

Hallmark Hall of Fame presents:
"The Gathering Storm" starring Principal Skinner

COLOR SUPER 8 FOOTAGE - CIRCA 1978

We see 70's era Super-8 footage and hear soulful Joe Cocker-style music a la the opening of "The Wonder Years."

- 1) Open on a scene of a young Homer and Marge clowning for the camera as they wash Homer's car. After a few seconds, the car slowly begins to roll out of the driveway and down the street. Homer desperately chases after it. SPLICE TO:
- 2) Homer cheerfully pushing Marge on a tire swing in the front yard of a suburban house. SPLICE TO:
- 3) Marge struggling futilely to push Homer on the tire swing. The branch sags under Homer's weight as leaves and twigs rain down. SPLICE TO:
- 4) Homer and Marge stand in the yard waving at the camera. Grampa, on a riding mower, drives behind them and out of frame. A beat later, Homer and Marge look off-camera, alarmed, and run after him. SPLICE TO:
- 5) They help a wet, angry Grampa climb out of a neighbor's swimming pool. The riding mower sits at the bottom of the deep end.

BART (O.S.): (CHUCKLE) Oh, man. They are gonna eat this up at Show & Tell.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL that we are...

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Bart is projecting the movies onto the refrigerator door. Lisa looks on, and Marge prepares breakfast.

MARGE: I'm not sure I'm comfortable with the idea of your classmates laughing at our family's private moments. How would you like it if, 20 years from now, people were laughing at things you did?

BART: Not likely.

On the refrigerator, the movie continues: Homer's birthday party, 1979. Homer now has a bushy beard and moustache. He opens and proudly displays his presents: a moustache cup, a 16-piece beard-grooming kit, and "Sebastian Cabot's Beard Book."

LISA (O.S.): Dad looks great with a beard. How come he shaved it off?

MARGE (O.S.): You know, I can't remember exactly, but...

Homer leans over to blow out the candles on his cake, and catches the bottom of his beard on fire. It spreads rapidly.

MARGE (O.S.): Oh, yes. They had to shave the rest off at the hospital.

The movie abruptly jumps to some footage of Patty and Selma clowning with a cardboard cut-out of Ronald Reagan in Washington, D.C.

WIDE SHOT - CONTINUOUS

A groggy Homer enters the kitchen and opens the refrigerator. Inside, he sees Patty and Selma's talking heads projected onto a jug of milk and a melon.

HOMER: (SCREAM)

He slams the refrigerator shut. A beat later, he re-opens it and sees Marge projected on the milk.

HOMER: Eh, that's a little better.

He takes the milk out and closes the door. We see footage of an obviously drunk Marge wearing a sombrero and being put into van marked "Policia de Tijuana."

MARGE: (ANNOYED MURMUR) Please, Bart. There must be something else you can take for Show & Tell.

BART: No way! This is the stuff of which B-minuses are made! Just because you may look a little foolish --

The film suddenly cuts to footage of a naked baby Bart sitting on his training potty and smiling earnestly at the camera.

BART: (EMBARASSED GROAN) Er, maybe people would just be interested in looking at the projector.

Out the window, we see the school bus drive up and honk.

BART: Argh! I gotta find something quick!

MARGE: Why don't you bring this potato? It's pretty big. Wait, I know... (OPENING REFRIGERATOR) ...You can take the potato and this green pepper. Oh, and here's a carrot!

HOMER: Why don't you take those dumb race car pajamas you always wear?

BART: Those pajamas are not "dumb." In fact, they're quite comfortable, thank you.

MARGE: I've got a neat idea. Why don't you take -- yourself? You can talk about things you like to do, and...

BART: Mom, I need something good.

MARGE: You're good.

The school bus honks again.

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - BART'S ROOM - A SECOND LATER

Bart is frantically rummaging through his closet. He comes upon a shoebox with holes punched in it and "Frog" written on the side.

BART: Oh, yes! (OPENS LID) Ewww. Sorry.

He puts the box back in his closet.

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - A SECOND LATER

Bart opens the night-stand next to Marge and Homer's bed and pulls out a book.

BART: (READING) "Erotic Massage for Couples." Nah, better not. Milhouse got suspended when he brought in those Italian playing cards.

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - SOMEWHERE - A SECOND LATER

Bart is rummaging through another closet. PULL BACK TO REVEAL it is Lisa's closet.

BART: (SHOCKED) Look at all these Dr. Demento records.

Lisa runs in to get her bookbag and sees Bart.

LISA: Bart, get out of my closet!

BART: I gotta find something for Show & Tell. (BEAT)

Where's that stupid clay cat you made at Lutheran day camp?

LISA: Just take one of my geodes. (OFF HIS LOOK) The rocks on my desk. (BEAT) No, that's the Trilobite...That's petrified wood...That's a bran muffin.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - A MINUTE LATER

Bart, holding a geode, and Lisa climb onto the bus.

LISA: Trust me on this, Bart. Geodes have scientific and

aesthetic appeal. They're perfect for Show & Tell.

Bart gets to the top step and turns to see that many kids on the bus are holding geodes, many bigger and cooler than his. The glare from the geodes is blinding.

MARTIN: Greetings, fellow Geodologist. My geode was found in the Limpopo Basin of Mozambique. The natives call it "Olu Katunji" or "Rock, which contains the Sun." Sit and tell me of your geode, Bart.

BART: (MOAN) I'll be right back.

Bart runs out of the bus and looks desperately around for something to grab. His eyes light up as he sees Santa's Little Helper in the front yard ripping the morning newspaper to shreds.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - BART'S CLASSROOM - LATER

Nelson is in the middle of his show and tell. He is holding an empty can of tomato paste.

NELSON: ...The ingredients were (READING) "Fresh pureed tomatoes, water, salt, and Sodium Benzoate used to retard spoilage." Once again, if I'm not mistaken, this can contained tomato paste.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: Thank you, Nelson. Bart Simpson, you're next.

Bart and the large, upside-down cardboard box next to him both stand up and walk to the front of the class.

BART: Boys and girls, Mrs. Krabappel, I come before you today to answer a question that has plagued mankind for centuries: What has four legs and ticks?

MILHOUSE: (RAISING HAND) A walking clock?

NELSON: A walkin'-clock!

MARTIN: (ASIDE, TO WENDELL) I'd wager he has some

variety of walking clock in that box.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: Bart, is it a walking clock?

BART: (CONFUSED) What? (BEAT) No, it's my dog!

He lifts the box, revealing Santa's Little Helper, who wags his tail happily. The kids ooh and aah. Mrs. Krabappel rolls her eyes.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: (LOW, SIGHS) If this was parochial school, I could spank him.

BART: My dog's name is Santa's Little Helper. Somebody told me once he was a pure-bred German sheperd. He's registered with the police department as a lethal weapon.

CLASS: Wow!

BART: He likes to eat out of the garbage and drink out of the toilet. One time he crawled under the house, and when he came out he was covered with ants.

SANTA'S LITTLE HELPER: (PANTS, SMALL BARK)

MILHOUSE: Lookit! It's thirsty or happy or hot or somethin'!

LEWIS: This is unbelievably exciting!

The dog scratches itself. The enraptured class murmurs excitedly.

BART: So in conclusion, (SING-SONG) that's my dog, not my cat, wash your face with chicken fat!

MRS. KRABAPPEL: Thank you, Bart. Great job.

She marks down "C+" for Bart.

CLASS: (CHEERS AND APPLAUSE)

MILHOUSE: (ASIDE, PROUD) I knew the dog before he came to class.

Bart and the dog head back to their seats. Martin goes to the front of the class with his geode. All the kids keep their eyes glued to the dog.

MARTIN: (DRAMATIC) Ka-Boom!! That, the sound of the thunderous volcanic explosion which gives birth to the

magnificent geode! One of nature's most marvelous --
 NELSON: (O.S.) You're doin' it wrong. You gotta pet him
 hard so he can feel it.

TURN TO REVEAL every kid near Bart is leaning over and petting the dog. Nelson demonstrates his hard-petting technique, which makes the dog's face stretch into funny expressions. Santa's Little Helper pants happily then sneezes.

SHERRI: Looklooklook! The doggie sneezed!
 MRS. KRABAPPEL: Ha! It thinks it's people!

There is a tapping at the door. Willie has his face pressed up against the little window and is excitedly trying to get the dog's attention.

WILLIE: (MUFFLED) Hey, pooch. Poochie-pooch.

The dog glances over and Willie looks ecstatic.

MARTIN: Anyway, this particular geode contains large
 amounts of quartz.

Everyone, including Mrs. Krabappel, is watching the dog, eagerly anticipating his next action. After a beat, he lies down on the floor.

MILHOUSE: (EXCITED) It's lying down!
 WILLIE: (MUFFLED) It thinks it's people!
 MRS. KRABAPPEL: Ha! He sure does. You know, I had a dog
 once who...(OFF MARTIN'S LOOK, GLUM) All right, back to
 Show & Tell. We'll put the dog away. C'mon, boy.
 CLASS: (GROANS)

Mrs. Krabappel leads the dog to a small coat room in the rear of the class. She puts the dog in, closes the door and returns to her desk. Everyone, including Mrs. Krabappel, stares icily at Martin.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: Well, Martin, we're all waiting to hear

about your geode.
 MARTIN: This geode --
 NELSON: Shut up!!

INT. BART'S CLASSROOM - COAT ROOM - LATER

Santa's Little Helper sits calmly on the floor. A smell wafts in from a nearby heating vent, and the dog goes over to sniff at it. We move into the vent and quickly follow it down to:

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The fumes come from a huge steaming pot. Lunchlady Doris ladles meat into the pot from a big drum labeled "Assorted Horse Parts - Now With More Testicles!"

LUNCHLADY DORIS: (PROUD) More testicles mean more iron.

INT. BART'S CLASSROOM - COAT ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

The dog whimpers and paws furiously at the vent. The grating swings open and Santa's Little Helper walks tentatively into the vent. He scrabbles a bit and then we hear him walk off into the distance.

INT. BART'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

There are various chuckles coming from the class.

MRS. KRABAPPEL: Well, I'm sure Ulysses Grant didn't think his own name was so funny. Anyway, in June 1863 he held a meeting with General Ambrose Burnside and General Joseph Hooker...

CLASS: (SNICKERS AND GUFFAWS)

MRS. KRABAPPEL: Class, please. Now, they were discussing the battle of McTitter's Mill...

There is a duct running across the ceiling of the classroom. We hear the clatter of the dog's toenails as he runs through the duct.

INT. LISA'S CLASSROOM - A MINUTE LATER

Santa's Little Helper peers through a grate above the class.

RALPH: Miss Hoover? There's a dog in the vent.

MISS HOOVER: (SKEPTICAL) Ralph, remember the time you said Superman was outside?

SANTA'S LITTLE HELPER: (CHEERFUL BARK)

The class sees the dog and becomes very excited.

LISA: Oh, no. This could wind up being as embarrassing as Grandparent's Day...

LISA'S THOUGHT BALLOON

Grampa stands helplessly trapped in the middle of the jungle gym. Workmen use blowtorches to cut him out.

INT. PRINCIPAL SKINNER'S OFFICE - A MINUTE LATER

An incredibly harried-looking Principal Skinner is on the phone. He is sweating profusely and has sweat stains under his arms and down his chest. All the lines on his phone are blinking.

SKINNER: (INTO PHONE) I know there's been a significant drop in the test scores, Superintendent, but I don't think it's the school's fault. What with the TV shows these kids watch, like that "Beavis and the Butthead"... What? I, I believe that's the name. (BEAT) Hold on. (YELLS OUT DOOR, ANGRY) Is it possible to get a fan in here?

Suddenly, a mob of very excited kids runs by down the hallway. Willie sticks his head in the door.

WILLIE: (PANICKED) Sir, ye've goot to coom quick! There's a doog roonin' aroond in the air doocts!

SKINNER: I understand.

He returns to his phone and punches a button.

SKINNER: I'll have to get back to you. (PUNCHES ANOTHER BUTTON) Mother, I have to call you back... I've got it... Yes, I've written it down -- "Riopan Plus."

He hangs up and grabs his P.A. microphone.

SKINNER: (OVER P.A.) Children, this is Principal Skinner...

INT. BART'S CLASSROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

SKINNER (V.O. OVER P.A.): ...Remain calm. There is a dog in the vents.

The class erupts in a frenzy.

INT. DUCT SYSTEM- LATER

Santa's Little Helper hears all the yelling and gets even more excited. He runs quickly down corridors of vents, barking. He slides down an inclined vent and spins around on all fours a la Bambi on the ice. He runs in another direction then sits down right above a grate and begins to pant furiously. Drool runs down his tongue.

INT. FACULTY LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

The dog's drool drips out of the grate and into a cup of coffee.

HIP SIXTIES TEACHER: ...but it was a great concert - pure Fogleberg (PICKS UP COFFEE, SIPS IT)

The door flies open and Principal Skinner and Willie burst in, followed by a bunch of overexcited kids and teachers.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Ssshhh! (SOTTO, POINTING UP)
He's up there.

Principal Skinner gingerly climbs up on the table and unlatches the grate. He sticks his head into the vent. From the dog's POV, we see Skinner's head popping into the vent. He gives Skinner a big, wet lick across the face then calmly saunters off down the vent and around a corner.

PRINCIIPAL SKINNER: Uccch. (LOOKING DOWN) Excuse me, pupils are not allowed in the Teacher's Lounge.

Kids are now wandering around the lounge, picking up papers, looking in cabinets, etc.

MILHOUSE: Hey Bart, look, there's a bunch of drawings of you!

He points to a bulletin board which says "Faculty Art Contest" and has several rude drawings of Bart drawn by various teachers. Skinner ushers the students out, except for Bart, who he restrains with an iron grip.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Bart Simpson, I understand this is your dog. Any suggestions?

BART: I could go into the vent and get him.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: I can't take that responsibility. Willie, you'll go into the vent and get him.

WILLIE: What?! Have ye gone waxy in the beester?! I'm na goin' in there, ye croquet-playin' mint-muncher!

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: You'll do it, William, or face a letter of reprimand from the regional public school system.

WILLIE: Ach. But I canna fit in the wee vent.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Grease yourself down and go in, you...
(THINKING) guff-speaking work-slacker.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - KITCHEN - A MINUTE LATER

Willie comes running in.

WILLIE: Have ye got any grease?

LUNCHLADY DORIS: Yes. Yes we do.

INT. DUCT SYSTEM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

A sweaty, greased-up Willie slithers through the cramped ducts, wearing only boxer shorts. Up ahead, there's a crossroad in the ducts. Out of the corner of his eye, he sees something run by very quickly, but only catches a glimpse of it, a la "Alien." Tense music builds as we hear eerie creaking from the ducts. Another imperceptible shadow runs by.

INT. PRINCIPAL SKINNER'S OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

Principal Skinner watches a lighted board labelled "School Heating System." A beeping, blinking light shows Willie's location. Another beeping, blinking light is rapidly approaching him from behind.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Good lord! It's coming up right behind him!

INT. DUCT SYSTEM - SIMULTANEOUS

Santa's Little Helper runs up behind Willie and begins licking his greased feet. Willie struggles but can't turn around.

WILLIE: (FRANTIC GIGGLES)

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

The duct runs along the hallway, which is packed with wild kids and teachers smoking and talking. They hear giggling and barking coming from the duct. Kids start throwing books, baseballs, etc. at the duct.

WILLIE: (O.S., GIGGLING) Ouch! (GIGGLES) Ouch!
 MRS. KRABAPPEL: Children, that's not helping.
 LISA: Miss Hoover, maybe things would calm down if we went back to class and tried to keep working.
 MISS HOOVER: Why don't you go in and erase the blackboard, and (LYING) the rest of us will join you in a bit.

A very agitated Principal Skinner runs out of his office and into the mob.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (TRYING TO CORRAL KIDS)
 Colodny, what are you doing out of class?! Baker, Atchison, Hymes! Return to your -- (SEEING TEACHERS, SPUTTERING) Krabappel! Hoover! I'll see you in my vent this afternoon.
 MRS. KRABAPPEL: Huh?
 PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Don't you sass me! I am in no mood for back-chat, flip-lip, applesauce or flack of any kind! Capiche?!

There is a sudden clatter from the duct, and we hear Willie and the dog moving rapidly away.

INT. DUCT SYSTEM - A MINUTE LATER

Willie is slithering after the dog as fast as he can go. They go past a little alcove in the ducts that is decorated with blacklight posters, pin-ups, etc. Otto sits there, reading Playdude and drinking beer.

OTTO: (YELLING AFTER THEM) Hey, don't blow my squat!

INT. LISA'S CLASSROOM - A MINUTE LATER

The room is empty, except for Lisa, who sits quietly at her desk, working.

LISA: (QUIZZING HERSELF) The capital of Maryland is? Not Baltimore, that's the obvious choice. It's...Annapolis. A-N-N-A-

The duct above her shakes and thumps wildly as Willie and the dog pass through, yelling and barking.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - NURSE'S OFFICE - A MINUTE LATER

A watery-eyed Wendell, Martin, and Ralph sit on a cot, sniffing and sneezing.

SCHOOL NURSE: Boys, your hay fever was probably set off by the dog. Just rest here until the symptoms die down.

There is a thunderous rumbling from the duct above them as the dog and Willie go by. A thick cloud of dust shoots out of the vent as the boys are showered with bits of plaster, bolts, etc. from overhead. They cough and wheeze horribly, then simultaneously take out and use their inhalers.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - SCIENCE LAB - A MINUTE LATER

The two charge through the duct above the lab, which groans and buckles under their weight. Just as they pass, a section of the duct comes loose and swings down on a lab table, smashing equipment and several large jars of vinegar. A tidal wave of vinegar rushes into a giant box of baking soda, which erupts in an enormous "volcano." Sheets of white "lava" flow through the room eventually hitting a display labelled "How A Smoke Detector Works." The smoke detector shorts out and showers sparks all over the display, which instantly bursts into flames. The smoke detector goes off. A second later, the piercing fire bell rings and the sprinkler system goes off.

INT. DUCT SYSTEM - A MINUTE LATER

Willie closes in on Santa's Little Helper and grabs him.

WILLIE: Why ye putrid sack of fleas, I'll hand ye over to the dog warden meself and - -

SANTA'S LITTLE HELPER: (FRIENDLY BARK)

WILLIE: (UNBELIEVABLY GLEEFUL) Aw, yer a good boy, arencha? (SCRATCHES DOG'S HEAD) Arencha? I'll take ye home and we'll have a nice bath. Now, out we go.

Willie pounds opens a grating, which falls from the duct. A few seconds later we hear it clatter to the ground in the distance.

WIDE REVERSE ANGLE

Willie and the dog peer out from a duct suspended high above the empty gymnasium. The duct swings slowly and precariously back and forth. After a beat, the fire bell in the gym goes off, followed immediately by the sprinklers.

WILLIE: (PRODUCING A FLASK) Well, time for a nip of courage.

The flask slips out of his greasy hand and crashes to the floor of the gym.

WILLIE: Ach.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - LATER

The gym is filled with paramedics, police, firemen, teachers and students. The firemen are raising a tall ladder under Willie and the dog. Chief Wiggum walks by Eddie and Lou, who are shooting baskets.

CHIEF WIGGUM: That's nice work, boys.

Principal Skinner stands around blankly, looking like he's had a nervous breakdown.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (QUAVERING) I-I... can't... take... this.

MILHOUSE: Uh, Principal Skinner, can I get you a glass of

water or something?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Food and drink... not permitted... in gymnasium.

Superintendent Chalmers storms in, livid.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (PULLING HIMSELF TOGETHER)
Superintendent Chalmers, you didn't have to come all the way down here. Everything's under control.

In the background, the big ladder tips over, smashing a huge window and pulling down the scoreboard.

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: I've had it with this school, Skinner: the low test scores, the constant outbreaks of botulism and ptomaine poisoning, class after class of ugly, ugly children...

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: I hardly think the children's appearance should...

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: I -don't-think-you-want-to-interrupt-me-Seymour. In the last hour, I've had the Fire Marshall on my back, the Humane Society in my hair, and the International Brotherhood of School Custodians up my south side!

The firemen are now bringing Willie and the dog down. Greased-up Willie slides comically around the gym floor. Santa's Little Helper dashes happily over to Bart.

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: Isn't that the boy who hit me with a tractor last year?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (LYING) No, that boy was expelled.

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: Tell me this. How did the boy smuggle a dog into school without your noticing?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Well, I did see him bringing in a large box this morning. But, students bring big boxes in and out of this school everyday. I can't be expected to monitor the

contents of every box.

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: (RUBBING HIS TEMPLES)

And why was the custodian allowed to go in after the dog?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: I sent him in. I didn't see any harm in sending a man into the heating system.

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: Seymour, I'm afraid you leave me no choice. You're fired.

DRAMATIC MUSICAL STING

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: I'm sorry, (PEEVED) did you just call me a liar?

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: (PUZZLED) No, I said you were fired.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Oh. That's much worse.

End of Act One

ACT TWO

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

The family is eating breakfast. Bart looks glum.

BART: I thought I'd be jumping for joy the day Skinner left, but now all I have is this weird hot feeling in the back of my head.

LISA: That's guilt, Bart. You feel guilty because your stunt wound up costing a man his job.

BART: But it wasn't my plan to get him fired. My plan to get him fired involved an empty apartment in Silicon Valley, a briefcase full of pirated software, and a little less than twenty-two thousand dollars. But all I've got so far is the apartment.

HOMER: Whoa, whoa, whoa, back up a minute. Let me get this straight: They let everybody out of school early, just because you brought a dog?

BART: Yeah, but --

HOMER: Well, I'm off to work.

Homer picks up the dog and dashes out the door.

MARGE: I think the dog has had enough excitement.

HOMER: (WHINY) But Marge, dogs can never get enough excitement.

Homer spins around wildly while holding the dog. He and the dog look very happy.

HOMER: (OFF MARGE'S LOOK) All right, all right, I won't take the dog.

Homer walks over and starts to pick up Maggie. He thinks better of it, grabs the cat and runs out.

ESTABLISHING SHOT - NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

INT. NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - HOMER'S WORKSTATION - LATER

Standing at the door to his workstation, Homer eagerly gestures to Lenny and Carl.

HOMER: Psst, guys, I got a plan that'll get us out of work real early today. Allow me to introduce you to Plan "X."

Homer spins his chair around to reveal a frightened Snowball II sitting there. He tries to lift it up, but it digs its claws into the chair. He finally rips it free and sets it on the floor.

HOMER: Now, we sit back and wait for the fireworks.

He sits down and swivels around, revealing the panic stricken cat is frantically hanging on to the back of the chair with all fours.

LENNY: Can we go home, yet?

CARL: Eh, I'll just go phone in a bomb threat.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY

Superintendent Chalmers stands on stage. Sitting to his left is the sternest, meanest looking man in the world.

SUPERINTENDANT CHALMERS: As Mr. Skinner's departure has left us in a bit of a bind, I've appointed a new principal to fill in for the rest of the year. Leopold?

The sternest, meanest man in the world approaches the podium. The children and teachers look horrified.

STERNEST, MEANEST MAN: From now on, things are going to be very different around here...with your new principal, Ned

Flanders!

The man applauds as he sits back down as Ned strolls in from the wings. The audience applauds and sighs with relief.

NED: Tip-top o' the a.m. to every-good-body here! As chairman of the PTA, I'm honored to step in and guide the school through this transitional period. While I may not be a Socrates or a Horace Mann or even Mr. Chips, I'll do my darndest. Afterall, as a legendary sailor once said, "I yam what I yam."

Only Rod, Todd and Martin laugh. All the other kids look confused.

ROD: (SOTTO, TO BART) He means Popeye.

BART: "Popeye?" What's that?

NED: Now I know everybody's eager to get back to class -

MRS. KRABAPPEL: (O.S.) Ha!

NED: But I thought it might break the ice if we had a little Q&A.

There is a long beat of silence.

KEARNY: (NUDGING JIMBO) Dude, ask a question or we'll have to go back to class.

Jimbo stands up, looking very awkward. Everybody turns to look at him.

JIMBO: (NERVOUS) Um, do you, er, what's your, um, policy, on...um, lockers?

NED: I wouldn't want to go out on a limb, and stick my neck out before all the facts are in, but I'd say every student should have one.

Superintendent Chalmers nods approvingly.

MARTIN: We've all enjoyed your tenure as chairman of the

PTA, particularly your monthly newsletter and "Neditorials," but tell us, who is slated to fill your shoes?

NED: (THINKING) Well, the by-laws stipulate the Sergeant-at-Arms would fill in for me, and I believe that would be...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

HOMER: (FURIOUS ANNOYED GRUNT)

Reveal that homer is holding an official looking letter.

HOMER: I do not recall volunteering to be Sergeant-at-Arms!

FLASHBACK - PTA MEETING

NED: Who wants to be Sergeant-at-Arms?

HOMER: Me, me, me, me, me! Me, me, me, me, me, me!

BACK TO REALITY

MARGE: Homer, all you have to do is lead a meeting once a month.

HOMER: But Marge, you know this family's not fit to hold high office. Grampa only served half his term in Congress before he was kicked out.

Homer points to a framed newspaper with the headline "Watergate Ax Falls: Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Simpson Indicted." Below is a photo of Grampa, in a 70's style suit, being escorted down the Capitol steps by police.

INT. QUIK-E-MART - DAY

Bart and Milhouse are using the self-service soft ice cream machine.

APU: Young men! Your gargantuan cone is making a mockery of our self-serve policy!

REVEAL that their cone is over a foot tall and growing. Milhouse turns and sees something.

MILHOUSE: Bart, look. It's Principal Skinner, and I think he's gone crazy. He's not wearing a suit or tie or anything!

We see Principal Skinner come out of a nearby aisle. He is wearing jeans, Keds, and a cardigan sweater.

BART: Principal Skinner... I didn't know you went shopping.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Of course. I do a lot of normal things: I snap my fingers 100 times each morning; I teach myself carousel repair; and I collect amateur films of buildings being demolished.

BART: I feel sort of guilty about my dog getting you fired, and biting you, and then making that mess in your office.

Skinner starts putting his groceries on the counter.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Well, maybe it was for the best. Now I finally have time to do what I've always wanted to do - - write the Great American Novel. (PROUD) It's about a futuristic amusement park where dinosaurs are brought to life through advanced cloning techniques.

Bart, Milhouse and Apu look very uncomfortable.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: I call it "Billy and the Clone-o-saurus."

APU: (CAN'T CONTROL HIMSELF) Oh god! First, you think of an idea that has already been done! And then, you give it a title that nobody could possibly like!! Didn't you...

LAP DISSOLVE TO: Later.

APU: ...not like it wasn't on the best-seller list for 18 months!
And on the cover of every...

LAP DISSOLVE TO: Later.

APU: ...one of the most popular movies of all time! What were you thinking?! (BEAT) I mean, thank you, come again.

MONTAGE of Flanders running the school

1) INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - BART'S CLASSROOM - MORNING

NED: (OVER P.A.) Guten morgen, teachers and learners. This is Principal Flanders. I'd like to wish a happy 10th birthday to Wendell Tompkins; a happy 8th to Wilma Wangshrink -- hmm, she seems to have a birthday every week; and a happy 44th to our own Edna Krabappel.

Mrs. Krabappel grimaces, stares furiously at the loudspeaker, and starts erasing an elaborate drawing on the blackboard which says "Mrs. K -- Happy 36th Birthday from your class."

2) INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - FACULTY LOUNGE - DAY

NED: (EXITING) Toody-doo, youdly-two!

MISS HOOVER: (RE: NED) Do you think he's...
(EFFEMINATE GESTURE)?

MRS. KRABAPPEL: I don't know. He's got a wife and kids.

MISS HOOVER: That doesn't count for anything. So does Mr. Largo.

ANGLE ON Mr. Largo eating a cookie and dabbing his mouth with a handkerchief after each bite. He notices them looking at him and gives them a sour look.

3) INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Bart sits calmly in front of Ned. He periodically takes a piece of candy from the bowl on Ned's desk.

NED: Bart, I'm beginnin' to get the feelin' you'd rather be in here than in class. This is fifth time you've been sent to my office this week, and now that I have peanut butter cups, you seem to be comin' every hour.

BART: (MOUTH FULL OF PEANUT BUTTER CUPS) Mufft be a co-in-fa-dince. (SWALLOWS) Say, Ned, I saw you patching the cracks in your driveway this weekend.

NED: (TOO EXCITED) Oh, yeah. What happened was, the roots from the sycamore cracked some of the asphalt, but I just got in there with some Sakrete -- well, the thing about Sakrete is... (ETC.)

With a devilish look, Bart leans back and begins eating more peanut butter cups.

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

HOMER: Kids, as chairman of the P.T.A., I'd like to ask you a very serious question: has Principal Goobatron screwed up the Jerk Academy yet?

BART: Actually, Ned's doing a good job. School's a lot more fun now.

HOMER: Well, if it isn't the head of the Flanders Fan Club! Loosen your bow-tie, Poindexter. It's cutting off the blood to your brain.

LISA: If it's any comfort, Dad, I don't think the teachers have much respect for Ned. My teacher smokes in class now, and she let us watch TV for two hours while she went out to get her car tuned up.

MARGE: I feel bad for poor Seymour Skinner. He must be very sad and lonely.

BART: He's not sad and lonely! I saw him in the laundromat, and he asked me to come over to his house and hang out. (OFF THEIR LOOKS) What? What?

EXT. SKINNER'S HOUSE - DAY

Skinner's Mother opens the door.

BART: I'm here to see Principal Skinner.

SKINNER'S MOTHER: What? Oh, wait, he left me a note...

(READING) "Mother, my friend Bart will be visiting this afternoon." Well, Seymour's up in his room. Don't touch the wallpaper.

INT. SKINNER'S HOUSE - SKINNER'S ROOM - A MINUTE LATER

Bart comes in. Principal Skinner is pretending to conduct an orchestra as classical music blares from a reel-to-reel tape player.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Bum-ba-bum-bum! Ba-ba-ba-bum!

(SEES BART) Oh, Bart! Welcome! Can I offer you a Diet Caffeine-Free Dr. Pepper or an individual fruit cocktail?

BART: No thanks. Hey, what's this?

Bart is looking at framed display of Skinner's Vietnam mementos (photos, medals, etc.)

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Why, that's my old unit from Vietnam. I was their Sergeant, they were my loyal troops.

We see the unit is full of hostile 19 year-olds who glare angrily at the square-looking Skinner.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: That photo was taken shortly before I was shot in the back... Which was strange, because I was in the Mess Hall at the time.

SKINNER'S MOTHER (O.S.): Seymour! Your friend is here!

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: I know, Mother.

SKINNER'S MOTHER (O.S.): Seymour, do you want me to tell you when it's 7:30?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: No, Mother. (TO BART) So, would you like to --

SKINNER'S MOTHER (O.S.): Seymour, I talked to Don Kramer today, and he said to plant the begonias before...

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (TO BART) Mother seems to be in one of her talkative moods. Let's go out to the patio.

SKINNER'S MOTHER (O.S.): ...but the hydrangeas need to be planted right away. Maybe your friend can help you.

EXT. SKINNER'S HOUSE - PATIO - LATER

Bart and Skinner sit on the dismal little patio. Through the window, we can see Skinner's Mother quietly sitting in her rocking chair.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: So, how's school?

BART: It's a lot of fun.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Fun? That doesn't sound good. A school described as "fun" is not being run efficiently. (BEAT) Has there been any talk about me, or the possibility of my return?

BART: No.

Skinner looks glum, and we see a guilty look in Bart's eye.

BART: (CHANGING SUBJECT) Do you have any more cool Vietnam stuff?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Oh, nothing you'd be interested in. Just a footlocker full of smoke bombs and a couple of remote-control spy cameras. (OFF BART'S LOOK, PERKING UP) I suppose we could load them into my car and go out to the old abandoned airport!

Skinner runs excitedly into the house.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER (O.S.): Mother, may I miss dinner tonight?

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY

Flanders strolls across the playground. Otto runs up.

OTTO: Hey, Ned! Can I borrow the school bus to go up to the Dead show this weekend?

NED: I don't see why not.

OTTO: All right! (TO PEOPLE O.S.) It's okay, dudes!

A motley groups of Deadheads cheer. We see they have already painted half the bus in psychedelic colors. Ned comes upon Mrs. Krabappel and the kids, who are having class outside. Most of the kids are running around, playing on the monkey bars, etc.

NED: Howdy-hey, Mrs. K.! Having class outside? What are you learning about, kids?

MILHOUSE: We just finished hearing today's horoscope, and we're about to hear Ann Landers.

NED: Sounds good. Edna, have you seen Miss Hoover around?

MRS. KRABAPPEL: She went to see that new martial arts movie in Chinatown, so I'm teaching her class, too. They're over there.

We see Miss Hoover's class gathered around a nearby ice cream truck.

NED: Jim Dandy! Everybody havin' fun?

KIDS: Yaaaaay!

A paddy wagon drives up. Lou gets out and opens the back door. Lots of excited, dirty kids stream out.

LOU: We found these kids playin' in the quarry. They say they're Mr. Bennett's class.

MONTAGE of Bart and Skinner together

1) INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Principal Skinner walks in with Bart.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: I though you might like this restaurant, Bart. They'll make a pizza pie with the topping of your choice.

They are greeted by a stereotypical Italian chef, a la the one on a pizza box.

ITALIAN CHEF: Ay, Seymour! You want-a your usual table?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: No, Luigi, I'd like one with two seats this time.

ITALIAN CHEF: You want-a the newspaper to read-a while you eat?

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: No, no. I'll be dining with a friend tonight.

ITALIAN CHEF: (WAY TOO HAPPY) Ay! Good-a for you!!

The chef seats them and goes into the kitchen.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: They treat you real nice here.

ITALIAN CHEF (O.S.): Ay, Salvatore! Guess-a who's here? Mr. Cuckoo Labonza, and-a some real ugly kid!

2) EXT. CARNIVAL - HAUNTED HOUSE RIDE - DAY

Bart and Principal Skinner get in the little cart and ride into the haunted house.

INT. HAUNTED HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A cheesy teenage Dracula jumps out of a coffin.

DRACULA: (SQUEAKY TEENAGE VOICE) Blah! I've come to suck your blood!

BART: (SCREAM)

DRACULA: (SEEING SKINNER) (SCREAM) Principal Skinner! I apolo-lologize for scaring you.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: No need, Jeremy. As a patron of the haunted house, I expect to be scared.

DRACULA: Oh, okay. (TIMID) Blah!

The cart moves along, and we see the cheesy teenage Wolfman, Mummy, Frankenstein, etc., all looking apprehensive and un-scary as Skinner approaches.

3) INT. SOMEWHERE - DAY

CLOSE-UPS of Bart and Skinner talking.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (UPROARIOUS LAUGHTER) And you say Ned Flanders actually ate the cookies you left in the faculty lounge?!

BART: Yep, he didn't even check for cigarette butts.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (CHUCKLES) Any good principal knows to throw students' gifts in the trash immediately. That place must be falling apart. (BEAT) Nobody's mentioned me, have they?

BART: I thought I heard someone say your name in the cafeteria, but they might've been saying "skim milk."

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (SATISFIED) Hmm.

VOICE (O.S.): All right, big smiles!

Bart and Skinner smile and we PULL BACK to reveal they're dressed in Civil War costumes, posing in the "Olde Tyme Photos" place in the mall. The camera clicks and we FREEZE FRAME on the sepia tone print of their photo.

INT. FLANDERS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ROD: Dad, will you unlock the Fun Cabinet, so we can play with Spiro-graph?

NED: Not until you finish your homework.

TODD: We don't have any homework. Tomorrow, we're running laps all day.

ROD: (PROUD) We get to listen to the radio while our teacher's in Chicago.

Ned looks upset, as he unlocks the cabinet and takes out Spiro-graph.

NED: (SIGHS) Boys, I'm afraid people haven't been taking education very seriously since I became principal. (GROWING TENSER) I think it's time I cracked down a little at school.

TODD: Dad, you're bending Spiro-graph!

INT. SCHOOL - XEROX ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Bart sits on the Xerox machine with his pants down. We see hundreds of photocopies of his butt coming out. He pulls up his pants and snickers as he takes the copies, turns them upside down, opens the machine, and puts them in the paper tray. He leaves just as a secretary enters with a stack of files.

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - A LITTLE LATER

A stern-looking Ned is speaking to Miss Hoover and Mrs. Krabappel. The secretary walks in and sets some Xeroxes on Ned's desk.

NED: ...And from now on, I want you teaching class, assigning homework, and showing me the respect this office deserves.

Ned picks up a Xerox and looks at it. On the back, we see Bart's butt. The teachers start snickering. Ned sees the butt and becomes incensed.

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - LATER

NED: I don't what I'm going to do about the 300 copies that were sent to the School Board, but I do know one thing -- you will be punished.

BART: Say, Ned, somebody told me you used to play the

piano...

NED: (WISE TO BART'S SCHEME) Oh, no, no, no. We're talking about your punishment. You will give me 2 months detention and a 1,000 word essay on responsibility. And now you will go back to class.

Bart leaves, looking very shaken.

EXT. SKINNER'S HOUSE - PATIO - DUSK

Principal Skinner stands at a barbecue grill wearing an apron that reads "Principals Do It 9 Months A Year." Both Bart and Skinner look glum.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: (COMPLETELY LIFELESS) So he's really keeping you in check now, eh? That's great.

BART: What?! Look, no offense intended, but it sucks to have a real principal again.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Bart, may I be frank with you? I've been harboring a rather naive belief that I was the only one who could run that school. And now that a man with no previous experience is running it efficiently, well, I feel pretty useless.

He takes the hot dogs off the grill and puts them on a flimsy paper plate. They all slide off and fall to the ground, where they roll across the patio. He picks them up and puts them in buns.

PRINCIPAL SKINNER: Mother, your hot dogs are ready.

EXT. SCHOOL - MIDNIGHT

Principal Skinner stands in front of the empty school looking wistful. We hear his mental sound montage of: school bells, children playing, fragmented p.a. announcements, etc. We move down the street to see Professor Frink standing wistfully in front of his old lab. We hear his mental sound montage of: weird scientific gizmos, robots, etc. We move much, much further down the street to see Nixon staring wistfully at the

White House. We hear his mental sound montage of: cheering crowds, "Hail to the Chief," and frantic chimpanzee sounds followed by a gunshot.

EXT. SKINNER'S HOUSE - THE NEXT DAY

Bart knocks on the door and Skinner's mother answers.

SKINNER'S MOM: Oh, you're Seymour's friend. He's not here right now.

BART: Do you know when he'll be back?

SKINNER'S MOM: 1998. Here, he left you this note.

Bart opens the note, which is in Skinner's incredibly neat handwriting.

SKINNER (V.O.): "Dear Bart, I do wish our friendship could have had more time to grow. But seeing as I'm no longer needed at school, I've decided to return to the only other thing that has given my life meaning - - I've re-enlisted in the United States Army. Sincerely, Sgt. Seymour Skinner."

Bart looks heartbroken.

SKINNER'S MOM: Don't worry about me, I've got two other sons.

The two sons come to the door. They both resemble Skinner, except one is fat and the other is muscular with a beard.

SKINNER'S BROTHER #1: Everything okay, Mom? Who's this?

SKINNER'S MOM: He's one of Seymour's friends.

SKINNER'S BROTHER #2: God, Seymour is weird.

End of Act Two

ACT THREE

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - BART'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bart sits at his desk, trying to write something. He crumples it up, throws it out and starts again. Homer walks by.

BART: Dad, do you know anything about responsibility?

HOMER: No...

We see Homer is carrying an upside-down box labelled "Wine Glasses - This Side Up."

HOMER:...Why?

BART: Because Ned is making me write this stupid essay. Plus, he gave me 2 months of detention.

HOMER: What?! Flanders cannot tell my family what to do. The only people who tell my family what to do are me, Marge, and Lyndon Larouche.

BART: But Flanders is the principal.

HOMER: Well, I'm head of the PTA, and I order you to disobey Flanders, and if you don't, I will punish you even more.

BART: So either way, I get punished.

HOMER: Yes. The lesson here is that you deserved to be punished.

EXT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - DAY

Skinner, now in drill sergeant uniform, is being shown around by a 26 year old Colonel.

COLONEL: It's good to see another combat veteran around here. I myself received a number of medals for securing the Montgomery Ward in Kuwait City.

SKINNER: Yes. Now, I understand it will be my duty to mold

the new recruits into a well-disciplined, highly-trained infantry unit.

COLONEL: Yeah, whatever, I guess. Here they come now.

A bus drives up and discharges teenage hayseeds of all shapes and sizes.

HAYSEED #1: Where do I get my grenades at?

HAYSEED #2: Hey, they don't have them group terlets no more, do they?

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - TWO DAYS LATER

Homer and Marge sit in front of Ned's desk.

NED: Homer, Marge, I know you're doing your best, but sometimes when kids act up, there's a problem at home. God knows, I caused my parents no end of trouble when I was a boy.

NED'S FLASHBACK - NEW YORK - 1959

Five year old Ned is playing with a bottle of ink and spills it all over a desk. Ned's father storms in - - he is a beatnik who resembles Ned, but has a goatee and a beret.

NED'S FATHER: (DICK SHAWN VOICE) Oh maaaaan! Ned spilled ink all over my poems! He's a real flat tire, I mean a cube, man! He's putting us on the train to Squaresville, Mona!

NED'S MOTHER: (PICKING UP NED) Come on, Neddy-O. Let's go steal some clothes from the NYU laundry.

BACK TO REALITY

MARGE: We've found that Bart doesn't respond well to punishment. He responds better to rewards. Candy and whatnot.

NED: I'm sorry, but the punishment stands.

HOMER: (REALLY STEAMED) Oh yeah?! Well, let me tell you something, Flanders! Bart is going to keep ignoring your punishment! I am going to drive you out of this office! And Marge is going to make those delicious marshmallow squares of hers!

MARGE: (VERY FIRM) Yes I am!

They storm out of Ned's office.

INT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - BARRACKS - NIGHTS

The recruits are gathered around Skinner for a rap session.

SKINNER: I re-enlisted because I longed for the sense of self-worth and accomplishment one can get from the Army. Why did you join up, Private Griner?

PRIVATE GRINER: (SQUEAKY TEENAGE VOICE) I got a girl pregnant, and I didn't want to be around when she had the baby.

PRIVATE #2: Me too.

PRIVATE #3: Me too.

PRIVATE #4: Me too.

INT. SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - NIGHT

The PTA meeting is about to begin. Parents and teachers sit in the kids' desks. Homer stands in front of the group.

HOMER: Welcome to the monthly meeting of the PTA. There's no need to wait for Flanders. He's not coming tonight.

EXT. FLANDERS HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - SIMULTANEOUS

Ned and Maude sit in their car, looking puzzled. The steering wheel is missing.

NED: Well, I guess I could try to drive, but it wouldn't be very

safe.

BACK TO SCENE

HOMER: I'll make this quick, 'cause I know we all want to get home to see the big football game tonight.

MR. MILHOUSE: Football season ended four months ago. What are you trying to pull?

HOMER: I'm sorry, I meant tonight's the big...Rosie O'Donnell special on HBO.

EVERYONE: (WAY TOO EXCITED) Oooh! / She's delightfully brassy! / Let's get outta here, then!

HOMER: Okay, item one: a vote to purchase soap and rags for the glee club car wash. All in favor?

EVERYONE: Aye!

HOMER: Item two: (VERY QUICKLY) the impeachment of Ned Flanders. All in favor?

A beat of silence as Homer looks expectant.

DR. HIBBERT: Wait a minute, let's discuss this.

HOMER: (ANNOYED GRUNT)

CHIEF WIGGUM: We may be in a hurry to see Rosie O'Donnell, but this sounds important. (SKEPTICAL) What's wrong with Ned Flanders?

HOMER: (GETTING VERY NERVOUS) Ned Flanders has, you know...been punishing my son, you know...and there's that other stuff he did, like, that stuff, you know?

CHUCK'S DAD: I've heard nothing but praise for Ned Flanders. He's a man in a very difficult position.

HOMER: Please just do me one favor and fire Ned Flanders.

DR. HIBBERT: That is an absurd request. I suggest we fire you and put an end to your brutish behavior. All in favor?

EVERYONE: Aye!

HOMER: (GENUINELY PANICKED) Egad! They've put an end to my brutish behavior!

EXT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - TRAINING GROUNDS - DAY

Skinner's company jogs along with him out front.

COMPANY: (SINGING) I met a woman in Paris, France /
Had a big hole in her underpa - -

Skinner looks very shocked and calls the company to a halt. He goes up to a soldier and yells in his face, drill sergeant style.

SKINNER: Where did you pick up that filth, private?!
PRIVATE: We heard Sergeant Clark's company singing it, sir!
SKINNER: Well, there will be no smut in my company. You're in this army to learn!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - TRAINING GROUNDS - LATER

Skinner's company jogs along with him out front.

COMPANY: (SINGING) I don't know, but I been told! / The Parthenon is mighty old!
SKINNER: (SINGING) Howwww old?
COMPANY: (SINGING) Real old!
SKINNER: (SINGING) What's inside?
COMPANY: (SINGING) Old stuff!
SKINNER: (SINGING) That's good, but needs improvement.

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bart is looking sadly at a letter he's received from Skinner. Enclosed is a photo of Skinner standing stiffly in uniform. Bart sighs.

LISA: Wow, I never thought Principal Skinner could become any more of a square, but there's the proof.
BART: It's weird, Lis. I miss him as a friend, but I miss him

even more as an enemy. Flanders is a pretty poor substitute.
LISA: What about Moe?

Bart considers this, then picks up the phone and calls Moe. (INTERCUT BETWEEN BART AND MOE)

BART: I'd like to speak to Mrs. Lintercourse. Her first name is Norma.

MOE: Hey, is anybody here familiar with Norma Lintercourse? (BEAT) No? Sorry, buddy, you've called the wrong place if you're looking for Norma Lintercourse.

BART: (HANGING UP) Eh, it lacks that certain thrill that comes with infuriating a man down to his very core.

LISA: You need Skinner. Everybody needs a good enemy. Holmes had his Moriarty. Mountain Dew has its Mello-Yello. Even Maggie has that baby with the one eyebrow.

Reveal that Maggie is glaring furiously out the window as the one-eyebrowed baby passes by in his carriage. He glares back. We hear a sinister musical sting.

EXT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - FRONT GATE - DAY

A sign says "Fort Springfield -- Proud Home of Secret Civilian Mail-Opening Project." A sentry with very thick glasses stands at the gate. He does not appear to notice as Bart rides his bike right past him.

EXT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - MORTAR RANGE

Skinner's men are firing mortars. Shells explode at the far end of the range. Suddenly, Bart appears over the horizon, riding his bike across the range towards them. Before Skinner has a chance to stop them, the men drop another round in their mortars.

SKINNER: Man on the range!! Change your trajectories!!

The men quickly swing the mortars around, just as they launch.

EXT. QUIK-E-MART - THAT MINUTE

Apu stands proudly outside with Sanjay as a tanker truck pumps gasoline into the ground. There are several rows of shiny new gas pumps out front.

APU: Sixteen brand new gas pumps! At last we can compete with the Gas & Gulp!

We hear the whistling of approaching shells. Apu and Sanjay look up.

EXT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - MORTAR RANGE - A MINUTE LATER

Bart and Skinner walk along.

BART: If there was some way to get rid of Flanders, would you want to come back?

SKINNER: I can't say I don't miss the school. And frankly, the Army isn't quite as I remembered it.

A group of rowdy soldiers rumble by in a tank. A soldier standing on top of the tank moons Skinner. Another one throws a beer can at him.

ROWDY SOLDIER: Up yours, sergeant!

SKINNER: Actually, it's exactly as I remembered it. (BEAT) I do want to come back, Bart, but it doesn't sound like Flanders is going to get fired.

BART: Yeah, but we could make him quit! We could drive him crazy -- just like I drove you crazy!

SKINNER: ...Yes. (WARMING TO THE IDEA) Then I could just show up and take my old job back!

BART: ...Yes.

SKINNER: Now you realize, if we both get what we want, and I become Principal again, we can no longer be friends.

BART: Yeah, it wouldn't be right: you, a principal, and me, a troublemaker.

SKINNER; Then let's end our friendship with something really

special. (PUTTING HIS ARM AROUND BART) How would you like to join me for some real Army ice cream?

INT. SIMPSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

BART: Dad, would you be willing to help me drive Ned Flanders crazy?

HOMER: (CALM) Certainly.

Homer tries to stand up, but crumples to the ground, shivering.

HOMER: (MOANS OF DELIGHT)

INT. FORT SPRINGFIELD - P.X .- DAY

Skinner is on the payphone.

SKINNER: Bart? I've come up with a few ideas on how to drive our friend Ned out of the principal business. (WEIRD NASAL LAUGH) Have you got paper and a #2 pencil? Good...

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

SKINNER (V.O.): First, the lights in the principal's office can also be controlled by the circuit breakers in the basement...

A slightly confused Ned tries to work at his desk as the fluorescent lights above him flicker on and off in a maddening pattern. We Homer in the basement, gleefully manning the switch.

SKINNER (V.O.): Also, there is a tiny, almost imperceptible hole in the wall. Someone with a lot of patience and a squirt gun could be quite irritating.

A stream of water hits Ned in the ear. Then another. Then several more in an irregular pattern.

NED: What the...(SQUIRT) Where the Devil...(SQUIRT,
SQUIRT)

Ned gets up and futilely tries to find the source of the water as the lights flicker on and off.

EXT. SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DUSK

Ned is getting into his car.

SKINNER (V.O.): Mr. Watkins, the science teacher, is a long-winded conspiracy nut. Sick him on Flanders, and he'll talk the poor man's ear off.

Homer, wearing a suit and tie, is talking to Mr. Watkins and points towards Ned. Mr. Watkins runs up and buttonholes Ned.

MR. WATKINS: Ned! Ned! (BREATHLESS) I heard you had proof that Hubert Humphrey is still alive and conducting psychic warfare experiments from a shielded room in Rand Corporation headquarters!

NED: I do not what you are talking about.

MR. WATKINS: You don't have to play dumb with me. I got these documents through the Freedom of Information Act. The photos are rather blurry, but I'm sure you'll agree....

DISSOLVE TO much later.

MR. WATKINS:...It was no coincidence that a young Marine by the name of Oliver North was stationed in Roswell at the time of the UFO crash...

NED: Victor, it's really getting late.

MR. WATKINS: Listen, we're having a meeting at the Ramada Inn this Saturday...

INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM - LUNCHTIME

The lunchroom is packed with kids. A frazzled looking Ned eats lunch alone in a corner.

SKINNER (V.O.): In 1972, I expelled a young troublemaker named Hank Williams, Jr. If he were to receive a fraudulent letter inviting him back to receive an honorary degree, it could create quite a stir...

Hank Williams, Jr. and his unruly entourage of huge cowboys burst into the cafeteria.

HANK WILLIAMS, JR.: Here I am! I believe somebody owes me an honorary degree and that fella's name is...what's that fella's name?

ENTOURAGE MEMBER: Ned Flanders, Hank.

Ned comes over and tries to escort Hank Williams, Jr. out.

NED: This is an elementary school. We don't award honorary degrees.

HANK WILLIAMS, JR.: The hell you don't! I invited all my rowdy friends to come see me get this degree!

The entourage gathers menacingly around Ned. The kids look on excitedly.

NED: I'm sorry, there's no degree for you, and I will not tolerate such a disturbance in my lunchroom!

HANK WILLIAMS, JR.: (STEAMING) Kids, we're gonna talk to your principal outside for a minute.

KIDS: Yay!

NELSON: Get him, Hank!

Hank Williams, Jr. and his entourage grab Ned and usher him out of the room.

EXT. SCHOOL - STREET - THE NEXT MORNING

A very haggard Ned trudges up the steps into school, holding one of those frozen blue gel packs to the side of his face. PULL BACK to reveal Bart, Homer, and Skinner looking on from a parked car across the street.

HOMER: I don't believe it! He's been harassed. He's been kept awake for 96 hours. He's even been beaten up by a famous country music star. And he's still coming in! This plan is not working!

SKINNER: It's working. Deep down inside, it's working.

BART: But how long is it gonna take? He could stay in that job for years, lingering on the brink of insanity. Just like you did.

SKINNER: You're right. (BEAT) Tomorrow, we must create a day so stressful that no principal could possibly withstand it!

MONTAGE - LATE THAT NIGHT

1) Bart is talking on the phone. We see split screens of him talking to: a sleepy Chalmers who nods his head "Yes"; an obviously drunk and confused Mayor Quimby; and Bumblebee Man, who looks very enthusiastic - - but then looks at his calendar and sadly shakes his head "No."

2) Skinner stands in front of the school going over a set of blueprints with the Old Sea Captain. He points to various strategic locations and the Captain nods. The Captain snaps his fingers and his men begin wheeling crates full of large, dead fish into the school.

3) Homer trains several local actors who vaguely resemble Ned Flanders.

HOMER: No! Not "Howdy-doodly," "Howdly-doodly."

ACTORS: (FLANDERS IMITATION) Howdly-doodly.

EXT. SCHOOL - STREET - MORNING

Students are pouring into the school. Skinner and Homer sit in a car

across the street and watch as Flanders drives into the parking lot. Skinner looks at his watch.

SKINNER: 8:56. In 4 minutes, Ned Flanders will begin the most traumatic day of his life.

Ned starts walking up the school steps just as Superintendent Chalmers arrives with his assistant, Leopold.

NED: Superintendent Chalmers, I'm glad you're here. I've been struggling with this for a long time, and, well, I just can't take it anymore. I quit.

PAN DOWN to reveal a thunderstruck Bart, who has just walked up with Santa's Little Helper and four other excited dogs on leashes.

SUPERINTENDENT CHALMERS: But, Ned - -

NED: I'm sorry. I have never resigned from a job before, but for the sake of my sanity, I'm leaving. Good-bye.

Ned gets into his car and drives away. Bart makes a frantic "What now?" gesture to Skinner and Homer, who come running over. Homer is wearing a fake moustache and a uniform that says "Grimaldi Paving."

SUPERINTENDENT CHALMERS: Seymour, what are you doing here? I thought you flipped out and joined the army.

SKINNER: Now I'm back to run the school! (TO STUDENTS) Dirksen, tuck in your shirt. Jaffe, spit out that gum.

LEOPOLD: (TO CHALMERS) He can't just stroll in here and take his job back.

SUPERINTENDENT CHALMERS: (DOESN'T CARE) Eh. He seems to know the students' names.

Superintendent Chalmers and Leopold walk away.

BART: So I guess we're enemies again.

SKINNER: Yes. Yes we are. Now wipe that smirk off your

face and get back to class.

HOMER: Do you still want me to fill Flanders's car with hot asphalt.

SKINNER: If you can catch up with him.

Homer runs off gleefully. A steam shovel pulls up in front of the school. A second later, a flatbed truck with a banner reading "Mobile Oktoberfest" drives up. A brass band on the back strikes up the "Beer Barrel Polka." A group of scraggly prospectors run up the steps with their burro.

PROSPECTOR: (GABBY HAYES VOICE) The man on the phone said the gold was buried under the Principal's Office!

There are two muffled explosions from underground, as two giant weather balloons burst out of the lawn and inflate on either side of Skinner. One balloon reads "GET." The other reads "BENT." Skinner assumes a "Rocky"-style victory stance.

SKINNER: Ah! It's great to back!

A limousine drives up, and an elated Hank Williams, Jr. runs out, waving a telegram.

HANK WILLIAMS JR.: I can't believe you're gonna name the school after me! And y'even put up a... (BEAT) Wait, I don't see any statue.

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

CHYRON: "TWO MONTHS LATER"

Bart sits calmly on the sofa. Skinner's office door opens, and Milhouse comes out, shaken.

SKINNER: The toilet paper is there for personal sanitary use, and for no other purpose! Is that clear? Simpson, you're next.

Bart goes into the office and comes out a moment later with a confident smile.

MILHOUSE: Hey, I get three weeks detention, and you don't get anything? What, are you still friends with him?

BART: Nuh-uh. (SLY) All I did was promise to keep a little secret.

Bart takes a piece of paper out of his pocket and unfolds it. We FREEZE FRAME to see it is a "WANTED" poster with a photo of Skinner and the caption "A.W.O.L. -- Sgt. Seymour Skinner -- Wanted for Desertion."

End of Show