

Dreamtime
by Maura Campbell

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Noah, a seventeen year old boy

Willy, a seventeen year old boy

Joerg, a middle aged geology professor, German born

Greta, Jorg's wife, a Russian professor, German born

*Actor 1

*Actor 2

*Actors 1 and 2 play various characters but throughout they represent the public.

SETTING

Joerg and Greta's home and Willy's and Noah's bedrooms. Many other locations are suggested. The fluid use of space is effective since scenes and dialogue constantly overlap.

The sound of an Australian Bullroarer, the Gumleaf, and the Didjeridu.

TIME

The present although the play moves forward and backwards. Many scenes overlap and stage directions are not used, including entrances and exits. Consider the places where dialogue overlaps so that the play can progress at a theatrical pace.

This play is inspired by the lives of Half and Susanne Zantop, murdered in their home January 27, 2001.

SCENE 1

GRETA
Joerg... Joerg... Joerg!

JOERG
What is it?

GRETA
You're sleepwalking again.

JOERG
What?

GRETA
You're sleepwalking. Again.

JOERG
Sleepwalking?

GRETA
You're going to kill yourself.

JOERG
Not possible.

GRETA
Come down now.

JOERG
I was dreaming-

GRETA
Come down now.

JOERG
I can't. I've lost my footing. I can't remember what comes next. Do I cut the rope?

GRETA
There's a thing-a-ma-jig. A clip. Undo that.

JOERG
My weight is on it. There's no way.

GRETA
Maybe we'll have to cut the rope.

JOERG
Surely I've got a knife. Now let's see... This isn't my knife.

GRETA
It isn't?

JOERG

I must have picked it up, though. Very strange.

GRETA

Well. You were dreaming.

JOERG

Of course! Greta- perhaps... perhaps we're still dreaming!

GRETA

I don't feel asleep.

JOERG

Not now, no. But when you wake up, you'll say.. what a strange dream. And it will fade, the way these things do, and it won't have any resemblance to reality.

GRETA

That would be a relief. Now come here-

JOERG

If I could just come down there... I'd kiss you! All over!

GRETA

What if I came up there?

JOERG

But that's not possible. You don't climb.

GRETA

But I can. If it's a dream, then it's no problem. I used to fly in my dreams. What's a little climb?

JOERG

But you're not wearing a harness. What if you should fall?

GRETA

I'll chance it.

JOERG

Steady now... grab hold... don't look down... full concentration... by God, you're a natural! Nerves of steel! You're here... take my hand...

GRETA

I can't...

JOERG

It's all right. You're fixed there. You're got a hold. Feel your center. Take a breath. Now let it out. Imagine... imagine you've held out your hand. And I've taken it. And I've pulled you to me. And I'm holding you. Holding you like a baby. I've got you. You're safe. Are you seeing that?

GRETA

No.

JOERG

We're one and two, Greta. There is nothing between us. Not even air. When you are climbing with a partner, you become one organism. One mind. One creation. You no longer have two legs, you have four. Not one heart, but two. That's the paradox. We are one multiplied by each other.

GRETA

You're asking me to have faith. Is that it? Is that it simply? Just ask me to have faith.

JOERG

Have faith. Greta! Greta!

SCENE 2

ACTOR 1

Package for Noah Stone!

NOAH

Uh, that's me.

ACTOR 1

Sign here.

NOAH

Do I have to sign?

ACTOR 1

It says right here, signature required.

NOAH

You couldn't just leave it?

ACTOR 1

You want someone else to sign... Not sure I can make that out. Could you sign it again?... Something rattling around in there! Hope it's not breakable!

NOAH

It's a present. For my mother.

ACTOR 1

"Noah Stone." Noah Stone. Hm. I know that name. You're not on television?

NOAH

Uh, no.

ACTOR 1

Did I read about you in the newspaper?

NOAH

Must be a common name.

ACTOR 1

I'll think of it. It's on the tip of my... Present, huh? For your mother? She raised a good boy. Well, Noah Stone. Thanks for the autograph. *'ave a great day, mate!*

ACTOR 2

Noah!

NOAH

Yes, Mom?

ACTOR 2

Who was that?

NOAH

It was the mail man!

ACTOR 2

Mail comes at noon!

NOAH

It was the delivery man.

ACTOR 2

What did he deliver?

NOAH

Nothing! He wanted to know if we lived here in case we ever got a delivery!

ACTOR 2

And our tax dollars are paying for this! Take out the compost! Where's your father?

NOAH

He went into town!

ACTOR 2

He didn't take my grocery list!

NOAH

I'll go in later!

ACTOR 2

Your sister's coming home and there's nothing in the house she'll eat!

NOAH

She'll eat turkey like the rest of us!

ACTOR 2

You know what I mean! None of her special food! And Uncle Harry won't eat potatoes so we've got to have rice! And I need three cans, no, four cans of whipped cream! And a bottle of Kitchen Bouquet!

NOAH

I'll go to the store!

ACTOR 2

Did you hear that last thing? Kitchen Bouquet! Wait a minute, I'd better write it down. And watch the roads, they're glazed over! And don't go over to Willy's, I need you back here! You hear me? You spend too much time with that boy, I don't like the way he skulks around! Noah! Come and get this list!

SCENE 3

ACTOR 1

I'd like to begin with the results of the medical examinations taken just after the arrests and compare those to the subsequent examinations after the trials. Specifically, the comparisons of the brain scans, my colleague and I analyzed the data and I think you'll find the results surprising. Why don't you begin. As we discussed.

ACTOR 2

I'm sorry?

ACTOR 1

The results of the brain scans. The comparisons. You have the graph there-

ACTOR 2

Oh, the brain scans. Let me see... You sure I have them?

ACTOR 1

We settled it last night. It was late-

ACTOR 2

Yes, it was late. I do remember, however, but it's the funniest thing-

ACTOR 1

What's funny?

ACTOR 2

I was absorbed just now in the most peculiar fantasy.

ACTOR 1

I think if you just look through there again-

ACTOR 2

I was on a ship. I could see a vast ocean. Gray. Steel gray. Rough waters. I was on the deck, leaning over the rail. Watching for mammals.

ACTOR 1

Mammals?

ACTOR 2

Aquatic mammals. Porpoises. Whales. Dolphins. I can follow it back easily. I was standing here. With you.

ACTOR 1

Yes.

ACTOR 2

And looking out. At them. And thinking, "He addressed a sea of faces." And that set me off. You know, I've never even been on a ship. Can't stand movies about sea life. And yet, there I was. There it was. Was I there?

ACTOR 1

I can state with complete authority that you were right here. No water. No aquatic mammals. Not even, apparently, a medical report.

ACTOR 2

But it was so vivid.

ACTOR 1

Does this happen frequently?

ACTOR 2

I'm not sure. But it was exciting.

ACTOR 1

About the reports-

ACTOR 2

Ah, yes. I have it right here.

ACTOR 1

When asked to describe the events on January 27 of this year, the first subject, Willy Ranger-

ACTOR 2

We detected nothing unusual. No excitement of electrical activity, no increase of blood pressure.

ACTOR 1

After the examination, the subject reported he was hungry.

ACTOR 2

Ravenous, was the word he used.

ACTOR 1

Reliving an episode is tantamount to experiencing it in terms of physical and chemical reactions. At least, that is what we commonly observe.

ACTOR 2

The second subject, um, Noah Stone, had a very different reaction.

ACTOR 1

Resting pulse at the start of the examination was sixty-two-

ACTOR 2

Elevated to a hundred and twenty within sixteen seconds-

ACTOR 1

We stopped the examination. There was a concern of cardiac arrest. After the trials, we repeated the examination. Willy had the same readings-

ACTOR 2

Noah, however, had a very different reaction the second time we questioned him. His resting pulse went from seventy-two to forty-four.

ACTOR 1

Never seen anything like it.

ACTOR 2

Afterwards, he went to sleep. He snored.

ACTOR 1

Brain activity, on the other hand, increased.

ACTOR 2

He was dreaming. Interesting pattern.

ACTOR 1

But what does it mean?

ACTOR 2

We're not supposed to ask that question. We're supposed to answer it.

ACTOR 1

Oh.

SCENE 4

JOERG

I don't know it needs something-

GRETA

Throw in some beans. "Alienation is the primary theme of Crime and Punishment. At first, Raskolnikov's pride separates him from society. He sees himself as superior to all other people and so cannot relate to anyone." Hm.

JOERG

Tell me what you think. Do you think it needs salt?

GRETA

I think she's plagiarized this. It's familiar.

JOERG

Yes, well, the Internet. Students are all over it. What about books? What about the dusty shelves of libraries, the time it takes to search - the abbreviation of experience, that's what has happened. Now take this soup, for example- This chicken stock - do you remember Mariah's third birthday party? I made the fricassee. Last April. Do you remember?

GRETA

Of course, I remember, how many granddaughter's do we have?

JOERG

What did she call it? "Chicken Tennessee?"

GRETA

She's precocious.

JOERG

You're not making the connection.

GRETA

"Within his personal philosophy, he sees other people as tools and uses them for his own ends." These are simply not her words.

JOERG

I made the stock from those bones! And put it in the freezer! Taste. Go ahead.

GRETA

It's a little weak. Sauté some onions. I'm dealing with plagiarism here!

JOERG

I know! Thanksgiving! I froze the date nut bread! (To himself.) A little of this, a little of that...

GRETA

You're not putting date nut bread in the soup!

JOERG

My mother put everything in soup! (Gleeful.) Hee, hee, hee!

NOAH
Hey.

WILLY
Hey.

NOAH
Whatcha looking at?

WILLY
It's a chat room.

NOAH
You want me to come back? I'm going to the store.

WILLY
No. Wait. I'm... done. How about a trip to Massachusetts?

NOAH
What?

WILLY
We're invited. That is, I'm invited. But I can invite you. I mean, I can once I join.

NOAH
Join what?

WILLY
American Nazi Party.

NOAH
Are you nuts?

WILLY
Do you know that by the year 2025 white Americans will be a minority?

NOAH
So?

WILLY
So think about it. We live in a democratic country. Suppose the majority of elected officials are black. Or Jewish. Or Latino. The founding fathers would turn over in their graves if they could see what's happening here.

NOAH
We've only got one black kid in school and he isn't even that black.

WILLY

You have to think ahead. Think of the long term. This is America. Look at this. More than fifty chapters all over the country. Notice anything?

NOAH

What?

WILLY

There isn't one in Vermont.

NOAH

Yeah, Nazis would be pretty unpopular here.

WILLY

You're not getting it. We start a chapter. They train us.

NOAH

Train us in what?

WILLY

I don't know - weapons. Physical combat. These guys are planning a revolution.

NOAH

My mom would kill me if I became a Nazi.

WILLY

She won't even know. Listen. "In the American Nazi Party, you will find no uniforms or ranks, we do not engage in publicly exposing our Comrades to undo publicity through pointless and dangerous Rallies or Marches. We instead stress Small Cell, and Individual Activism as the path for which to build our Movement, as securely and in a responsible manner as possible." Small cells. That means units.

NOAH

He's asking you when you want to come to Boston.

JOERG

Why don't you stop all that?

GRETA

Hm?

JOERG

Look, it's starting to snow.

GRETA

It's January, Joerg. It snows.

JOERG

Not usually when it's this cold. Pretty, pretty flakes. I shoveled the deck.

GRETA

Good for you. Now let me work.

JOERG

Try it now. I put in some sausage.

GRETA

I'm not sure- Still needs something. Did you try the onions?

JOERG

We're out. Just one dried up morsel in the crisper. We might have some flakes.

GRETA

Dehydrated onion? Please. "The manner in which the novel addresses crime and punishment is not exactly what one would expect. The crime is committed in Part I and the punishment comes hundreds of pages later, in the Epilogue." She copied this.

JOERG

How can you tell?

GRETA

You teach a novel for thirty years, you come to know the manner, the beat, as it were, of young minds. There's nothing original here. No fingerprint. It's from the Internet. I could key in *Crime and Punishment*-

JOERG

Internet's down.

GRETA

Ah, well.

JOERG

Probably the weather.

GRETA

The weather has nothing to do with it.

JOERG

A day like this makes you want to stay in bed.

GRETA

I've got work to do.

JOERG

What work? The work was done by someone else, you said so yourself.

GRETA

"The real focus of the novel is not on those two endpoints but on what lies between them—an in-depth exploration of the psychology of a criminal." Why would she do that?

JOERG

Lazy. I had a student last semester that copied the flyleaf of the book we were using. When I confronted him, he said it was accidental. How do you do such a thing accidentally? He said it contained a point he wanted to make, and he inserted it in his paper meaning to delete it later and simply forgot.

GRETA

What did you do?

JOERG

I gave him the benefit of the doubt.

GRETA

You always were a socialist. (Pause.) There's someone at the door.

NOAH

Don't tell him my real name.

WILLY

You in or you out?

NOAH

I don't know.

WILLY

They'd have to approve you, anyway.

NOAH

Who's going to approve you?

WILLY

You're kidding, right? I'm perfect. I'm white-

NOAH

I'm white-

WILLY

I'm English and German, the operative word being German. You're Irish as evidenced by the way your old man gets drunk on St. Paddy's day, not to mention Monday, Tuesday-

NOAH

What if they want you to kill someone?

WILLY

They're not monsters. Look, read what it says, "We are not monsters." I just want the training.

NOAH

Well... You can start with this.

WILLY

They came?

NOAH

Special delivery.

WILLY

Let's have it!... That's what I'm talking about!

NOAH

Wow. I didn't realize they would be so big.

WILLY

Man, I can think of more than one person I'd like to show this to! You know, like the entire student council!

NOAH

These are serious.

WILLY

Worth every penny. What's the matter?

NOAH

Nothing.

WILLY

Don't you like them?

NOAH

Sure I do. I just think they're kind of big. Heavy, you know?

WILLY

Look, we studied this. We spent hours picking them out.

NOAH

I know, I know. It's fine. It's just on the computer screen they looked different. I was just kind of surprised.

WILLY

Wait a minute, wait a minute. Check this out. Now that is hot. Go on. Tell me if you can see it. What?

NOAH

I don't know, you're walking kind of funny.

WILLY

There's nothing funny about having a knife like this on you. I don't like being laughed at.

NOAH

Hey. I'm just fooling around. I never know with you. I never know when you're acting serious.

WILLY

What?

NOAH

Nothing.

WILLY

Hey, I am just messing with you.

NOAH

It doesn't feel like it.

WILLY

I got something for you. Early Christmas present.

NOAH

Is this the chemistry test?

WILLY

No. That's the chemistry answer sheet.

NOAH

Jesus, Willy! How did you get this?

WILLY

Very carefully. Actually, it was just lying on Mr. Prescott's desk. So... I picked it up.

NOAH

Won't he miss it?

WILLY

Maybe. But so what? He knows the answers. He's been giving tests for a hundred years.

NOAH

You're saving my life.

WILLY

What do you want to do this weekend? Besides memorize that thing.

NOAH

I don't know. My sister's home for Thanksgiving.

WILLY

Uh huh. The Jacobs are out of town.

NOAH

So?

WILLY

So I'm thinking maybe we'll hang out at their house. I've got a key.

NOAH

Did you ask them?

WILLY

I work for them! I would just say we were checking on the place. Come on, Noah. The hot tub. The big screen.

NOAH

The bar...

WILLY

The bar... Sarah and Kelsey... Hey, let's try these out. You know the Miller's dog?

NOAH

Yeah? What?

WILLY

Let's get it.

NOAH

What are you talking about?

WILLY

It's old. It can barely walk.

NOAH

I'm not killing a dog.

WILLY

Look, we have to know what these can do. In case we ever need them.

NOAH

I'm not killing a dog, Willy!

WILLY

All it does is bark. Jesus, Noah! I'm just kidding. I'm just testing you. Come on, you think I'd kill a dog? Lighten up.

NOAH

I've got to go to the store.

WILLY

I feel like climbing. God, it's so claustrophobic in this town! Let's go to Burlington.

NOAH

My mom has to make the stuffing-

WILLY

Okay, look, I just need to pick something up. We'll be back in two hours. When does she need to make the stuffing? Thanksgiving's not until tomorrow!

NOAH

She's- I don't know, I'm supposed to get the celery-

WILLY

Fuck it. Let's go to the gym.

NOAH

Fuck it. I'm going to the store.

WILLY

We're climbing. Then we're going to the store.

NOAH

Okay, okay. Hey, aren't you going to turn that thing off?

WILLY

Nah. My mother never comes in here.

JOERG

What time should the roast go in the oven?

GRETA

We have until four o'clock. We'll have drinks at six, I made mushroom caviar. The roast will be done before seven.

JOERG

With those cheese crackers? Are you making those?

GRETA

If you'll leave me be another hour!

JOERG

Fine, but what's for lunch?

GRETA

What about your soup?

JOERG

If there was something else I could add- maybe a can of tomatoes! Ah, here!

GRETA

Now what are you putting in?

JOERG

Just taste, just taste. I think I've finally hit on it!

GRETA

It's good.

JOERG

Kitchen Bouquet!

GRETA

That's for gravy!

JOERG

My mother put it in everything. How's the plagiarist?

GRETA

Look here. Look at the font. Do you see?

JOERG

Not without my glasses.

GRETA

There are two fonts in the paper. Conclusive proof. She copied and pasted parts of it from the computer.

JOERG

That's what you get for making them read *Crime and Punishment!*

GRETA

One of the greatest novels in the world!

JOERG

These young people. They want reality shows. If it's not real, they're not interested. What do you say we go upstairs?

WILLY

So, I've been thinking. Do you know how much money there is in Hanover? With the college? We go over the mountain and scope out some of the expensive houses in the country. Just outside. And we go in, we find the PIN numbers.

NOAH

What, do you think they leave PIN number lying around?

WILLY

These people are arrogant. My dad works for lots of them. They just leave information on their desks. And, you know, if we have to be persuasive-

NOAH

But they won't be home, right? When we go in?

WILLY

Things sometimes change. Sometimes there are opportunities that we can't pass up. That's what I was saying about the dog. In case we have to make an adjustment.

NOAH
I'm not killing a dog, Willy!

GRETA
You're forgetting one thing.

JOERG
What's that?

GRETA
The strudel! We have to pick it up before two.

JOERG
All right. All right. I'm going out. Fifty, sixty, a hundred... and forty, fifty... I'm rich! What time are they coming?

GRETA
Six o'clock.

JOERG
I thought perhaps Bordeaux would go nicely with the roast. What were you thinking?

GRETA
We need whipped cream.

JOERG
The last can didn't work. Should I get Cool Whip as a backup?

GRETA
I'm not serving Cool Whip.

JOERG
I'm just saying, the last can of whipped cream was a dud.

GRETA
Then get ice cream.

JOERG
It's not the same. My mother used to make her own. First she'd milk a cow-

GRETA
I told you, no cows.

JOERG
Then we'd have cream! Real, fresh- you grew up in the city, so you don't know the joy of homemade butter and fresh whipped cream.

GRETA
So get whipping cream and I'll whip it up, will you be happy?

JOERG

And, of course, she made her own strudel. With currants, not raisins.

GRETA

I'll go to town. You stay here and fantasize.

JOERG

We'll both go. Someone has to hold the strudel. It leaks right through the box. That's how I know it's good.

GRETA

What time are they coming?

JOERG

Six thirty, seven. We'll know when they get here.

GRETA

It's snowing. You didn't get the new tires.

JOERG

I know, I know. I have an appointment on Monday. What's a little snow? I have a surprise for you when we get back.

GRETA

I'll bet.

JOERG

It's an outdoor activity.

GRETA

Outdoors? In this weather?

JOERG

A surprise. What is life without surprise?

ACTOR 1

You boys all right there?

NOAH

Willy? I can't...

WILLY

Give me your hand.

NOAH

No. I don't know. It's... I don't want to come up there.

WILLY

What are you talking about?

NOAH

I'm feeling frozen, like. I'm frozen.

WILLY

Give me your hand.

NOAH

I need to get down. I'm dizzy. I can't hang on.

WILLY

I've got him! Look, you've just got to concentrate. You've done this a thousand times.

NOAH

I'm seeing... like when I look down...

WILLY

Don't look down-

NOAH

But I'm seeing... like nothing below... a pit, except there's no bottom, no sides-

WILLY

You're in a gymnasium, moron. We're in Burlington, Vermont and you're fifteen feet above the floor and we've done this a thousand times.

NOAH

Willy-

WILLY

Noah!

ACTOR 1

He okay?

WILLY

He's fine.

ACTOR 2

How many fingers have I got up?

WILLY

Hold on, Noah! I've got you!

NOAH

They say that if you die in your dreams, you really die-

ACTOR 1

Give us room! What's your name, son?

NOAH

Noah... it's Jimmy... Willy...

WILLY

He's all right, he just got dizzy.

ACTOR 1

Jimmy what?

NOAH

I've been getting these... these spells... sometimes when I'm driving... it's the weirdest thing... I'm going along and looking at the road, the fields, whatever... and then it's gone. Just completely gone. Like I'm nowhere. Like I'm in the sky except there aren't any clouds. Nothing. Just me.

ACTOR 2

I'm calling an ambulance. *Heil Hitler!*

WILLY

You're screwing things up, Noah!

NOAH

Where's the box?

WILLY

Shut up!

ACTOR 1

What box?

NOAH

I think I hurt my head.

ACTOR 1

We're getting you a doctor.

NOAH

My mom - she half cooks a turkey the day before Thanksgiving. I'm supposed to get the celery.

ACTOR 1

Help me elevate his feet. I'll go get a blanket.

NOAH

We only have one oven. And we have to make the pies and all. What are you talking about knives?

WILLY

Would you shut the fuck up?

ACTOR 2

Racial greetings White Brothers and Sisters~

NOAH

I was thinking that maybe I should change schools... I think I need a change... I think maybe... after Thanksgiving... if I could just go somewhere else for a while... I'm thinking I really need a change...

ACTOR 2

We are looking for Men and Women, who are willing to sacrifice for the Good of the Folk, not people who are looking for aggrandizement, titillation, or simply causing undirected and useless mayhem. This is not a game or a gang.

ACTOR 1

What did you think of the movie, Willy?

ACTOR 2

If you are tired of being blamed for all the world's problems - simply because you are White, join with us!

WILLY

I thought it was kind of stupid, actually. Couple of bank robbers talking about going to Australia, but that's not where we got the idea. Like I'm going to imitate a movie. Like I don't know the difference between fact and fiction.

ACTOR 2

To learn more about the American Nazi Party, we suggest writing to our National Headquarters and requesting an Info Pack.

ACTOR 1

Then why Australia?

WILLY

Well...

ACTOR 2

Please enclose a \$5 donation to cover costs. This information will be relayed to you as quickly as possible.

ACTOR 1

What?

WILLY

Well, like the guy in the movie said, "They speak English there." But, you know, they're kind of... Backwards. Come on, everyone knows the country was founded by low lives. I just- we just thought it would be easy there.

ACTOR 2

If you are willing to join the ranks of your ancestors who forged this land from a wilderness teeming with savages, we urge you to become involved.

ACTOR 1

Were you planning on killing people in Australia?

WILLY

Oh, that. I think... I wanted to kill someone for the experience.

You see, I don't believe killing is necessarily wrong. The reality is that it's instinctive. We're born to dominate. Well, let me put it another way. The stronger over the weaker - is definitely human nature. And nobody has to get hurt as long as that is respected.

ACTOR 1

Did Noah share your views?

WILLY

He did what he was told. He stood up.

ACTOR 1

He's going to testify against you.

WILLY

He's going to what?

ACTOR 1

He made some statements. I have it in my notes...

WILLY

I don't believe this.

ACTOR 1

It's true. He told the state how you practiced by breaking into people's home in your own community first. There was the Jacobs-

WILLY

I had a key!

ACTOR 1

Noah says here that you tried to join the Nazi party.

WILLY

Yeah, well, maybe if I had we wouldn't be sitting here having this little conversation. Maybe I'd have some help.

ACTOR 2

Download Adolf Hitler's masterpiece Mein Kampf [HERE](#).

WILLY

I'm getting kind of sick of you.

ACTOR 1

There was a house in Vershire.

WILLY

We didn't even go in there. The guy wouldn't let us in.

ACTOR 1

What was your plan if you did?

WILLY

Plan?

ACTOR 1

There was a little boy in there. Seven years old.

WILLY

Yeah, well, it was his lucky day, wasn't it?

ACTOR 1

He said you were trembling all over. Was it excitement or fear?

WILLY

That guy in Vershire better watch his mouth.

ACTOR 1

He didn't tell us. Noah did.

WILLY

You're lying.

ACTOR 1

Noah's cutting a deal with the state. In return for testifying against you he'll serve a twenty-five year sentence.

WILLY

What about my deal?

ACTOR 1

I don't see one on the table.

WILLY

He's fucking dead.

ACTOR 1

You're not exactly in a position to make threats, Willy.

WILLY

I might surprise you.

GRETA

Did you lock the house?

JOERG

Oh, we'll be right back.

WILLY

How was Thanksgiving?

NOAH

Too much food.

WILLY

You feeling better?

NOAH

Yeah, if we didn't have school tomorrow. How was Boston?

WILLY

Noisy. Dirty.

NOAH

Did you meet the guy?

WILLY

Yeah, I met him.

NOAH

So what happened? Did you join?

WILLY

It was all bullshit. He wanted me to distribute pamphlets. I said, what about weapons training? How do you have a revolution without that? He didn't look like he'd ever shot a gun in his life. I mean, I was willing to start a cell here. You and me. Jesus, Noah, you should have come. He would have seen that I had some influence. Fuck it. Neo-nazis. I mean, you're what, Irish?

NOAH

My grandfather was Italian.

WILLY

Then you'd be a target probably. These Nazis hate everybody. But listen. It gave me an idea. I was walking by a travel agency and I saw a sign. Australia! This is the place! I've been researching it all weekend. It's like an untamed territory. I mean, they have cities, but most of it is still wild. You see that? It's called the Bush. They've still got wild Aborigines there. It's ripe! We can kick ass there.

NOAH

It looks like desert.

WILLY

Well, of course, it is the desert. But that's just one part. There are mountains. And ocean. Australia's an island.

NOAH

I know Australia's an island, I'm not an idiot. Nicole Kidman's from Australia.

WILLY

Russell Crowe! The Gladiator? That's the kind of people come out of there. So when we get our money together-

NOAH

We'll need passports.

WILLY

Okay, that's nothing.

NOAH

How much will we need?

WILLY

I figure ten thousand each. Here's the thing. Everything's backwards there. We're having summer, they're having winter. So we want to get there before they have winter. Say in May.

NOAH

But we're graduating.

WILLY

Noah, you've got to think beyond that. It's just a ceremony.

NOAH

My parents are expecting me to graduate.

WILLY

All right, look. I'm not sure exactly where we're going to end up. But if it's in the southern part, it's already going to be cold.

NOAH

I thought Australia was hot.

WILLY

It's a continent. It's got four seasons!

NOAH

I'm graduating, Willy. I'm going to need that diploma.

WILLY

Let's make a deal. I come up with the twenty thousand and we go. Whether that's June or whatever. It's a lot of money. And by the time we've amassed it, things might be getting a little hot, you know what I mean?

NOAH

Hot, like how?

WILLY

I'm taking all the risks. I'm planning it all. You'll be able to walk away. So cut me a little slack.

NOAH

I could always join you. You could get us set up.

WILLY

We're in this together. All the way. So look. I figure we need some practice. Just to get an idea of what kinds of obstacles lay in our path. So tomorrow - let's take a field trip.

NOAH

Tomorrow's school.

WILLY

What this with you and school all of a sudden?

NOAH

I'm failing. Chemistry and English. Jesus! I'm not going to graduate if I don't figure something out.

WILLY

I've got it figured out if you'll just listen. Will you listen? We try another town. We go over the mountain to Rochester. I thought of Rochester because no one knows us there. We find a nice house. We knock on the door. We say we're doing a survey. Environmental thing, global warming, so forth. Bring notebooks. You come up with some questions and I'll casually look around.

NOAH

Questions about global warming?

WILLY

The thing is we have to practice for when we strike. You know, we could get the whole amount the first time. These things have happened. Twenty thousand. Look. I'll pick you up for school. And we'll head over the mountain. Afterwards we'll go to Burlington. Do a little climbing.

NOAH

But what if-

WILLY

What if, what if. You're thinking too much. What's the expression? Stay in the now.

NOAH

I guess.

JOERG

Hold it steady!

GRETA

I think I can manage. You're getting one piece for dessert, no more. And Julie gets to take the rest home with her! Now where have you got to? Joerg?

JOERG

Greta. Look at this.

GRETA

It's a rock. We've got them all over the house.

JOERG

But it's not where I keep it. It's igneous and it's placed - or rather crammed - in the middle of my metamorphic collection.

GRETA

Perhaps Allie moved it when she dusted.

JOERG

Since when did she start dusting my rocks?

GRETA

I don't know, maybe she had too much caffeine.

WILLY

Anything upstairs?

NOAH

Not yet!

WILLY

Check under the beds!

JOERG

It's very strange.

GRETA

You must have moved it.

JOERG

When was that girl here?

GRETA

What girl?

JOERG

Your student. With the black hair and glasses.

GRETA

Yolanda?

JOERG

That's it.

GRETA

A few weeks ago. She didn't play with your rocks.

JOERG

We took a Polaroid.

NOAH

Willy! I found a roll of quarters!

WILLY

Genius! Let's get the hell out of here.

JOERG

She was going back to somewhere-

GRETA

Brazil.

JOERG

That's right. Look at this! Can you see it?

GRETA

I'm not as intelligent as you. What am I looking for?

JOERG

Behind her. The rocks. See? There it is!

WILLY

Let's try the house down the road. We can always come back here later.

GRETA

So the rock mover has been here recently.

JOERG

I'll figure it out.

GRETA

I'm hungry. How about some lunch?

JOERG

There's soup.

GRETA

Maybe a sandwich.

JOERG

There's someone at the door. Ah! It's a couple of kids!

GRETA

Don't let them in!

JOERG

It's just a couple of kids!

GRETA

You'll talk all day! I need you to cut up the vegetables!

JOERG

But they're... it's cold out there! I'll let them in, you come out in fifteen minutes, no, ten minutes and say I've got a phone call! An important phone call!... They were lost! Looking for directions!

GRETA

Have you seen my good knife?

WILLY

Hi! I'm Aaron Bradshaw and this is Ian Jones. We're doing a survey, can we come in?

ACTOR 1

Some other time-

WILLY

It will just take a minute; it's for a school project-

ACTOR 1

I'm busy. Aren't you kids supposed to be in school?

NOAH

We go to a private school. In Chelsea.

WILLY

We'd really appreciate it. It will only take a minute. We're trying to get opinions on the dangers of global warming.

ACTOR 1

I think it's a bunch of crap. That good enough?

WILLY

There's a form I'd like you to look at and we're collecting signatures.

ACTOR 1

I'm not signing anything. Look, if it'll make you happy, leave me a flyer or something and I'll look it over later.

WILLY

Can I use the bathroom?

ACTOR 1

What?

WILLY

I drank some coffee and we've been in the car for a while.

ACTOR 1

Look, I don't know what you kids are up to, but the survey is over. Some other time. Watch my car. You're parked kind of close.

WILLY

What did you say?

NOAH

What?

WILLY

You said Chelsea! The school is in Vershire!

NOAH

Oh. I guess it kind of slipped out.

WILLY

Mistakes are deadly, Noah. You're screwing up our future with them.

NOAH

I thought we were practicing!

WILLY

Suppose that fat guy had let us in? And I found the PIN numbers. And you had told him Chelsea. The next thing that happens is he calls the town and finds out who wasn't in school that day. And we're screwed. This guy drives a BMW. You don't think he's got twenty thousand in his bank account?

NOAH

Why don't we just steal his car?

WILLY

Because we don't have those kind of connections. Fencing is another business altogether. Maybe in Australia. But we don't have time to learn the trade. Let's stick to the plan!

NOAH

Okay!

WILLY

Let's just go to Burlington. I feel like climbing anyway.

NOAH

Maybe we should just...

WILLY

What?

NOAH

Go back to school. He's looking out the window at us.

WILLY

Just get in the car.

NOAH

I want to go home.

WILLY

I said we're going to Burlington-

NOAH

I'm going home, Willy!

WILLY

Okay, okay, relax. Jesus, you're jumpy.

JOERG

Remember that couple that was murdered near Boston? Five years ago. We were on vacation, watching the local news-

GRETA

It was in Maine, what about it?

JOERG

Maine? No, we were at that conference-

GRETA

We were in Bar Harbor in July and we were freezing to death.

JOERG

Whatever possessed us to go to Maine?

GRETA

Your cousin's twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

JOERG

Oh, yes. The bed and breakfast - it had those delightful pancakes.

GRETA

What about it?

JOERG

What about what?

GRETA

The murders.

JOERG

Oh, right. You said it was probably a sex thing.

GRETA

Why on earth would I say that?

JOERG

You were guessing. You were supposing it must be something like that. They were in their beds, there were sex toys everywhere-

GRETA

So they had sex and then turned knives on each other.

JOERG

It didn't say anything about knives.

GRETA

Oh. For some reason, I thought there were knives.

JOERG

What was that?

GRETA

What was what?

JOERG

I think there's - oh, its Brendan's dog, probably. Did you put the garbage out?

GRETA

No. Yes. I don't know.

JOERG

I'd better check it. What time are they coming?

ACTOR 2

How are you feeling, Noah?

NOAH

Fine.

ACTOR 2

Your mother says you blacked out.

NOAH

Oh, just got a little dizzy.

ACTOR 2

And an ambulance came?

NOAH

I think the gym had to call one. Liability since I fell.

ACTOR 2

You were climbing?

NOAH

Yeah, me and Willy go to an indoor climbing gym. Petra Cliffs.

ACTOR 2

And is it the first time it's happened?

NOAH

I don't think I had eaten. It was the day before Thanksgiving and I was kind of saving up my appetite.

ACTOR 2

You've been friends with Willy a long time?

NOAH

What about Willy?

ACTOR 2

Your mother gave me the names of some of your friends.

NOAH

Oh.

ACTOR 2

So, you've known him long?

NOAH

All my life. Well. Most of it. He moved here in the sixth grade.

ACTOR 2

And do you have other friends?

NOAH

What? Sure. Ben, Jeremy, you know.

ACTOR 2

How's school?

NOAH

Fine.

ACTOR 2

How are your grades?

NOAH

Are you going to take my blood pressure or anything?

ACTOR 2

I just wanted to talk to you.

NOAH

Oh. So you're that kind of doctor.

ACTOR 2

I'm a medical doctor.

NOAH

A shrink.

ACTOR 2

Your mother's rather worried. She thinks you're under some kind of stress.

NOAH

Yeah, well, I'm alive. That's stressful.

ACTOR 2

Do you worry, Noah? About anything?

NOAH

Sometimes I worry about dying.

ACTOR 2

Have you ever known anyone who died?

NOAH

My grandpa. I was with him when he-

ACTOR 2

Tell me about it.

NOAH

It was my turn to watch him. He was hooked up to this machine. I feel asleep. But then I woke up in my own bed.

ACTOR 2

So in the morning he was dead?

NOAH

No- he died at night. And then... he got up... and carried me to bed.

ACTOR 2

How could he carry you there?

NOAH

I don't know. But he did. I felt it. I saw it.

ACTOR 2

You saw it?

NOAH

I saw him and I saw myself, like a movie, sort of.

ACTOR 2

A dream, maybe?

NOAH

You know when you're dreaming. You're in the dream. I was outside the dream, looking at the dream.

ACTOR 2

I'm going to give you a prescription. An anti-depressant.

NOAH

I'm not depressed.

JOERG

What time is it?

GRETA

Half past two. No, three.

NOAH

I don't want to take any pills.

JOERG

At four o'clock it's happening.

ACTOR 2

A low dose. Just try them for a month.

GRETA

What's happening?

JOERG

My surprise! I told you! And then... you'll be so happy, you'll beg me to go upstairs!

GRETA

I'll have to be very happy. Why don't you take a bath now.

JOERG

A bath?

GRETA

If I'm going to be as happy as you say I am, I'd prefer it if you first take a bath.

JOERG

Only in America!

ACTOR 2

How are your grades?

NOAH

Grades?

ACTOR 2

Grades. How are they?

NOAH

Okay. I'm passing. Except for chemistry but it's not my fault. I studied for the wrong test.

ACTOR 2

How are your board scores?

NOAH

I don't know.

ACTOR 2

You seem uncomfortable.

NOAH

Do I have to answer these questions?

ACTOR 2

We can talk about anything you want.

JOERG

How do you like me now?

GRETA

I'm almost done-

JOERG

Just five seconds, is that too much to ask? Give me a kiss.
On the cheek - just to hold me over-

GRETA

I told you, not now!

JOERG

My surprise, oh yes, I need some music, where is that CD?

NOAH

I'm going to Australia!

ACTOR 2

Australia? Okay. Very nice. Sydney's a beautiful city. The
Great Barrier Reef. Oh, and you'll have to see Ayers Rock.

NOAH

Ayers Rock?

ACTOR 2

In the middle of the desert. A monolith. The Aborigines
consider it a sacred place. It's where the Dreamtime
originated.

NOAH

What's that?

ACTOR 2

A creation myth. The Aborigines believe that their ancestors
dreamed the world into being.

NOAH

Kind of like positive thinking?

ACTOR 2

Kind of.

NOAH

My grandpa had a friend, this old guy, his name is George. He's in AA. He goes to meetings on Monday nights. He's kind of spiritual, that's what they teach in there. He says that he's not responsible for the first thought that comes in his head, but he's responsible for what comes after that. I don't really get it.

ACTOR 2

I think what he means is that thoughts come unbidden - we don't know from where. But we can evaluate them, discard them and direct the next one.

NOAH

Do you think people can enter your dreams? Like my grandpa?

ACTOR 2

All the people in your dreams... Noah, they're all you.

NOAH

How is that possible?

ACTOR 2

It's your head, your subconscious. They're your dreams.

ACTOR 1

What time did you go in?

WILLY

The first time or the second?

ACTOR 1

The first time.

ACTOR 2

Have you considered yoga?

NOAH

Yoga?

ACTOR 2

I think it will help relax you. Let's try a little meditation. Close your eyes.

WILLY

They had gone out. We watched them drive away. Then we went in. I suppose it was about one. It was a nice house.

ACTOR 2

I want you to try and relax, start by taking a deep breath and hold it... Then let it out...

ACTOR 1

When did you decide you were going to kill them?

WILLY

If we robbed them, we'd have to kill them.

ACTOR 1

You were prepared, in any event.

WILLY

You could see they had money.

ACTOR 1

So you could go to Australia.

WILLY

No, yes, it was just something we talked about.

ACTOR 2

The blue sky is all around you, and way in the distance, on all sides, is a vast ocean...

ACTOR 1

A week after the murders, you hitchhiked west and it says in the police report that you told the truck driver you were orphan brothers who had left home now that you had both turned eighteen.

WILLY

That moron said that? I said we were cousins-

ACTOR 2

I want you to imagine that you are on top of a mountain and you can see for miles and miles.

ACTOR 1

And that you told him you were on your way to Australia. And that you were going to work on a shrimp boat when you got there.

WILLY

God, you guys are so literal. It's a story. We were going to do something, maybe we would have ended up on a shrimp boat, and they have shrimp in the ocean over there. Maybe it would be lobsters. Maybe we had some other plan.

ACTOR 1

The truck driver said he was pretty sure you boys were in some kind of trouble and it looked to him like the younger boy was with you against his will.

ACTOR 2

Feel the wind on your face, Noah...

WILLY

Against his will? What did Noah say to him?

ACTOR 2

That wind is God.

ACTOR 1

I have no record.

WILLY

I should never have let him sit in the middle!

NOAH

That was weird.

ACTOR 2

When you're feeling stressed, find a place where it's quiet.
And go there.

JOERG

Do you know why I married you?

GRETA

Tell me.

JOERG

Because you didn't know how to cook.

GRETA

What are you saying? Our first date I made you a meatloaf!

JOERG

That's what that was!

GRETA

Stop it!

JOERG

I thought, this beautiful, brilliant woman, at least there is
something I can teach her!

GRETA

I'm a great cook-

JOERG

Now! But I had to take you under my wing - I was devious.
You didn't know you were being trained. But you had a talent!
I could taste it! Wait a minute, wait a minute, I'm going to
give it to you.

GRETA

I told you, not now!

WILLY

Merry Christmas, Noah.

NOAH

Thanks!

WILLY

I didn't have any wrapping paper.

NOAH

Gloves.

WILLY

I got myself a pair, too.

NOAH

Sorry I didn't get you a present. I had to buy for my parents and my sister and my cousins...

WILLY

I don't need any Christmas presents. I've got you.

NOAH

Wow, that sounds gay.

WILLY

Nothing gay about me. Hey, you okay?

NOAH

Feeling a little weird lately.

WILLY

Sit down. Lay down. You want some tea or something? My mom's got all these teas.

NOAH

Maybe some water.

WILLY

I think you've got a little fever, man.

NOAH

I probably ate too much yesterday.

WILLY

What did you get for Christmas?

NOAH

Oh, stuff. Money.

WILLY

How much?

NOAH

My grandmother gave me a hundred dollars.

ACTOR 2
Willy? We're going out!

WILLY
Okay, Mom!

ACTOR 2
Rebecca's watching television!

WILLY
Okay!

ACTOR 2
Willy?

WILLY
What?!?

ACTOR 2
Don't bother her!

WILLY
What do I want with her?

ACTOR 2
I don't want to come home and find out you've bothered her!

WILLY
Okay already! I won't bother her! God, I hate having a retard for a sister. Want to hear some music? Lay down. I'll give you a head massage.

NOAH
That's okay.

WILLY
I'm good at it. Sarah says I'm the best. Look, I'm offering. Take advantage.

ACTOR 2
Willy!

WILLY
Now what?!

ACTOR 2
Mr. Miller is in the yard! Have you seen his dog!?

WILLY
No!

ACTOR 2
Well, he can't find him! He was tied up and the rope isn't broken! Did you see anyone in the yard!

WILLY

No!!

ACTOR 2

Well, can you help him look?!

WILLY

No!! I'm doing something!!

ACTOR 2

Well, he's all upset!

WILLY

Bye, Mom!... Jesus!

NOAH

What do you suppose happened to the dog?

WILLY

I don't know, maybe it got run over.

NOAH

Where are the knives?

WILLY

Hidden.

NOAH

Let me see them.

WILLY

I have them hidden way back in the closet. I'll have to take everything out.

NOAH

Do you know anything about the dog missing?

WILLY

What do you care about the stupid dog?

NOAH

You killed it. You killed that poor dog.

WILLY

So what? It bit Rebecca. And it was old. And I told you this is serious what we're doing and the dog doesn't matter. This is how we get to Australia. Things don't just happen. You have to make them. You have to direct them. Listen. Noah. You don't ever have to do anything. I can do it. The dog - it was so fast. Right through the heart. He never even felt it. It was a mercy killing. Listen. That dog is better off dead. The Miller's never even let it inside. It just sits out there and barks its head off, no one even pets it.

NOAH

I thought it bit Rebecca.

WILLY

The one time someone tried to pet it! Noah. We're not going to make it if one of us isn't prepared to do the right thing.

NOAH

Where is it?

WILLY

In a bag.

NOAH

Where?

WILLY

In the trunk. I figured we'd take it to the woods later and dump it.

NOAH

I'm going to throw up.

WILLY

Jesus!

NOAH

No more dogs! Do you hear me?

WILLY

You think I like killing dogs? I'm getting us ready!

NOAH

I don't want to kill anybody!

WILLY

Neither do I! But if it's us or them, Noah, who's it going to be? Me? You?

NOAH

It doesn't have to be anybody!

WILLY

Well, that's not the way the world works, bro. Look at the Middle East. How would you like to live over there?

NOAH

I wouldn't!

WILLY

But sometimes the Middle East comes to you. And I'm not going to let anything happen to us.

NOAH

Is this part of the Nazi crap?

WILLY

I'm not a Nazi. You know what they said? I'm not the right material. Can you believe it? The Nazis rejected me! Take a sip.

NOAH

I don't want any booze.

WILLY

Just a sip.

NOAH

I'm not supposed to. I'm on medication.

WILLY

You're what?

NOAH

Anti-depressants. From the doctor.

WILLY

You're depressed?

NOAH

No. It was because of the fall. At the gym. I'm not sleeping good.

WILLY

Stop thinking about everything. How's that head? How's this?

NOAH

Weird.

WILLY

But good?

NOAH

Yeah.

WILLY

Stop thinking. Will you just stop thinking? It's Christmas.

ACTOR 1

Do you think pain is a sign of character weakness?

WILLY

Jesus. You with the questions.

ACTOR 1

Why did you kill them, Willy?

WILLY

Why does anybody do anything? It was necessary.

ACTOR 1

You went there at one o'clock and no one was home. What did you do while you waited for them to come back?

NOAH

That feels good.

WILLY

We ate lunch. Tuna fish! It was really exciting, I mean, I knew we were going to do it, you know how you feel sometimes?

ACTOR 1

No, tell me.

WILLY

I don't know. Just kind of... lucky. What are you, asleep?

NOAH

Just resting my mind.

WILLY

We were a little worried about the snow falling. Because of tire tracks. I know the police can track a car from its tire tracks. So we walked, maybe, half a mile.

ACTOR 1

Both times?

ACTOR 2

When you're feeling stressed, find a place where it's quiet. And go there.

WILLY

The first time we drove up to the house. The second time we parked it down the road.

ACTOR 1

Did you go in? The first time?

WILLY

Dummy here picked up a rock.

ACTOR 1

A rock?

WILLY

The weirdo collects rocks. Worthless rocks. So we go in. We come up with a plan. I talk to them while Noah - Jimmy we're going to call him - while Jimmy looks around. You know, they've got all kinds of junk in there, statues and so forth.

ACTOR 1

So you thought maybe he'd spot a diamond or something.

WILLY

That would have been too easy! Anyway, they didn't have anything worth taking that they were leaving out. So we decided we'd come back. On foot.

ACTOR 1

But the tire tracks - they would be there from the first time, right?

ACTOR 2

What do you see, Noah?

NOAH

Snow! It's snowing!

ACTOR 1

So you walked. And then you knocked at the door.

GRETA

Not again!

JOERG

I think it's the same kids! Nope. Two boys. No car! Maybe it's broken down!

GRETA

What about my surprise?

JOERG

But they look so cold! Have we got any hot chocolate?

GRETA

You just can't help yourself, can you? All right, let them in. I'll go heat the milk. We're never going to have this dinner!

JOERG

Welcome to our happy home!

SCENE 5

ACTOR 1 AND 2

(alternately)

Once upon a time, in the time before time, in the Dreamtime, the Ancestor Spirits came to earth to create the plants and animals and humans. They carved them with their great stone knives and breathed life into their forms and then went back to sleep. But everywhere they went they left evidence of their sacred work, a rock, a waterhole, a plant.

Every place has stories and all stories are joined in the Creation of the past, and embodied in the present - in the land and in the descendants of the Ancestor Spirits. For the Dreamtime lies just around the corner of the mind, it is the eternal now. Between heartbeat and heartbeat the Dreamtime can come again.

JOERG

Come in! Come in! Out of the cold! Where's your car?

WILLY

Oh, we got dropped off. We're from the Mountain School. We're doing a survey.

JOERG

Dropped off?

WILLY

Our friends are up the road at another house. Blue house?

JOERG

Yes, the Schillers, yes, yes. Come in. Greta! Greta! We'll need that chocolate! Do you like hot chocolate?

NOAH

Sure!

JOERG

A survey?

WILLY

Environmental. Questions about the environment.

JOERG

Well, I know all about the environment. I'm a geologist. Joerg Adler.

NOAH

Noah Stone.

WILLY

I'm Ben. Ben Smith.

JOERG

Sit down, sit down. I'll warn you, though. I'm a teacher. I'm bound to talk for hours. (Yelling.) Isn't that right, Greta? That's my wife. She's in the kitchen. So! Fire away. Ask me anything. What school did you say?

WILLY

The Mountain School. I'm allergic to chocolate.

JOERG

Allergic?

NOAH

I'd love some.

WILLY

You know, we really only have a few minute then we're getting picked up.

JOERG

Oh. Greta! Nix on the chocolate! Fire away then. What is your survey about?

WILLY

Environmental questions.

JOERG

Yes, but that's a big subject. What specifically do you what to know?

WILLY

Jim has a notebook.

JOERG

Jim?

WILLY

I call him Jim.

NOAH

What are your views on global warming?

JOERG

Completely against it!

WILLY

And what about pollution?

NOAH

The ozone layer is being depleted. What are your views on that?

JOERG

Rather a broad survey, isn't it?

WILLY

We're just trying to get a general idea of what people are concerned about.

JOERG

What school did you say you attended?

WILLY

The Mountain School.

JOERG

Ah, yes. I have a friend that teaches there. Mr. Ziegelman.

NOAH

We're just part time students. We're home schooled mostly. We just started this term. You know. After Christmas. We're doing this for extra credit.

JOERG

Uh huh.

NOAH

I'm not sure I know everyone's name.

JOERG

I see you're a climber. The clip.

NOAH

What? Oh. Willy and I go to an indoor gym. Been going, what, for a year now?

WILLY

Fourteen months.

JOERG

And do you get out?

WILLY

Get out?

JOERG

The indoor gym is a simulation-

WILLY

There's nothing "simulated" about climbing in a gym. I'm up to a 5.7 course.

JOERG

I mean no disrespect. But the course is marked in a gym. In nature you have to find your way. Not to mention the stakes are much higher. Still, I think indoor climbing is a good way to get started.

NOAH

We're just doing it to get in shape.

JOERG

In shape for what?

NOAH

For life. You know, getting in the zone. Facing our fears. Pushing the limits. That sort of thing.

JOERG

What about adventure? What about the outdoors?

NOAH

We're going to Australia and live in the outback. With our school.

JOERG

I spent a year in Australia. When I was in my twenties. You know what the best thing about Australia was? Don't tell my wife- the women! I never saw such short skirts in my life - they were at least five years behind the fashions here, thank God. And they drink beer like sailors. Geologically, though, it's a fascinating place.

NOAH

Did you ever throw one of these?

JOERG

Carefully. Very carefully. First lesson in boomerang throwing. "Remember, you are the target!" Australia is a good place to go when you are young. You'll be changed.

NOAH

What do you mean?

JOERG

You know the biggest hoax in the modern world? That we're powerful. That we've somehow tamed the landscape, brought it under our control. There's so much noise in our society. In the Australian desert - the world is constantly being re-created. You can hear it. You can hear it here, too, if you could block out all the noise. This house, the highways - the high rises! All a dream. Temporary, you see? Go to Australia. Go to the desert. Really will blow your mind.

WILLY

We weren't really thinking of hanging out in the desert.

JOERG

I have a feeling you'll change your mind once you get there.

WILLY

What kind of rocks are these?

JOERG

Igneous.

WILLY

Volcanic.

JOERG

Very good!

WILLY

I'm not an idiot.

JOERG

They're also called fire rocks. Much more evocative, don't you think? What other questions do you have?

WILLY

What would you say the most pressing problem is today?

JOERG

(to Noah)

Are you looking for something?

NOAH

What? Oh. I just like looking at your stuff.

JOERG

What are you most interested in? Maybe we can direct the survey a little better if we can find a focus.

WILLY

Look, this is the school's idea.

JOERG

It's just you don't really seem prepared.

NOAH

It's an independent project so we're trying to figure it out as we go along.

JOERG

Tell you what. I'll give you the name of a colleague of mine. Lives about three miles from here. Not only is he an expert in the environment, he's a volunteer coordinator for Green New England - Greta! Do you know where I have Brock's phone number?!

GRETA

You have his card in your wallet!

JOERG

Either of you married? Of course not. Avoid it for as long as you can. My wife is a tyrant. Finishes my sentences, won't let me eat anything I like... Love is the crime. Marriage is the punishment.

GRETA

It's getting dark! And it's snowing!

JOERG

What? Oh! All these papers, enough to drive you crazy. I'll give him a call...

ACTOR 1

This is the moment.

ACTOR 2

I can't. I won't. We'll just skip ahead.

ACTOR 1

But it happened. You must see it.

ACTOR 2

I read about it in the papers! Every word! How Joerg reached for his wallet and when Willy saw the money-

ACTOR 1

A hundred and thirty dollars-

ACTOR 2

Then when Greta came out of the kitchen-

NOAH

I would love that cup of hot chocolate! I would really, really like it if you'd go back in there and heat up the milk!

GRETA

But there's the most terrible sound coming from my husband! He's hurt - he's trying to say something to me -

NOAH

Do you have marshmallows?

GRETA

He just can't help himself! He loves young people! Loves it when they come to the door!

NOAH

If you'll just stay in the kitchen! Or leave! Maybe there's a door?!

GRETA

But he's calling me! All my life he has called me and I have answered. It's the most beautiful sound - his voice - saying my name - saying... Greta! Greta!

WILLY

Slit her throat! Noah, do it!

(Papers, a thousand blood soaked papers, fly into the air.)

WILLY (cont'd)

Get her purse! Noah!

NOAH
I can't find it!

WILLY
Did you touch anything?

NOAH
No!

WILLY
Maybe there's a safe? Look upstairs!... Shit! Noah! We've got to get out of here!

NOAH
What?

WILLY
Hand me that - wipe there on the floor. Do you have your knife?

NOAH
Yeah...

WILLY
Let's get the hell out of there...

NOAH
I'm coming, I'm, Jesus-

WILLY
Take your clothes off. Now. We've got to burn them.

NOAH
You're hurt.

WILLY
Yeah. Son-of-a-bitch.

NOAH
Jesus, Willy, it's deep!

WILLY
Hand me that bottle. Under the dresser. Jesus!

NOAH
I'm not feeling so hot.

WILLY
Here. Put these on. Christ! Would you- damn!

NOAH
I'm okay. Just need to lie down for a few minutes. It's the pills, I think.

WILLY
Noah?

NOAH
What?

WILLY
Where's your knife?

NOAH
It's under my clothes.

WILLY
I'm missing my knife sheath.

ACTOR 1
"The Elk from Canntrek Knives offers the big game hunter uncompromising quality at a reasonable price. The Elk hunting knife boasts a full 6.88 inch clip point blade, ideal for field dressing large game animals, hence its name."

WILLY
I left it at the scene.

NOAH
They'll trace the knife from the sheath-

WILLY
A million people bought that knife. Anyway, it was on the internet. Some company out of - I don't know.

NOAH
This is big, Willy. This is a big deal what we did.

WILLY
Look, do you know how many psychos live in a college town? All the students they've had, that they've failed? I'm surprised any of those professors live out their natural lives. They're all ass holes. Anyway, they were German. That means they were probably Jewish. It could have been anyone. There's a Nazi cell in New Hampshire, they'll probably take responsibility for it-

NOAH
We shouldn't have-

WILLY
What? Gone in there? We did this together, man. You and me. We were awesome. You're just freaking out. And there's nothing to freak out about. We're a couple of kids. I mean, look at us. There is nothing to worry about. No motive. No one saw us. Just keep your mouth shut-

NOAH

I haven't said anything-

WILLY

And you won't have to. Nobody's going to ask you.

NOAH

I touched the boomerang- my fingerprints-

WILLY

You don't have fingerprints on file anywhere! Even if the police found them - which they're too dumb to do, and anyway, how many fingerprints do you suppose are in that house? In any house? My dead Uncle Calvin's fingerprints are in my house and he hasn't been there in ten years! Would you stop being a moron?

NOAH

I didn't want this - I never wanted this...

WILLY

Who are you trying to kid?

JOERG(V.O.)

Remember, you are the target.

SCENE 6

ACTOR 2

Noah? Noah, there's some... people... here to see you! You up there, Noah? Turn down that music! I said there are some people here in uniforms! I'm going to get your father! You talk to these people and then you'll talk to me! I hope you didn't hit anybody with the car! They're looking it over right now! You up there? Does this have anything to do with you and Willy going into the Jacob's house when they weren't home? I told you they might call the police! Noah? I want you to stay away from that boy! You hear me? I'm going to get your father now!

ACTOR 1

Hey, Noah! How you doing there, buddy?

NOAH

Okay.

ACTOR 1

I'm Detective Storm and this is Detective Wave.

ACTOR 2

How ya doing?

NOAH

I said okay.

ACTOR 1

Yeah, well, we wanted to swing by and have a word with you. I asked your mother if we could kind of keep this private. In case there was anything you'd rather she didn't know just yet. You know what I mean?

NOAH

No.

ACTOR 2

We were wondering about a delivery you had some time last fall.

NOAH

Delivery?

ACTOR 2

It would have been from the Canntrek Knife Company. Ring a bell?

NOAH

Oh, yeah. I sold them.

ACTOR 1

Sold?

NOAH

Yeah, my buddy and I were going to do some wilderness camping and, well, we really paid more than we could afford. So we sold them.

ACTOR 1

Where did you sell them?

NOAH

We went to the Army Navy Store. In Burlington. But they said they didn't sell used knives. But there was a customer in there. He liked them. So, we sold them.

ACTOR 2

Really!

NOAH

Yeah. What's this about?

ACTOR 1

A knife just like the ones you ordered was used to kill the Adlers in Hanover.

NOAH

Those professors?

ACTOR 1

The same.

NOAH

Do you think it could be the guy we sold the knives to?

ACTOR 1

I don't know. Did you get his name?

NOAH

Nah. He paid cash. And we never saw him again. That was the only time.

ACTOR 2

Can you describe him?

NOAH

Well. Kind of a big guy. With a beard. Maybe forty. I think he might have been Canadian. He had an accent.

ACTOR 2

Canadian?

NOAH

Might have been Spanish.

ACTOR 1

You've been very cooperative.

NOAH

You sure it was with those knives?

ACTOR 2

The husband - Joerg Adler. It was particularly brutal. In the field we call it "overkill." Rage killing. What's your shoe size?

NOAH

Shoe size?

ACTOR 1

We found footprints. Several of them.

NOAH

I'm nine and a half.

ACTOR 1

These are bigger.

NOAH

(beat)

What about the wife?

ACTOR 2

I don't think she walked anywhere once she was hit. Let's get your parents in here.

NOAH

I was just going to, like, go to the bathroom.

ACTOR 1

Sure. Go ahead. Wink wink nod nod. We'll wait in the kitchen.

NOAH

Willy! Jesus! They were at my house!

WILLY

Who's at your house?

NOAH

The police! FBI! I don't know! They traced the knife sheath!

WILLY

All right, calm down. Did you give them the story about the guy in Burlington?

NOAH

Yes, but-

WILLY

Then that's all there is to it.

NOAH

Christ, you should have heard my parents about the knives!

WILLY

So you were a bad little boy and bought some knives. That's all they've got!

NOAH

They're coming here!

WILLY

Good thing I haven't got anything to hide, huh?

NOAH

They'll want to know your shoe size.

WILLY

Shit.

NOAH

What are we going to do, Willy!

WILLY

How much cash do you have?

NOAH

Nothing! Fifty bucks!

WILLY

We're going to have to go.

NOAH

Go?

WILLY

Like get in the car and drive.

NOAH

Go where?

WILLY

Are you stupid? They're coming here and they're not just taking my shoe size with them!

NOAH

You said you were taking the risks - I want to go home - I want to tell them that I-

WILLY

You're not going nowhere but in the car with me, you got that? You're looking at life in prison, maybe the electric chair!

NOAH

Jesus!

WILLY

So pull yourself together and let's get the hell out of here!

NOAH

I'm not going. I'm going to turn myself in-

WILLY

What did you say?

NOAH

I'm going to turn myself in, we're just a couple of kids-

WILLY

You know what happens to kids? In jail?

NOAH

No! Yes! Fuck!

ACTOR 2

Willy? Willy!? Willy, get down here, I want to talk to you! There are some people here! I'm coming up there! Willy!

(Black out.)

SCENE 7

ACTOR 2
What'll you boys have?

WILLY
Coffee.

NOAH
I'll have a hamburger and French fries and a chocolate shake.

WILLY
We can't afford it!

NOAH
I'm hungry!

WILLY
I don't care! We eat once a day. We already ate.

NOAH
Well, can I just have the chocolate shake?

WILLY
No!

NOAH
You're having coffee!

WILLY
Coffee's a dollar!

ACTOR 2
You want a chocolate shake?

NOAH
I guess not.

ACTOR
Tell you what. I'll charge you a dollar for one. How's that?

NOAH
Thanks!

WILLY
I'll have a chocolate milk shake!

ACTOR 2
Where you boys from?

WILLY
New York

NOAH

New Hampshire-

WILLY

I'm from New York and he's from New Hampshire.

ACTOR 2

Long way from home.

NOAH

How much are the hamburgers?

ACTOR 2

Your mothers know where you boys are?

NOAH

Our mothers are dead. We're on our way to California.

ACTOR 2

Uh huh.

NOAH

We have jobs there. We've already graduated.

ACTOR 2

I like your outfits. You'll fit right in. Hey, Hank! Get your ass over here! These boys going to California! Can they hitch a ride with you!

ACTOR 1

Sorry! Only going as far as Australia!

NOAH

Australia! Willy, did you hear that?

WILLY

We were thinking of going there later in the year. But since you're going-

ACTOR 1

Sure thing, mate! Course, I'll have to charge you.

NOAH

We don't have any money.

ACTOR 2

Take it out in trade, huh, Hank?

ACTOR 1

Sure, sure. Help with the driving, that sort of thing.

WILLY

We've got licenses.

NOAH

I don't know, Willy, it's a big truck.

ACTOR 1

Sheila here will give you lessons, right, Sheila?

ACTOR 2

I've got a book. You can read it in a jiffy. It's got everything you need to know in it.

NOAH

Really?

ACTOR 2

Yeah. Come here, have a look. It's behind the bar. Big book. Heavy.

NOAH

It's about truck driving?

ACTOR 1

Go on.

NOAH

Maybe we'll just go as far as California. Willy? Willy?

ACTOR 1

I said go on!

NOAH

Willy!

ACTOR 2

Who wants to go for a ride?

ACTOR 1

Last one in the buggy is a rotten egg!

WILLY

Noah! Come on!

NOAH

I'm not going, I'm not fucking-

WILLY

Come on!

ACTOR 1

Rough country out here, mate! We're hundreds of miles from amenities, things like ATM machines where you can type in PIN numbers but the good news is - out here, everybody carries a knife!

ACTOR 2

Never know who you're going to bump up against, hey, mates? Remember this is the Dreamtime. We haven't caught up with the modern world. A little snack for later. Say hi to Russell Crowe for me!

WILLY

Wow! It's incredible! Hey, Noah! Now, what?

NOAH

Where are we?

WILLY

We're here! In Australia- Look, I know it's hot, their seasons are backwards, February is the middle of the summer-

NOAH

Of course it's hot, I knew it would be hot, but, where are the buildings? Where are the banks? Where are the girls?

WILLY

We're in the desert. Last time I looked, the desert was full of sand. And lizards. That kind of stuff. This is just where we start. This is just the beginning. We make our way to the coast. That's where the ocean is. The girls! Banks!

NOAH

Do they even have PIN numbers in Australia? Did you ever think to check on that?

WILLY

They may not be as sophisticated as we are, but they have computers. And computerized banking means PIN numbers. Look, we've got- We've got a hundred and thirty-

NOAH

We spent some of it. We bought food.

WILLY

Okay, so we bought food. We've got to eat, right? What are we going to do, not eat? We could eat kangaroo. Probably taste like woodchuck. They're like, what, rodents here?.

NOAH

What did we come here for?

WILLY

We're modern day cowboys. Without the cows. The stuff we did. Not everyone gets to do that. We're special, Noah. I mean, those people didn't have a clue. And they had how many degrees? What good is it in the end?

NOAH

They were nice-

WILLY

You've got to think positive! Look, there was this old guy I knew in jail. He said you weren't responsible for the first thought that comes into your head-

NOAH

What guy? What jail? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT???

WILLY

You're here, Noah. Aren't you finally here?

NOAH

I don't get you.

WILLY

Forget it. I was just thinking about something someone else said and I got it confused. There are all kinds of strange sounds in the desert. It's because it's so empty. See that mountain? It's an optical illusion. Just light playing. There are all kinds of sounds from the wind going around it-

NOAH

Going around what?

WILLY

The mountain - don't you feel it? Don't you feel the wind on your face?

NOAH

The wind... I thought you said it was an illusion-

WILLY

What I'm saying is that if you believe it's there, it has all kinds of magical properties - that's what happens to people in the desert. They start believing in things - like this wind- It makes you go crazy. Being out here - you can see how primitive people got all their weird ideas. What are you doing?

NOAH

I'm going to climb.

WILLY

I told you, it's an optical-

NOAH

What was it that guy said? "In nature you have to find your way."

WILLY

Look, we don't have my gear-

NOAH

"What about adventure? What about the great outdoors?"

WILLY

We can sleep here. Will that make you happy? And in the morning we'll head out. It'll be cool. You'll see. We'll find the banks- The ocean. We've got to get to the ocean. Hey, Noah! Remember when we went to Boston? God, that seems like a million years ago now... Hey, get your hands off me... It's not what you do, it's what you think about it - Noah? We stood up, Noah, no one can take that away -

JOERG

That's it - put your weight on that foot - feel the toehold - I've got you... Ah! You made it! I knew you would. You were so determined. You don't remember us. The survey! You were doing a survey - what was it, Greta? An environmental survey. You asked us some questions. You came to our home. It was January - something - Greta -

GRETA

The twenty-seventh.

JOERG

Joerg and Greta. We talked about Ayers Rock. Uluru. Well! Here it is! Can you believe it? No one believes it. I don't even believe it! You'll have to be careful out here. It's the land of the Dreamtime. Things aren't quite what they seem, are they Greta? I mean, the desert. It can fool you. It looks like an ocean when the light is just right-

GRETA

"He looked out at a sea of faces." I read that somewhere.

JOERG

We passed the ocean on the way here. A thousand, maybe fifteen hundred miles.

GRETA

Fifteen hundred?

JOERG

It's hard to say. Could be two thousand. You know, the temperature drops as much as fifty degrees at night. You'll actually be freezing in a few hours. This was once an ocean floor. Around five hundred million years ago.

GRETA

Oh, you and your big numbers.

JOERG

Ah! Look, Greta! But no whipped cream! My mother would be appalled.

GRETA

Always your mother! One piece!

JOERG

Wait a minute, wait a minute! There's something I'm forgetting, something... That day you came to our house-

GRETA

We had hot chocolate- No, it was soup.

JOERG

That soup! Ah. Funny how memory works.

(to Noah)

You ever have a sudden insight into something? Some great puzzle - maybe you didn't even know it was a puzzle. And then suddenly - there it is. Opened wide in front of you. Kind of like rewriting history - what does that say about time?

GRETA

You're going to drip juice all over your trousers! Give that to me!

NOAH

And currents, not raisins! Like my mother made.

JOERG

Do you hear that, Greta? Jimmy and I are of the same mind.

NOAH

Noah. My name is Noah.

JOERG

Right! Of course. I get things mixed up, isn't that right, Greta?

GRETA

We've been together, what, thirty years?

JOERG

Thirty-one years. Six months. Eleven days. No, ten days. And-

GRETA

You met me on a Wednesday and you were drunk.

JOERG

Of course I was drunk, we had won the World Cup!

GRETA

He didn't play himself. Just so there's no misunderstanding.

JOERG

Didn't play? Ah, but I remember every single run up the field that day, every save. Franz Beckenbauer scored the winning goal-

GRETA

It was Gerd Mueller.

JOERG

It was Franz-

GRETA

You were drunk. It was Mueller.

JOERG

I say it was Franz-

GRETA

Look it up.

JOERG

Are you sure?

GRETA

It was Mueller.

JOERG

Hm. You see? A sudden insight. And the world is different. You know what is frightening? I have made my own world. Yes, yes, I have. Some of it with incorrect information. But does it really matter? The world continues to spin, day becomes night, and then becomes day whether I am informed or misinformed. I am not so great. Handsome, yes. Intelligent, yes. I'm having a pretty good time - with some notable exceptions - but I'm having my own peculiar experience and am basically unaffected by what is commonly known as reality. How do you like that?

NOAH

I had a thought... a bad thought. I didn't know it was bad, not at first. And then I had another one. And then another one. They sort of accumulated. Like a snowball. And I didn't know it but my thoughts became things. And I couldn't unravel them. There were no straight lines just this... dense cluster.

GRETA

I didn't bring a knife. To cut the strudel. How could I have forgotten a knife?

JOERG

That's why you keep me around, my dearest- That's funny... I've let you down again, sweetheart. Sorry. I'm so, so sorry.

GRETA

Never mind. There's no harm done. You can't think of everything. You and your great big heart and your great big brain. You're a scientist, remember?

Five hundred million years ago this was an ocean floor. You can't be prepared for everything.

JOERG

You love me, don't you?

GRETA

There is no limit to how much I love you. No number that I can assign to fully express the depth. The poets have tried to say it. Byron came close.

JOERG

But he didn't know you.

GRETA

It's truly inexpressible.

JOERG

You see what love can do? It's completely underestimated. There's nothing else like it. Never mind the physical pleasures. It's really... I'm going to go for it, Greta. I'm going to try and define love.

NOAH

You know, it's starting to cool off a bit. I think this is yours.

JOERG

Now I remember. You had a friend. He was taller, blond. German, I think.

GRETA

No, Spanish. He had this delightful accent.

NOAH

Only me. There was only me.

JOERG

Greta? Do you see this?

GRETA

I believe I do!

JOERG

It's a miracle! Snow in the desert! You know what this reminds me of?

GRETA

What?

JOERG

That day in January. The surprise! Remember the surprise?

GRETA

Oh, yes! Tell me!

JOERG

I was thinking that it would be nice to dance in the snow. We could have gone on the deck, the snow was falling lightly - like now. I was thinking that right about dusk, that fleeting moment between dreaming and waking - that we could have a little dance with the snow falling around us.

GRETA

That is love. You - forgetting to use your big brain - have defined it.

NOAH

My first thought was that I just wanted to get away from Chelsea. Any way I could. My next thought - and this is the one I'm responsible for - was that I just wanted to go back to that day, to before we went into the house -

ACTOR 2

Noah, who was that at the door?

NOAH

Nobody... A delivery... Wrong house... You got that list, Mom. I'm ready.

ACTOR 1

Have a nice day, son.

ACTOR 1/2

For the Dreamtime lies just around the corner of the mind, it is the eternal now. Between heartbeat and heartbeat the Dreamtime can come again.

(The end.)