Kids Will Be

Thomas E. Moran

Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

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KIDS WILL BE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts

in

The Department of English

by

Thomas E. Moran
B.A., Felician College, 1999
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ABSTRACT

This is the pilot episode of a television series, which explores a young girl’s descent into suburban drug culture.
In this episode, the main character, Ally, follows her disaffected love interest, Marco, to the squat, an abandoned building inhabited by runaways and addicts.
KIDS WILL BE

ACT I: OD AND OJ

FADE IN:

INT. ALLY’S BEDROOM – DAY

ALLY, a young 14, sits at her vanity and looks through a small wooden box which holds collection of BUTTERFLY BARRETTES.

CROSS CUT:

INT. SQUAT – NIGHT

ALLY, one year later, multiple facial piercings, too much eye liner, looks like she’s on death’s door. Ally opens the same small wooden box, but now it is filled with NEEDLES, SPOONS, and a small BAG OF HEROIN.

ALLY (V.O.)

“Suicides have a special language. Like carpenters they want to know which tools. They never ask why build.”

Ally quotes Ann Sexton, whose poetry will play an important role later in the season.

CROSS CUT:

INT. ALLY’S BEDROOM – DAY

Ally pushes a group of multi-colored plastic bracelets up past her elbow. She smiles.

ALLY (V.O.)

“To thrust all that life under your tongue!”

CROSS CUT:

INT. SQUAT – NIGHT

Ally ties a rubber tube around her upper arm. She smiles.

ALLY (V.O.)

“That, all by itself, becomes a passion.”

CROSS CUT:
INT. ALLY’S BEDROOM - DAY

Ally puts on mascara, then lipstick.

    ALLY (V.O.)
    “Death's a sad Bone; bruised, you'd
    say, and yet -”

CROSS CUT:

INT. SQUAT - NIGHT

Ally runs her fingers over her lips. Ally cups her hand over her mouth. She vomits.

    CHRIS(O.S.)
    (Ally’s Father)
    You’re going to be late.

CROSS CUT:

INT. ALLY’S BEDROOM - DAY

Ally flinches, looks at her watch, and frantically wipes off the makeup and zips a sweater over her tank top. THREE KNOCKS at the door.

CROSS CUT:

INT. SQUAT - NIGHT

Ally convulses on the floor. FOOT TAPS ON THE FLOOR THREE TIMES.

    ALLY (V.O.)
    “She waits for me, year after year,
    to so delicately undo an old wound,
    to empty my breath from its bad prison.”

    PISS (O.S.)
    Shit. I told you not to bring that bitch here.

PISS, a hardened long time squatter nudges Ally with his foot. POCKETS a younger, less worn out street kid, bends down and checks Ally’s eyes.

    POCKETS
    She’s tanking.

Pockets tilts Ally’s head back.
PISS
Smart. Now it will be easier for
her to choke on her own puke. Roll
that bitch over.

Pockets rolls Ally onto her side and cradles her head.

PISS (CONT’D)
If you think I’m helping you drag
her skanky ass to the yard, you’re
stupider than you look.

Piss leaves. Pockets strokes Ally’s hair.

ALLY (V.O.)
So how did I get from there to
here?

POCKETS
Ally? Ally, come on.

CROSS CUT:

INT. ALLY’S BEDROOM – DAY

Ally stashes her makeup in her backpack. CHRIS, Ally’s light-
blue-collar dad (sears-sucker suit, $20 watch) stands in the
crack of a partially open door.

CHRIS
Ally, Come on. You’re gonna be
late.

ALLY (V.O.)
Same as everyone else. One day at a
time.

Ally slings her backpack onto her back and explodes through
the bedroom door.

ALLY (CONT’D)
I’ll make it. I’ve got a ride.

INT. KITCHEN – DAY

Ally stops short. The table is set: a plate of scrambled
eggs, bacon, toast, and O.J.

Chris fiddles with the breakfast plates. He lines up the
knives and forks on the folded paper napkins.

CHRIS
A ride?
ALLY
Now this will make me late, fat,
and a prime candidate for
cardiovascular disease.

CHRIS
Who’s this ride coming from?

CAR HONKS.

ALLY
April.

Chris looks out the window and takes a deep breath. Ally
watches him from behind.

ALLY (CONT’D)
She’s still my sister.

CHRIS
How is she?

ALLY
You know.

CHRIS
No, I don’t.

ALLY
I’ll fill you in tonight. Don’t
wanna start a new school on a bad
foot.

Chris rubs his forehead with one hand and grabs a full glass
of orange juice with the other.

Angle on “FROM-CONCENTRATE O.J.” container.

CHRIS
At least drink your juice.

ALLY
You know I adore you, daddy, but if
it’s not organic -

Ally rushes out the door.

ALLY (O.S.) (CONT’D)
Remember, Plus C stands for
carcinogens.

Chris takes a swig of orange juice and shakes his head.
EXT. STREET - DAY

Ally rushes to a rusted out old junk heap and flings open the back door.

INT. MATT’S CAR - DAY

APRIL, a beautiful 16 year-old bad-ass and MATT, her 23 year-old, gaunt, artist boyfriend make out in the front seat. Matt periodically REVSES THE ENGINE to keep the car from stalling.

ALLY
What is this, a Porno?

APRIL
Bow-chic-a-bow-bow.

MATT
You know what a fluffer is, Ally?

(Ally through the rearview mirror).

ALLY
Yes. And no, that’s gross.

APRIL
Keep us waiting and our minds wander.

Matt playfully grabs a handful of April’s hair.

ALLY
Your mind, his hands - Great, I can skip sex-ed today, but I have history first period, so unless you’re planning on reenacting the French revolution up there -

APRIL
I’ll let you eat cake, baby.
And whatever else you want.

Matt slaps his hands together in mock-prayer and then slams them onto the steering wheel.

MATT
(Fake french accent)
Off with her pants!

APRIL
The king must go down.
Matt flops his head onto April’s lap. April SQUEALS.

ALLY
Mel Brooks did it first and better –
letsgo-letsgo-letsgo.

APRIL
Alright already, you don’t have to
take our heads off.

April and Matt burst into giggles. Ally gives a begrudged
smirk and shakes her head just like her father.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Matt’s car pulls into the street.

CAR HORN

Another car swerves to avoid Matt’s car.

INT. MATT’S CAR - DAY

April lights a cigarette and passes it to Matt, then offers
one to Ally. Ally waves it off.

ALLY
Dad asked about you.

APRIL
What did you tell him?

ALLY
What could I tell him?

April takes a long drag. Ally takes off her baggy
sweatshirt, and takes out her make-up bag. For the rest of
the scene Ally will attempt to put on makeup; April will take
each piece of makeup away and do it for her.

APRIL
You’re doing that wrong – you’re
gonna look like a $3 ho. Tell him
I’m an adult, and when he starts
treating me like one we can talk.

ALLY
You’re 16, you can’t even buy your
own cigarettes.

MATT
Sure can smoke’em though.
APRIL
Cheap’s not your best look, baby.

April gives up on Ally’s supply of makeup and pulls out her own stash.

ALLY
I’m just saying – maybe he’s got a point.

APRIL
If he didn’t want me to grow up so fast, maybe he shouldn’t have turned me into an eight-year-old house wife. .

ALLY
He didn’t –

APRIL
Laundry, dishes, dinner, getting you ready for school in the morning.

ALLY
He just needed help after –

APRIL
Even before she killed herself –
She was a waste of space.

Matt puts the car in park.

MATT
Last stop. Corner of Angst Avenue and the Boulevard of Broken Homes – everyone out.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL – DAY

MARCO, 16, the bad boy all the girls want to fix, sits smoking with ANT, 17, the pot head, and FOUR GUYS on the front steps of the school.

Ally looks back at Matt’s car, April and Matt are going at it again.

PAIGE (O.S.)
Ally!

PAIGE, 14, Ally’s best friend from grade-school runs toward Matt’s car with a bulging back-pack and an arm full of books.
PAIGE (CONT’D)
Where were you? I went by your house.

Ally looks through her backpack, avoiding eye-contact with Paige.

ALLY
I was running late so I caught a ride with April.

Angle on Matt’s car.

PAIGE
PDA much?

Marco notices Ally.

MARCO
Who’s that?

ANT
That’s that psycho-bitch-April. I told her she looked hot one day; bitch keyed my car.

Ant flicks away his cigarette.

MARCO
I mean the new girl.

ANT
Let me get a drag.

Marco stares at Ant, then takes a long drag.

ANT (CONT’D)
Aight, I see how it is. I guess that’s psycho’s sister. I wouldn’t try to hit that. If she’s anything like her sister, she’ll hit back.

From behind we see Marco flip his cigarette so the lit end is near his palm. Marco holds eye contact with Ally. He lets out a slight gasp and smiles.

Ally smiles back.

PAIGE
I just thought – we always walk to school together.

Paige follows Ally’s eyes to Marco.
ALLY
Middle school was only three
blocks. Isn’t that Marco?

PAIGE
What’s left of him. My sister said
he went completely nuts when his
brother died.

Ally and Page walk toward the school entrance.

PAIGE (CONT’D)
Quit all his extra curricular
activities, started dressing like a
freak, and from the looks of it
stopped bathing. Do you think April
would mind if I caught a ride in
the mornings?

Camera angle on April and Matt still making out in the car.

ALLY
I’ll ask her, if she ever comes up
for air.

PAIGE
We should go – I did a run through
over the weekend and it should take
us three minutes to get from our
lockers to homeroom, which leaves
us a minute and a half to setup our
books and stuff.

Paige and Ally walk past Marco, Ant, and the guys on the
steps.

ALLY
You came to school on a weekend,
and timed your routes? Did you
synchronize your watch to the clock
in the principal’s office?

Paige smiles widely and does a little happy dance.

PAIGE
Oh my God, I didn’t tell you. You
know how my sister works in the
office; she got us all the same
classes, even homeroom.

Ally smiles half-heartedly. The BELL RINGS. Paige looks at
her watch.
PAIGE (CONT’D)
See? You joke, but -

Paige grabs Ally’s wrist and makes a run for the front door. The other kids on the steps start casually toward the door. Marco stays and finishes his cigarette.

FADE OUT.
ACT II: IT'S NOT STALKING, IT'S RESEARCH

FADE IN:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ally stands in front of a trophy case. A clean cut version of Marco is featured in three team photographs: Football, wrestling, and track & field. Ally fixates on the trophy case for the entire scene.

    PAIGE (O.S.)
    Earth to Ally. We’re going to be late for fourth period.

    ALLY
    We have study hall fourth period.

Paige looks at the trophy case and shrugs.

    PAIGE
    They still take attendance. And we need to create a spreadsheet for our extra-curricular, anyway.

    ALLY
    I think I’m going to see if I can get a pass to the library.

    PAIGE
    Great! We can sign up for all the activities we want before the after school rush. We’ll be first on every list - that’s sure to impress the faculty advisors.

Ally cringes with embarrassment.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Ally looks through two open yearbooks. Paige shifts through a stack of flyers for various activities.

    PAIGE
    The trick is picking the right combination - to seem diversified, not scatter-brained.

    ALLY
    I don’t get it.
PAIGE
Like grouping the school paper, literary journal and yearbook shows a focused interest in publication, but yearbook, the school play, and student government makes you look like a dilatant - The play, the math league, and the newspaper seems like you have no idea what you want to do or where your strength lies.

Ally holds up an open yearbook to show to Paige.

ALLY
Marco’s freshman quote: Live each day as if you were the person you wish you were.

PAIGE
I’m thinking debate, student government, the paper. Accentuating my leadership and communication skills.

ALLY
Then sophomore year: I think it’s kind of funny, I think it’s kind of sad - the dreams in which I’m dying are the best I’ve ever had.

Paige reaches over and closes the yearbook Ally is reading from.

PAIGE
Stalking losers is not an extra curricular activity you can put on your college application.

ALLY
I’m not stalking him. I find him interesting.

PAIGE
He’s not that interesting - if everyone who lost someone they loved just fell apart what would the world look like?

Ally runs her finger over a YEARBOOK PICTURE of Marco with his arm around his brother, Barry.
PAIGE (CONT’D)
People die - get over it.

Ally becomes visibly upset. She looks like she might cry or scream. Paige looks suddenly concerned.

PAIGE (CONT’D)
I didn’t mean your -

Ally stands up and goes to the LIBRARIAN’s desk.

ALLY
I need a pass back to study hall.

The Librarian retrieves a small slip of paper from a multislotted wooden box.

PAIGE
Ally!?

The Librarian SHUSHES Paige, without looking up from her work.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ally is walking briskly down the hall. Paige runs to catch up with Ally.

PAIGE
Look, I’m an idiot.

Ally stops, but doesn’t turn around to face Paige.

PAIGE (CONT’D)
Forgive me?

ALLY
Maybe. You said your sister knew about Marco and his brother right?

Paige NODS excitedly, obviously relieved that Ally is still speaking to her.

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Paige’s sister, MOLLY, 22, the kind of receptionist that makes high school boys hope they get called to the principal’s office, sits at the front desk checking attendance sheets. There is a high counter in front of Molly’s desk.

Ant walks up to the counter and grins. Molly smirks at Ant.
MOLLY
Third trip to the office today.

Ant leans over, closer to Molly.

ANT
The man’s keeping me down.

MOLLY
Take a seat. Seems you’re not the only one who forgot he was back in school.

Molly spins around in her seat and focuses her attention on her computer screen.

ANT
I’d just as soon keep you company up here.

Paige and Ally walk up to the counter. Still typing at the computer, Molly points at the row of chairs. Ant reluctantly walks away.

Paige wrinkles her nose at Ant.

PAIGE
They’re all in love with her.

MOLLY
First day and little sis is already cutting class. So much for being the good daughter.

From Paige and Ally’s viewpoint we can see what Ant was smiling at - a clear look down Molly’s shirt.

PAIGE
I’m not cutting. I have a pass from study hall.

Paige sounds younger in her sister’s presence.

MOLLY
Did you miss your big sister? That’s so adorable.

PAIGE
It was Ally’s idea.

ALLY
Do you have a minute?
MOLLY
No misbehaving while I’m gone, or it’s the ruler when I get back.

Ant Beams. Molly picks up the stack of attendance sheets.

MOLLY (CONT’D)
Come with me - I have to file these.

INT. FILE ROOM - DAY

Molly files the attendance sheets.

MOLLY
Spill it. You’re pissed I stuck you in all the same classes as my dorky little sister aren’t you?

ALLY
Yeah.

PAIGE
Bitch.

ALLY
But, I wanted to ask you about something else. What do you know about Marco?

MOLLY
Absolutely everything. I am the eyes and ears of this institution, the confidant of horny young boys who would lose all faith in God if I ever buttoned my top button.

Molly checks her shirt to make sure she is showing a sufficient amount of cleavage.

PAIGE
And you wonder why I’m the favorite?

MOLLY
But whose favorite, pussy cat?

Molly files a folder.

ALLY
So what happened? He went from like Captain America to -
PAIGE
Rebel with out a bath.

ALLY
In three months.

MOLLY
His brother died of cancer.

Molly sounds different now. Her voice is softer, calmer.

ALLY
So he just gave up?

MOLLY
It wasn’t an overnight thing.

Molly reaches into the file drawer and pulls out Marco’s file.

MOLLY (CONT’D)
Freshman year he was an A-B student, few absences, made varsity on three sports.

PAIGE
Those are personal files. You can’t just -

Molly and Ally ignore Paige.

MOLLY
He was never sent to The Pit.

ALLY
The Pit?

MOLLY
In-school suspension – the cubical behind my desk. It’s where I get all the good gossip. For some reason the dolts that get sent there think it’s sound proof.

Molly Flips through the pages of the file. Paige looks nervously out the small window of the door.

INT. MAIN OFFICE – DAY

Ant pokes around at Molly’s desk.
INT. FILE ROOM - DAY

Molly flips through the pages in the folder.

MOLLY
Here we go. Excused absence for the last three weeks of school - That’s when his brother got really bad

PAIGE
You know you get fired for this.

Molly sighs.

MOLLY
No, really, I couldn’t. You think the student’s are the only ones I have dirt on - The principal’s been screwing Mrs. Grove, the biology teacher in his office for months - she’s a moaner -

Ally and Molly laugh. Paige sticks her finger in her mouth and mock-vomits.

PAIGE
Gross, we have her next period.

MOLLY
And her husband is on the board of education, which technically makes him the principal’s boss.

ALLY
Sweet.

Molly flips to the back of the file, reads through it silently for a second, and then sticks the closed folder under her arm.

MOLLY
Marco’s brother died right before the school year ended - not pretty from what I hear - Marco started slipping: Increased absences, more notes from the faculty on attitude, falling grades, he played football again for about a month and then quit..
ALLY
It’s kind of sad. Didn’t anyone notice and try to help him?

MOLLY
He had a weekly appointment with the school shrink, but he stopped showing up around the time he quit football. Now, he rarely makes it to class at all.

PAIGE
Real winner you’ve fixated on, Ally. His brother dies and he just hides from the world - try’s to become no one.

Paige presses her ear against the door and closes her eyes tight with concentration.

Molly gently puts a hand on Ally’s thigh and gazes off into the distance.

MOLLY
Not no one - His brother was a lot like Marco is now. Marco was the good son, Barry was the bad seed. I guess he’s trying to become Barry.

PAIGE
Oh no. If you die, I’m gonna have to become a slut.

Molly snaps out of her reverie.

MOLLY
If I died and left you my boobs maybe. As it stands now -

PAIGE
Honestly, I don’t know why you care. He’s lost any shot he had at getting into a good school. He’s probably going to end up right back here working some dead end job.

Paige shoots a scathing look at Molly.

MOLLY
Remember who writes your schedule - You want first period P.E., followed by metal shop?
ALLY
Maybe he just needs someone who understands what he’s going through?

PAIGE
Maybe he just needs some prozac and a bath.

Paige opens the door as Ally, and then Molly, approach.

PAIGE (CONT’D)
Come on, we’re gonna be late for fifth period.

INT. MAIN OFFICE – DAY
Ant lounges sleepily in the waiting area, but perks up when Molly returns to her desk.

ANT
(To Molly)
You know we’re gonna be partying at my place this Friday – you should come down.

Ally gives Paige a nudge. Paige mouths no-way.

MOLLY
I know you just want me for the beer I could bring.

ANT
Girl, I want you for everything you can bring.

BELL RINGS

INT. BIOLOGY CLASSROOM – DAY
Ally and Paige sit at a lab table which accommodates 4. They are joined by JERRY, 14, extremely well groomed. Jerry’s cloths are more stylish/urban-adult then the other kids in the room.

JERRY
We have homeroom together. Thought I’d sit with a familiar face.

Paige shushes him.
Mrs. Grove, 40, an attractive but harsh looking woman drops her chalk while writing her name on the board. Mrs. Grove groans as she bends down to pick up the chalk.

Ally and Paige shudder.

Mrs. Grove
I am Mrs. Grove and this is Bi-

Serena, 16, heavily tattooed, manic panic hair, combat boots comes in late for class. Mrs. Grove speaks without skipping a beat and continues writing on the blackboard: Biology 1.

Mrs. Grove (Cont’d)
Serena, How nice of you to join us for a third year of freshman biology. Take an empty seat.

Serena flips Mrs. Grove the finger and sits down next to Ally. Paige rolls her eyes. Ally smiles at Serena. Serena mouths FUCK YOU.

Mrs. Grove (Cont’d)
It seems you do not have enough room left to turn yourself into a walking cheat sheet his year, so I suggest you make it here on time and pay attention.

Mrs. Grove stands at the front of the room, facing the class.

Serena
Actually there’s a little room left on my ass, but I’ll have to ask you to read it to me.

The class chuckles.

Mrs. Grove
Enjoy The Pit Serena. Staring at four blank walls will do more to prepare you for your future than my lecture anyway.

Serena smirks and strolls out; she flips off the entire class.

Mrs. Grove (Cont’d)
I hope you choose your seat carefully, these will be your lab partners for the rest of the year. Table three, I feel truly sorry for you.
PAIGE
But -

Mrs. Grove speaks right over her.

MRS. GROVE
There will be no alterations and no exceptions.

Paige looks destroyed.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Ally and Paige walk down the hall. Jerry tags along behind them.

PAIGE
I can’t do it. I can’t work with such an obvious sociopath.

JERRY
She is pretty intense, huh.

Paige looks at Ally, but speaks to Jerry.

PAIGE
Who are you?

JERRY
I’m Jerry. Just moved to town this summer from -

Now Paige gives Jerry her attention, as though she just realized something terribly important.

PAIGE
What’s your G.P.A.? I need to know if we’re gonna have to carry two mental midgets or just one.

JERRY
3.5, But I’m -

Paige and Ally open their lockers and put their books away.

PAIGE
I guess that’s okay. But we’re all going to have to work twice as hard as usual to exceed expectations.

ALLY
Welcome to town, Jerry.
PAIGE
Which means there is no way we can
  go to that party this weekend.

JERRY
There’s a party this weekend?

They both ignore Jerry’s question.

ALLY
If we don’t go to the party on
  Friday, I’ll be too depressed to do
  any work on Saturday.

Paige looks exasperated with Ally, so she turns her attention
  back to Jerry.

PAIGE
Yes, there’s a party. No, we aren’t
  even invited. And yes, Ally’s going
  to be a complete pain in the ass
  until she get’s her way.

ALLY
Look, I’ll make you a deal. We’ll
  work on the Biology project Friday
  afternoon, go to the party, then
  get back to the project first thing
  Saturday morning.

PAIGE
There are still two major problems
  with your plan – We’re not invited
  and there is no way either of our
  parents would let us go even if we
  were.

JERRY
Alright, ladies, I can’t secure
  your invites, but if you let me tag
  along, I think I can help with the
  parents.

BELL RINGS

INT. CAFETERIA – DAY

Ally, Paige, and Jerry carry trays down a long buffet style
  line. Paige and Jerry select various food items, Ally so far
  only has a bottle of spring water. Behind the counter a surly
  CAFETERIA WOMAN glowers.
ALLY
Excuse me. Do you serve anything that isn’t laced with preservatives and pesticides?

CAFETERIA WOMAN
Of course we do, princess. But we keep it all in the back room with the china and crystal, so the common folk don’t feel jealous.

The cafeteria woman laughs at her own joke. Jerry laughs a little, too.

PAIGE
Here comes the angry letter to the school board: (mimic’s Ally’s voice) Teen obesity and depression have both been linked to the exact type of food you serve in your –

ALLY
Wouldn’t you like a healthy alternative? A baby green salad or meat that’s not filled with steroids and antibiotics?

Jerry grabs a twinkie.

JERRY
Personally, I’ll take all the free steroids and antibiotics you’ve got. Any idea what those things cost on the street?

Jerry grabs a second twinkie.

PAIGE
Spend much time on the street, there, Jerry? You’re wearing three hundred dollar shoes.

JERRY
Are they? These things just appear in my closet.

Ally pays for her bottle of water.

PAIGE
What, does your mom still shop for you?
JERRY
No, she has people to do that, and everything else, for her.

Paige pays for a small tray of food.

ALLY
I’ll catch up with you guys in a bit. I’m gonna go see if April is out in the parking lot.

PAIGE
Lunch in the parking lot - Welcome to lifestyles of the poor and forgettable.

FADE OUT.
ACT III: BRUNCH WITH BURNOUTS

FADE IN:

EXT. PARKING LOT – DAY

Marco, Ant and BURNOUTS sit on the steps leading down to the parking lot, eating brown bag lunches and fast food.

April and Matt sit on the hood of Matt’s car, feeding each other french fries between kisses.

Ally walks past Marco. She smiles, then quickly looks away and makes a b-line to her sister.

MASS
Didn’t you graduate from here like four years ago?

MATT
What is this graduation you speak of?

April rolls over and straddles Matt

APRIL
My man delivers.

ALLY
I see you’ve already covered the tip.

April reaches for Matt’s zipper.

APRIL
Actually, I was just about to uncover it –

MATT
The hours are shit, but the benefits are great.

ALLY
Do you know that guy over there?

Ally nods in Ant’s direction.

APRIL
Bug or something right?

ALLY
Ant, I think.
Real sweet talker - Last spring he told me my ass looked so good he’d like to wear it as a hat.

Matt puffs up his puny chest and makes to walk over to Ant.

I don’t care how young he is, that boy’s getting a busted lip.

April pushes him back down onto the hood and kisses him.

Don’t worry baby, I keyed his car — he got the message.

Guess you’re not going to his party Friday?

Please, why would I go hang around with a bunch of little boys when I got a man at home?

A man with Percy tickets for Friday night.

Matt pulls two tickets out of his pocket. April grabs them and inspects them closely. She is obviously excited.

I love you.

I was gonna surprise you, but — (To Ally) sorry to block your play, but those cost me forty. Couldn’t let them go to waste.

Ally stares at the sidewalk in resignation.

Thanks, Matt.

Why do you wanna spend time with that insect anyway?

Ally betrays herself by glancing at Marco.
ALLY
I didn’t. I just thought a party might be fun.

APRIL
I see.

April makes kissy faces and starts hugging herself.

APRIL (CONT’D)
O Marco I love you – please, please let me have your babies.

ALLY
Shut up.

APRIL
She had this huge crush on him when he was in eighth grade – I thought she got over it when he went to high school. But now that they’re back in the same school – (sings) let’s get it on.

ALLY
Wanna tell me again how mature you are?

MATT
I’m feeling kind of fatherly – maybe I should go find out what the young man’s intentions are?

Matt and April hop off the hood and walk over toward Marco. Ally grabs April’s shirt as she’s walking away.

ALLY
If you do this, I will never forgive you.

April pulls her shirt away from Ally.

APRIL
Of course you will – It’s your nature.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL STEPS - DAY

Ant, Marco and four others finish there lunch. April and Matt walk up the steps. Ally follows.
ANT
I was hittin’ that shit so hard,
that shit so hard, she was screaming like someone was
screaming like someone was killin’ her.

April stands in front of Ant.

APRIL
That tends to happen if you don’t
have consent first..

ANT
Shit. What you want? I ain’t said
nothin’ to you - I know how it is.

April slings her arm around Ally.

APRIL
See this innocent looking little
girl.

ANT
Wassup? You pimpin now? How much?

Ally looks horrified. April gives Ant a quick kick in the
shins and looks over her shoulder at Ant’s CAR.

APRIL
Those new tires you got there?

Ant looks at his car then at the ground. He is intimidated.

APRIL (CONT’D)
This is my little sister; she’s
coming to your party on Friday. If
any of you dumb fucks try to slip
something in her drink,

Angle on Ant.

APRIL (CONT’D)
or give her just enough drinks so
she mumbles something close enough
to “Okay” to let you sleep at night

April flicks her wrist. Matt SNAPS a rubber band against his
wrist.

APRIL (CONT’D)
I’ll castrate every mother-fucking
last one of you.
MATT
(To Ant) And just so you remember,
I’ve got something in my car I’d
like to show you.

Matt and Ant walk over to Matt’s car. April follows. Ally
turns to leave.

APRIL
You have fun, sweetie.

MARCO
So you’re coming out Friday?

ALLY
You mean I didn’t just die of
embarrassment? I could of swore I
keeled over right after “innocent
little girl.”

Marco takes her wrist as if he’s checking her pulse.

MARCO
I’m pretty sure you survived.

Marco holds her wrist a second longer than necessary.

ALLY
In that case I guess whatever
doesn’t kill you –

MARCO
Eventually wears you down and kills
you.

Marco lights a cigarette.

ALLY
Yeah.

Ally looks at the cigarette. Marco flips the cigarette so
the lit end is in the cup of his hand – it becomes invisible
except for the smoke rising through his fingers (he does not
take another drag).

MARCO
I don’t know – I think it’s kinda
cool how she looks out for you.

ALLY
She could be a little less militant
about it, but yeah, she looks out
for me.
Ant returns to the steps, pale and shaken.

ANT
Those two are fucking crazy.

MARCO
What?

ANT
Forget it, man.

Ally looks back at April and Matt, both of them laugh then start making out again.

ALLY
Alright then - I gotta go.

MARCO
So, I’ll see you Friday maybe?

Ally nods at Marco. She turns toward the entrance of the building with a huge smile on her face.

INT. MAIN HALLWAY - DAY
Ally does a little victory dance and ducks into the girls room.

INT. GIRL’S ROOM - DAY
Serena sits on the window ledge smoking. Ally looks a bit startled, then goes to the sink and washes her hands.

SERENA
I must have dropped too much acid this morning.

Serena hops down off the ledge.

SERENA (CONT’D)
I could have sworn I just saw you talking to Marco out on the steps.

Ally soaps up her hands.

SERENA (CONT’D)
He’s taken.

Serena turns off the faucet.

ALLY
I didn’t know you guys were dating.
Ally moves down one sink and turns on the water and finishes rinsing her hands.

SERENA
We’re not. But you’re not going to be dating him either - understand?

ALLY
I understand - that you apparently did drop too much acid this morning.

Serena blocks the door. Someone tries to get in from the outside. Serena kicks back at the door.

SERENA
It’s fucking occupied.

ALLY
You know with all those tattoo’s - some of those are homemade right? - You should really get tested for hepatitis.

BANGING ON THE DOOR.

SERENA
I said: It’s fucking occupied.

GIRLS push their way in. Serena turns and walks out.

SERENA (CONT’D)
This isn’t over.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Jerry, Ally, Paige and a CROWD burst out the main doors.

JERRY
It’s over. I’ve survived the first day at a new school, in a new town - no name calling, no wedgies, no fights.

ALLY
Lucky you.

PAIGE
Maybe you could get a restraining order, then they’d have to switch her lab group.
ALLY
I don’t think being a bitch is grounds for a restraining order.

Jerry scoots past Paige to catch up with Ally. Jerry puts his hand on Ally’s shoulder for moral support and to slow her down.

JERRY
We’re still going to the party, right? You’re not gonna chicken out.

ALLY
Do you think she’s gonna be there?

Serena sits on a wall, lights matches, and flicks them at CHEERLEADERS as they walk past.

PAIGE
If she puts you in the hospital, that’s definitely grounds for a restraining order.

Cheerleaders scoff and walk away. Serena LAUGHS.

ALLY
I’m going – not only did I get invited –

PAIGE
Spill it.

ALLY
Marco, kinda said he hoped he’d see me there.

Jerry smacks his hands together.

JERRY
We’re all set then. You got the invite; I have the parents covered.

PAIGE
Exactly how are you planning on convincing our parents to let us go to a burner party?

Ant passes a DIME BAG to a KID IN FLANNEL.
JERRY
I’m not. You tell your mom your
you’re studying at Ally’s, and you
tell your mom you’re sleeping at
Paige’s.

Jerry stops, crosses his arms - completely satisfied.

PAIGE
Ally’s mom’s dead, and that’s a
shit plan - what are we supposed to
do after the party? Sleep in the
park?

JERRY
After the party, you two can come
home with me.

ALLY
Yeah - no.

Paige makes a “Whatever” hand sign.

PAIGE
Nice try, horn-dog. I don’t know
what the girls are like where
you’re from, but around here -

TWO SENIOR GIRLS, scantly clad walk by.

SENIOR GIRL 1
Does semen have carbs?

SENIOR GIRL 2
If it does - Blow your diet or your
boyfriend.

SENIOR GIRL 1
Tough call right?

Jerry gestures toward the senior girls.

PAIGE
Well, we’re not those kind of
girls. And if you think -

JERRY
Trust me, the thought never entered
my mind.

PAIGE
Why not!?
Ally laughs at Paige’s sudden desire to be desired.

ALLY
What are you going to tell you’re parents? Or are you just expecting them to be cool with this little coed slumber party.

PAIGE
I’m very attractive!

Paige pushes out her barely-there chest.

JERRY
Are you kidding? My father will practically wet himself with masculine pride – it will keep him off my back for at least three months.

PAIGE
You’d be lucky to date a girl like me.

Jerry gives her little more than a sideways glance.

JERRY
And my mother won’t even know you’re there unless you’re swimming around in the bottle of gin beside her bed.

PAIGE
So I’m not like hollywood-hot, but come on. I’m not exactly hard on the eyes.

Ally turns to Paige.

ALLY
You’re adorable, Paige.

Ally looks back to Jerry.

ALLY (CONT’D)
Alright, but you’re riding the couch – whether it’s crossed you’re mind or not.

PAIGE
You can’t be serious?
JERRY
We have plenty of spare bedrooms.

Ally spots Matt’s car.

ALLY
You need a ride?

INT. MATT’S CAR - DAY
Matt grabs April’s sides. April squirms and giggles.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY
CAB pulls up behind Matt’s car.

JERRY
Looks like mom sent a cab. Thanks though.

Ally zips her cover sweater over her tank top. Ally and Paige pile into the back seat of Matt’s car.

ALLY (O.S.)
Pee-wee Herman didn’t even watch this much porn.

Matt’s car SPUTTERS away.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY
Matt’s car SPUTTERS in the distance outside. Ally sans-makeup comes through the door and slings her backpack into a chair.

Chris stirs a pot and watches the car drive off from the window.

CHRISS
Learn a lot?

ALLY
Yup. Four places you can shoot heroin without leaving a mark, and how to make a crack pipe out of a light bulb and a ballpoint pen.

Ally retrieves a pen from her backpack and wiggles it.

CHRISS
My tax dollars at work. It’s about time they started teaching kids things they can use in the real world.
Ally peaks under the lid of a simmering pan.

**ALLY**
What-cha cooking, good-looking?

Chris uses an oven mitt to push the lid back onto the pan.

**CHRIS**
You know if you lift the lid you let the magic out.

**ALLY**
(sings) Try, try, try to understand it’s a magic pan - papa.

**CHRIS**
Heart - *Dreamboat Annie* - 1975.

Ally slings her arms around her father’s neck and kisses his cheek.

**ALLY**
Is there anything you don’t know?

**CHRIS**
Well, I don’t know that the capital of Croatia is Zagreb.

Ally picks up a newspaper from the table.

**ALLY**
Someone’s been sneaking crossword puzzles again.

**CHRIS**
Busted. You know what I would like to know -

Chris brings the pan to the table.

**ALLY**
That your food is free of harmful additives and artificial flavors?

Chris serves the chicken.

**CHRIS**
Free-range chicken.

Chris points at the pot.

**CHRIS (CONT’D)**
Wild rice.
Chris points to the salad on the table.

    CHRIS (CONT’D)
    Organic baby Arugula with all natural balsamic vinaigrette.

Chris brings over the pot of rice.

    ALLY
    Yes on the chicken. Yes on the salad. No on the rice - You know wild doesn’t mean natural.

Chris serves himself a heaping pile of rice.

    CHRIS
    Thought I could slip it past you. Speaking of slipping past - how’s your sister?

    ALLY
    She seems good.

    CHRIS
    Working part time jobs to support a dead-beat pedophile boyfriend seems good to you?

    ALLY
    Why do you even ask?

Ally wolfs down forkfuls chicken and salad.

    CHRIS
    I keep hoping you’ll say: good, she’s dumped the loser and is currently packing her things to move back home. Or horrible, she’s miserable and needs you to bust down the door and rescue her.

Ally pauses before she speaks. She puts her hand gently on her father’s arm.

    ALLY
    She’s okay - Matt really seems to love her and she’s not exactly new to taking care of people.

Chris pulls his arm out from under Ally’s arm, dismissing the tender moment, and offers Ally more salad. Ally waves it off.
CHRIS
I know I was unfair to you girls after -

ALLY
You did the best you could. We all did. I have a lot of homework to do. If I don’t get a move on, I’ll be up til midnight.

Chris watches Ally walk away.

CHRIS
Homework on the first day of school?

Ally disappears through her bedroom door.

ALLY (O.S.)
There’s a fine line between educator and sadist.

Chris returns to his meal.

FADE OUT.
ACT IV: PARTY BALLS

FADE IN:

EXT. JERRY’S HOUSE - DAY

CAB pulls up to the curb. JERRY’S HOUSE takes up the entire property crowding out the small houses on either side.

Ally, Paige, and Jerry pile out of the cab.

PAIGE
This is where you live?

JERRY
No, I would not say - live.

ALLY
Harold and Maude?

Jerry smiles.

PAIGE
Where did this come from? I think I would have noticed a mansion on Garden Street sometime during the last 14 years.

The three of them look up at the massive house.

JERRY
My dad had it built over the summer. It’s a Mc-mansion. You pick what you want out of a catalog. They say would you like fries with that? And three months later your order is ready.

The three of them walk up the steep, marble stairs leading to the front door.

Paige admires the exotic looking flowers on either side of the stairs.

PAIGE
Is your father looking to adopt?

JERRY
He’s in New York on business most of the week, but he usually comes back early Friday afternoon. He should be back now. We can ask him.
INT. JERRY’S FATHER’S OFFICE – DAY

BILL WATERS, Jerry’s father, the kind of guy who wears power ties around the house even on Saturdays, flips through a legal pad. FRONT DOOR CLOSES.

Jerry pops through the door and beckons Ally and Paige to follow.

BILL
Hey big-guy, get in here a tic.

JERRY
This is Ally and Paige, I told you they were coming over tonight.

Bill gives Jerry a “Not-bad” smirk and nod.

BILL
Right, I’ll talk to you later.

Bill comes out from behind his desk and puts one hand on each of the girls shoulders, gently walking them out of his office.

BILL (CONT’D)
I hope you girls arn’t after Jerry just for his money.

PAIGE
We’re –

BILL
Cause he doesn’t have any – I’m serious, we’ve been defrauding the IRS for years and now they’re coming to take all this back.

Paige and Ally exchange awkward looks.

BILL (CONT’D)
I’m just kidding – he’s loaded.

JERRY
Dad!

Bill pushes the girls further down along the hallway. Bill stops Jerry. Bill makes a plunging motion.

BILL
It doesn’t matter how you get them as long as you get them in the end – am I right?
JERRY
Sure thing, dad.

Jerry walks quickly to catch up with Paige and Ally.

BILL
Hey if it looks like it’s going to be wet out there tonight - Don’t forget to bring a rain coat..

JERRY
He really believes you don’t understand what he just said to me.

INT. JERRY’S BEDROOM - DAY

Ally sits at the computer desk. Paige sits on the bed. Jerry flips through an enormous CD collection.

PAIGE
So about that whole adoption thing... Your dad is kind of a perv.

JERRY
He definitely loves women, or the idea of them, anyway.

Jerry puts on a CD - Indie girl rock.

PAIGE
Why do all guys want girls just for sex?

JERRY
Not all guys.

PAIGE
Yeah right.

Ally spins around in the desk chair to face them.

ALLY
Jerry’s right. Not all guys are like that.

PAIGE
You’ll see soon enough. If Marco does like you, even just a little, he’s gonna try at the party tonight.
Ally stretches and runs her fingers through the back of her hair.

**ALLY**
Maybe, I’ll let him. Maybe I just want him for sex.

Paige jump ups, scandalized.

**PAIGE**
You little slut.

**ALLY**
Christ, I’m just kidding.

Paige looks down. She’s standing on the edge of a BANANA REPUBLIC CATALOG. She peeks under the bed and pulls out a STACK OF CATALOGS.

**PAIGE**
I thought you said someone shops for you. What are you doing with all these men’s fashion catalogs?

**INT. JERRY’S BATHROOM – NIGHT**

Ally applies way too much makeup. KNOCK ON DOOR.

**JERRY (O.S.)**
You decent?

**ALLY**
That’s a matter of opinion. But yeah, I’m dressed.

Jerry walks in and shakes his head.

**JERRY**
When we reached a full hour, I suspected as much.

**ALLY**
What?

Jerry wipes off Ally’s excess makeup and starts from scratch.

**JERRY**
You’re over-doing it. You look like a drag-queen. Not that there’s anything wrong with drag queens – But somehow I don’t think that’s Marco’s type.
ALLY
I know. I suck at this.

JERRY
Then it’s a lucky thing you met me. I happen to be fantastic at it.

ALLY
How do you know how to do this sort of thing?

JERRY
I read a lot of magazines.

INT. JERRY’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Paige sits on the bed and flips though a fashion magazine. Jerry walks out of the bathroom and closes the door behind him.

PAIGE
I’m giving her five more minutes and then I’m going to bed.

JERRY
Inhale now because Ally is about to take your breath away.

Jerry opens the bathroom door. Ally’s hair and make-up look professionally done.

ALLY
Does it look okay?

PAIGE
You look great – and it only took an hour and a half. Amazing.

EXT. ANT’S HOUSE – NIGHT

The party is in full swing. SIX JOCKS are drinking beer out of plastic cups on the front steps. A cab pulls up carrying Ally, Jerry, and Paige.

PAIGE
What’s the varsity football team doing here?

JERRY
Jocks and kegs: If you tap it they will come.
DAMIEN, senior, linebacker, letter-man jacket, stumbles to the bottom of the steps.

DAMIEN
What? Does your dad drive a cab or something?

JERRY
No, my dad drives a bus.

Damien turns back to the Jocks and raises his beer.

DAMIEN
Party Bus!

All the Jocks raise their beers.

JOCKS ALL
Party Bus!

Jerry raises an empty hand in the air.

JERRY
Band Wagon!

Jocks raise their beers again.

JOCKS ALL
Band Wagon!

Ally, Paige, and Jerry climb the steps. The Jocks all pat Jerry on the back as he passes.

INT. ANT’S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

The activity at the party is as diverse as the people who showed up: KIDS make out on the couch, KIDS talk intensely in groups of 3-4, KIDS dance by the speakers, KIDS push each other angrily, KIDS pass around a three foot water bong.

Paige walks through the door and collides with FRANCIS, a shirtless sweaty burnout.

FRANCIS
My bad, baby.

Francis wraps his arm around Paige’s head, more than her shoulders. Paige looks at the hairy armpit an inch away from her face.

PAIGE
Ally?
ALLY
Can I borrow her for a minute? We need to get some drinks.

Francis lets go of Paige and points at the kitchen.

FRANCIS
I’ll catch you later, baby.

INT. ANT’S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Serena and Ant sit at a table with THREE KIDS. Serena bounces a quarter off the table, it lands in a shot glass. She pushes the glass across the table to ANT.

SERENA
That’s right - Drink bitch.

Ally stops short in the kitchen door. Serena laughs.

SERENA (CONT’D)
This is too good.

Serena stands up struts toward Ally.

SERENA (CONT’D)
Either you got some big hairy balls under that skirt, or you’re dumb as shit.

ANT
Give it a rest, Serena.

ALLY
(To Serena)
Have you seen Marco? Cause he told me he was gonna be here.

Serena licks her chops.

SERENA
(To Ant)
That was three in a row right?

ANT
Yeah, let’s get back to the game.

SERENA
Three in a row means I get to make a rule -

Serena smiles slowly. She looks Ally over, head to toe.
SERENA (CONT’D)
From now on before you take the shot you have to say: I came on Ally’s face and it was an improvement.

ANT
Would you bitches chill out? Marco’s not even comin’ tonight. He said he had some business at the Squat.

SERENA
You have a shot to do.

Ant looks apologetically at Ally.

ANT
Don’t tell your sister, okay - It’s just a stupid game. I came on Ally’s face and it was an improvement.

Ant takes the shot. Serena turns back to Ally.

SERENA
Stay the fuck away from Barry.

The room falls silent.

ANT
You just called Marco -

ALLY
Barry?

SERENA
Fuck this.

Serena pushes her way past Ally and Paige.

INT. ANT’S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Serena stomps through the circle of Kids smoking from the bong in the center of the room.

Jerry sits on the stairs to the second floor with a group of girls.

SERENA
Move it, asshole.

Serena shoves Jerry to the side.
JERRY
And she seemed so nice the first
time I met her.

INT. ANT’S KITCHEN – NIGHT

Ant bounces a quarter off the rim of the shot glass. Paige
grabs Ally by the arm.

PAIGE
He’s not coming. Can we just go
now?

ALLY
Marco’s not the only reason I came
tonight. I wanna have some fun for
a change.

Ant passes the shot glass to the next kid at the table.

ANT
No hard feelings, right? You need a
drink?

ALLY
Yeah, we do.

ANT
We got beer, beer, some berry
flavored wine cooler-shit.

PAIGE
I’ll take a berry one.

KID at the table snickers. Ant hands Paige a wine-cooler.

ALLY
Do you have anything stronger?

ANT
Vodka.

ALLY
Great.

ANT
I’ll screw ya.

ALLY
Just a drink is fine.
ANT
A screw-driver. You don’t wanna
drink this shit straight.

Ant pours a quarter glass of Vodka. Ant pulls out a container
of orange juice (The same brand her father offered her).

ALLY
Wait - not too much juice.

ANT
You like it strong, huh?

Ally takes a sip and makes a sour face.

ANT (CONT’D)
Too strong?

Ant tries to add more juice.

ALLY
Are you kidding - I can barely
taste the vodka.

Paige rolls her eyes and walks back into the living room.

INT. ANT’S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

Jerry and THREE GIRLS sit on the steps to the second floor.
Paige walks over to Jerry.

Damien and Jocks enter from front door.

DAMIEN
Party Bus!

Jerry waves. Damien and the Jocks go into the kitchen. Step
girl 1 puts her arm around Jerry’s shoulder.

STEP GIRL 1
Does your dad really drive a party
bus?

JERRY
Just a regular old greyhound.

PAIGE
His dad doesn’t drive a bus. He’s
like a millionaire CEO of
something.

Jerry points up the stairs. Everyone looks. Jerry walks
away.
INT. ANT’S KITCHEN - NIGHT

The kitchen is messier than before. Only Ant and Ally are still at the table. Ally continuously attempts to bounce a quarter into a shot glass.

ALLY
I’m gonna get good at this. Then we’ll see who makes the rules.

ANT
Serena’s not so bad, she’s just a little -

Ant makes a squish motion with his hand.

ANT (CONT’D)
upstairs you know.

Damien enters and pumps the beer-ball, then pours a cup of foam.

DAMIEN
Beer run.

Francis pops his head through the door.

FRANCIS
We’re out too. Gonna hit the squat.

Ally stops bouncing the quarter.

ALLY
What is The Squat? Is that like a club or something.

FRANCIS
It’s not like a club, club.

ANT
People go there to hang out; it’s hard to explain.

ALLY
You mind if I come check it out?

FRANCIS
Sure, why not?

ANT
No way. Your sister’ll kill me if she finds out you went down there.
Ally grabs her purse.

**ALLY**
I won’t tell, if you don’t. Just let me tell my friends.

**FRANCIS**
Don’t worry man we’ll be back in like a half hour.

INT. ANT’S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT
Paige taps her foot outside the bathroom door.

**ALLY**
I’m gonna run down to the squat real quick and see if Marco’s there.

**PAIGE**
Wait - where are you going?

**ALLY**
It’s like a club, but not like a club, club – It’s hard to explain.

Bathroom door opens THREE GIRLS walk out.

**PAIGE**
Wait right here. I’ll be right out.

Paige goes into the Bathroom.

Francis walks over to Ally.

**FRANCIS**
You ready?

**ALLY**
Don’t worry I’ll be back in like a half hour.

INT. BATHROOM – NIGHT
Paige throws her hands in the air.

**PAIGE**
Am I talking to myself?

Paige looks at herself in the mirror.
PAIGE (CONT’D)
Are you talkin’ to me? You talkin’ to me?

Paige chuckles and checks her hair.

EXT. ANT’S HOUSE – NIGHT
Ally and Francis walk across the lawn.

ALLY
Is this place far?

FRANCIS
Not too far.

ALLY
Does Marco go there a lot?

FRANCIS
Not really. His brother used to be there all the time though.

Ally and Francis get into a cheep car with tinted windows and expensive rims.

Francis’ car pulls away too slowly.

INT. ANT’S LIVING ROOM – NIGHT
Paige checks her watch. Jerry walks over to her.

PAIGE
Are you talking to me now?

JERRY
Looks like it.

Jerry hands Paige a wine cooler.

PAIGE
If you didn’t want anyone to know about your dad you should have said something.

JERRY
When I don’t want someone to know something, I don’t say anything about it at all. Which is what I was doing.

Jerry looks around the room.
JERRY (CONT’D)
Where’s Ally?

PAIGE
She went to some club, the Squat.

JERRY
WHAT!

SMASH CUT

EXT. SQUAT - NIGHT
Francis’ car pulls up in front of an abandoned house on the wrong side of town.
Marco stands in the doorway holding a BUNDLE wrapped in a flannel shirt.

MARCO
Try and stop me.

Marco turns away from the house.

INT. FRANCIS’ CAR - NIGHT
Francis and Ally both watch Marco.

ALLY
What’s going on?

FRANCIS
Just shut-up.

GUN SHOT.

EXT. SQUAT - NIGHT
Marco crumbles in the doorway.
Ally runs to him.

FRANCIS
Fuck this.

Francis peels out down the street.

FADE TO BLACK.
VITA

Thomas E. Moran was born in New Jersey on November 14, 1977. He graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in English from Felician College in 1999. He moved to Louisiana to pursue a Creative Writing Masters of Fine Arts from Louisiana State University in 2002.