

**MALCOLM IN THE MIDDLE**

**"Stock Car Fever"**

**written by**

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**Writer's Second Draft**

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FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

MALCOLM, and REESE sit on the couch watching TV. They wear nothing but towels. Lois, also wearing just a towel, ENTERS carrying a huge basket of white laundry and DUMPS it at the boys' feet.

LOIS

You fold. You stack. Complain  
and you go to school naked.

Lois EXITS. Malcolm and Reese dig in, find their own underwear and slide into it as quickly as possible. They start folding laundry.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

Slipping into warm underwear is  
the only good thing about Monday  
mornings.

DEWEY ENTERS, wearing a bath towel. He stands in front of Reese.

REESE

What?

Dewey just GRINS.

REESE

(continuing)

What do you want, monkey-boy?

Dewey LOUDLY SLAPS his bare chest.

REESE

(continuing)

What are you doing?

Dewey looks to Malcolm who NODS approvingly. Dewey FLAILS on his chest and neck repeatedly.

DEWEY

Ow! Ow! Ow!

LOIS (O.S.)

What's going on in there?

DEWEY

Ouch! Reese is hitting me, Mom!

LOIS (O.S.)

Reese, don't make me come in there!

REESE  
I'm not doing anything!

Dewey FALLS TO THE GROUND and begins FAKE BAWLING.

DEWEY  
Help!

Reese leans over Dewey.

REESE  
Knock it off, creep!

Out of nowhere, Lois GRABS Reese by the ear and HUSTLES him out of the room through:

REESE  
(continuing)  
I'm innocent. I was set up.

LOIS  
You and O.J.

They EXIT. Dewey smiles and sits on the couch.

MALCOLM  
(to camera)  
I taught him that move.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The boys sit at the kitchen table eating breakfast. Lois is with them working on the mail. Dewey picks at his food.

DEWEY

My eggs are runny.

LOIS

(without looking up)

Do you think those little boys on CNN coming home to their burned out homes riding nothing but a three-legged goat complain about their mother's runny eggs?

DEWEY

What's CNN?

LOIS

They don't have eggs. So eat. What is all this stuff from your teacher, Malcolm?

MALCOLM

She's a flier freak.

LOIS

She sends two or three home a day. Like I have time to read.

MALCOLM

She thinks for a child to receive a good education, the parents have to be involved.

LOIS

Ten to one she doesn't have kids.

Hal ENTERS and sticks his head inside the refrigerator.

HAL

Honey, which juice don't I like - apple or grape?

LOIS

You don't like either.

HAL

Right.

Hal closes the fridge and sits down.

LOIS  
Don't forget to mail the bills.  
I'll deposit my paycheck.

Hal sticks a stack of bills in his shirt pocket and pours himself a glass of milk. Lois spots a particular flier.

LOIS  
(continuing)  
What exactly is "Personal  
Fulfillment Week?"

MALCOLM  
Mostly it's Square Dancing. Then  
we sit in a circle and talk about  
how the Square Dancing makes us  
feel.

REESE  
You should see these geeks. The  
Krelboynes dance on the tetherball  
court in front of the whole  
school. We laugh our asses off.

LOIS  
Excuse me?

REESE  
Butts. We laugh our butts off.

Lois reaches for a bottle of dishwashing liquid.

LOIS  
Open.

Reese opens his mouth and Lois squirts in a few drops.

LOIS  
(continuing)  
Swish. Spit.

Reese swishes and spits into a cup.

REESE  
That crap tastes like crap!

MALCOLM  
Mom, today is Polka Day. This  
class is turning me into a total  
weirdo.

LOIS

Malcolm, you are a gifted little boy. These kids who call you a weirdo are the same ones who, at the age of fifty, will be asking you if you want sour cream on your baked potato.

Hal gently touches Malcolm's shoulder.

HAL

What your mother is trying to say is...

(notices something)

Your left ear is bigger than your right ear. Now that's weird.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY - 15 MINUTES LATER

The boys are leaving for school. Hal waits for them by the back door.

HAL

Where you going?

MALCOLM

(hello?)

To school?

HAL

How'd my boys like a ride with Dad?

REESE

Us?

HAL

Sure, you.

MALCOLM

Why?

HAL

Do I need a reason?

Hal opens the back door. There's almost a CRAZY LOOK on his face. The boys start to EXIT.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

Something's wrong. Something's terribly, terribly wrong.

INT. FRANCIS' DORM ROOM - DAY

Francis is showing a large boa constrictor to his dorm mate, Stanley.

FRANCIS  
I call him Otis.

Francis drops the snake in his empty footlocker.

STANLEY  
Article thirty-one, paragraph C of the Marlin Academy of Military Conduct strictly forbids the housing of pets.

FRANCIS  
Don't you get it? This isn't just a snake. It represents rebellion. Nonconformity. Standing up to the "man."

STANLEY  
I don't think you get the concept of military school, dude.

Francis pulls a white rat from his pocket.

FRANCIS  
Check this out.

Francis drops the rat into the foot locker.

SFX: MOUSE SQUEAK

STANLEY  
Wow. He swallowed it whole.

FRANCIS  
It's just a mouse.

STANLEY  
No it was really excellent.

FRANCIS  
Then we have a deal?

STANLEY  
Since it's a snake, screw article thirty-one - paragraph C.

Reveille plays.

FRANCIS  
Time to main.

STANLEY  
(a little too gung-ho)  
Yeah!!!

Francis closes the footlocker, but a shirtsleeve causes the lid not to shut entirely.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Hal's car whizzes past the school.

MALCOLM (O.S.)  
Dad?

HAL (O.S.)  
Yes, Son?

MALCOLM (O.S.)  
You just passed our school.

HAL (O.S.)  
Oh, I did, did I?

Hal lets loose with a CRAZY LAUGH.

INT. HAL'S CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Hal behind the wheel; the boys are in the back seat.

DEWEY  
Yeah. There's Jimmy Barnes  
smoking a cigarette. He's Reese's  
friend.

HAL  
Dewey, what have your mother and  
I taught you about snitching?

DEWEY  
(resigned)  
"Only snitch when asked to snitch."

HAL  
Thank you. We're not going to  
school today, boys.

MALCOLM  
We're not?



HAL

No, siree-Bob. But your education does continue. Today, you will take that first step toward becoming a man. Geez, I wish I had me for an old man.

REESE

(surrepticiously to Malcolm)

Alright, we're going to a whorehouse.

HAL

Reese! I heard that.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

To be honest, that's where I thought we were going.

REESE

Where are we going then?

HAL

Forget it. I just wanted to share something with my boys. Now no matter what I say you're just going to be disappointed.

MALCOLM

No, we won't, Dad.

HAL

We're going to a stock car race!

REESE

Cool.

MALCOLM

Awesome.

HAL

That's right, guys. We're rebels. We're on the road. We're wild men! Now who's got a Twinkie in their lunch bag for their old dad?

MUSIC CUE: "SUKIYAKI"

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Hal's car merges onto the expressway.

DEWEY (O.S.)  
Does Mom know we're not going to  
school?

HAL (O.S.)  
Lord, no. She'd kill me.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING - LATER

Lois is gathering her keys and purse. She looks for the  
check on the desk and can't find it. She looks in her purse  
and can't find it.

LOIS  
Where did I put that damn paycheck?

MONTAGE

Lois DUMPING her purse out.

Lois TEARS the desk apart.

Lois SEARCHES the kitchen. BEADS OF SWEAT are forming on her  
brow.

ANGER BUILDING, Lois STORMS out of her bedroom quickly.

Lois EMPTIES pockets from dirty laundry.

Lois EMPTIES pockets from clean laundry.

Lois RIPS her minivan apart. She finds a mint flavored  
toothpick and SHOVES it in her mouth.

Lois, toothpick hanging out of the corner of her mouth, KICKS  
OPEN the front door. She RE-ENTERS the house and stares it  
down. She SPITS the toothpick out.

SFX: RATTLESNAKE

MUSIC CUE: Suggesting a Western-style showdown.

LOIS  
(continuing; tough as  
nails)  
That's the way it's going to be,  
huh?

Lois slams the door.

FADE OUT:

## ACT TWO

EXT. GRANDSTANDS - DAY - NOON

The guys are getting situated in their seats. Hal is in the middle.

HAL

Excited?

MALCOLM

Yeah, okay.

HAL

Well, who wouldn't be? I've loved this when I was your age. Stock car racing is the best sport in all the world. The best I tell you. The best.

REESE

Why do they call them stock cars?

HAL

Have no idea. See that orange car over there? Number three?

MALCOLM

Yeah.

HAL

That's old Rusty Malcolm. This is his last race, and he's my favorite racer. Rusty Malcolm is much more than a man. He's my hero. His dedication to being the best inspired me to have courage, persistence, and good old-fashioned American ingenuity. The man completely revolutionized the in-car urination system that is still used in NASA today.

REESE

Think anybody will die in a fiery crash?

HAL

Let's hope. These seats were a fortune. You know, Malcolm, you were named after Rusty Malcolm. It took me two kids to win the argument.

DEWEY

Who was I named after?

HAL

My favorite dog. But I loved him, too.

REESE

How 'bout me?

HAL

Reese, you were named after my favorite candy.

MALCOLM

Francis?

HAL

(wistful)

My favorite talking mule.

MALCOLM

Who did mom get to name?

HAL

Me. My name was Mike before we met. I'm kidding! We're at the races! I'm a wild man at the races! Here we go! Go Rusty!!!

A DRUNK MAN leans over from the row behind.

DRUNK MAN

I read in People where Rusty Malcolm is going through a divorce.

HAL

Shut your filthy mouth!

Hal GLARES at the drunk man and puts on a funky-looking NASCAR, tinted visor.

ANGLE ON

The cars starting.

BACK TO STANDS - MONTAGE - TIME DISSOLVES

The boys watching with excitement.

The boys getting hot.

Growing restless.

Playing grab ass.

Finally...

DEWEY

He won. Rusty Malcolm won!

HAL

That was only the first lap.  
Here...

Hal makes a hash mark on the program and hands it to Dewey.

HAL

(continuing)

You can keep track of the laps.

REESE

How many more to go?

HAL

(excitedly)

Two hundred forty-nine. Four  
hours of nirvana.

MALCOLM

Can we go get sodas?

HAL

Anything for my boys on our  
special day.

Hal hands the boys a bill and they EXIT.

HAL

(continuing)

Be careful boys. That's a twenty.

They EXIT.

HAL

(continuing)

What good kids. Come on, Rusty!  
Wooooo!!!

INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY

Francis is smoking a cigarette lining up a pool shot.  
Stanley chalks his cue when four TOUGHS in full dress  
uniforms walk in.

STANLEY

Uh-oh.

They surround Francis as he lines up a shot.

FRANCIS

(sotto)

Please dear God, don't let me look up.

E.C.U. On Francis' eyes.

Beads of sweat form on his brows. The Toughs form a semi-circle at the end of the table and GLARE at Francis. Francis pulls his cue back. His hands SHAKE. He fires the ball and in SLOW MOTION the ball leaves the velvet and flies through the air toward the toughs.

FRANCIS

(continuing)

Oh, damn.

The ball hits on TOUGH #1's chest causing a ribbon to rip his shirt. Stanley can only shake his head at his buddy's blunder.

FRANCIS

(continuing)

My fault.

Tough #1 picks up the ball and slowly moves toward Francis. Francis nervously smokes in anticipation of a beating. The Tough gnetly puts the ball down in front of Francis.

FRANCIS

(continuing;  
nervously)

Thank you. That was kind.

TOUGH #1

You ripped my shirt and broke my ribbon. And I had to spend a weekend with sick, bald kids to earn that ribbon.

FRANCIS

The ball...it just...shwoop...my fault. I'd be happy to replace the shirt and the ribbon.

All the Toughs circle Francis and grab a billiard ball. The each POUND HIS ARMS until they arm limp. Tough #1 gets in Francis' face and HAMMERS HIM IN THE GUT. Francis' cigarette FLIES OUT of his mouth.

TOUGH #2  
 Commandant on the floor! Ten-hut!

COMMANDANT IRWIN SPANGLER ENTERS the room. Spangler is half-man, half modern medicine. Though only fifty, he looks like something out of a George Romero film. With his game right arm he carries a chihuahua.

SPANGLER  
 I smell smoke!  
 (baby talk to dog)  
 Does Patton smell smoke?

Patton YAPS that annoying chihuahua yap. All the boys have snapped to attention. A cigarette burns at Francis' feet. Spangler drags his leg to Francis while Patton gnaws on his prosthetic limb.

SPANGLER  
 (continuing)  
 Private, is that your smoke on the floor?

FRANCIS  
 Sir! Yes, Sir!

SPANGLER  
 Explain, soldier.

FRANCIS  
 Sir, I was giving the other recruits a lesson on the dangers of smoking, Sir!

Francis wipes his mouth and shows it to Spangler.

FRANCIS  
 (continuing)  
 I even managed to cough up a little blood, Sir!

Patton licks up the blood from Francis' palm.

SPANGLER  
 Do I look like I was born yesterday, Private?

FRANCIS  
 No way, Sir!

SPANGLER  
 You are not going to make it here because you are weak.  
 (more)

SPANGLER (cont'd)  
 You give into tobacco and God only  
 knows what else addiction. Look  
 at this dog.

He holds his arm out straight. The dog is firmly attached to  
 it. Francis looks strait ahead.

SPANGLER  
 (continuing)  
 Look at it! I love it. I feed  
 it. I'm the only thing Patton has  
 in the world, and yet it still  
 attacks me. Do you know why?  
 Because IT is not weak! Do you  
 understand me, boy!

FRANCIS  
 You want me to be more like a  
 chihuahua?

Rage crosses Spangler's face.

SPANGLER  
 Not A chihuahua. THIS chihuahua!  
 There will be no hot water for a  
 month for the entire floor. You  
 can thank the private after I  
 leave.

Spangler exits. The Toughs eye Francis, then:

FRANCIS  
 (pointing)  
 Look! It's Ollie North!

The Toughs turn to look. Francis RUNS FOR HIS LIFE.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The house is clean. Well, clean-er. Lois is sliding a china  
 cabinet back into place. She finds a girlie magazine.

LOIS  
 Hello, Reese.

She CROSSES to a table throws it down. REVEAL The table has  
 four stacks on it. Each stacked is clearly marked. One for  
 HAL, REESE, MALCOLM, & DEWEY. The piles include  
 switchblades, fireworks, a few forged report cards, and eight  
 remote controls.



EXT. CONCESSION AREA - DAY

NASCAR fans mill about as Dewey, Malcolm and Reese ENTER.  
Reese spots the snack stand.

REESE

Over here.

DEWEY

Somebody's got to take me to the  
bathroom.

From the boy's P.O.V. The camera ZOOMS in on a porta-potty.  
The door flies open and A FAT MAN, obviously with some kind  
of intestinal distress comes out rubbing the part of his gut  
that his T-shirt refuses to cover. A breeze of stench pushes  
fans back a bit as a swarm of flies BUZZ insanely around the  
Andy Gump.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

Twenty-eight dollars a ticket.

REESE

You take him.

MALCOLM

In your dreams.

REESE

It's your turn.

MALCOLM

It's always my turn. Dewey, you're  
just gonna have to hold...Dewey?

REVEAL Dewey has disappeared into a sea of white trash.

MALCOLM

(continuing)

Where'd he go?

REESE

Who cares? That just leaves more  
for us.

Reese holds up the twenty.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

It's not often we're entrusted  
with such a high domination.

(to Reese)

Let's go.

The start to CROSS to the snack bar when Reese spots an half-eaten hot dog on the condiment table. He grabs it and stuffs it in his mouth.

REESE

Score!!!

MALCOLM

Dude, what are you doing? Do you know how many germs were on that Polish sausage?

REESE

(taunting)

Too slow.

In his taunting Reese CHOKES on a huge hunk of pork. He coughs and spits it out. Malcolm looks at the OTHER PATRONS.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

Any other place on the planet this would be considered uncouth.

Malcolm looks at the INCREDIBLY LONG LINE at the snack stand.

MALCOLM

(continuing)

This place sucks! It's hot. It stinks. And I'm bored out of my mind.

Reese stops Malcolm and points to a sign on a door which reads: "MECHANICS ONLY - ALL OTHERS FORBIDDEN".

REESE

Let's check it out.

MALCOLM

Hey, dipwad. It says, "Forbidden."

REESE

To some people forbidden means stay out. To others it means there is something bitchen on the other side of that door.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

I hate it when he makes a good point.

(then to Reese)

What if we get caught?

REESE

(opening door)

There is no way we are going to  
get caught.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - DAY

OFFICER KARL has the boys by the collars of their shirts. He  
throws them into a couple of plastic chairs. Malcolm has a  
pneumatic drill twisted in his shirt.

MALCOLM

We didn't do anything.

OFFICER KARL

Son, you have a pneumatic drill  
attached to your shirt. Just sit  
and shut up.

REESE

I'm a diabetic. I need insulation.

Officer Karl just snorts and leaves them alone in the office.

FADE OUT:

## ACT THREE

EXT. RACETRACK - AFTERNOON - STOCK FOOTAGE

Cars BUZZ around the track.

EXT. GRANDSTANDS - DAY

Hal is watching the race. A fond smile crosses his face as  
WE:

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PIT ROW - DAY - HAL'S FANTASY

A car SCREECHES up to it's pit. Helmeted pit crew guys jump over the wall and change rubber, fill the tank, etc. A pole with a water bottle goes in the driver's window. The DRIVER squirts water in his mouth. The car abruptly lowers and the PIT BOSS gives the driver the okay to race off. The driver raises his visor.

DRIVER

Great beverage work, Hal.

REVEAL Hal on the other side of the wall. He is deeply touched by the compliment.

HAL

My pleasure, Rusty.

The driver speeds away as the entire pit crew congratulates Hal on his fine work.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRANDSTANDS - DAY

The P.A. Snaps Hal out of his fantasy.

P.A.

And Rusty Malcolm has retaken the lead with only one hundred laps to go.

Hal smiles.

HAL

Hear that boys?

Hal looks over to the empty seats.

HAL  
 (continuing)  
 This just plain hurts my feelings.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Later...Lois is obviously worn out, but the stacks contain more incriminating evidence. Lois is on a quest. And she's almost forgotten about the paycheck completely. The phone rings. Lois answers it.

LOIS  
 (into phone)  
 What!  
 (beat)  
 Well, golly gee, that does sound like a wonderful way of saving time and money. Could you hold on? That's my call waiting.

Lois hangs up the phone and begins moving the couch. There is a knock on the screen door. Lois doesn't even look up.

LOIS  
 (continuing)  
 What does that sign say?

CAROLINE (O.S.)  
 (reading)  
 "No soliciting."

LOIS  
 And that includes Jesus.

Lois starts to shut the door.

CAROLINE  
 Wait! I'm Caroline Miller.  
 Malcolm's teacher. May I come in?

LOIS  
 What did he do now?

CAROLINE  
 Nothing. That's the point. May I?

Lois ushers her in.

CAROLINE  
 (continuing)  
 Oooh. Spring cleaning?

LOIS  
Ho-ho. I'm cleaning house  
alright. Help me move this couch,  
will you?

Caroline puts down her purse and help Lois slide it away from  
the wall through the following:

CAROLINE  
Is Malcolm home?

LOIS  
What the hell are you talking  
about?

CAROLINE  
Malcolm has missed the last four  
days, and I think I know why.

LOIS  
Ditching. Malcolm is ditching?

Lois scribble something on a piece of paper and throws it on  
Malcolm's pile.

LOIS  
(continuing)  
"Ditching!" Ha! One more for the  
pile.

CAROLINE  
I think Malcolm is cutting school  
because...is that blood?

Caroline point to a spot on the floor.

LOIS  
Of course it's blood. I have four  
boys. Although, actually, that is  
my blood.

CAROLINE  
I think it's because Malcolm's not  
comfortable expressing his  
feelings.

LOIS  
Oh, this about the dancing.

CAROLINE  
Exactly. I'm trying to get in  
touch with the right side of  
Malcolm's brain.

LOIS  
Use a rolled up magazine.

(then)  
Look, he's a ten year-old boy who hates to dance. You're teaching the smart kids and that's tough to figure out?

That stings Caroline.

CAROLINE  
I just thought a little culture.

LOIS  
Lift!

They slide the couch out.

LOIS  
(continuing)  
Thought? Wake up, sister. You can't think with these kids. You have to react. Thinking will get you eaten alive.

Caroline points to something behind the couch.

CAROLINE  
Oh my God! What is that?

LOIS  
Don't be such a baby. I'll get the tongs.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - DAY

Malcolm and Reese are sitting in the plastic chairs. They've been in this situation before.

REESE  
Remember, my name is Kevin. You be Clyde.

MALCOLM  
I don't want to be Clyde.

REESE  
Okay. Who do you want to be?

Malcolm thinks for a second, then:

MALCOLM  
Clyde's fine. Can you muster up a cry?

REESE

Not anymore. We need a plan.  
Let's do the thing we did at the  
zoo.

MALCOLM

Nah. Didn't work.

REESE

How about the mall thing? We  
almost got away at the mall.

MALCOLM

No, we didn't. We didn't even  
come close to getting away at the  
mall.

The door OPENS OMINOUSLY. Officer Karl's huge frame fills  
the doorway.

REESE

I've got a plan. Just follow my  
lead.

MALCOLM

I don't want to follow your lead.

REESE

Trust me.

MALCOLM

Trust you?

REESE

We can argue later.  
(pointedly)  
When we're out of here.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

As sure as my name is Clyde, this  
will end in disaster.

Officer Karl moves toward them MENACINGLY.

OFFICER KARL

You boys stand up.

They do. Officer Karl softens.



OFFICER KARL

(continuing)

You know, it wasn't that long ago that I was your age. And I was curious, too. A race car garage is a mighty exciting place for a young man. You boys really didn't do any harm, so I've decided to let you off let you off with a warning this time. And here are a couple a hats I found lying around....

As he offers the caps, Reese takes a karate position and CHOPS an unsuspecting Karl in the balls.

REESE

Hiya!!!

MALCOLM

You idiot!

REESE

Follow me!

They run to the door and it's locked. They turn around to see Karl writhing in pain. They shake the door to no avail.

REESE

(continuing)

I think I can cry now.

INT. FRANCIS' DORM ROOM - DAY

Francis and Stanley enter the dorm. Francis immediately heads to his footlocker.

FRANCIS

Oh man.

STANLEY

What is it, dude?

FRANCIS

Otis is gone.

STANLEY

You're in trouble now.

FRANCIS

Me? What about poor Otis? Out there alone. He's never been on his own before.

(more)

FRANCIS (cont'd)  
He could starve to death.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASSY AREA - DAY

Tight shot on Otis.

Tight shot on Patton yapping wildly.

Tight shot on Otis. Waiting.

Tight shot on Patton. Yapping. Moving closer.

Tight shot on Otis. Cool as a cucumber.

Tight shot on the grassy area where Patton once was. The yapping abruptly turns into a YELP. The the sound stops.

Tight shot on a lumpy Otis as he slithers away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The CAMERA FOCUSES in on the evidence Lois has gathered and PANS around to find Caroline lounging on the couch drinking coffee with Lois. Lois is sharing a scar on her arm with Caroline.

LOIS

...and this is where Dewey bit me  
right before his fever broke.

Lois takes in the house.

LOIS

(continuing)

You know, I never thought I'd end  
up here. I always dreamed I'd be  
dealing cards on an Indian  
reservation.

CAROLINE

Seven years of college and I'm  
still renting a room from my  
mother. I'll be seventy and  
she'll still be alive. People  
will think we're sisters.

LOIS

By the way - who's watching the  
class.

CAROLINE

I left Freddy in charge. To be frank, he's better at it than me.

The phone RINGS. Lois answers it.

LOIS  
(into phone)

Yeah.

It's Francis.

INTERCUT WITH:

FRANCIS

Hello, Mother.

LOIS

What do you want, Francis?

FRANCIS

To see my mother's face. I'd like to come home for a day or two, but for some strange reason the airline isn't accepting the credit card number.

LOIS

That's because we changed it, dear.

FRANCIS

I miss my family.

LOIS

I'm sorry, Francis, I mean,  
(looks at phony ID)  
Olaf Mortensen. You can't come home.

FRANCIS

I could really use your help here.

LOIS

Well... Can you hold on? That's the call waiting.

Lois hangs up the phone and crosses back to the sofa with Caroline.

LOIS

(continuing)

Where were we?

Caroline takes in the house.

CAROLINE

You know. I wouldn't mind this.

LOIS

Mind what?

CAROLINE

Being a mother. Wife. People who love you.

LOIS

Honey, you watch too much TV.

CAROLINE

I'm serious. Every night I come home to three cats and Bob.

LOIS

Who's Bob?

CAROLINE

My showerhead.

Caroline and Lois laugh.

CAROLINE

(continuing)

You got anything stronger than coffee.

Lois reaches into "Francis'" pile and pulls out some Southern Comfort.

LOIS

I think that can be arranged.

EXT. GRANDSTANDS - DAY

Hal, completely sunburned, watches the race.

P.A.

And with two laps to go, it looks like Rusty Malcolm is going to win his final race.

HAL

Yeah, baby!

Hal looks around for the boys. As he turns his back to look up, WE SEE Dewey DEWEY SPRINT ACROSS THE SPEEDWAY TRACK..

P.A.

For the love of God somebody get that little boy off the track!

Disappointed, Hal turns around just as Dewey BARELY MAKES IT.

HAL

(shrugs)

I can't believe they're missing  
this action.

INT. COMMON ROOM - DAY

Spangler has the boys lined up against the wall. He paces back and forth slowly dragging his dead leg. He stops in front of Francis.

SPANGLER

So, we meet again, heh soldier?

FRANCIS

Sir, yes, sir!

Spangler holds his hand out.

SPANGLER

Explain this!

FRANCIS

Sir, your fingers were blown off  
in the Michigan Militia, sir!

SPANGLER

What's in the hand!

FRANCIS

They appear to be raisonettes, sir!

SPANGLER

They are snake droppings! Snake droppings that I found in your footlocker. I watched in horror as your snake devoured my beloved Patton. I tried to shoot it, but as you know, with the glass eye, my depth perception isn't what it used to be.

FRANCIS

Are you sure Patton is gone, Sir?

SPANGLER

Yes. I loved that dog more than my own mother, and God takes away everything I love. Everything!

Spangler gathers himself.

SPANGLER  
(continuing)

Two months - no electricity for  
the entire academy! And all you  
TV watchers and video game junkies  
can thank the private here.

Spangler EXITS. The guys surround Francis. As he prepares  
for his beating:

TOUGH #1  
We hated that dog.

FRANCIS  
Huh?

TOUGH #2  
Way to go, man.

One by one the Toughs slug Francis approvingly in the arm  
until it goes dead with pain.

EXT. RACETRACK EXIT - AFTERNOON

Hal walks through the crowd looking for the guys.

HAL  
Dewey!

Dewey walks up to Hal.

DEWEY  
Hi, Dad.

HAL  
Seen your brothers?

Dewey points to both of them at the main gate with Officer  
Karl.

HAL  
(continuing)  
Ah, geez.

He approaches them.

DEWEY  
Hi, Dad.

OFFICER KARL  
These your boys?

HAL  
That they are.

OFFICER KARL

They are probably the worst kids I have ever encountered in my life. And I work the State Fair.

HAL

They're not that bad.

OFFICER KARL

Not that bad? These two destroyed a three hundred dollar pneumatic impact drill. And they physically attacked me.

HAL

Three hundred dollars?

OFFICER KARL

And they physically attacked me.

HAL

Officer...what can I say? I'm truly embarrassed. It's obvious you have a tough job. Why don't I just make restitution for any damages, and I want you to see a doctor...

Hal reaches for his wallet then kicks Karl in the shin. He picks up Dewey under one arm.

HAL

(continuing)

Clyde! Kevin! Run!

Hal and the boys sprint for the car leaving Karl sprawled out on the ground.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FRONT DOOR - EVENING

Hal and the boys are laughing as they walk up the steps.

HAL

Men, today was a great day.

MALCOLM

(to camera)

It was a great day. Sometimes fathers surprise you.

HAL

Now you gotta promise me one thing.

REESE  
Anything, Dad.

HAL  
As far as your mom is concerned,  
I was at work all day.

He takes off his hat and NASCAR has been burned into his skin. He pulls out a comb for his hair and a piece of paper falls out.

MALCOLM  
No problem, Dad.

Hal looks at the paper.

HAL  
Your mother's paycheck. Hmmm, I  
wonder if she missed it.

Malcolm looks into the camera and grins.

MALCOLM  
(to camera)  
At least she doesn't know I  
skipped school all week.

FADE OUT: