

THAT IN-BETWEEN PERIOD

Written by
Mark L. Feinsod

Goldenrod Rev. (2/3/17)

917-414-9349
feinsod.mark@gmail.com
markfeinsod.com

EXT. BALLARD COLLEGE - NIGHT

FADE IN. It's a perfect summer evening on a picturesque campus in the countryside. A party rages inside an immense tent in a field bordered by dignified ivy-covered buildings. STUDENTS dance with abandon, take drugs and engage in other types of debauchery.

Upstate New York. 1995.

Outside the tent, THREE WOMEN, 22, pass around a vial of cocaine, making no effort to conceal it. LEAH wears a fur coat despite the heat. AUBREY looks like the bass player in a shoegaze band. GEORGINA has the nonchalance of someone whose family has had money since the Normans invaded England.

LEAH

We can stay with my cousin in Lake Como, then head to Saint-Tropez.

AUBREY

I have to be back in August. My father's financing my first feature and we're starting pre-production.

GEORGINA

I'll probably, like, accept that assignment from Vogue to do a photo shoot about how my entire class at prep school became millionaires.

LEAH

We graduate tomorrow. Don't you guys want to experience a little freedom before the hardship begins?

GEORGINA

Aren't you, like, going to work for your uncle?

LEAH

Become a real estate mogul at twenty-two? That's so depressing.

AUBREY

You should give something back to the less fortunate. That's why I'm becoming a filmmaker.

LEAH

Your father runs the largest movie studio in Hollywood.

Georgina spots THREE MEN, 22, standing nearby as they drink beer, pass a joint around and crack jokes.

GEORGINA

(Calling out to them)

Hey, Hudson, Moishe, do you think Leah's wasting her life?

The three men amble over. HUDSON has the charm of someone who succeeds at everything. MOISHE is used to always being right. PATTERSON has too much self-regard for his own education and not enough real world experience.

MOISHE

Leah, what about your real estate empire? You could be running New York by Thanksgiving.

LEAH

I'm just saying, I don't want my whole life mapped out for me.

HUDSON

Some of us have student loans to worry about.

LEAH

Once you get your MBA, you'll pay them off in no time.

Hudson smiles at Leah's confidence in his abilities.

GEORGINA

Patterson, what do you think?

PATTERSON

I majored in European Modernist Literature. I'll probably work at WalMart until I'm eighty-five.

LEAH

You won an award for best senior thesis. What about grad school?

PATTERSON

I figured I'd work in advertising while I write my first novel. That's what Fitzgerald did.

Hudson claps a hand upon Patterson's shoulder.

HUDSON

We're going to take over the city. And then the world.

Everyone cheers, clinks bottles of beer together and drinks.

HUDSON (CONT'D)
(To Patterson)
We should find a place together as soon as you get a job.

PATTERSON
(Looking around)
Has anyone seen Bettina?

Everyone shrugs as the conversation continues around him.

INT. PATTERSON'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Patterson has sex with his girlfriend BETTINA, 20, who has the comportment of someone for whom everything is a performance. He is lost in the moment as he kisses her with closed eyes, which he opens to see that she's staring at him.

PATTERSON
You know that freaks me out.

BETTINA
I like to engage all my senses when I have sex.

He turns his head so he doesn't have to look at her as he gets back into it. He moans in staccato bursts that rise in volume as he builds towards a climax.

PATTERSON
I love you.

BETTINA
Love is an illusion created by poets to justify their existences.

Patterson is taken by surprise and stops moving.

PATTERSON
Why are you saying that now?

BETTINA
Get off me. I can't talk to you like this.

Patterson sighs, confused, and slides over so he's lying on his side as he stares quizzically at Bettina.

BETTINA (CONT'D)
You're leaving tomorrow. I still have another year.

PATTERSON

I'll come visit. And we can meet up in the city.

BETTINA

I want to start auditioning now so I can hit the ground running as a working actress when I graduate.

PATTERSON

You won't have time to see me in between winning Academy Awards?

BETTINA

Why do you have to demean the thing I care about most in this world?

PATTERSON

The thing you care about most?

BETTINA

If I'm going to be a successful actress, I have three years, tops, before I start auditioning to play grandmothers.

(Determined)

The biggest shortcut to success is knowing people. My parents are famous journalists, but they don't have connections in film and TV.

PATTERSON

You'll make connections.

BETTINA

I need to find a famous boyfriend. An actor who's already established.

PATTERSON

I was just inside you a minute ago.

BETTINA

I studied ballet for over ten years. I'm incredibly flexible.

PATTERSON

Believe me. I know.

BETTINA

I need to use every tool at my disposal to advance my career.

PATTERSON

So the past year has meant nothing to you? Do you want to think about it?

BETTINA

You can finish if you want. Just try to be quick. I'm exhausted.

Patterson stares at Bettina, dumbfounded and upset. When she realizes he's not interested in continuing their sex, she rolls onto her side, facing away from him as she drifts off. His stunned eyes remain focused on her bare back.

EXT. BALLARD COLLEGE - DAY (MONTAGE)

The tent where the party took place has been transformed into a perfect setting for graduation. ROWS OF STUDENTS in caps and gowns sit as they listen to THE COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER, except for Patterson, who stares glumly into space.

Patterson waits to be called to receive his diploma. He notices Bettina in the audience as she laughs with HER FRIENDS, seemingly without a care in the world.

Outside of the tent, Patterson morosely holds his diploma as he poses for photos with his mother GENEVIEVE, 50s, his stepfather GUSTAVO, 50s, and his sister JILLIAN, 18.

Patterson takes more pictures with his father MORRIS, 50s, Morris' girlfriend SHANNON, 50s, her son MATT, 20s, and Jillian. Patterson and Jillian stand on the opposite side of Morris from Shannon and Matt and are clearly unhappy about their presence.

EXT. THE PARKING LOT OF PATTERSON'S DORM - DAY

Patterson and Hudson load up a battered 1980 Toyota Corolla with boxes and duffel bags. Beside it, a Buick is parked. Genevieve hugs Patterson as Gustavo and Jillian stand nearby.

GENEVIEVE

I can't believe my baby boy's a college graduate. When I have dreams about you, you're always five years old.

PATTERSON

When I have grandchildren, you'll still be trying to tie my shoes.

JILLIAN

That was never a skill you mastered.

Patterson frowns at Jillian in mock anger as he breaks away from Genevieve's embrace. Gustavo shakes Patterson's hand as he passes an envelope to him.

GUSTAVO

Open an IRA and start saving for retirement.

PATTERSON

Thank you. You didn't have to do that.

GUSTAVO

Yes, I did. Best senior thesis.

Gustavo smiles, happy his gift is appreciated, as Genevieve glares at Shannon across the lot.

GENEVIEVE

I can't believe your father brought that woman up here.

JILLIAN

It's OK to call her "the whore," Mom. Patterson and I have been doing it since we were kids.

GENEVIEVE

Patterson. There's no such person.
(Turning to Patterson)
Your father and I gave you a perfectly good name. Paul.

JILLIAN

Four years at a private college ruined him.

PATTERSON

You should get going. You'll probably hit lots of traffic.

JILLIAN

Sure thing, Patterson.

Jillian chuckles and heads towards the Buick.

GENEVIEVE

(To Patterson)
We'll see you tonight. Drive carefully. Love you. Bye, Hudson.

HUDSON

Take care, Ms. Deutsch.

Genevieve, Gustavo and Jillian get into the Buick and wave as they drive away. Patterson watches them leave as Hudson, holding a box, stands beside him.

HUDSON (CONT'D)

I like your family. Nice people.
(Waiting a beat)
Paul.

PATTERSON

Fuck you.

They grin at each other and turn to continue loading up the Corolla as Morris walks over from his own car, where Shannon is smoking a cigarette as she talks to Matt.

MORRIS

We're heading back. Make sure you thank Shannon for coming.

PATTERSON

Nobody asked her to come.
Shouldn't she be raising her cholesterol level somewhere?
(Changing the subject)
Did you ever read the copy of my senior thesis that I mailed to you?

HUDSON

First one from the Literature Department ever awarded "Best Senior Thesis" in the history of the school.

MORRIS

(To Patterson)
I paid your tuition. Where's my award for that?
(Disapprovingly)
What can you do with a degree in literature? Most writers aren't discovered until they've been dead for a hundred years.

PATTERSON

Their fathers usually get to their work a little earlier than that.

MORRIS

Moving back home after college is hardly the first step to success.
(MORE)

MORRIS (CONT'D)

(Extending his hand)

We'll talk about this some more
when you get back to New Jersey.

Patterson, totally frustrated, shakes Morris' hand, then watches his father walk back to his own car, where Shannon is still chainsmoking with Matt. Hudson approaches Patterson and places a hand upon his shoulder, then looks over at Moishe and Leah, who are sharing a beer nearby.

HUDSON

(To Moishe)

Thanks for helping. Appreciate you
doing the heavy lifting.

MOISHE

My delicate constitution can't
handle the strain on my back.

PATTERSON

Time to head back to the Jersey
suburbs. I've got to get out of
there as fast as I can.

HUDSON

You'll find a job soon. I'll start
looking for apartments as soon as I
get to the city.

LEAH

You can always come in for the
weekend and stay with Aubrey and I.

HUDSON

I start work as a runner at the
stock exchange in a week, so I'll
be there all summer.

PATTERSON

I'll be there every chance I get.
The suburbs are so soulless.

LEAH

I'll find a girl with loose morals
to help you get over being dumped
by the hottest woman you'll
probably ever be with in your life.

HUDSON

Famous actors are going to be
dumping her all summer once they
realize how annoying she is.

PATTERSON

I should get on the road.

LEAH

Poor baby. You'll be OK.

Hudson and Leah envelop Patterson in a hug as Moishe joins the embrace from the outside, wrapping his arms around everyone else. They laugh and Patterson happily accepts that he's not going anywhere just yet.

INT./EXT. SUBURBAN NEW JERSEY - DAY

Patterson pilots the Corolla along Route 22, with its endless succession of strip malls, as he smokes cigarettes and listens to music from the early '90s, which he plays on tapes that he inserts into the deck on the dashboard.

Suburban New Jersey.

The Corolla turns onto the main street of a town. A sign reads, "Welcome to Summerlawn. Founded April 15, 1687." Patterson cruises along streets lined with well-maintained homes and green lawns. He pulls into the driveway of a split-level house. Genevieve's Buick is already parked there.

INT. PATTERSON'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

Patterson enters the foyer, lugging an overstuffed duffel bag, and looks around. It's weird to be home again.

PATTERSON

(Calling out)

Hello?

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)

(Calling out)

In the kitchen.

Patterson sets down the bag and trudges up the short flight of stairs to the second floor, then heads into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Patterson enters to see Genevieve preparing dinner.

GENEVIEVE

Welcome back. Once you get settled, take out the garbage and set the table.

PATTERSON

I just walked in and you're already asking me to do the same chores I had in high school?

GENEVIEVE

I'm making a special dinner to welcome you home. Don't you think you should contribute in some way?

PATTERSON

I don't appreciate being treated like a child.

GENEVIEVE

While you're under my roof, I expect you to act like part of this household.

PATTERSON

I'm an independent grown man.
(Pausing for a moment)
I need some money.

GENEVIEVE

My purse is on the bed. I have \$80 in there. Take twenty.

Patterson turns to go upstairs.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

After you take out the garbage and set the table.

Patterson's shoulders sag and he clenches his teeth, but he heads to the garbage can and ties off the full bag inside.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gustavo sits at the head of the table, with Genevieve to his right and Patterson at the far end. The table is covered with platters of fish, fresh summer vegetables, bread from an Italian bakery and a bowl of salad.

GUSTAVO

(To Patterson)
Are you going to see your father tonight?

PATTERSON

I need to work on my resume and make a list of ad agencies in the city to call in the morning.

GENEVIEVE

Go visit your father. Your sister says he hasn't been well.

PATTERSON

He hasn't been well since the day he was born.

GENEVIEVE

That's not nice.

PATTERSON

What part of it isn't true?

GUSTAVO

The store's open late on Thursdays. I'm sure he'd love to see you.

PATTERSON

I'm under a lot of stress, what with graduation, trying to find a job and Mom being on my case to clean the entire house.

GENEVIEVE

NATO should intervene.

PATTERSON

I'll go see Dad tomorrow. I need to process everything emotionally.

GENEVIEVE

Your father drove all the way to your graduation in his condition.

Patterson clenches his teeth again, clearly irked.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Now that you're going to be living here again, I expect you to keep your room clean.

PATTERSON

Don't tell me what to do in my own space.

GENEVIEVE

Paul, there have to be some ground rules so we can all co-exist.

PATTERSON

It's Patterson. Not Paul.

Genevieve rolls her eyes at Patterson.

PATTERSON (CONT'D)
I'll keep the door closed. You'll
never see what state it's in.

GENEVIEVE
That's fine as long as the state
it's in is "clean."

Patterson sets down his fork and gets up from his chair.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)
Dinner is at seven every night.

Patterson glares at Genevieve, who decides not to press it.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)
If you'd like to join us, that'd be
nice. But if you have plans, just
let us know.

Patterson storms out of the room, taking his frustrated
energy with him. Gustavo and Genevieve exchange a glance.

EXT. SUMMERLAWN BUSINESS DISTRICT - NIGHT

Patterson pilots the Corolla along Main Street, which runs
through the town's charming business district. He parks in
the municipal lot, then gets out and crosses the street to an
immaculately maintained building. The ground level houses a
business with a sign reading, "Deutsch Shoes - Since 1905."

INT. DEUTSCH SHOES - NIGHT

Patterson enters the brightly-lit space, which is filled with
CUSTOMERS, many of them with CHILDREN, as SALESMEN help them
try on shoes. Patterson scans the room as ABE, 60s, carries
a shoebox while heading towards A MAN with TWO CHILDREN.

ABE
The scholar returns. Welcome home,
Paul.

PATTERSON
Hi, Abe. It's Patterson now.

ABE
Your sister Jillian mentioned that.

PATTERSON
Is my father here?

ABE

In the back.

(Cheerfully)

I heard you won best senior thesis.
Congratulations.

Patterson smiles as Abe holds up the shoebox to indicate he has to help a customer. Patterson nods as Abe heads off. Patterson crosses to the cash register and stops to take a lollipop from a jar. Morris emerges from the back and stares at Patterson, then stiffly shakes his hand.

MORRIS

I wish you would've called first.
Thursdays are our busiest night.
Everything's twenty-five percent
off until ten thirty.

PATTERSON

I'm aware of that. Grandpa started
doing it in 1965.

In the center of the room, MRS. KAUFMAN, 30s, perches on a chair as Abe places shoes onto the feet of her son RANDOLPH, 7, and daughter MACKENZIE, 11. Morris crosses to Mrs. Kaufman as Patterson frowns, then follows his father.

MORRIS

Mrs. Kaufman, lovely to see you
again. Randolph and Mackenzie have
become such lovely young children.

PATTERSON

Soon they'll have feet like giants.

Morris glares at Patterson, then turns back to Mrs. Kaufman.

MRS. KAUFMAN

Mackenzie gets braces next week.

MACKENZIE

I told you, Mom. I absolutely
refuse to get braces.

Mrs. Kaufman turns to Morris with an embarrassed expression.

MORRIS

The best part of having children is
when they become fully formed
people with minds of their own.

Patterson makes an expression to indicate he doesn't recall Morris ever appreciating his own independent thought.

MRS. KAUFMAN

(To Patterson)

Are you home for the summer? Going to help your father in the store?

MORRIS

He's not interested in the family business. Just in spending the money I make.

Morris laughs conspiratorially at Mrs. Kaufman.

MRS. KAUFMAN

It's a wonderful place. My family's been coming here since it first opened.

MORRIS

(To Patterson)

Her great-grandparents used to buy shoes for her grandparents here when Great-Grandpa Al opened the store in 1905.

Randolph licks Mackenzie's cheek as she pushes him away.

MACKENZIE

You're disgusting!

MRS. KAUFMAN

Both of you, stop it this minute.

(To Morris)

I'm so sorry.

MORRIS

(Gestures at Patterson)

He could learn a few things about manners from them.

(Smiling at Mrs. Kaufman)

Let me know if I can help you with anything.

Mrs. Kaufman turns to deal with Randolph and Mackenzie as Morris and Patterson walk away to give her some space.

MORRIS (CONT'D)

What are your plans for the future?

PATTERSON

A friend of mine is starting business school at NYU in the fall. We're going to get a place in the city together.

MORRIS

Don't you think you should find a job before you start paying rent?

PATTERSON

Thanks. That never occurred to me.

MORRIS

You'll save a fortune if you commute instead. Your mother won't charge you rent, not that she should, considering I gave her that house when she divorced me.

PATTERSON

That was twelve years ago. She caught you with Shannon.

MORRIS

I'd offer you a job to give you some income while you look for something permanent, but I have the exact amount of employees I need.

PATTERSON

Way to show family loyalty.

MORRIS

A lot of these guys worked for your grandfather. Besides, I don't know how much longer the store's going to be around.

PATTERSON

What do you mean?

Patterson and Morris are interrupted by MRS. NESPOLA, 50s, who holds up a beige ladies' pump.

MRS. NESPOLA

Do you have these in black? I need them for my son's wedding.

MORRIS

Not a problem, Mrs. Nespola. I'll get them for you right away.

Morris takes the shoe and turns back to Patterson.

PATTERSON

What do you mean, you don't know how much longer the store's going to be around?

MORRIS

It's a noble thing, to own a shoe store. There are two things you should never skimp on.

PATTERSON

I know. Mattresses and shoes.

MORRIS

You could always go into the mattress industry. Too bad you don't have the skills or experience to run a business.

(Holds out his hand)

We'll have dinner soon.

Patterson, annoyed by Morris' evasiveness and lack of confidence in his abilities, shakes his father's hand. Patterson watches Morris head towards the stockroom as he is intercepted by AN ELDERLY COUPLE, 70s, whom he greets warmly. Patterson observes the interaction with envy in his eyes.