

GRACE

The summer of 1987 I was just out of grad school. I got an adjunct job but it barely paid so I worked in the student union as a waitress. Your father was a busboy. He had just arrived from Mexico, from Guadalajara. He had a dream of being an architect. My friends thought I was crazy, thought the language barrier alone made it impossible between us. But actually... that part made it easier. He wasn't intimidated. And we understood each other just enough -- you know, enough to... be together. Not enough to last.

(beat)

Our worlds were just too different. And maybe I thought I wanted to be someone's wife, but I don't think I even knew what that meant. So he left. And it was just the three of us. His real name was Juan Roberto del Alba. That's why I called you Jack and Bobby. For his names -- John and Robert.

BOBBY

That's why? But that's... so boring.

GRACE

The real story usually is.

Jack enters and throws down his bag.

JACK

What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

57

BOBBY

We got a TV.

Jack looks at his mom.

GRACE

One hour per night is the limit.

BOBBY

What if a movie's on?

GRACE

It might be negotiable. If it's historical. Or has an educational element, like cooking or gardening.

(off Jack)

Or... not. So. What do you two want to watch for our inaugural program?

JACK

We can't. We gotta go.

(to Bobby)

Go get your running shoes.

Grace looks at Jack, nods. She doesn't love the transfer of power but she gets it, agrees to it.

COURTNEY (PRELAP)

In the end, I loved both men...

58 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

58

COURTNEY

Grace used to say Jack and Bobby were like two sides of one coin. Without Bobby, Jack might never have learned compassion. Without Jack, Bobby might never have gained strength.

59 EXT. HART STREET. DAY.

59

There they stand, Jack and Bobby, Jack in his track practice suit, Bobby in some... bizarre facsimile of running clothes.

BOBBY

So... what are we doin' out here, Jack?

JACK

Running. I gotta stay in shape if I wanna be back on the team in January.

BOBBY

Yeah, but I can't run.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

JACK

You can run as far as you can run. And tomorrow you'll run a little further. Now warm up.

Bobby begins doing the stretches Jack is doing. Badly.

BOBBY

So... um... now that we're hanging out more do you think I could be cool?

JACK

No.

BOBBY

Eventually?

JACK

Probably not.

BOBBY

What about me isn't cool?

JACK

You get too excited about things.

BOBBY

Cool people aren't excited?

JACK

They don't act excited.

BOBBY

Why not?

JACK

'Cuz it's not cool.

BOBBY

Sounds like a lot of work... Hey, are we gonna run past Courtney's house?

JACK

Depends how far you wanna go.

BOBBY

Are you guys like dating now?

JACK

No.

BOBBY

But she likes you, right?

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

59

JACK  
I don't know.

BOBBY  
Do you like her?

JACK  
Maybe... Sure.

BOBBY  
Did you tell her that? If you tell her,  
I'm sure she'll --

JACK  
Bobby. I'll handle it.

COURTNEY (PRELAP)  
I loved Jack, the way you love the first  
time. But Bobby...

60 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

60

COURTNEY  
Bobby was my life.  
(beat)  
One day he called me up out of the blue,  
it was... a while after Jack died. He  
said he had this crazy idea to run for  
Congress, wanted to know if I'd help out  
on his campaign. Stuff a few envelopes.  
It all happened so fast after that:  
Congress, the Governor's Mansion, the  
White House... us.  
(beat)  
They called him "The Great Believer."  
And it's true he had this lightness about  
him, even then. But he saw some dark  
hours during his Presidency. In those  
times, he used to say that the wrong  
brother became President.

61 EXT. HART STREET. RESUMING.

61

As the boys stand,

JACK  
Remember, just go as far as you can. If  
you have trouble breathing, stop.

BOBBY  
I'm afraid, Jack.

(CONTINUED)



1 CONTINUED:

61

JACK

Don't be. Let's go.

He begins to run. Bobby, hesitant, watches him go for a moment, watches his stride, so fluid and confident. We watch Jack run until he RUNS OUT OF FRAME and Bobby RUNS IN.

We FREEZE TIGHT ON Bobby's face in this moment, his fierce determination a harbinger of the man he will become.

DISSOLVE TO:

The BLACK AND WHITE image we saw in the beginning, of Governor McCallister seated on the capitol steps.

SABLE (V.O.)

The night before the presidential election. The race was still tight, the outcome uncertain, if Robert McCallister did win it would be by a negligible margin. People associate this image with a President's determination, as he steels himself for battle and the crucial hours to come. They say it tells the story of a man who saw his destiny and chased it. In truth, it was none of these things.

62 INT. NONDESCRIPT DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND. THE FUTURE.

62

SABLE

McCallister had asthma. Had from boyhood. He was simply pausing, as he often did before a speech, to catch his breath.

Sable smiles with satisfaction at the secret he's shared.

FADE OUT.

END OF PILOT.