

SCENE I

INT. RUN-DOWN HALLWAY - DAY

An OLD, FLOORBOARD CREAKS. Bastion freezes. A DARK FIGURE lurks at the other end of the hallway.

STENLAND

Now you can ask yourself... is that
the sound of an old, floorboard
creaking?

The floor CREAKS again as the Dark Figure steps forward.

STENLAND

Or is that a bad ass mother fucker
with a turbine-chopped, twin-blade
pointed at your ass?

(cocks shotgun)

I know you don't want to die today,
Hossman.

(beat)

You've got five seconds to burn
them grits boy.

BASTION

Step into the light, old man.

The Dark Figure protrudes from the shadows. The Dark Figure is STENLAND, 53, a belligerent alcoholic. He wears a pair of TIGHTY WHITIES that hides beneath his enormous BEER GUT.

STENLAND

It's your move, buddy.

Bastion slowly extends his arm to FLICK the lightswitch on. Stenland holds a shotgun pointed at Bastion. Neither one moves. Stenland PULLS THE TRIGGER. CLICK! But it's not loaded.

STENLAND

What are you doing here?

BASTION

To see you.

STENLAND

(lowers his gun)

What for?

Bastion notices an OLD PHOTOGRAPH of him and his childhood friends hanging on the wall. A BOOKCASE, full of GRADE SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS, stands against it.

BASTION
You remember Nick Salvatore?

STENLAND
That little shit next door?

BASTION
He's in the hospital.

STENLAND
He was always a tough kid. He'll
manage.

BASTION
He's an alcoholic.

Stenland stumbles into the living room. He searches for a
CIGARETTE and lights it.

STENLAND
Good for him. I never put his lips
to the bottle.

BASTION
Like hell you didn't!

STENLAND
Every man is responsible for his
own actions.

BASTION
At what age did you become a man?

STENLAND
Hey! I put this roof over your
head. I put food in your belly. Who
the hell do you think you are?

BASTION
You didn't do shit. You never took
care of us. I learned everything on
my own. The hard way.

STENLAND
You think you're so smart. What a
waste of time and money. All those
books... and still no spine.

BASTION
Hey asshole, fuck you. You were
never a man, much less a father.

Stenland stands face to face.

STENLAND

Does it look like I give a shit?
Take a look around. I'm living in
the lap of luxury. The government
pays my bills, and little fucks
like you don't come around very
often.

BASTION

Little fucks like me know how to
BATHE.

Stenland gets really quiet.

STENLAND

(murmurs)

Every cow gets slaughtered. We're
all just part of the herd.

Stenland stammers into the kitchen.

SCENE II

EXT. STENLAND'S BACKYARD - DAY

Nick TACKLES Bastion, and RUBS HIS FACE in the dirt.
Stenland's body shadows over the kids FIGHTING.

STENLAND
Both of you get up RIGHT NOW.

Bastion and Nick stop immediately. Fear covers their faces.

STENLAND
(to Bastion)
Are you gonna embarrass me like
that? Rolling around like a dog.
(to Nick)
Give me that bat.

Stenland takes the bat from Nick.

STENLAND
Take your shirts off. NOW.

Nick and Bastion take their shirts off.

STENLAND
Alright, you filthy, pecker-rats.

Stenland swigs his beer.

STENLAND
You stand here in this corner, and
you over there.

Nick and Bastion obey.

STENLAND
Now we're gonna finish this.
(swigs his beer)
Like men.

All the Kids remain silent. Stenland CRUSHES his beer can.

STENLAND
(to Bastion)
Don't you dare disrespect our
family name. I taught you better
than that. Now put your fists up.
Both of you.

Bastion and Nick look at one another.

STENLAND
I'm not going to ask you feather
dicks again.

Bastion puts his fists up. Nick doesn't.

STENLAND
(to Nick)
Nick, you have my permission to
fight back, but I want you to
know... you don't have to do this.
You could run home like a PUSSY.

Nick clenches his fists.

STENLAND
(to Bastion)
Bastion, do me proud.

Bastion and Nick hesitantly circle one another. Nick PUSHES
Bastion. The Kids SHOUT!

NICK (KID)
C'mon! Hit me! What are you waiting
for?

Bastion PUNCHES Nick square in the face. Nick FALLS DOWN.

STENLAND
(to Bastion)
There you go. Now you got the
upperhand.

Nick lies on the ground broken. Stenland crouches down to see
Nick's face. It's bruised and busted. Blood is dripping from
his nose.

STENLAND
Nick, are you okay? You're not
going to tell your parents about
this... are you?

Nick's eyes are glossed over. Stenland stands up and helps
Nick to his feet.

STENLAND
Bastion, this is your
responsibility.

Stenland heads back to the house and steps in some DOG SHIT.

STENLAND
How many times have I told you to
clean up after the GOD DAMN DOG!?

Stenland SLAPS the shit out of Bastion. Bastion SOBS.

STENLAND

Huh!? How many times? Pick it up.

Bastion looks down at the poop. He hesitates.

STENLAND

Pick it up! NOW.

Bastion picks up the dog doo.

STENLAND

You're sleeping outside with the
dog tonight.

Stenland heads back inside.

STENLAND

You need to learn your lesson.