

EVENING SHADE

(PILOT)

"A Day In The Life Of Wood Newton"

#0601

FINAL DRAFT

August 8, 1990

A Production of
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Written by

Linda Bloodworth-Thomason

Directed by

Harry Thomason

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EVENING SHADE"A Day In The Life Of Wood Newton"SETS

- I, A: - Ext. Evan Evans' House - Establishing Shot - Day
I, A: - Int. Evan Evans' House - Day
I, B: - Ext. Wood Newton's House - Establishing Shot - Day
I, B: - Int. Bedroom - Day
I, B: - Int. Fontana Beausoleil's Bedroom
I, C: - Ext. Newton House Front Porch
I, D: - Int. Newton's Bedroom
I, D: - Int. Frieda's Bedroom - Day
I, E: - Ext. Dr. Harlan Elldridge's Office - Establishing Shot
I, E: - Int. Dr. Elldridge's Examining Room
I, H: - Ext. Shoe Store - Establishing Shot
I, H: - Int. Shoe Store - Day
I, J: - Ext. Barbecue Villa - Establishing Shot - Night
I, J: - Int. Barbecue Villa
I, K: - Ext. Newton House - Establishing Shot
I, K: - Int. Newton Bedroom - Day
I, L: - Int. Barbecue Villa - Night (Little Later)
I, M: - Int. Barbecue Villa - Night (Little Later)
I, N: - Ext. Newton House - Night

NARRATION

NOTE: What follows is a synopsis of information which will be revealed during the narration by Ponder Blue (Ossie Davis). The narration will be accompanied by appropriate film as we identify all the characters and see them in various stages of activities and explain their relationship to Wood Newton (Burt Reynolds).

The show opens with Ponder's observation -- "It's morning in Evening Shade." We learn through the narration that this is Wood's birthday and wedding anniversary. Sixteen years ago he gave himself the 18-year-old Ava Evans (Marilyn Henner) as a present. We see film clips of Wood Newton's days as a star of a pro-football team -- Ponder tells of how Wood has helped him out financially when times were hard. Now Ponder is one of the most prosperous people in Evening Shade and only runs the Barbecue Villa because he enjoys it.

The Barbecue Villa is the gathering place for all the Evening Shade locals. Besides being famous for some of the area's best barbecue, it features a 1950s jukebox with classic vintage black music. This is where Wood Newton heard his first black music and fell in love with number B-5 ("Blueberry Hill"). The other person in Evening Shade who loves B-5 is Nub Oliver, the town eccentric who rides around in a little wagon, which sports an American flag -- Hand-painted on the side are the words "Chariot of Fire."

We see Nub stacking newspapers for delivery at 6:00 AM. He is surrounded by about 15 boys and girls ("newsboys") on bikes. Somewhere amongst them is the "carrier" of the month. We learn that Ponder's sister, Francis Blue, has been taking care of Evan Evans' household (Hal Holbrook) since his wife passed away many years ago. Francis's son, R.C. Blue, now goes to Duke University and aspires to be a country western singer. He is the only person from Evening Shade to have ever recorded a record. ("We May Be Happy And Just Don't Know It.")

Evan's sister, Freida (Elizabeth Ashley), helped him raise his daughter Ava and is somewhat of a mother-in-law to Wood Newton.

We see Wood's father, Mr. Obo Newton's Hardware Store and find out he died when Wood was in high school. We see Fouch's drugstore and soda fountain, which takes care of everyone's "pharmaceutical, cosmetic and personal needs."

We discover that Wood's high school team has no natural talent and a long string of losses. Ponder explains that Ava Newton is running for Prosecuting Attorney and one of the campaign issues is her pledge to shut down "The Lovely Fontana," a stripper who violates city zoning laws. As a protest, Fontana has taken to "streaking" the football games (seen from a distance in body-stocking, G-string and pasties) and as we open the show, her picture appears in the morning paper, as she embraces Coach Wood Newton.

SCENE A

(Evan, Taylor, Molly,
Will, Frances, Nub)

(NOTE: NARRATOR'S DIALOGUE TO COME)

(A)

EVENING SHADE

"A Day In The Life Of Wood Newton"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. EVAN EVANS' HOUSE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

INT. EVAN EVANS' HOUSE - DAY (A SATURDAY IN OCTOBER)

(EVAN, HAL HOLBROOK, IS SEATED AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE WITH HIS THREE GRAND-CHILDREN: TAYLOR, 15, MOLLY, 9, AND WILL, 4. WILL IS COUNTING MONEY AS MOLLY PERUSES THE NEWSPAPER. THERE ARE VARIOUS PACKAGES OF TWINKIES, CUPCAKES AND JUNK FOOD ON THE TABLE)

WILL

Three dollars and ten cents, three
dollars and eleven cents....

MOLLY

Boy! Forty-five to six! I bet
Dad's in a bad mood this morning!

TAYLOR

Why should he be in a bad mood?
We always lose!

MOLLY

Yeah, but not by that much! And
it's his birthday. Y'all should've
tried to score a few extra points
for his birthday!

TAYLOR

Right, Molly.

MOLLY

Grandpa, on my paper route this
morning, I didn't miss one porch.

EVAN

Chip off the old block. Your
mother used to fire 'em within
an inch of the front door without
waking people up.

WILL

Three dollars and twenty cents.
Three dollars and twenty-one
cents...

EVAN

Where's this boy getting all this
change?

TAYLOR

He found it under the bleachers last night. He uses a metal detector and then Dad's old car vacuum to suck it up. He's made about twenty-five dollars.

EVAN

That's amazing.

MOLLY

(TURNING PAGE, RE: PAPER) Boy, I can't believe this picture of Daddy and the Lovely Fontana. Grandpa, did you put this in the paper?

EVAN

I certainly did not. That was the sports editor.

TAYLOR

She's a dog.

WILL

(LOOKING) I think she's pretty.

MOLLY

If you ask me, this is not a very good idea for Daddy to be posing with the Lovely Fontana when Mom's trying to shut her down. It makes Mom look kind of dumb.

EVAN

That's an incredibly sharp insight, Molly. Why don't you pass that along to your father?

TAYLOR

Dad didn't pose with her. He can't help it if she ran over to him wearing that stupid outfit.

WILL

(LOOKING) I think it looks good.

MOLLY

It's not an outfit; it's a G-string and pasties.

EVAN

Here! You kids! What do you know about stuff like that?

MOLLY

I did a report on Gypsy Rose Lee. I know quite a lot.

EVAN

I'll bet you do.

WILL

She sure does have a big-looking chest.

EVAN

What do you know about big-looking chests?

WILL

Not very much.

EVAN

That's just what I thought.

(POINTING) Now you better hurry
up there and finish your pastries.

WILL

(RE: PICTURE IN PAPER) You
mean you got these from her?

(EVAN REACTS)

MOLLY

Will, these are pastries, not
pasties.

(AS TAYLOR BURSTS OUT LAUGHING)

EVAN

All right now, that's enough.
Let's get this conversation on
a higher plane. You should be
filling your minds with great
literature, and art, and music,
and not sitting around counting
money, and discussing women's
underwear. That's what's wrong
with our entire educational
system -- you don't know anything
about what you should know, and
what you do know is way too much
about nothing.

TAYLOR

Grandpa, do you have any granola?

EVAN

No, I don't have any granola. I don't even know what it is.

What's wrong with what we have?

I went to the store and got it myself.

TAYLOR

Where's Miss Frances?

EVAN

She took the day off. Her kidneys are hurting her. (HANDING PACKAGE) Here, why don't you try some of these Dolly Madison cupcakes. She was the wife of one of our presidents.

MOLLY

Mom doesn't like us to have sugar.

EVAN

Oh, horseradish! I'm tired of hearing about sugar! I've been eating it all my life. Let me tell you, sugar will propel you -- it got me where I am today!

WILL

I like sugar. (RE: PASTRIES)
I like whatever these things are.

(AS FRANCIS BLUE ENTERS, CARRYING A SACK OF GROCERIES AND A WRAPPED GIFT, THEY ALL AD LIB HELLOS)

FRANCIS

Good morning. What's going on?

*

MOLLY

Grandpa said it's your day off.

FRANCIS

That's correct. But now I'm having to come over here because I knew he wouldn't give you children anything decent to eat. (SURVEYING TABLE) And I see he hasn't disappointed me.

EVAN

I thought you were going for your dialysis.

FRANCIS

Oh, I've already had that this week. That's just how much you listen. I said "analysis." I went out to Merleen Elldredge's to be color coded -- can you imagine? Twenty-five dollars to tell me all black people are "winters" and should wear the jewel tones. (A BEAT, THEN, RE: EVAN) I cannot believe you have on that raggedy old shirt again. I swear I'm gonna throw that out!

EVAN

This is a good shirt! This is
my Saturday shirt! You leave
this shirt alone!

(SUDDENLY OUTSIDE, WE HEAR)

SFX: WAGON WHEELS

(AND THE SOFT CHANTING OF NUB OLIVER)

NUB (O.S.)

Hey hey... ho ho... you've got
that ball, now really go... hey
hey... ho ho...

FRANCIS

(CALLS OUT BACK DOOR) Nub

Oliver, don't you track up my
carport with that dirty ole
wagon!

(AS NUB APPEARS IN DOORWAY KEEPING ONE LEG
ON HIS WAGON)

NUB

Hey, Mr. Evan, do you want me to
take extra papers downtown today?
With that picture of Coach, I bet
they go like hotcakes.

EVAN

No, just the usual amount, Nub.

NUB

Okeydoke.

(DURING THE FOLLOWING, FRANCIS PICKS UP
NEWSPAPER AND LOOKS AT IT)

MOLLY

Hey, Nub, how long did your
route take you this morning?

NUB

(PUFFED UP) About twelve
minutes!

MOLLY

Shoot! You lie. You're making
that up.

NUB

See you, girlie! Play B-5!

(AS HE SPEEDS OFF)

WILL

Boy, that's fast! Could that be
true?

EVAN

Could be. He's riding on a
chariot of fire.

FRANCIS

(TO EVAN) You ought to be
ashamed, letting them put a
picture like this in the paper!

EVAN

Listen, I can't keep something
out just because it might not
reflect well on my own family.

FRANCIS

Oh, pooh. You're the editor.
You can do whatever you want.

WILL

Miss Francis, who's that present
for?

FRANCIS

That's a little something for
your momma and daddy's
anniversary, darlin'.

WILL

How come we always stay here
every anniversary?

MOLLY

Because they like to have
breakfast in bed and be alone!

TAYLOR

(TEASING HIM) So they can hug
and kiss.

WILL

He's always kissin' her. I
don't see why today's any
different.

MOLLY

Well, trust us. It just is.

EVAN

I don't like the way you kids
talk.

MOLLY

I bet they're kissin' right now.

FRANCIS

(RE: PICTURE) Did you deliver
a paper there this morning?

MOLLY

Yes, ma'am.

FRANCIS

I bet they're not.

(EVERYONE REACTS)

CUT TO:

(B)

EXT. WOOD NEWTON'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING SHOT - DAY

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

(BREAKFAST TRAYS ARE ON THE BED. AVA NEWTON (MARY LOU HENNER) IS IN THE BATHROOM. SEVERAL WRAPPED GIFTS ARE ON THE BED. WOOD NEWTON, IN ROBE, IS TRYING TO GET AVA TO COME OUT)

WOOD

Come on, honey, please come out.
I can't believe you're gonna let
some silly little picture ruin
our anniversary. (A BEAT; NO
ANSWER; THEN) Don't you want to
open your gift?

AVA (O.S.)

(TENSE) I don't feel like
opening gifts.

WOOD

Okay. Well, then I'll open one
of mine. Birthday, anniversary,
whatever you got for me. (GOING
TOWARD BED; CALLING BACK TO DOOR)

I'm sure you gave me something nice.

(AS THE DOOR OPENS AND AVA ENTERS, WEARING
ROBE)

AVA

What I'd really like to give you
is a good piece of advice. The
next time your wife is running
for prosecuting attorney, and one
of the key campaign issues is
whether or not she is serious
about closing down a stripper who
violates city zoning laws, I think
it would be real smart for you
not to have your picture in the
paper with said stripper -- okay?

WOOD

Sweetheart, I didn't have any
control over that. The woman
practically fell on me. She
was running ninety miles an
hour. She's top heavy --

AVA

And I also think since, number one, you are my husband, number two, the election is in four weeks, and, number three, it is against the law to jog around town without your clothes on, that it was at best inappropriate for you to say, and I quote...

(READING)... "She certainly hasn't hurt attendance any. Considering the score, I was pretty glad to see her coming down the track." Do you really think that was a helpful remark?

WOOD

Well, I guess it was a little flip --

AVA

Yes or no?

WOOD

Listen, don't start with that lawyer stuff -- I hate that.

AVA

It's almost like you're trying to sabotage me!

WOOD

I don't believe this! In case
you've forgotten, I'm the guy
who put up a hundred and fifty
posters all over town 'til three
o'clock in the morning -- not to
mention I could have been killed.

*

AVA

You could have been killed?

*

WOOD

That's right. It was raining.
I could have been electrocuted.

AVA

The truth is, you really don't
want me to be prosecuting
attorney, do you?

WOOD

Ava, we've been all through this.
I just thought it was enough
that I'm the football coach in
the state of Arkansas who hasn't
won a game in two and half
years -- and all the nice people
in town hate me. I didn't think
we also needed the criminals
hating you. But hey, you want
it, we're going for it, and I
say let's make it a clean sweep.

*

*

(MORE)

SFX: AS THE PHONE RINGS

WOOD (CONT'D)

Let's be the most hated family
in America!

(PICKING UP PHONE, YELLING)

WOOD (CONT'D)

Hello? (A BEAT) Just a second.

(HANDING PHONE TO AVA)

AVA

(INTO PHONE) Hello? Oh, hi.

(AS SHE TURNS HER BACK ON WOOD, TALKING
SOFTLY INTO PHONE)

AVA (CONT'D)

They did? Are you sure? (A BEAT)

Okay, thanks for calling.

(SHE HANGS UP PHONE)

WOOD

Who was that?

AVA

Harlan's nurse. The lab just
called with my test results.

(BURSTING INTO TEARS) I'm
pregnant!

WOOD

What are you talking about? You
can't be pregnant -- That's
ridiculous!

*
*

AVA

(GETTING KLEENEX) Why does this have to happen now -- Just when I finally get Will in kindergarten and here I am trying to start a whole new career .. (A BEAT, THEN TO WOOD)... You did this on purpose.

WOOD

(CONFIDENT) Sweetheart, in case you've forgotten, I've had a vasectomy... vasectomy. How could you possibly be pregnant? *

AVA

I was just about to ask you the same thing.

WOOD

(STILL SMILING) I don't believe this, I put up posters, I get my tubes tied, I do everything right. And you're mad at me?

(A BEAT, THEN)

AVA

How do I know you had a vasectomy?

(A BEAT)

WOOD

What?

AVA

I don't know. Maybe you conveniently forgot.

WOOD

Forgot? You think I forgot,
lying on a table with my pants
down while four people stood over
me laughing and talking with a
ten-inch knife and a needle the
size of a basketball pump!

(YELLING) Oh yeah, I forgot
alright! I'd forget that about
as easily as I'd forget being
circumsized at a pep rally!

AVA

Stop screaming!

WOOD

I am not screaming! You want to
hear screaming? (YELLING) This
is screaming!

(AS SHE STARTS TO CRY AGAIN)

AVA

I just can't believe it! A few
hours ago, I was sleeping
peacefully in this bed, and now,
here I am pregnant and you're on
the front page of the newspaper
supporting the Lovely Fontana.

(AS HE TAKES HER BY THE SHOULDERS)

WOOD

Listen to me, you are not pregnant!

(THEN, RE: PAPER) And why are
you getting on that again? I
don't support her. I don't even
like her. She's nothing to me.

(AS HE FAKE SPITS ON PAPER)

SFX: THE PHONE RINGS

(HE ANSWERS)

WOOD (CONT'D)

(INTO PHONE) Hello?

(THE FOLLOWING SCENE WILL BE INTERCUT
BETWEEN THE NEWTON BEDROOM AND FONTANA
BEAUSOLEIL'S BEDROOM)

INT. FONTANA BEAUSOLEIL'S BEDROOM

(FONTANA IS STANDING NEXT TO PHONE IN A
CHEAP-LOOKING, LOW-CUT SWEATER WITH JEANS)

FONTANA

Coach Newton?

WOOD

Yes.

FONTANA

This is Fontana Beausoleil.

WOOD

(GOING ON ALERT FULL-SCALE)

Uh-huh.

FONTANA

I just want to tell you how much
I appreciate all the nice things
you said about me in the paper
and to let you know I will find
a way to repay you.

WOOD

Hey, that's okay, really, you
don't owe me anything.

FONTANA

Ask and it's yours.

WOOD

Allrighty, well, thanks for
calling. Bye bye.

(HE HANGS UP PHONE)

AVA

Who was that?

WOOD

Nothing. Business. What I don't
understand is why would you even
be taking a pregnancy test when
you know it's impossible?

AVA

It was just a feeling. You said
yourself I was getting chubby.

WOOD

Chubby? I said you look voluptuous. You always look voluptuous. (TAKING HER IN HIS ARMS) Look, honey, don't cry. You almost never cry. I can't stand it when you cry. I'll call Harlan right now and he'll tell you it's all a mistake.

SFX: AS THE DOORBELL RINGS

AVA

Who's that?

(AS WOOD PULLS ON PANTS HURRIEDLY)

WOOD

I don't know. But if I had to guess, I'd say someone's here to strip us, rob us and leave us for dead!

(AS HE EXITS)

CUT TO:

(C)

EXT. NEWTON HOUSE FRONT PORCH

(MARGARET FOUCH (ANN HEARNE), HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, AND HERMAN STILES (MICHAEL JETER), SHY, SLIGHT, UNASSUMING MATH TEACHER, ARE STANDING ON THE PORCH)

MARGARET

(TO HERMAN) Now when he gets here,
I'll do the talking, Mr. Stiles.
He's probably going to be
expecting someone with a little
more experience, but we'll
convince him you're the one.

HERMAN

Okay.

WOOD

(OPENING DOOR) Margaret, what
are you doing here?

MARGARET

Well, in case you've forgotten,
I am your principal, and you asked
me to let you know when the money
came through for an assistant
coach.

WOOD

Yeah.

MARGARET

Well it came through and he's here.

WOOD

Mr. Stiles? I thought Mr. Stiles
was a math teacher. (TO HERMAN,
SHAKING HANDS) How are you,
Herman?

HERMAN

Fine, thank you.

MARGARET

Well, he is. But we only received
four hundred dollars for the job,
and he's the only one who will
take it.

HERMAN

That's four hundred dollars a
year.

MARGARET

Anyway, Mr. Stiles is going to help you on his free period and after school. I wouldn't have bothered you on a Saturday but after last night's score, I think this falls under the category of emergency. By the way, I've taken the liberty of inviting the sheriff's department to next week's game, so if Miss Beausoleil decides to streak again, she's gonna have about fifteen Deputy Dawgs on her tail. You might pass that along.

WOOD

Me? I don't even know her.

(A BEAT, THEN) So, I guess you know a little something about football?

HERMAN

No, but I've been to some games. I'm starting to pick up the lingo.

WOOD

Uh-huh.

MARGARET

(RE: HERMAN) He didn't know anything about industrial arts either, but he taught that last year, and now he can screw bolts and stain wood like crazy.

WOOD

Well that's very encouraging.
Okey-dokey! See you next week.

HERMAN

Okay, and don't worry, Coach.
When we meet that opposing team on Friday, we'll crush their guts.

WOOD

Right.

(HE EXITS BACK INTO HOUSE)

CUT TO:

(D)

INT. NEWTON'S BEDROOM

(AVA IS TALKING ON THE PHONE, DABBING HER EYES WITH A WASHRAG AS WOOD ENTERS)

AVA

Okay, we'll set up a time when

I see you. 'Bye.

(SHE HANGS UP PHONE)

WOOD

Who was that?

AVA

Neal Heck. He's following me around all day, doing a piece on the campaign and he wants a picture of the whole family having fun together!

WOOD

Well, I guess that one will have to be pulled from the files.

AVA

Exactly my sentiments.

WOOD

(PICKING UP PHONE) Look, I'm
calling Harlan right now.

AVA

(STOPPING HIM) Wood, I've had
three children. I know I'm
pregnant. If Harlan gave you a
vasectomy, then obviously it
didn't work.

(A BEAT AS THIS SINKS IN)

WOOD

I'm gonna kill that guy! You
know, I've been fishing with him
for forty years. He never could
tie a damn knot!

SFX: AS THE PHONE RINGS

WOOD (CONT'D)

(RE: PHONE) Okay, that's it!

This phone is coming ouc of the
wall! Say goodbye! (ANSWERS

PHONE YELLING) Hello?

(DURING THE FOLLOWING, WE INTERCUT BETWEEN
THE NEWTON BEDROOM AND FRIEDA EVANS' (ELIZABETH
ASHLEY) BEDROOM -- WE SEE A SMALL SECTION OF
AN OPULENT, UPSCALE BEDROOM)

INT. FRIEDA'S BEDROOM - DAY

(FRIEDA IS DRAPED ACROSS A CHAISE LOUNGE
DRINKING FROM A CUP)

FRIEDA

Wood Newton?

WOOD

Yes.

FRIEDA

I was just sitting here, drinking my cafe au lait with mint and reading in the morning paper about what a big fool you have made of yourself by endorsing the public exhibitionism of some over-peroxidized, white-trash, melon-farm escapee named Fontana Beausoleil, whose entire family also happens to be white trash, not to mention having four hundred used cars in their front yard and naming all their babies after movie stars. I am totally and completely humiliated for my darling Ava, your children, our newspaper, and all decent, clean-living people everywhere. And just what do you have to say for yourself?

WOOD

I'm sorry. I don't talk to women whose voices are lower than mine.

(HE HANGS UP THE PHONE)

AVA

Who was that?

WOOD

I couldn't tell. It was either
Louis Armstrong calling from hell,
or your Aunt Frieda.

AVA

Oh I see. Another joke. It's
not enough to get me pregnant
and sabotage the election -- I
forget you also enjoy insulting
my family.

WOOD

Ava --

AVA

Well I've had enough of this
anniversary! Don't forget you
promised to take the kids to buy
new tennis shoes. Since it's a
tradition, I suppose I will see
you at your birthday dinner
tonight. In the meantime, I will
be out all day campaigning with a
reporter by my side and I have
just one request: (RE: NEWSPAPER
PICTURE) Don't you or your little
athletic supporter come anywhere
near us! Happy birthday!

(SHE EXITS, SLAMMING DOOR)

WOOD

(QUIETLY) Yeah, and happy
anniversary to you, too, Miss
Magnet-Womb.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

(E)

FADE IN:

EXT. DR. HARLAN ELLDRIDGE'S OFFICE - ESTABLISHING SHOT

INT. DR. ELLDRIDGE'S EXAMINING ROOM

(WOOD IS STANDING IN A PAPER GOWN WHICH
TIES IN THE BACK. HARLAN (CHARLES DURNING)
IS IN DOCTOR'S ATTIRE)

HARLAN

Of course I gave you a vasectomy.
And a damn good one, too! What's
wrong with you, boy? You're
lettin' the pressure of those
games get to you. Or maybe
you've just got Fontana Beausoleil
on your mind. You know, I give
her her annual physical and let
me tell you, it can take your
breath away.

WOOD

(THROUGH CLENCHED TEETH) When you tied the knot, how tightly did you tie it?

HARLAN

I tied it plenty tight, just like I tie all of 'em. You know what you need to do? You need to relax. Come out to Tara.

(PRONOUNCED "TAHRA") this weekend. Merleen's got all new paint on the front porch columns. Color called White Linen. Looks like a million bucks!

(AS WOOD GRABS HIM BY THE COLLAR)

WOOD

Listen to me. I don't want to come out to Tara. I want to know what you did to the lower half of my body.

HARLAN

Now, Wood, I'm gonna tell you one more time -- I tied your tubes, boy. You may be virile, but you're not that virile. I haven't had one go bad on me yet. Hey, you know what to do when a pit bull falls in love with your leg? (A BEAT, THEN) Act interested!

(ANOTHER BEAT AS HE CRACKS UP)

WOOD

(NOT LAUGHING) That's very funny.
I enjoy standing here in a paper
outfit, waiting to find out if
my wife's pregnant while you tell
pit bull jokes.

HARLAN

You can go ahead and get dressed.

(AS WOOD STEPS BEHIND A SCREEN AND DOES SO)

HARLAN (CONT'D)

Look, I'm sure the lab probably
got Ava's test mixed up with
somebody else's. Now I've got
my girl callin' about it. In the
meantime... (RE: MICROSCOPE)...
I'm gonna look at your slide here
in a minute and tell you somethin'
about your sperm count.

(AS NURSE NADINE ENTERS CARRYING SLIDE TO
HARLAN)

NADINE

Hey, Wood, sorry we missed the
game last night. We listened on
the radio, but it was hard to
hear for all the booing.

(AS SHE HANDS SLIDE TO HARLAN AND EXITS)

NADINE (CONT'D)

Take care.

WOOD

You too, Nadine.

(DURING THE FOLLOWING, HARLAN HOLDS SMALL PLATE UP TO LIGHT, AND THEN BEGINS DABBING IT WITH SEVERAL CHEMICALS)

HARLAN

Guess Merleen and I will be at your birthday dinner tonight over at the Villa. Did you know some Hare Krishnas from California came through here yesterday and had lunch there? Boy I hate to see that. Looks like the highway patrol could keep the kooks on the freeways and outta the small towns.

(AS WOOD STEPS OUT FROM BEHIND THE SCREEN AND FINISHES DRESSING)

WOOD

I just have one thing to say to you, Harlan. Ava and I have had our babies. And we love our babies. But in fifteen years they'll all be grown. That's the way we planned it. That's why I had a vasectomy. Because when the last one graduates from college, I don't want to be sitting in the bleachers wearing Pampers.

(MORE)

WOOD (CONT'D)

You, on the other hand, are childless and already old, so let me just say that if we are pregnant, as far as I'm concerned, this is your baby, not our baby, your baby. And since you're the one who screwed up, on the day he's born I'll be bringing him to your house and leaving him on your doorstep. You can name him Bubba. He can be Bubba from Tara. But you're gonna raise him, you're gonna feed him, you're gonna stay up all night worrying, you're gonna give him a car to tear up, and you're gonna put him through a very expensive college.

HARLAN

Why does it have to be expensive?

WOOD

Because I'm his father, and I'm sure his S.A.T. scores will be very high and also because I don't want him to grow up to be like you -- a man who can not even tie a simple knot.

HARLAN

Seriously, talkin' about kids,
you know what I think the problem
with that team is? You've got
too many white boys on it.

WOOD

Okay, that's it. I don't want to
talk to you anymore. I'll see
you in nine months. Keep your
porchlight on. I'll be coming
through the woods with a basket.

(AS HARLAN FITS SLIDE UNDER MICROSCOPE)

HARLAN

Well, I've got your slide right
here. But I can tell you right now,
there aren't gonna be any little
sperms swimming around because when
I rope them off, they stay roped!

(AS HE FOCUSES MICROSCOPE)

HARLAN (CONT'D)

I mean, those suckers aren't
gonna be swimming anywhere.

(A BEAT, THEN LOOKING) Holy cow!

WOOD

What's wrong?

HARLAN

Looks like the Summer Olympics!

(WOOD REACTS)

CUT TO:

ES - "... Wood Newton" - #0601 - FINAL - Rev. 8/9/90 SCENE H
(Sam, Wood, Molly,
Taylor, Will, Dorothy,
Announcer (V.O.),
R.C. (V.O.), Nub,
Herman, Harlan,
Virgil, Merleen,
Customer Extras)
37.

(H)

EXT. SHOE STORE - ESTABLISHING SHOT

INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

(SEVERAL PEOPLE ARE MILLING ABOUT. A MALE CLERK, SAM, IS WAITING ON WOOD, MOLLY, TAYLOR AND WILL. A MIDDLE-AGED FEMALE CLERK, DOROTHY, IS AT THE COUNTER. MOLLY IS TRYING ON TENNIS SHOES IN MIRROR. WILL AND TAYLOR ARE WEARING THEIR NEW TENNIS SHOES. A RADIO IS BLARING THE SOUND OF AN ANNOUNCER WHO HAS A HICK VOICE)

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

... With John Ramsey scoring the only touchdown for Evening Shade. Last night's defeat was the worst in a series of losses suffered by the Mules in their first five outings. And that's Sports Talk. Now back to more music, and our own R.C. Blue.

(WE HEAR STRAINS OF R.C. SINGING)

R.C. (V.O.)

We may be happy and just don't
know it. We may be happy most
of the time...

MOLLY

What's the matter, Daddy, don't
you feel good?

WOOD

I feel okay.

MOLLY

You seem a little despondent.

WOOD

Despondent?

MOLLY

Yeah, that was in my Reader's
Digest vocabulary quiz of D-words.
I've been wanting to try it out
in a sentence.

WOOD

Well I'm glad to have been of
use to you.

(AS WE HEAR)

SFX: WAGON WHEELS APPROACHING

(AND NUB'S VOICE O.S.)

NUB

Extra! Extra! Get your papers
while they're hot.

(AS NUB ENTERS SHOE STORE WITH WAGON)

NUB

Extra! Extra! Coach Newton loses
another game but makes a new
friend! Picture inside. Read
all about it! (THEN, SEEING WOOD)
Hey, Coach, sure was a poor game
last night, wasn't it?

WOOD

Yes it was, Nub.

(AS NUB PASSES HIM)

NUB

Nice shot of you, though. Hey!
Extra! Extra! This is a
collector's edition!

DOROTHY

(RE: FLOOR) Nub, I want you to
take that wagon outside right now.
Those wheels are making lines!

NUB

Extra! Extra!

WOOD

(TO DOROTHY) That's right. You
ought to get him out of here.

*

He's ruining this carpet.

*

(SUDDENLY NUB BEGINS MAKING A CIRCLE WITH
HIS FOOT IN ONE DIRECTION AND RUBBING HIS
HEAD WITH HIS HAND IN OPPOSITE DIRECTION)

NUB

Look at this! I'm using all
sides of my brain at once!

DOROTHY

Now go on! Git!

NUB

(POINTING TO HER) I know you!

You're from America!

(AS NUB GOES BY MOLLY, THEY SLAP HANDS)

MOLLY

Hey, Nub.

NUB

See ya, girlie! (AS HE EXITS O.S.
TRAILING OFF) Hey, hey, whaddya
say, Mules take that ball away!

MOLLY

Daddy, you know what happened
after the game last night?

WOOD

No, what honey?

MOLLY

Grandpa fell asleep and we got to stay up and watch this movie called Dial M For Murder and then he woke up about two in the morning and he said... (IMITATING GRUFF VOICE)... "Here! You kids get in there and get to bed right now and you better pipe down, too!"

WILL

He's always telling us to pipe down. But he didn't say anything to me 'cause I was fake sleeping!

WOOD

(PRE-OCCUPIED) Uh-huh.

MOLLY

(TO WILL) He's not listening to us. He always goes "Uh-huh" when he's not listening.

SAM

(TO WOOD) So Herman Stiles is the new assistant coach.

WOOD

Who told you that?

SAM

He was in this morning to buy a pair of cleats. I think he's buying a helmet, too.

WOOD

He'll need the helmet. He's going
to crush some guts.

SAM

How's that toe feel, Molly?

MOLLY

It feels a little tight.

SAM

I'll get you a five and a half.
(THEN, TO WOOD) I studied every
play last night. I can tell you
exactly what the problem is.
Eye-hand coordination. They
just don't have that quickness.

WOOD

You could be right, Sam.

(AS SAM GOES)

*

WILL

What did he say, Dad?

WOOD

He said everyone on the team is
stupid.

WILL

Oh.

WOOD

(RE: SHOES) How do those feel,
buddy? Do they feel good?

WILL

I guess. They're just shoes.

WOOD

Right. It's not like they're
gonna change your life or
anything.

TAYLOR

Hey, Dad, I've been thinking
about something.

WOOD

What's that?

TAYLOR

It's probably not a good time
to say this, but I'm not sure I
want to be involved in football
anymore.

WOOD

That's okay, son. I'm not sure
I do either.

TAYLOR

I'm serious. I'm gettin' kinda
worried about getting my face
hurt.

WOOD

You're worried about your face?

TAYLOR

Yeah. You know, since I'm taking
drama and everything, the more
I'm in it, the more I think I'd
like to be rich and famous, you
know, like a movie star.

(A BEAT, THEN)

WOOD

Son, if you don't want to play
football you don't have to, I
mean, just because you're the
only kid I have for the next three
years who has any natural talent,
and I'm the football coach, I don't
want you to feel obligated in any
way, but I do just have one
question -- did your mother tell
you to say these things to me
today?

*

TAYLOR

No, why?

WOOD

No reason. I just thought maybe
all of you had gotten together
and decided because it's my
birthday to drive me insane.

*

*

(AS WILL CLIMBS UP ON CHAIR)

*

WILL

Daddy, why don't the police wear
tennis shoes?

WOOD

I don't know, I never thought
about it.

WILL

Criminals wear tennis shoes. If
the police wore 'em, I bet they'd
catch a lot more criminals.

WOOD

(PUTS WILL ON HIS KNEE) Good
point. Isn't he full of energy
today?

TAYLOR

He's hyper from all that sugar.

WILL

I've been eating pasties. They
belonged to the wife of a president.

WOOD

(TO TAYLOR) What's he talking about? *

TAYLOR

(ROLLING HIS EYES) Nothing. *

MOLLY *

He's deranged. *

(AS DOROTHY APPROACHES WITH BAG, TO WILL)

DOROTHY

Here you go, Mr. Will. I put
your old shoes in this bag. *

WILL

Thank you.

DOROTHY

You're welcome. (TO WOOD) He's so cute, I hate to get him in trouble, but did you know he was under the bleachers last night with some kind of a suction device trying to get money out of people's pockets?

WOOD

(TO WILL) Is that true?

WILL

I just tried it on one person. It didn't work.

WOOD

Okay, that's it. I think I'm gonna have to be confiscating all of your equipment.

*

*

DOROTHY

Don't be too hard on him, Wood. I just didn't want him to get in trouble with anybody at the game.

TAYLOR

(RE: SNEAKERS ON HIS FEET)

Dorothy, I'll be getting these, too.

DOROTHY

Okay.

WOOD

(TO WILL) We're gonna have a
talk about this on the way home.

WILL

(SWEETLY) Okay. You can talk to
me anytime you want.

WOOD

That's very nice, son. I'm glad
to know your door is always open.

MOLLY

Daddy, I've decided to get these
cheaper shoes since it's your
birthday.

(AS WOOD STANDS UP)

WOOD

Well thank you, darlin'. That's
very sweet. In fact, I think
I'm gonna have to have a kiss!

(AS HE GRABS HER, KISSING HER, SHE SQUEALS
WITH DELIGHT. WOOD CROSSES TO DOROTHY TO
SIGN FOR SHOES)

WOOD (CONT'D)

Okay, troops, we're out of here.

WILL

I got you a present but it's not
wrapped.

WOOD

What's that, son?

*

*

*

WILL

It's a whole bunch of gum.

WOOD

What kind?

WILL

Hadn't ever been chewed.

WOOD

That's my favorite.

(AS HARLAN ENTERS SHOE STORE)

HARLAN

Hey, Taylor.

TAYLOR

Hi, Dr. Elldridge.

HARLAN

Hey Woodrow, what's goin' on?

(WOOD SHOOTS HIM A LOOK)

HARLAN

Merleen's just outside parking
the Eldorado. You better get out
of the downtown area, boy! We're
shoppin' for your birthday present!

WOOD

Why? You've already given me
enough.

HARLAN

Yeah, wait 'til you see what
you're gettin' after dinner.

MOLLY

Hi, Dr. Elldridge.

*

*

HARLAN

(HUGGING HER) How ya doin', Molly
Dean? I swear this girl gets more
grown up every time I see her.

WOOD

Yes, all my children are growing
up. I think we covered that today.

*

(MOLLY EXITS)

*

HARLAN

(LOOKING OUT WINDOW) Whoa! Here
comes Merleen now!

WOOD

(SOTTO, GRABBING HARLAN) Listen
to me. I know how that little
grapevine works up there in your
office. And I just want to tell
you that if one word about Ava
being pregnant gets out before the
election, I'm gonna take that
El Dorado of yours and wrap it
around your little miniature
mailbox replica of Tara.

(AS A CUSTOMER, VIRGIL, LEAVES STORE)

*

VIRGIL

See ya, Coach. Keep your chin up.

WOOD

Okay, Virgil. (THEN, TO HARLAN) *

You know, I am getting so sick
of that. Just once before I
retire, I would like to hear the
word "Congratulations."

(AS MERLEEN BURSTS INTO THE STORE)

MERLEEN

(LOUDLY) Congratulations! And
happy, happy baby!

(WOOD REACTS)

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

(J)

FADE IN:

EXT. BARBECUE VILLA - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT

INT. BARBECUE VILLA

(EVAN AND WOOD ARE SEATED AT A TABLE)

EVAN

I'm telling you this baby thing
could cost her the election. It
just couldn't have happened at
a worse time.

WOOD

I don't want to talk about it.

EVAN

Well we have to talk about it.
Ava's all upset. She's got this
Neal Heck following her around
today.

(MORE)

EVAN (CONT'D)

He's a pretty good reporter. And it's a helluva an ethical conflict for me. Here I am, the editor and publisher. I can't withhold relevant information about a candidate. On the other hand, maybe it's not relevant. I just don't understand how this happened.

WOOD

I told you how it happened. I had a vasectomy and it didn't work.

*
*

EVAN

Well, where in the heck did you get it?

WOOD

Vasectomies R-Us.

*

EVAN

Okay, I'm not trying to get in your business. But it still looks like you could've planned a little better. I mean, if nothing else, there's Fouch's right down there on the corner, taking care of all our pharmaceutical, cosmetic and personal needs.

WOOD

You know, I just want to say that if I were going to discuss my pharmaceutical needs, it would not be with a person who would wear a shabby-looking shirt like that to another person's birthday party.

EVAN

What's wrong with this shirt? I happen to like it. It's warm, it's friendly, it's me.

WOOD

And furthermore, I would greatly appreciate it if you and everyone else would stay out of my bedroom.

EVAN

Well somebody better be in there with you. You're certainly not doing a very good job on your own. (A BEAT, THEN) Incidentally, did you know your youngest son has not washed his feet for days?

WOOD

Well, I don't understand that. We make him take a shower every night, whether he needs it or not.

*
*

EVAN

Yeah, well he told me he fake
showers, like he fake sleeps.

WOOD

Evidentially he's not really
participating in much of anything.
I don't know why we're bothering
to feed him.

(AS PONDER APPROACHES TABLE)

PONDER

That was your mother on the phone.
She's running late. Looks like
everybody's running late for the
thirteenth annual Wood Newton
Birthday Dinner.

WOOD

Hey, that's all right. As far
as I'm concerned, we can cancel
the Thirteenth Annual Wood Newton
Birthday Dinner.

PONDER

I just didn't want you to think
they're not coming because you
never win any football games and
nobody wants to be seen with you.

WOOD

Thank you. That was very
considerate.

(AS PONDER SITS DOWN WITH A BEER FOR HIMSELF)

EVAN

You know, I have to say I think it speaks incredibly well for me that in spite of your rampant unpopularity and the fact that you married my daughter and ruined my life, I'm here and on time for your party.

PONDER

I think it shows a lot of class.
(A BEAT, THEN) So where are Ava and the kids anyway?

WOOD

They're coming in another car.

EVAN

How come you all didn't ride together?

WOOD

Because she's not speaking to me. Well, she spoke to me once. She said, "Take your own car." And by the way, I'd like to thank you for that picture in the paper this morning. That set the tone for the whole day.

EVAN

Listen, any time Lady Godiva jogs in public it's news. What I don't understand is, why you had to say something about it. If I was married, and a naked lady ran past me, I might have a look or two, but I guarantee you I wouldn't have a comment. Would you, Ponder?

(A BEAT, THEN)

PONDER

I believe I'd play that one close to the vest.

(WE HEAR)

SFX: NUB'S APPROACHING WAGON, O.S.

WOOD

You know, you two are really cute. You should get your own radio show, sort of like Bob and Ray giving advice. (TO EVAN) That way nobody would see you and you could wear that crumby shirt all the time.

NUB (O.S.)

Extra! Extra! Two for the price of one. Last chance for this collector's edition.

WOOD

Doesn't this guy ever take a
break? (TO EVAN) Why don't you
send him on an errand out in the
country?

(AS NUB STICKS HEAD IN DOOR)

NUB

Hey, Coach. Congratulations on
your new baby.

(TRAILING OFF)

NUB (O.S.)

Push 'em back, push 'em back,
way back!

PONDER

I thought that was supposed to
be a secret.

WOOD

Well, we can forget about that,
now that it's gone to Geraldo
Rivera on wheels! Hey, what
the heck? I don't care anymore.
I'm just gonna stay in here till
morning and play B-5.

(A BEAT AS PONDER EXCHANGES A LOOK WITH
EVAN, THEN)

(MORE)

WOOD (CONT'D)

You sold it! You sold it! (RE: *)
B-5 READING) "As Nasty As They *

Want To Be"? Millie Vanelli? *

and "Me, So Horny"! (TO PONDER, *)

UPSET) What is this, a joke?

Where's your old jukebox?

PONDER

I sold it to an old antique
dealer.

WOOD

You what?

PONDER

I sold it. I had to. I got too
many high school kids coming in
here now. That machine was over
forty years old. It's out of
date. Nobody liked the music.

WOOD

I liked it. I can't believe it.
Ponder, you sold "Stagger Lee"
and "Blueberry Hill" and left me
with this? How could you do that?
I come here every day. I pay
taxes and I don't want "I Want To
Be Nasty" and Millie Vanelli and
"Me, So Horny" in my life!

*
*
*
*
*
*

PONDER

I'm a businessman, Wood. I gotta
go with the new stuff the kids
like, like Madonna.

*

WOOD

I just can't believe it. "Shop
Around," "Deep Purple," "Duke Of
Earl." That was my youth. That
was everybody's youth.

EVAN

Well it wasn't my youth. But
I'll have to say it was certainly
a lot better than whoever this
Donna person is.

WOOD

You know, I didn't know this
birthday could get any worse. But
I was wrong. All day it's been
like a snowball rolling downhill,
picking up crud and slime. There
must be some supernatural force at
work, like I've got a bad moon
rising. My wife's not speaking to
me, I've got a football team who
can't play football, an assistant
coach who stains wood, a son who
doesn't want to get his face hurt,
another son who has dirty feet and
sucks money out of people's pockets, a
friend who gave me a gimp vasectomy
and a naked woman who's stalking me.
Maybe I should just go home and get
under my bed.

EVAN

Well, it's a little late for that.
If you'd been under your bed, we
wouldn't be in the shape we're in
today.

PONDER

Hey, at least the worst is over.

(AS FRIEDA ENTERS, SCREAMING)

FRIEDA

Wood Newton!

PONDER

Maybe not.

FRIEDA

I am so mad at you, I was not even gonna bother to come here tonight, except for the fact that I did not want to upset my darling Ava. Number one, you hung up on me this morning, and number two, I have to tell you right now, that as much as I love your children, there's just no way I'll be able to babysit this new baby.

WOOD

You never babysat for us.

FRIEDA

Then I must have been traveling. Anyway, I was deeply hurt that I had to find out about this pregnancy from Imogene Seifert.

(MORE)

FRIEDA (CONT'D)

You know, Imogene is like C.N.N.;
always bringing the world right
into your living room. It's just
a little funny to me how she's
had that foreign exchange student
from Scandanavia living there for
three years and nobody questions
it. Well, I think it's time to
let that boy go home. We ought
to all wear T-shirts that say,
"Free Nels."

*

(AS PONDER MOTIONS TO A WAITER)

PONDER

You want a drink, Frieda?

FRIEDA

Well, I just had a little afternoon
toddy. I suppose maybe a
screwdriver.

WOOD

Good choice.

EVAN

You're lookin' very dapper, little
sister.

FRIEDA

Oh, I tell you, I'm just gettin'
too old to get it cinched up and
all together anymore.

(MORE)

FRIEDA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna go live on one of those
beaches in the Soviet Union like
I saw on "Sixty Minutes" where
thousands of fat people just lie
around letting it all hang out.

(PUSHING WRAPPED BOOK TOWARD WOOD)

Here's your birthday present. It's
a copy of North Dallas Forty. I
didn't know what to get you.

WOOD

Thank you. I think you gave me
this last year.

*

FRIEDA

Well I didn't know what you like
to read.

WOOD

I like to read this, over and
over.

FRIEDA

Listen, you're lucky I gave you
anything. You know, Ava could
have been Attorney General of
Arkansas some day.

(MORE)

FRIEDA (CONT'D)

But I guess you're gonna just keep her pregnant until she's too old to run for that office. (THEN, ON HIS REACTION) Don't be grinning at me. I know how you are around her. Every day it's just, "Hrm, hrm, got to have me some of that." You know, if you men had to have some of these babies, you'd be a lot more careful about where you park your Pontiacs.

EVAN

You know, Frieda, sometimes you really hurt our feelings.

WOOD

That's right. We're very sensitive about cars.

*

FRIEDA

Well where is everybody? Let's get this show on the road. And please whatever you do, do not seat me next to Merleen Elldridge. I am so sick of that color analysis thing.

(MORE)

FRIEDA (CONT'D)

Every time I see that woman, she yells out that I'm a Spring and then she sends me a bill for 25 dollars. And of course now she's all upset 'cause I'm not goin' to France with her and Harlan. Well, I'm sorry but I just do not care to revisit the Louvre with someone who would organize a Buford Pusser Film Festival.

(A BEAT, THEN WOOD AND EVAN EXCHANGE A LOCK)

*
*

CUT TO:

(K)

EXT. NEWTON HOUSE - ESTABLISHING SHOT

INT. NEWTON BEDROOM - NIGHT

(AVA IS SITTING ON HER BED WITH PICTURE ALBUMS AND OLD BABY PHOTOS OF HER CHILDREN. SHE THEN NOTICES PRESENT STILL ON BED AND OPENS IT, REVEALING WOOD CARVING OF HER NAME AND TITLE; IT SAYS "AVA EVANS NEWTON - PROSECUTING ATTORNEY" -- SHE IS OBVIOUSLY TOUCHED BY IT)

(AS TAYLOR, MOLLY AND WILL ENTER. DURING THE FOLLOWING THEY PILE ON THE BED WITH HER)

TAYLOR

Hey, Mom, what time are we supposed to be at Dad's birthday dinner?

AVA

Right now. Molly, I can't believe you've been playing outside in your good dress.

MOLLY

We're building a treehouse for
Scout.

AVA

Who's Scout?

MOLLY

The new baby! We named her
after that girl in To Kill A
Mockingbird.

WILL

She named her. I don't like it.
I'm just calling her "Girlie."

MOLLY

No you're not; that's stupid.

AVA

You didn't say anything about the
baby in front of Neal Heck, did
you?

TAYLOR

No, we didn't. Mom, why don't
you want anybody to know?

AVA

Because, Taylor, there's probably
some people who wouldn't vote for
me if they knew I was gonna have
a baby.

WILL

Why? Don't they like babies?

AVA

Sure they do. It's just... hard
to explain.

MOLLY

But they're gonna find out after
the election. Isn't that...
deceitful?

AVA

Molly, I know you're wanting to
use that word today, but I would
appreciate if you would use it
somewhere else, okay?

TAYLOR

Hey, Mom, you should see it. It's
not really a treehouse. I just
took that old picnic basket that
was out in the garage and built a
little shelf in the tree, so she
can be right in the middle of all
the branches and have birds around
her and everything. It's cool.

*

WILL

And I'm gonna get Dad's beer
cooler and put it out there and
keep some little milk cartons
iced down for her.

MOLLY

Will! Mom's gonna breast feed
her.

(AS AVA TAKES WILL IN HER ARMS)

AVA

That's okay. Will doesn't know
about babies because he's always
been the baby. Taylor got to
have Molly, and Molly got to
have you, and you didn't get to
have anybody.

WILL

Now I'll get to have "Girlie."

MOLLY

That's not her name.

WILL

Yes it is.

(A BEAT AS AVA TEARS UP)

TAYLOR

Hey, Mom, don't be upset.

(PUTTING ARM ON HER) We'll
help you raise her.

MOLLY

Yeah, and Dad will help too.
When I had the earache, he
rocked me all night long.

AVA

(THROUGH TEARS) That's right.
He did, didn't he?

WILL

He rocked me, too. He can't sing
very good, though.

AVA

You all are really happy about
this baby, aren't you?

TAYLOR

I'm happy.

MOLLY

Are you happy?

AVA

(SHAKING HER HEAD, HALF LAUGHING
HALF CRYING) Yes.

WILL

Then how come you're crying?

AVA

I guess I was happy and just
didn't know it.

MOLLY

Hey, just like R.C.'s song.

(AVA HUGS ALL OF THEM)

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

(L)

FADE IN:

INT. BARBECUE VILLA - NIGHT (LITTLE LATER)

(WOOD, EVAN, PONDER, FRIEDA, HARLAN,
MERLEEN AND NUB ARE ALL PRESENT, AS ROCK
MUSIC BLARES FROM JUKE BOX. MERLEEN (50'S,
ANN WEDGEWORTH TYPE) IS OVERDRESSED)

FRIEDA

Well, I just cannot believe that
you all didn't know that Fontana
Beausaleil is a cousin to Neely
Deely!

EVAN

I don't even know Neely Deely.

FRIEDA

Of course you know him! He and
his brother Wheely used to work
on Daddy's farm over at Malvern.

EVAN

Never heard of 'em.

HARLAN

I've never heard of 'em either.

FRIEDA

Oh you all are just saying that to get me riled! Anyway, the Beausaleils are just as squirrely as the Deelys. The biggest job anyone of them ever had was 1990 census taker and I should know because the silly fool came to interview me in the state hospital and then listed me with the government as being Vietnamese.

EVAN

Well, that's an understandable error, Frieda. I'm sure he meant Viet Cong.

WOOD

(TO PONDER, RE: JUKEBOX) I just want you to know how much I really hate that music. In fact, I'm going to have my next vasectomy here so that can be playing in the background.

HARLAN

(PUTTING AN ARM AROUND HIM) Hey, ole buddy, after the gals go home tonight, we're gonna have us a little stag birthday drink, just us fellas, huh? I got a little somethin's gonna cheer you up.

WOOD

What is it, a refund?

HARLAN

(CRACKING UP) This guy's killin' me! (THEN SOBER, LOOKING AT WATCH) No kidding. We need to get the gals and children out of here by 10:00.

WOOD

Listen, I've had all the surprises I want from you for one day, Mr. Scalpel-Meister.

*

HARLAN

You're gonna love it!

MERLEEN

How are you, Evan?

EVAN

Pretty good, Merleen. How are you gettin' along?

MERLEEN

Oh, I'm just real good. You
need to come out to Tara ("TAH-RA")
and see the new den. We got all
new carpet and curtains with
little golf clubs all over them.
It's really cute.

EVAN

I'll bet it is.

FRIEDA

(SCREAMING -- RE: DRINK) Ponder,
you're gonna have to give me
a refill.

*
*

(AS PAULINE NEWTON, WOOD'S MOTHER, ENTERS
AND CROSSSES TO WOOD, CARRYING GIFT, WOOD
AND HARLAN STAND)

PAULINE

Hello everybody.

*

WOOD

Hi, Mom. (TO HARLAN) Don't say
anything to my mother about
the baby. I want to tell her.

*

(AS HE KISSES HER)

PAULINE

Happy birthday, Woodrow. Oh, son,
I'm so pleased about the new baby.
I heard it from one of Dr. Elldridge's
nurses in Fouch's, when I was getting
my medicine refilled.

*

(AS WOOD GIVES HARLAN A LOCK)

HARLAN

How are you, Miss Pauline?

PAULINE

Very fine, thank you. You know, son. I hate to put a damper on your little party, but several of my lady friends were sitting down front at the game last night and they said they're pretty sure you were using some unpleasant language.

WOOD

I might have slipped a time or two, Mother. I'm sorry.

*

PAULINE

You know, Woodrow, I raised you with the idea that you would always be a gentleman of unimpeachable manners. I hope you're not going to let me down at this late date.

WOOD

I'll try to do better, Mother.

PAULINE

I know you will and that's just what I've told everyone. You're a wonderful son.

WOOD

Thank you Mother.

HARLAN

(TO PAULINE) I'm glad you did that. I've been concerned about it myself.

(WOOD SHOOTS HIM A LOOK, AS FRANCIS AND R.C. BLUE (COLLEGE AGE, HANDSOME, MEGAWATT SMILE, COWBOY HAT) ENTERS)

EVAN

Well look who's here? How the heck are you, R.C.?

R.C.

Just fine, Mr. Evans.

EVAN

Boy, I'm glad to see you home for the weekend. Maybe you can keep your mother out of my hair. I quit paying her three or four years ago, but she still keeps coming over to my house.

(AS PONDER CROSSES TO THEM, HE HUGS R.C.)

FRANCIS

Hmm, hmm, it's so little, you might as well quit payin' me.

PONDER

Hey, nephew, what's goin' on?

R.C.

Not much, Uncle Ponder. (PUTTING ARM AROUND HIM)

(MORE)

R.C. (CONT'D)

(A BEAT, THEN) Hey, Coach, happy
birthday!

WOOD

Hey, R.C., good to see you,
buddy. What are you doin' home?

R.C.

Well, I'm here to bail you out!
They called me to come back and
play for you.

WOOD

(ATTEMPTING CHEERFULNESS) Hey,
best news I've had all day.

FRANCIS

Speaking of football, somebody said
Herman Stiles is the new assistant
coach. And now he's running around with
a little canteen filled with Gatorade.

HARLAN

Herman Stiles couldn't coach...

*

*

WOOD

I'm gonna call the house and
check on Ava.

PONDER

She called. She's on her way.

R.C.

(TO HARLAN) Coach seems a little
down. (A BEAT, THEN) Is he
upset about the game last night?

HARLAN

Nah, he'll be all right. He's
got those "Over the Hill, My
Wife's Off the Pill and My
Vasectomy Didn't Take Blues."

R.C.

(TO DR. ELLDRIDGE) They're
gonna have a baby? *

FRANCIS

(TO R.C.) That's correct. (THEN
RE: EVAN) And it's just one too
many for us to take care of.
We're gonna have to start farmin'
'em out.

EVAN

You worry about your own farm.
I'm not farmin' out anybody!

FRIEDA

Well I just think it's terrible
this baby thing had to happen
the same day that awful picture's
in the paper.

R.C.

What picture?

FRANCIS

The picture of Wood and Fontana
Beausoleil. One's having the
birthday and the other's wearing
the suit.

WOOD

(TO PONDER) Does it seem to you that people are talking about me like I'm not here?

*

HARLAN

Well, I don't care what anybody says, the fact is, Fontana Beausoleil is a friend of mine and by gosh she's perked up the football games and helped attendance and I'm for anything that promotes Wood and the team.

EVAN

And we all know what a master of promotion this guy is. After all, he's the one who suggested that our license plates say, "Arkansas, Not As Bad As You Think."

(AMIDST LAUGHTER)

HARLAN

I'll tell you what -- it would have gotten people's attention!

R.C.

Boy, it's good to be home. I miss this.

PONDER

Really? I get sick of it.

(AS AVA AND THE CHILDREN ENTER WITH NEAL HECK, THE REPORTER, 30'S, JEANS, SPORTCOAT, ALL EYES ARE ON HER, INCLUDING WOOD'S. THEY EXCHANGE A LOOK AS EVERYONE AD LIBS HELLOS AND HUGS. DURING THE FOLLOWING, SEVERAL OTHER DINERS ENTER, INCLUDING EARL)

HARLAN

Hey, here's the candidate of the
hour now! Get in here, girl!
You're holding up the
proceedings!

AVA

I'm sorry. I had to speak at
the Jaycees and it ran late.

ANGLE ON FRIEDA

(AS SHE GRABS TAYLOR, HUGGING HIM. HE GRINS)

FRIEDA

Just look at that profile! It's
just like mine! I'm telling you
this is a good-looking boy! We
ought to just put him on a float
and drive him through town every
Saturday!

*
*

(AS WILL APPROACHES EVAN, WOOD AND R.C.)

WOOD

(RE: FRIEDA) I wish she wouldn't
say stuff like that. It makes
it so much harder for me to get
him to ram his face into the
groin of a 300 pound tackle.

EVAN

(TO WOOD) Well, I'm sure Neal's
heard about the baby by now. I
think I'll go over and do a little
damage control.

(SUDDENLY WILL BEGINS MAKING A CIRCLE WITH
HIS FOOT IN ONE DIRECTION AND RUBBING HIS
HEAD WITH HIS HAND IN OPPOSITE DIRECTION)

WILL

Look at this! I'm using all
sides of my brain at once.

R.C.

*

Wow.

*

WOOD

(TO R.C.) He's been spending
some quality time with Nub.

(AS WILL HOPS INTO R.C.'S LAP)

WILL

Hi, R.C.

R.C.

(MOCK STERNNESS) Hey, that's Mr.
Blue to you.

WILL

Can I see your hat?

R.C.

I told you I'll give it to you
when you're big enough to wear it.

(PUTTING IT ON WILL, IT COVERS HIS
FACE. R.C. RETRIEVES IT) And
you ain't big enough yet.

ANGLE ON EVAN

(APPROACHING AVA AND NEAL. HE KISSES HER.)

EVAN

Hi, darlin'. How are ya feelin'?

AVA

I'm fine.

EVAN

Listen, Neal, why don't you go on home? You've hounded this lady enough for one day. I mean, after all, she's just running for office in a little tiny town! It's not like this is Watergate or Iran-Contra, okay?

*

(NEAL REACTS)

AVA

Daddy! I'm fine!

ANGLE ON WILL, R.C., AND WOOD

WILL

... And then we built a treehouse for the new baby. And I'm gonna get some stickerbush switches and stand guard so no criminals can get to her.

WOOD

You're a real law and order guy,
aren't you? And what'd your
mother say about this treehouse?

WILL

She cried.

WOOD

She did?

(A BEAT AS WOOD AND AVA EXCHANGE A LOOK
AGAIN)

ANGLE ON MOLLY

(SITTING ON PAULINE'S LAP AS MERLEEN
APPROACHES THEM)

MERLEEN

Miss Pauline, you'll have to
come out to Tara and see our new
pond. We have two Styrofoam
swans floating on it.

PAULINE

Well, I'll certainly look forward
to that.

MOLLY

Grandma, since I look like you, I
hope the new baby looks just like
us.

PAULINE

Oh! Wouldn't that give her a good
start in life?

ANGLE ON WOOD

(AS EVAN APPROACHES)

EVAN

Can you beat that? Everybody in
this town knows about this baby
but my reporter. This guy hasn't
got a clue. I don't know whether
to be relieved or depressed!

WOOD

I wouldn't worry about it.

(AS VIRGIL PASSES BY)

VIRGIL

*

Hey, Coach, don't feel too bad.
You can't build a team if you
ain't got the players.

WOOD

Thank you, Virgil.

*

(AS HARLAN APPROACHES CARRYING TAMBOURINE)

HARLAN

Did you see what one of those
Hare Krishnas left here? You
know, it's amazing to me that
anyone could be happy just running
around chanting and playing a
tambourine all day. You would
think they would at least want
to get some other instruments
and form a band.

EVAN

You just kind of ooze
spirituality, don't you, Harlan?

(AS PONDER AND TWO WAITRESSES EMERGE FROM
KITCHEN)

PONDER

Okay, we've got hot rib plates
here comin' through. (TO ALL)
Sharpen your dentures and get
your elbows off the table.

*

(AS THEY SERVE)

HARLAN

(RE: WATCH) Boy, we need to get
this show on the road! Get the ladies
and the little ones on out of here!

MERLEEN

Harlan, why are you so anxious
to get rid of us?

HARLAN

You wouldn't understand, Merleen!
It's just a little surprise for
Wood and the guys.

ANGLE ON FRIEDA AND NEAL HECK

FRIEDA

(TO NEAL HECK AND ANYONE ELSE)
Well all I can say is, even if
Ava was not running against Jim
Guy Tucker, I still wouldn't
vote for him because he's wimpy.
(MORE)

FRIEDA (CONT'D)

He was wimpy even in high school,
just a little ole puff of a boy.
Now he's just a little ole puff
of a man. And of course you've
heard the rumor that he had to
have a spine implant.

AVA

(TO NEAL) Neal, I hope you know
that my aunt is given to exaggerated
hyperbole for the sake of
entertainment and does not in any
way reflect the viewpoint of me
or my family.

HARLAN

Yeah, and besides that, Jim Guy
Tucker is a friend of mine.

FRIEDA

Oh, everybody's a friend of
yours, Harlan, from Tammy Faye
Baker's personal secretary to
some fool you met in a jungle
boat on Pirates of the Caribbean.

HARLAN

You know, Frieda, in the world of
pork and beans, I think you might
be missing a couple of gristle cubes.

*

MERLEEN

Oh, ya'll don't start.

FRIEDA

Well, if I am, I assure you it was a condition brought on by a severe overexposure to jackasses.

PAULINE

Oh my! Let's not forget the little ones.

(AS WILL WALKS BY)

FRIEDA

I'm sorry, Miss Pauline, but these men are just eggin' me on. (RAPID FIRE) Just like actin' like they don't know who Neely and Wheely Deely are! When of course, everybody knows that they have known Neely and Wheely Deely all of their natural lives! (THEN GRABBING WILL) Come here, darling, you come live with your Aunt Frieda and I'll raise you up right.

EVAN

(TO WILL) That's right. Then you can run around and play the tambourine.

(AS WOOD RISES, RAISING HIS GLASS)

WOOD

Before we begin our annual food fight, I'd like to make a toast.

HARLAN

Quiet, everybody. Birthday boy wants to make a speech. (THEN TO WOOD) Make it quick.

WOOD

As you all know, it's not just my birthday today. It's also Ava's and my wedding anniversary. We haven't celebrated it yet, so I'd like to do that now, with an announcement for Neal Heck, who apparently is the only person in town who doesn't know that we are expecting our fourth child. There's been a lot of talk tonight about keeping it a secret till after the election, but that isn't our style. And anyway, it's too late. But the truth is, we're proud to be having this baby, and I hope you're writing this down, Neal, because I want everyone in this town to understand that when we were having our first son, Taylor, I was playing professional football while Ava was tracking down a job, renting U-Hauls and moving us to Pittsburg in the middle of a blizzard.

(MORE)

*
*

WOOD (CONT'D)

And when we had our daughter
Molly, she was busy raising a
five-year-old, working part-time,
and graduating second in her
class from law school. And as
a matter of fact, our last son
Will was almost born on an island
in the middle of the Ouchita
River, where Ava had taken sixteen
little girls camping for the
weekend. So I really don't want
to hear about a pregnant woman
or a mother of four doing a man's
job. I think my wife has proven
there's no such thing as a man's job.
And when the election rolls around
in four weeks, I'll be the first
person in line to cast my vote for
Ava Evans Newton, the first female
prosecuting attorney of Evening
Shade, Arkansas. And I will be
just as proud of that, as I am of
being the guy who gets to go home
to her tonight. (LIFTING GLASS TO
HER) Happy anniversary, sweetheart.

*

(AS EVERYONE CLAPS AND AVA REGARDS HIM,
TOUCHED, NUB ENTERS WITH WAGON, EXCITED)

NUB

Hey, Harlan!

HARLAN

Yo!

NUB

You know that Fontana woman who's supposed to be inside a birthday cake that you gave me ten dollars to be on the lookout for? Well, I just wanted to let you know she hadn't gotten here yet.

(A BEAT AS EVERYONE INCLUDING WOOD, REACTS, THEN)

HARLAN

(STEAMED) Thank you, Nub.

CUT TO:

SCENE M
(Ponder, Wood, Nub,
Fontana,
Waiter Extra)
90.

(M)

INT. BARBECUE VILLA - NIGHT (LITTLE LATER)

(THE PARTY IS OVER -- EVERYONE HAS GONE HOME. PONDER IS STANDING BEHIND COUNTER PUTTING UP GLASSES. WOOD IS SITTING ON A STOOL. ONE WAITER IS SWEEPING UP. NUB IS LYING BELLY-UP IN HIS WAGON. THE TAMBOURINE NOW ALSO HANGS FROM THE TOP OF HIS FLAGPOLE)

PONDER

(SINGING, JAZZ-STYLE) Happy
birthday, Wood Newton... happy
birthday to you. (AS HE PUTS
CAKE AWAY) Hey, Nub, you want a
piece of cake?

NUB

Nah. I don't like cake.

WOOD

Ava looked beautiful tonight,
didn't she?

PONDER

Ava always looks beautiful. And you are one lucky s.o.b. that Miss Fontana whatever her name is never showed up.

WOOD

I can't believe something good finally happened. (A BEAT, THEN) I'll probably be killed by a meteorite on the way home. You know, Ponder, the older I get the more confused I am about life. I mean, how could I, Wood Newton, possibly have a son who would rather be a rich movie star than play football? I don't understand it. I don't even understand why the police don't wear tennis shoes. Do you know?

PONDER

No, I've given it serious thought but I'm sorry, I don't.

*

*

NUB

I'm confused, too.

PONDER

Yeah? What are you confused about?

NUB

I'm confused about fiber.

PONDER

Gettin' past your bedtime, Nub.
You better get on down to the
newspaper.

NUB

(STILL LYING ON BACK, HOLDING TEN
DOLLAR BILL IN THE AIR) Nah, I'm
going for a spin first. (GETS UP,
HOLDING OUT TEN DOLLAR BILL TOWARD
WOOD) Happy birthday, Coach.

WOOD

(A BEAT, THEN TOUCHED) Nub, I'm
not gonna take your money.

NUB

I know. I was just lettin' you
look at it. (AS HE PUTS MONEY IN
POCKET AND STARTS TO GO) Play B-5.

WOOD

Nub, B-5 is gone.

NUB

(BOARDING HIS "CHARIOT") No, it's
not. It's in the air. You just
have to pick up the sound waves.

WOOD

Right.

NUB

Or you could order it from a
record store. (HE EXITS,
TRAILING OFF -- O.S.) You got
it, whaddya gonna do (CLAP CLAP)
you got it, put it through (CLAP
CLAP).

(A LONG BEAT, THEN)

WOOD

You know what I realized tonight,
Ponder? I realized I'm not
immortal.

PONDER

Yeah? That usually hits around
fifty.

WOOD

Well it hit me at forty-eight. I
was sitting here looking at Ava
and the kids and all of a sudden
I just felt so incredibly grateful
for this baby. (A BEAT, THEN) Do
you remember the first time you
felt immortal?

*

*

PONDER

Yes I do. I was a little bitty
thing and I was lying down in
the back of a hay wagon. My
father was drivin'.

*

*

(MORE)

PONDER (CONT'D)

I just remember lookin' up at
him and his shoulders seemed
about seven feet wide. For just
a few seconds, he moved his body
and blocked out the sun and I
thought to myself, "Man, I'm
gonna live forever."

(A BEAT, THEN)

WOOD

Your father was a good man. My
father was a good man. And when
I was seventeen and he was dying,
you were the only person in this
town who would tell me.

*

PONDER

Go home, Wood. Somebody's
waitin' for you.

(AS WOOD GOES)

WOOD

The sauce was a little hot tonight.

PONDER

You're talkin' about my cookin'
or thinkin' about your wife?

WOOD

Get some decent music, will ya?

(AS FONTANA BEAUSOLEIL ENTERS WEARING A
PINK AND WHITE PLYWOOD TIERED-CAKE-SHAPE
STRUCTURE WITH SHINGLES. THE TOP OF THE
CAKE IS OPEN AND HANGS LOOSE ON A HINGE,
SO THAT HER HEAD IS STRETCHING OUT)

(ONE SHINGLE HAS FALLEN OFF SO THAT HER ARM IS STICKING THROUGH. HER LONG LEGS ARE BARE. SHE HAS ON ONE HIGH HEEL AND CARRIES ANOTHER)

FONTANA

I just cannot believe this day!
It's been a nightmare from
beginning to end. It's not
enough to get 400 nasty phone
calls from all these P.T.A. types,
but I also have to ride in the
back of that filthy stinking
beat-up old farm truck in this
ridiculous looking get-up and
then walk the last half-mile
with cow dung stuck to my new
high heels after my Uncle
Delman's radiator blows up, and
all these red-neck geeks are
hanging out their car windows
screaming and yelling at me.
(CRYING) I mean, just because
I'm a striptease artist doesn't
mean I don't have any feelings!

(AS WOOD CROSSES TO HER)

WOOD

Hey, it's okay. Don't cry. I
know how you feel. I've had the
same kind of day. (RE: HOLE
COSTUME) What the heck happened
here?

FONTANA

(CRYING HARDER) One of my
shingles fell off.

WOOD

(TO PONDER, RE: FONTANA CRYING)
Well, get her a handkerchief or
something. (TO FONTANA) I'd
give you mine but I'm using it.

(AS PONDER CROSSES/HANDING)

PONDER

How about a napkin?

FONTANA

Thank you.

PONDER

(RE: HOLE) What happened here?

WOOD

One of her shingles fell off.

PONDER

(TO FONTANA) Where'd you get
this thing anyway?

FONTANA

Herman Stiles made it for me.
He does all my props. He used
to teach shop at the high school.

WOOD

You see this. The Lord is
sending me an omen.

(MORE)

WOOD (CONT'D)

(RE: CAKE) This represents the
football team. Crumbly material
to start with. Herman Stiles
steps in. Now all the shingles
are falling off.

PONDER

Excuse me, Miss uh --

FONTANA

Beausoleil.

PONDER

Are you wearing anything under
there?

FONTANA

What do you think?

PONDER

(TO WOOD) I don't think she's
wearing anything.

WOOD

You must be freezing. Here,
take my jacket.

FONTANA

(CRYING) I can't get it on.
And now I don't have any way home!

WOOD

(RE: KEYS) Well, I guess I
could drive you.

FONTANA

I can't fit inside a car...
unless I take the cake off.

WOOD

No, no. Don't do that. Let's
just think a minute.

FONTANA

I was supposed to pop out of it
anyway as a surprise for you,
but the surprise is ruined now.
(CRYING AGAIN) And then on top
of everything else, that
cheapskate Harlan only paid me
\$20! That isn't even enough to
have his wife tell you what
season you are!

(AS NUB ENTERS IN WAGON)

WOOD

Listen, please don't cry. I
really appreciate the thought.
I mean, after the day you've
had I'm sure you didn't feel
like getting naked and going
out.

FONTANA

Oh, I don't mind getting naked.
It's a dying art that no one
appreciates anymore.

(AS NUB BEGINS PULLING OWN NOSE, THEN WIGGLING THUMB BETWEEN INDEX AND MIDDLE FINGERS)

NUB

Yeah, it's kinda like that old trick "I got your nose." You hardly ever see anybody do that anymore.

PONDER

What are you doing back?

NUB

I forgot to tell Coach something...

WOOD

What is it?

NUB

You know that lady that was supposed to be dressed like a cake. I never could find her.

(A BEAT, THEN)

WOOD

Okay, Nub. Thanks for letting me know.

NUB

(RE: FONTANA'S COSTUME) I saw her outside, but I figured that was supposed to be a hat.

WOOD

It's an easy mistake.

(A BEAT AS THEY REGARD HIM AND HIS WAGON)

PONDER

You know, Miss Beausoleil, there
is a way to get you home tonight,
but it's not exactly the Orient
Express.

(A BEAT, THEN)

WOOD

(GETTING IT) That's right.
But it is a convertible.

FONTANA

Hey, I don't care. I can't walk
another step with these blisters.

WOOD

(HOLDING OUT A \$10 BILL) Nub,
how would you like to have
another ten dollars?

NUB

(TAKING IT) Okay, if you're
sure you don't want it anymore.

WOOD

I want you to pull the lovely
Fontana in your chariot all the
way to her house. And I also
want you to treat her like a
princess.

NUB

Okeydoke!

FONTANA

(TO WOOD, RE: NUB) Are you
sure it's okay?

PONDER

It's okay. Don't you know Nub?

FONTANA

Yeah. That's why I'm asking.

WOOD

Trust me. Nothing can get him
off his course. Once you give
him a destination, he's like a
homing pigeon.

(AS SHE SITS DOWN IN WAGON, PROPPING FEET
UP. PONDER GRABS A CHECKED TABLECLOTH AND
PUTS IT OVER HER)

PONDER

Your cape, madam.

FONTANA

Thank you. You guys are really
sweet.

NUB

Watch it there. You're sitting
on my binoculars.

FONTANA

Sorry.

(AS NUB BEGINS OPENING AND CLOSING KNEES
WHILE RUBBING STOMACH)

NUB

Look at this. I'm using all my
motor skills.

WOOD

(TO FONTANA) We forgot to mention,
there's also entertainment. (THEN
TO NUB). Okay, pal, let's try and
keep it within the speed limit.

NUB

Whatever you say, Coach.

(AS THEY GO)

WOOD

And Nub, one more thing.

(AS NUB PAUSES AT THE DOOR)

WOOD (CONT'D)

Just remember, you don't like
cake.

(A BEAT AS NUB GRINS, DELIGHTED, AT
PONDER AND WOOD)

CUT TO:

(N)

EXT. NEWTON HOUSE - NIGHT (11:30 PM)

(AS WOOD ASCENDS THE PORCH STEPS, TIRED
AND SUBDUED, HE STOPS, SEARCHING FOR A KEY)

ANGLE ON AVA

(WHO IS DRAPED ACROSS PORCH SWING IN
WHITE NEGLIGEE AND MATCHING ROBE)

AVA

Did you know when you were the
big football star in college
and I was just a little newsboy
that when you would come home
on vacation, I would purposefully
throw the paper at your bedroom
window, just for the thrill of
waking you up?

WOOD

Boy, I'm glad to see you. (A
BEAT, THEN) What are you doing
out here?

AVA

(STANDING UP, LOOKING STUNNING)
Waiting for my husband. We still
have thirty minutes of our
anniversary left.

WOOD

You're not mad at me anymore?
(SHE SHAKES HER HEAD AND CROSSES TO HIM,
PUTTING HER ARMS ON HIS SHOULDERS)

AVA

I decided it's not your fault
your vasectomy didn't work and
that you attract wild and crazy
women. After all, you attracted
me.

WOOD

You know, I'm not sure it's
appropriate for a future
prosecuting attorney to be on
her front porch in a see-through
nightie.

AVA

Well I can't let Fontana
Beausoleil have all the fun. (A
BEAT, THEN) I loved your speech,
and my name carved in wood. (SHE
KISSES HIM, THEN) Wood.

WOOD

Isn't this how we got into
trouble?

AVA

It's not gonna be easy having
four kids. (AS THEIR PASSION
BEGINS TO ESCALATE)

WOOD

You know, when you look like
this, all I want to do is be
worthy of you.

AVA

I don't know how or why -- this
morning I was in shock. Now I want
this baby more than anything.
(KISSING HIM) When I walked in
tonight, and saw the look on your
face, I knew you wanted it, too.

WOOD

I want every baby you've got. (A
BEAT, THEN KISSING) Can we go
inside now?

AVA

(WALKING OVER TO A LARGE OBJECT
COVERED BY QUILT ON THE OPPOSITE
SIDE OF PORCH) Not until you
open your present.

WOOD

What present?

AVA

(TAKING OFF QUILT, REVEALING
WRAPPING PAPER) The one the kids
couldn't get through our front
door.

(WOOD REACTS, THEN TEARS THE PAPER BACK,
REVEALING A LARGE, CLASSIC 1950'S JUKEBOX.
A LONG BEAT AS HE LOOKS AT HER.)

AVA (CONT'D)

I bought it from Ponder. He tore
up the check. (AS SHE SWITCHES
IT ON) Taylor hooked it up for you.

(WOOD REACTS, OVERWHELMED)

AVA (CONT'D)

You don't have to say it.

ANGLE ON AVA'S HAND

(AS SHE PUNCHES IN B-5 AS A LOOK PASSES
BETWEEN THEM)

AVA

You don't have to say anything
at all.

SFX: AS THE STRAINS OF "BLUEBERRY HILL" DRIFT
FROM THE JUKEBOX

(AVA AND WOOD BEGIN DANCING. AFTER A FEW VERSES, WE SEE NUB'S "CHARIOT OF FIRE" TRAVERSING THE NEARBY SIDEWALK. AND HEAR)

SFX: THE FAINT JANGLING OF A TAMBOURINE

(IT COMES AND GOES IN A FEW SECONDS, TRAILING OFF IN THE DISTANCE. A GIANT CAKE PERCHED ON THE BACK OF A WAGON WITH NUB SITTING IN THE FRONT -- COASTING FULL SPEED AHEAD)

NUB

Hey hey... ho ho... you've got
that ball now really go...

(AS WOOD MANEUVERS AVA SO SHE MISSES THE SPECTACLE, HE GIVES A LOOK FOR THE CAMERA)

NUB (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hey hey... ho ho...

FATS DOMINO (O.S.)

The wind in the willows played,
love's sweet melody...

ANGLE ON UPSTAIRS WINDOW

(WE SEE THE FACES OF TAYLOR, MOLLY AND WILL, AS THEY WATCH. NARRATOR, PONDER BLUE (V.O.), OFFERS HIS OWN REFLECTIONS ON THE DAY'S EVENTS, INCLUDING THE FACT THAT THE NEWTON CHILDREN ARE BEING GIVEN THEIR OWN "REMEMBERED" MOMENT OF IMMORTALITY AS THEY WATCH THEIR PARENTS DANCE ON THE FRONT PORCH, ON A WARM OCTOBER NIGHT, IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT, IN A PLACE CALLED "EVENING SHADE")

FADE OUT.

THE END