

MY FRIEND DAHMER

by
Marc Meyers

based on the graphic novel
by John Backderf

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OVER BLACK:

When I was a kid, I was just like
anybody else.

-Jeffrey Dahmer

FADE IN:

A DEAD CAT on the side of the road. Flies swarm around. Cars pass. Then, a thunderous rumble. The large tires of a PENCIL YELLOW SCHOOL BUS approach and come into focus.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD, OHIO - AFTERNOON (1977) - ESTABLISHING

The bus barrels down the two-lane blacktop, cutting through the wooded countryside.

JEFF DAHMER, 16, gazes out the window. His blank face is hidden behind WIRE-RIMMED GLASSES and SHAGGY, TOWHEADED HAIR. His eyes track the roadkill as the bus drives past.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS

Full of jabbering TEENAGERS. Awkward freshman sit closer to the front. Cooler kids own the back rows.

In a middle row, Jeff is by his lonesome.

Three average teenagers in the row directly in front of him play Twenty Questions:

PIMPLE FACE

Is it a person?

BOWL CUT

Yes.

FRECKLE FACE

Is the person living?

BOWL CUT

Yes.

PIMPLE FACE

Is the person famous?

BOWL CUT

Sort of.

The Bus driver grips the steering wheel as the bus hits a cluster of potholes. Everyone bounces, but no pause to the antics.

JOHN "DERF" BACKDERF, 17, sits in the front. He has a subversive confidence. Already resigned to his band-nerd status, he no longer gives a shit. He RIPS OUT a page from his pad:

DERF

Dang it.

The bumpy ride ruined his cartoon. He starts a new sketch that mocks the Bus Driver clenching the steering wheel:

BUS DRIVER

Calm down in the back. Sit down...

The bus thunders along and turns onto WEST BATH ROAD.

Jeff's eyes land on a NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER, late 40s, handsome and lean, running in the same direction as the bus. He's dressed in classic 70s running attire: Nikes, color striped tube socks, Adidas shorts.

The bus stops. Several kids unload. The jogger runs ahead.

The bus picks up speed. Again, Jeff's eyes lock on the Neighborhood Jogger. Jeff studies the jogger's stride, his arms moving back & forth, thighs pumping, his stoic face.

The bus accelerates. The Neighborhood Jogger starts to disappear behind the bus in the distance.

Jeff heads up the aisle to the rear emergency exit door, trying to keep his sights on the jogger. He's oddly fixated.

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)

Sit down in the back. Can't see. Who is that?

The front row freshmen shrug. They don't know.

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)

Hey!

Other kids on the bus don't know either.

BUS DRIVER (CONT'D)

Who's that?

Derf looks up from his drawing pad.

DERF

(eye rolls)

That's Jeff Dahmer.

BUS DRIVER
Jeff. Sit down.

Jeff gets a tap on the shoulder. He turns around.

JEFF
But I didn't do anything.

Jeff returns to his seat. The bus accelerates again...

EXT. SCHOOL BUS - MOMENTS LATER

The bus dumps Jeff and some other kids off at their stop.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff steps up to the edge of the driveway and waits. There again, the Neighborhood Jogger approaches. Getting closer - Jeff smiles, yet afraid to wave, as the jogger runs right past and continues up the slope.

Once the jogger disappears over the hill, Jeff lowers his head and shuffles up the driveway. His shoulders thrust slightly forward. A strangely rigid and inflexible figure. The stiff, awkward gait of a kid uncomfortable in the world.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jeff dumps his backpack on the floor. He heads into the den. The hallway walls are lined with dismal wood paneling. He hears chatter around the corner and curiously backtracks.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jeff enters the living room. A wall of windows looks out on the wooded property sloping below.

He discovers his fragile mother, JOYCE DAHMER, 41, on the sofa. She flips through a lookbook with MR. BURLMAN, a middle-aged man with a slight twitch.

MR. BURLMAN
I-I-I think we cud frame the wall of windows with dwapes.

Joyce looks up and notices--

JOYCE
Jeff. Hi. What about tennis practice?

JEFF
Told you already, tennis season ended.

Mr. Burlman stands. His knees knock. He wobbles toward Jeff, and extends his hand.

JOYCE

This is Mr. Burlman, my new interior decorator.

Mr. Burlman's twitching escalates.

MR. BURLMAN

Hehwo... braaa... Jeff.

JOYCE

Don't be alarmed. Just a mild case of--

MR. BURLMAN

P-p-palsy.

JOYCE

He's a very talented designer.

MR. BURLMAN

Thank you, Mrs. D-d-dahmer.

JEFF

Hi.

Mr. Burlman trembles for a beat, stuck.

MR. BURLMAN

N-n-nice to meet you.

JEFF

Uh-huh.

Jeff cuts through and exits the side door to return outside.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Jeff chuckles to himself. The man's tick amuses him, as it would any teenager.

JEFF

(to himself)

Dwapes.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

Jeff treads along the side of the road. Tennis sneakers grind against the pebbly dirt. His pace slows.

At his feet is the same roadkill, spotted from the bus. He TAPS THE DEAD CAT with his sneaker.

Jeff reaches down and picks it up. Holds it preciously in his palms. He compulsively squeezes it. A slight sound escapes from the decomposing insides. He smirks.

Prepared for such a macabre discovery, Jeff pulls a crumpled plastic bag from his pocket and places the roadkill inside.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON

A bunch of teenagers on bikes maraud down the road. Little concern for traffic.

BOSSY

C'mon. I don't wanna miss Monty Python.

LANKY

Nudge nudge. Wink wink. Know what I mean?

BOSSY

Say no more. Say no more.

SHORTY

Car.

The teenagers swoop to the shoulder to let the car pass. They keep peddling up the hill, huffing it.

Suddenly, a DOG SNARLS at them from the edge of a property and they peddle quicker, but the incline makes a quick getaway that much harder.

SHORTY (CONT'D)

We shoul'da gone the other way.

They run straight into Jeff who's walking down the hill, carrying his souvenir.

JEFF

You're safe. The dog's harmless and on a chain.

The teens catch their breath. They're immediately curious--

BOSSY

Hey, Dahmer. Why are you carrying around...

(glances in the bag)

Ew!... Dead cat!?!

JEFF

I'm gonna dissolve it.

LANKY

Huh?

JEFF

In some acid.

BOSSY

Whaaat? You're so fulla crap.

SHORTY

Where did you get acid?

JEFF

My dad's a chemist. I can get my hands on it easy.

LANKY

Yeah right--

JEFF

Come see if you don't believe me.

They follow Jeff down the hill.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - WOODED FRONT YARD - AFTERNOON

Tucked in the woods on the side of the property, just fifty feet from the road, is a MAN-MADE WOODEN SHED. Weeds grow up the walls. Jeff and the gang of curious teenagers approach.

INT. HUT - CONTINUOUS

They enter. A rickety door. A musty space. Assortment of glass jars line the shelves. Each contains a brown, murky substance, individually labeled: Raccoon, Crow, Rabbit, etc.

JEFF

Welcome to my science project.

Jeff places the dead cat on the table, then retrieves an ALUMINUM CONTAINER.

JEFF (CONT'D)

This acid is kinda weak... so it takes more than a couple of weeks for the flesh to dissolve.

He pours acid into an empty jar, then forces the cat inside.

BOSSY

Yuck.

Jeff pours in some more acid and caps it off.

SHORTY

Wha-wha-why are you doing this?

JEFF

I like to study bones. It-it interests me. What's inside...

BOSSY

Aw, this is all total bullcrap! Dead animals, acid, c'mon. I bet these jars are fulla nothin' but muddy water.

Browbeaten beads of sweat dot Jeff's forehead. He pushes past and reaches for a jar on a top shelf. Labeled: Raccoon.

JEFF

See this. I found it a month ago on Hametown Road. The flesh is almost completely dissolved now.

BOSSY

Ha! Yeah right.

JEFF SNAPS. He THROWS THE JAR DOWN on the floor, shattering on impact. Remnants of a half-dissolved raccoon spill out. Flesh-pudding and bones. A jawbone. Gnarly raccoon feet.

The STENCH is palpable, like a hundred rotten eggs. They all gag, bumping into one another as they squeeze out the door.

EXT. WOODS - HUT - CONTINUOUS

Jeff and the other teenagers scatter away from the hut, holding their noses, retching. One vomits in the dirt.

BOSSY

Gawd, Dahmer! You are such a freak.

The teens run off, abandoning him. Jeff stands alone on the edge of his property - a stiff silhouette.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DINING AREA - NIGHT

Jeff's father LIONEL DAHMER, 41, sits at the head of the dining table. A man of high intellect but unable to connect over quotidian details with his chafing wife or two sons, Jeff and DAVE, 10.

Lionel serves himself some peas and carrots. Nearby, in the kitchen, Joyce anxiously pulls a chicken out of the oven.

LIONEL

(breaks the silence)
Someone pass the iced tea.

Dave reaches for it. Jeff takes the pitcher and passes it.

JEFF
How was your day, Dad?

LIONEL
Uneventful.

DAVE
Mrs. Demeson read more from
Charlotte's Web today--

JEFF
Dad, is there a stronger chemical I
could use? Something that works
faster?

JOYCE
Jeff, let your brother speak. What's
the book about, Dave?

DAVE
It's a... about a spider who talks to
a pig named Wilbur who's going to be
slaughtered by a butcher.

LIONEL
Let me think.

Joyce serves an under-cooked chicken.

JOYCE
Jeff, give your brother the
drumsticks.

JEFF
Why? He doesn't - I like the dark
meat.

LIONEL
Jeff.

Jeff obliges and gives the two drumsticks to his brother.
They pick at the chicken. It's raw on the bone.

DAVE
Dad, why is there toilet paper in our
trees, again?

LIONEL
I don't know, son.

Jeff lowers his head. Lionel sneaks a peak in his direction.

LIONEL (CONT'D)
How's tennis, Jeff?

JEFF
It ended over a week ago. But next year I got a chance to be ranked second singles.

LIONEL
Next fall, how about play some team sports? Or join some clubs...

Jeff chokes on his food, and the intimidating suggestion.

JOYCE
Shoot, I forgot the potatoes.

Joyce beelines back to the oven.

JEFF
I'm in the Marching Band too.

LIONEL
I know, but... something new might lead to some better friends. Friends are our connection to the world.

Joyce returns with hot potatoes and drops them on the plates.

DAVE
Chicken's red inside, Mom.

Joyce stops moving and examines the table.

JOYCE
You don't like my cooking? New house rule. *We eat our mistakes.*

Joyce sits. The two boys pick at the food. Lionel and Joyce make eye contact across the table. Jeff notes their glare, full of resentment.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING - ESTABLISHING

A drove of students mill about. It's a quintessential public high school - soulless, modular formation of red brick. A school bus pulls in and drops off another herd of teenagers.

Some kids gather around the SCHOOL ROCK. This defaced boulder is the students' billboard: graffiti, couples' initials, and the declarations "Balderelli Sucks" and "Class of '77 Rules!"

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - MORNING

Jeff walks warily down the overcrowded hall, teeming with mid-70s trends, hormones, and bravado. Platform shoes. Bell bottoms. Layered long hair and sideburns. "Sabbath Bloody Sabbath" by Black Sabbath blares from a beatbox.

Two senior BULLY-JOCKS shove Jeff into the wall--

BULLY-JOCKS

Outta my way, Dumber! Dumb ass.

Jeff slides to the floor. He scurries to pick up his books.

INT. BIOLOGY CLASS - DAY

Working by himself, Jeff peers into a microscope.

Several rows ahead, Derf and two rascally cohorts, KENT and MIKE, joke around. Kent wears a KISS T-shirt, almost always. He also wears a skeptical attitude. Mike is constantly jovial, with a paunchy, short physique to match.

MS. BOWLES, 50s, limps around class. Her metal ankle-brace creaks and distracts, as does her lisp.

MS. BOWLES

Mr. John Backderf. Have you matched, um, the chloroplast?

DERF

We're workin' on it, Miss Bowles.

KENT

Yeah, we're on question sixteen to be precise.

Ms. Bowles looks at their papers. Derf's margins are filled with doodles of the girls' butts in the row ahead.

MS. BOWLES

Gather your stuff.

DERF

Me? We're-we're taking turns on the scope, Miss--

MS. BOWLES

Over here. With Jeff.

DERF

Geez.

Ms. Bowles leads Derf to the back row.

MS. BOWLES

Jeff, keep on the same slide and give Mr. Backderf a look.

Derf focuses to complete the assignment. MS. BOWLES strolls down the side of her classroom and glances in a cabinet. JEFF LOCKS EYES on a jarred FETAL PIG on a shelf, unaware Derf is now copying his answers.

INT. CAFETERIA - LUNCH HOUR

Jeff carries his tray from the kitchen into a boisterous cafeteria. He sulks past the stereotypical clusters of cliques at separate tables:

PSYCHO-STONERS, led by LLOYD FIGG, giving each other dead arms. Lloyd's the school's premier delinquent.

BULLY-JOCKS, led by the Quarterback, flirting with the PROM QUEEN WANNABES at the next table.

BAND NERDS, led by Derf, who chortle over a Mad Magazine and trade music cassettes.

Jeff finds a seat at a table against the back wall. The table is empty, except for OLIVER ZLATKA, 16, a sophomore and the school's effeminate weakling. Jeff sits at the far end to lessen their association.

OLIVER

Hey.

Jeff nods, keeping to himself. He shyly eats.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

I'm going away this summer to a wilderness camp. But in exchange my dad said I can get tickets to see Neil Sedaka in concert.

JEFF

My favorite.

OLIVER

I know. Wanna go?

JEFF

Um, sure.

Prom Queen Wannabe WENDY WATKINS butts in--

WENDY

(nudges Jeff)

Hey, kid, you're in my spot. Move.

Jeff slides closer to Oliver. Wendy stands on an empty chair and gets the crowd's attention--

WENDY (CONT'D)
Over here. Everyone!

ANOTHER PROM QUEEN WANNABE
Quiet.

WENDY
Quiet. Thanks. I'm only talking to the seniors, so the rest of you just keep your traps shut. As you know, I'm on the Prom Planning Committee and I've - we've put our hearts into the event which is right around the corner. It's going to be the best prom ever and just a reminder that voting for prom King and Queen ends this Friday. And, and it just came to my--

Figg knocks over Oliver's food tray.

FIGG
Hey, Faggot. She's talking.

Laughter erupts.

WENDY
Stop that--

FIGG
You're a little fruit.

WENDY
Freakin' juniors, stop that.

Figg starts to give Oliver a wedgie in the aisle. Bully-Jocks cheer him on. More widespread laughter and applause, even from Derf and his band-nerd cohorts.

LUNCHROOM MONITORS swarm in and pull Figg away. In the confusion, Jeff slips out, undetected. He's relieved he wasn't the target.

INT. HUT - AFTERNOON

At his work table, Jeff pulls a lumpy mass - wrapped in an undershirt - from his backpack. He unveils the fetal pig, stolen from Biology class. Jeff holds it preciously in his palms and thumbs its belly.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DEN - NIGHT

Jeff stares blankly at *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* as he finishes a bowl of cereal, blocking out his parents' argument in the living room nearby--

LIONEL (O.S.)
I can't believe you did that without discussing it first.

JOYCE (O.S.)
Why? You always say no to everything.

LIONEL (O.S.)
Joyce, I'm not paying for a crony drape hanger.

JOYCE (O.S.)
Interior decorator. There's a difference.

Dave sidles down the hall to get a look.

LIONEL
You're not capable of this kind of project. It needs attention, dedication. Next week you're going to want to do pottery.

JOYCE
That's hardly - I'm ready to go back to work.

LIONEL
What - how?

JOYCE
(gesturing to her son)
David will be eleven.

Lionel shoos David away.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
He's old enough to let himself in. Lynn Watkins up the street went back to work. Cynthia Bakula is selling real estate now, she's not even around on the weekends. Even Jane Kyriazis is doing bookkeeping.

LIONEL
May I remind you, you've been back from the mental hospital for less than a year. Besides.

A strained pause.

LIONEL (CONT'D)
 (walks away)
 Forget it.

JOYCE
 Forget what?

LIONEL
 ... Just a month ago you saw a UFO fly
 past the house, and you chased it down
 the street in your bathrobe.

JOYCE
 Jerk.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Jeff and Dave lie in twin beds, forced to listen to their
 parents' continued argument on the other side of the wall:

LIONEL (O.S.)
 GODDAMMIT, JOYCE, I'M NOT GOING TO
 have this argument again! It's not
 even about that guy.

Dave snuffles. Jeff wipes a tearful eye.

JOYCE (O.S.)
 You're a fascist, you know that.

LIONEL (O.S.)
 We're talking about nothing. We have
 nothing left to say to each other--

JOYCE (O.S.)
 I have plenty, don't get me started.

LIONEL (O.S.)
 Shut the hell up.

JOYCE (O.S.)
 I've had it with--

SLAM! A door shuts in a face. Absolute silence, except for
 Dave's sniffling. Jeff slides over to his brother's bed to
 comfort him.

DAVE
 Are they going to hit each other?

JEFF
 No, they just yell.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - BAND ROOM - DAY

MR. HICKS, the heavy-set armpit-stained band leader, conducts a rehearsal. Jeff plays trumpet. In the back row, Derf plays tuba beside Kent on percussion. Mr. Hicks wraps up the song.

MR. HICKS

That sounds excellent. The trumpet and clarinets were pitch perfect.

A momentary proud smile crosses Jeff's face.

MR. HICKS (CONT'D)

Groovy. You play like that at our year end recital and we're gonna blow scalps off the audience...

Band members sort of understand his latest idiom.

MR. HICKS (CONT'D)

... Once again, from the top.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Oliver lurks among the parked cars, hiding. Two BULLY-JOCKS find him and approach. Oliver backs up, timid.

MOOSE

Hey, faggot. There you are.

GOOCH

You've been avoiding us all day.

Jeff appears - his backpack and trumpet case slung over his shoulder - not expecting to find anyone other than Oliver.

OLIVER

Hey, Jeff.

GOOCH

Coming to save the day, Dahmer?

JEFF

No, no--

MOOSE

Are you going to defend this homo with your trumpet case?

GOOCH

I got a trumpet you can blow.

JEFF

I was just gonna tell him somethin'.

MOOSE
Go ahead, I'd like to see this.

JEFF
Forget it.

OLIVER
(blurts out)
Jeff, I got the Neil Sedaka tickets
for this Saturday.

Jeff acts surprised, like he doesn't know Oliver's reference.
The bullies encroach on Oliver.

MOOSE
You guys going together? Cute.

JEFF
I'm not going to any concert - it's
not my thing, you know.

OLIVER
But my dad said he'll pick you up this
Saturday around five...

The Bully-Jocks beat up on Oliver - it's routine. Jeff slips
away, abandoning the scene for his own safety.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - AFTERNOON

Lionel pulls into the driveway in his gray 1974 AMC Pacer. He
grabs his leather briefcase and heads inside.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - CONTINUOUS

Lionel looks for Jeff around the house. He finds Dave in the
den watching *Family Feud* on TV.

LIONEL
Hi, Dave. So where's your brother?

DAVE
I think he's in his lab. Been there
for hours.

LIONEL
And your mother?

Dave shrugs.

E/I. HUT - AFTERNOON

LIONEL SWINGS OPEN THE DOOR AND BARGES IN. Jeff is busy examining rodent bones. The fetal pig is in a jar labeled: Baby Pig.

JEFF

Dad, you're never home this early.

Realizing the breadth of the dead animal collection, Lionel SNATCHES several jars for a closer look.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Dad!?!

LIONEL

That's enough, Jeff.

Lionel leaves with the jars. Jeff's confused, but his attention quickly returns to the bone fragments.

Suddenly, Lionel impetuously PULLS THE DOOR OFF THE HINGES.

JEFF

Dad!?!

LIONEL

You're spending too much time in here.

With a burst of adrenaline, Lionel stiff-arms Jeff to keep away and starts pulling more jars from the hut.

JEFF

Don't, don't...

A moment later; Lionel dumps the jars in the trash can.

Jeff impotently circles the hut as Lionel continues to empty it of its jars, acid, and other contents. Jeff moves to save some and prevent his father--

LIONEL

(assertive)

I let you have a pet cemetery when you were a kid, but then this...

Dave has wandered over and watches from a distance.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

You need, Jeff, to come out, to come out of your shell, something more normal.

JEFF

I'm in the band. I'm--

LIONEL

You're not hearing me.

Lionel drags out the work table.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

I don't understand what happened...

He pushes and sways the hut, loosening its construction. He tears it apart until it COLLAPSES, revealing Jeff shuddering with fear. Jeff's most contained obsession is now history.

Lionel catches his breath. Jeff and Dave stand around and look at the flattened hut as Lionel drags the trashcan away.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff hides the contents of one jar (which he clearly swiped) behind a tree. He covers the bones with leaves.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN

Lionel, Jeff, and Dave pick at leftovers for dinner. Dave hums as he eats, while Jeff pouts. Joyce is absent.

LIONEL

You always liked performing as a kid. Jeff, maybe... how about doing theater? Or something else? Any of it could... At least help your acceptance to college.

Silence.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - CLASS ROOM - DAY

Jeff keeps to himself, head lowered, in the back of class.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Jeff eats by himself. SCHOOL SPIRIT approaches, gregarious.

SCHOOL SPIRIT

Wanna sign up for Key Club?

(no response)

We're looking for new recruits who can be active over the summer. Just because school's out, it doesn't mean we stop helping people in our community. Would you like to help others in your community?

JEFF

No.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Derf, Kent, and Mike are joined by buddy NEIL, also a jokester but the most empathetic of the bunch. They take turns tossing a broken bike pedal into a garbage pail, like a game of horse, wasting time...

KENT

We're still trapped in this wasteland for another year.

Jeff creeps past.

DERF

I know - it might drive me crazy. Senior year's going to suck, I'm ready to get out.

Jeff starts to approach, hoping to join in their game. A tense TEACHER pops out of the side door--

TEACHER

Hey, are you in an after-school program?

MIKE

Not right now--

NEIL

Tennis season is over.

DERF

Marching band is only in the fall--

TEACHER

Well then, get off school grounds. The day's over. You can't be hanging around with nothing to do. Go, get...

Derf, Kent, Mike and Neil withdraw, tittering. None of them notice Jeff nearby. He cuts the other way.

Figg body checks Jeff.

FIGG

Wanna catch a buzz?

Cupped in Figg's hand is a joint.

FIGG (CONT'D)
 Straight off the boat. Seven bucks.
 (no response)
 Yesterday, I freakin toked-up and hit
 a thousand in mailbox baseball.

Hesitantly considering it, Jeff checks his pockets. They're empty except for a PLASTIC BAG.

FIGG (CONT'D)
 Why the bag, dude?

JEFF
 I pick up roadkill, but I'm trying to quit.

FIGG
 I'll get you roadkill. Stick with me.

Figg drifts by, already onto his next potential customer.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - FRONT YARD

Jeff sits beside the flattened hut. He FONDLES the small, recovered collection of rodent-size bones.

Then, the Neighborhood Jogger runs up the street, approaching. Jeff checks his watch as he edges closer to the street. He lurks in the bushes, waiting.

The Neighborhood Jogger trots past Jeff's house.

Jeff's breathing quickens, excited.

Trailing the jogger, Jeff weaves through the bushes.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Jeff JUMPS OUT onto the shoulder of the road. He scurries, hesitantly, up the incline CHASING AFTER THE JOGGER.

Further up the slope, the jogger passes Wendy Watkins (the prom queen wannabe). She's retrieving mail. Her IRISH SETTER yaps at the jogger's heels. She pulls at the leash.

WENDY
 I'm so sorry, so sorry.

Jeff slows, keeping a distance. He watches the jogger run away. Checks his watch once again.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Jeff stares out the window, eyes locked on a squirrel staring right back at him, frozen on a branch. Lionel drops by.

LIONEL

What are you doing?

JEFF

Stu-studying for finals.

LIONEL

Can I have a minute? Look, I went through it too. It's completely normal. Puberty is this period when your sex glands become functional and your hypothalamus signals hormonal changes that stimulate the pituitary. Then, the gonads and testis... anyway, it's an awkward time. You mustn't forget all boys go through it too, not just you, so there's no reason to be shy.

JEFF

That's not it, Dad.

LIONEL

Try me. I spoke to someone at work about - I'm ready to listen.

JEFF

Most everyone's known me since elementary school, they're not going to change their minds now. It'll be easier after I graduate.

LIONEL

But you can't - look... okay... the hut... You have to understand, Jeff, I just get mad at you sometimes because I see in you things I don't like about myself. I spend too much time in the chemistry lab, I know. I just want you to be more active than I was, have friends in a way I never really... so... I have something.

Lionel steps away. He returns and presents TWO DUMBBELLS.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

I picked these up at The Summit Mall. It'll help, I think.

(MORE)

LIONEL (CONT'D)

You'll be more impressive, you might find it rewarding. And maybe some girl might notice you. Right? Okay?

Jeff stares back, blankly. Lionel sets the dumbbells down and withdraws. Jeff pushes them away with his heel.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Jeff hears his parents bickering again.

JOYCE (O.S.)

You have to start somewhere--

LIONEL (O.S.)

It makes no sense. It's ugly. How much?

JOYCE (O.S.)

Just a hundred and twenty-five dollars.

LIONEL (O.S.)

For a pink fucking foot stool? That's ludicrous, Joyce!

DESPERATE KNOCKS at the door. Jeff has placed the dumbbells as doorstops. He moves them away and lets in Dave. Jeff peaks out:

JOYCE

I think we should divorce.

LIONEL

Divorce!?! Over this foot stool?

JOYCE

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME?

Jeff barges out.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jeff SNAPS, vehemently knocking over a lamp.

JEFF

Will you stop! Stop it.

LIONEL

Jeff.

JEFF

Stop. Fighting. Seriously.

JOYCE
 Dammit. This doesn't concern you.

LIONEL
 Go to your room, Jeff.

Jeff stews, staring at them. Odd panting. The room is tight with tension. Then, Jeff obediently retreats.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jeff locks the door. Eyes well up with tears. A jumble of emotions. He returns one dumbbell to the door and takes the other one to his bed. Dave watches as Jeff starts doing bicep curls, furiously.

CUT TO:

BATH, OHIO during a carefree July day.

TEENAGERS roam on bicycles.

CHILDREN play in a park.

KIDS jump into the town pool.

EXT. BATH TOWNSHIP PARK & POOL - TENNIS COURTS - DAY

Jeff rallies with Neil. Jeff hits a winning forehand.

NEIL
 Wow, nice slice. Why didn't you hit like that last season?

Jeff shrugs, not comfortable with compliments, as he fetches balls. Neil fetches his water.

NEIL (CONT'D)
 I'm heading over to the pool to cool off. Wanna come?

Jeff considers it, then shakes his head no.

NEIL (CONT'D)
 Ah, C'mon.

EXT. BATH TOWNSHIP PUBLIC POOL - DAY

Jeff treads water in the deep end. Fixated on a group of young boys frolicking nearby. He goggles at their lean, weightless bodies glistening in the water.

NEIL

Jeff, Jeff, move over. I'm gonna dive right on you.

Jeff swims away.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jeff sits at the edge of his bed doing more bicep curls.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Jeff sets a small, makeshift trap. He eyes a squirrel nearby.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT YARD - DAY

Several seniors paint "Class of '78 Rules" on the school rock. In the b.g., Jeff walks through the front entrance.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Jeff trudges down the hall. He's taller and more muscular after a growth spurt and summer spent lifting weights. He now fits into his father's hand-me-down dress shirt and slacks, and carries his old, leather briefcase. In contrast to the colorful 70s fashion in full bloom, this, ironically, casts a studious appearance to teachers scanning the halls.

INT. HISTORY CLASS - DAY

MR. FEDELE, a jovial scatterbrain, struggles to get command of his classroom.

MR. FEDELE

Everyone, quiet down. I know it's exciting to catch up after summer break.

Jeff is detached in the back row.

MR. FEDELE (CONT'D)

I have rules, I must go over, I have rules. Your attention, students.

But no one in class really cares. Fedele's weak reputation precedes him. Students pass notes and gossip. Derf doodles a cartoon of Fedele for an audience of onlookers.

MR. FEDELE (CONT'D)

That's enough. Quiet. Alright, good. Thank you.

Mr. Fedele starts passing out textbooks from the stack.

MR. FEDELE (CONT'D)
 Your senior year American History Honors class will focus on Federal Government and our Presidents. Why is history important?

Mr. Fedele notices Jeff hunkered down in the back.

MR. FEDELE (CONT'D)
 You. Why is history important?

Jeff mumbles.

MR. FEDELE (CONT'D)
 What?

JEFF
 (mumbling)
 Uh, it's important... dunno.

MR. FEDELE
 You all must speak clearly.

JEFF
 (mumbling, like a moan)
 I dunno.

Chortles from students. Derf turns. Jeff mumbles again - this time intentionally for attention. Laughter escalates. The reaction surprises Jeff. He smirks, then:

JEFF (CONT'D)
 BRRRRRAAAA dunno.

Laughter ERUPTS.

MR. FEDELE
 Quiet! Let me answer. We can only really know about ourselves if we come to better understand our past. Turn to page ten in your new text books.

INT. HISTORY CLASS - LATER

RIIING. The period bell halts Fedele's lecture. Kids head for the door.

MR. FEDELE
 Wait, before you forget, take a permission slip and packets home for our spring trip to DC. Everyone must get a parent to sign it.

A fellow student approvingly pats Jeff on the shoulder as they head out. Jeff grins.

INT. AUDITORIUM - AFTERNOON

A DRAMA GEEK finishes her audition song:

DRAMA GEEK

If happy little bluebirds fly beyond
the rainbow, Why, oh why can't I?

MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Thank you, very nice, Melody,
beautiful as always.

(scanning the audition sign-
up sheet)

Next up, Oliver Zlatka.

Oliver scampers onto the stage.

Jeff is in the audience, slouched in a seat against the wall.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Hi, Oliver. Apologies. Unfortunately,
I was instructed by the PTA to do a
musical this year, to be more
inclusive.

OLIVER

(sings off key)

Somewhere over the rainbow, way up
high, There's a land that I've heard
of, once in a lullaby.

Jeff wipes nervous beads of sweat from his forehead.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

Somewhere over the rainbow, skies are
blue, And the dreams...

Oliver stops himself, knowing his audition is awful. An awkward silence. Oliver exits the auditorium, head down.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Next up. Jeff Dahmer.

Musical Director waits. No one comes on stage.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Jeff Dahmer?

Those scattered around the seats look around. Jeff covers his face. A look of self-doubt comes over him. He slips out.

MUSICAL DIRECTOR (CONT'D)
 Okay, lost your chance. Next up is
 Alan Tomczak.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - LIBRARY - DAY

Jeff sits at a reading table scanning the quiet scene. He studies a pack of STUDENTS doing homework at another table. A light bulb goes off...

Jeff GROWLS. LOUDER AND LOUDER, evolving into a widespread moan. Shoulders jerk up.

JEFF
 ... Baaaaaaa! Arrrrr! Baaaaa!

Totally unexpected, the other students laugh.

MRS. WOODARD, the irascible librarian, STORMS IN from a book aisle. Finds everyone reading, swallowing their amusement.

MRS. WOODARD
 Who did that!?

She beelines it over to the table of snickering students.

MRS. WOODARD (CONT'D)
 Was it you? Behave yourself or get out
 of my library.

They remain tight-lipped. Mrs. Woodard looks around, then returns to her chores filing away books. Again, it goes quiet... then:

JEFF
 (moaning)
 Brrra! Thmaaa!

More snickers. Mrs. Woodard bursts in, again. She's FUMING. Still no clue--

MRS. WOODARD
 Who keeps making that noise?

Jeff lowers his head. A smirk creeps across his face. Feeling a connection to the other kids.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN HALLWAY - DAY

Jeff passes Neil and his friends, including Derf, and hints:

JEFF
 Hey man, watch this.

Jeff steps into the middle of the main hallway and throws a sudden, sprawling

EPILEPTIC-LIKE FIT

His arms FLAIL. His tongue wags out of his mouth. It's hilarious and bizarre.

A crowd gathers. Laughter and cheers.

Derf, Neil, Mike, and Kent rush over for a front row view. Widespread laughter from the swelling crowd. Though, a few straight-laced kids flee in confusion.

Jeff continues spazzing, center stage.

RIIING. Students scurry off to class. Yet, Jeff continues flailing for a few stragglers. Appreciating the display, Derf is one of the very last to split.

Becomes an empty hallway. Only then, Jeff gets up and heads to class himself, pleased with the result.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - LATER

Classrooms empty out at the end of another period. Derf, Neil, Kent, and Mike gather at their lockers.

DERF

Dude, what's the dealio with Dahmer?

KENT

Is he insane or what?

DERF

I think he's hilarious.

NEIL

Yeah. That's new.

DERF

Heard he spazzed in Math too.

KENT

For the last couple of days, he's been doing a Dahmer, I call it.

DERF

I've never really spoken to him.

NEIL

We rally in tennis but that's it.

Kent nudges Derf. There's Jeff shuffling past. They give him a thumbs up. Jeff BLEEPs back--

JEFF

BAAAAAA.

They're amused.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

Gym class. Two Team Captains pick players for dodgeball.

TEAM CAPTAIN

And I'll take Backderf.

A couple more names are called. Jeff and a scrawny kid are the last ones left. Scrawny is picked.

TEAM CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Uh, alright... I guess we got Doofus Dahmer.

The teams take their sides, readying for play. COACH NATALE whistles. A mad rush to the balls.

A BLITZKRIEG OF BALLS FLY in Jeff's direction, along with insults. He's quickly obliterated. He crosses to the sideline. More balls strike him in the head.

COACH NATALE

(tardy)

No headhunting.

Moments later; as the game continues, Derf is also out. Together on the sidelines:

DERF

Doesn't it bother you? The way some of them talk about you, right to your face?

JEFF

Used to it. Somehow I'll get 'em back.

DERF

Won't get any better for these psycho-stoner losers. At least our best days are ahead of us.

Jeff nods, though uncertain.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Jeff sits alone. Derf drops by.

DERF

Hey, Dahmer. Curious if you want to join us at our table.

Jeff turns. He sees Neil and other band nerd buddies watching, waiting for Jeff's response.

DERF (CONT'D)

No reason a champion spazzer has to sit here in hell. C'mon over. We got parking lot views.

Jeff takes his tray and follows Derf to his table. Neil pulls out a seat for Jeff. They welcome him with Dahmerisms - BAAAA, THMAAAA, etc.

KENT

Kudos on your freakin' spazzes, dude. Totally classic.

JEFF

Uh huh.

DERF

We dig it.

NEIL

Where'd you get the idea?

JEFF

I dunno.

KENT

C'mon, man.

MIKE

Dude, like, you know what it reminds me of. There's this decorator in town that my parents hired. He used to have little fits in our living room, til my toads fired him.

JEFF

Mr. Burlman. Yeah, my mom hired him too.

MIKE

Knew it.

JEFF

After five months, all he added is an ugly pink foot stool.

They laugh.

JEFF (CONT'D)
 (spazzes)
 And lacey dwapes.

They laugh harder.

DERF
 Where have you been? I say we form The
 Dahmer Fan Club.

JEFF
 What?

DERF
 Yeah.

Jeff brightens.

DERF (CONT'D)
 There's just so much time left. And
 with Dahmer as our fearless leader, I
 really think we can disrupt Revere
 High and ensure we go out in style.

KENT
 In infamy.

NEIL
 Yeah, and if we don't, I'm gonna do
 something crazy like kill the Pope.

Jeff smiles, likely for the first time in school in ages.

DERF
 I already...
 (flips through his
 notebook)
 Drew you.

Derf shows his cartoonish drawing "Dahmer as a Telephone Pole" of Jeff stiff & upright. Compliments for the humorous depiction. Jeff relishes the attention.

DERF (CONT'D)
 And as part of the Dahmer Fan Club, I
 appoint myself The Minister of
 Propaganda.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Derf hurries to color in some last minute touches on a hand-drawn poster. A subversive chuckle to himself. Bandmates retrieve him and pull at him.

KENT

Derf, we're late. C'mon.

INT. GYMNASIUM - MOMENTS LATER

Pep rally. Cheerleaders prance around in unison. The football team files onto the court in their new jerseys.

The Marching Band is stacked into the bleachers, beside the rest of the student body. They play the quintessential pep rally song. Derf plays tuba. Kent on bass drum. Hoisted on the wall above them is Derf's poster. It's a large cartoon of an angry running back stomping Jeff Dahmer flat on his back. It reads: GO MINUTEMEN! CRUSH THE COMETS! (A speech bubble reads: BAAAAA!)

Several rows ahead, Jeff plays trumpet. Once the song ends, Jeff glances back at his large cartoon. Gives a thumbs up to Derf.

Center court, the officious VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI takes the microphone.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI

Thank you, Revere High Marching Band!
Be proud Minutemen!

Cheers & applause from the bleachers. A couple of psycho-stoners taunt Oliver, wearing sneakers decorated with school colors.

PSYCHO-STONER

Hey, gay boy, aren't you supposed to be up there with the cheerleaders?

Psycho-stoner shoves Oliver off his seat. Oliver fumbles before finding another seat two rows back, fleeing conflict.

COACH NATALE

(takes the mic.)

Hello, Minutemen! Are you ready for a winning season? Some of these guys have been playing ball together since grade school, and they've been preparing for this season their whole lives. Let's hear it for Team Captain Hirsch.

The Cheerleaders lead a cheer as the Team Captain takes center court, but instead The Dahmer Fan Club hails:

THE DAHMER FAN CLUB

Go Dahmer! Dahmer Rules!

Kent pounds on his drum. Derf blows his tuba, off tune. From the stands, other periphery members disrupt. Among them:

NEIL/MIKE
BRAAAAAAAA. MRAAAAAA. THMAAAAAA.

Just as Team Captain/Quarterback Hirsch is about to speak--

DERF
Go Dahmer!

Jeff hoists the bell of his trumpet upward and BLOWS A LONG, SCREECHING CRY that drowns out the Team Captain's opening remarks. Laughter erupts.

COACH NATALE
Cut that out, kid.

Musical Director is frozen in shock. A hush runs through the crowd. Jeff daringly BLOWS ANOTHER UNRULY SCREECH, rousing more band members to copy and make noise.

Balderelli jumps into action and climbs into the stands.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI
What's your name?

Balderelli GRABS Jeff by the arm and drags him off the line. The Dahmer Fan Club and others applaud the disturbance. Balderelli leads Jeff to the door--

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI
What's your name?

Before Jeff can stutter out an answer--

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI (CONT'D)
I have bigger fish to fry. You hear me kid?

JEFF
I didn't, I didn't...

Vice Principal Balderelli returns inside, pulling the door closed behind him. The door locks, leaving Jeff outside.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - WOODED FRONT YARD - DAY

Jeff waits in the bushes. Eagerness in his eyes. Palpitating with anticipation. He hears him coming - HUFF! HUFF! - up the hill.

The Neighborhood Jogger trots by, muscles pulsing, chest out, hair bouncing above his headband.

Jeff stares, mouth agape. TITILLATED...

Then, just as quickly, the jogger breezes by up the hill and Jeff deflates... his mood shifts to shame and confusion.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The Dahmer Fan Club pal around near their lockers. A group of HOT GIRLS mingle nearby.

KENT

They're totally out of our league.

DERF

I know, a primo target. Someone do a Dahmer, do a Dahmer.

Jeff is more than willing to impress. He hands over his textbooks and runs up the hallway, FLAILING his arms.

JEFF

Hurricane drill. HURRICANE DRILL.

He spooks the girls, but runs right past them. His spazz culminates outside the TEACHER'S LOUNGE.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Help, help!

Yet, the teachers are disinterested, mere head shakes.

NEIL

So wrong, it's so wrong...

Jeff continues to spazz, gaining no further attention from the adults, as he continues flailing out the back door.

DERF

Where's he going!?

In hysterics, The Dahmer Fan Club high five.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

The hungover ENGLISH TEACHER rests his head on his desk. The blackboard reads: Today's Assign., Read Machiavelli's The Prince, Chap 1 & 2. QUIETLY. THANK YOU!

Darf draws a cartoon - "Dahmer in a Bag of Groceries." PENNY, plainly cute & keenly observant, looks on.

PENNY
 (whispers)
 Is Dahmer your muse?

DERF
 What? No.

PENNY
 Sure looks like it. You're talented.

DERF
 Thanks.

PENNY
 Why don't you sketch me?

Derf blushes.

JEFF
 (nearby, interjecting)
 I can draw you.

DERF
 Let's see.

PENNY
 Yeah.

JEFF
 Okay... first, get out of your chair.
 And lay down on the floor.

Chuckles. Penny actually follows his direction and sits on the floor. Jeff retrieves chalk from the side blackboard.

JEFF (CONT'D)
 Lay down. And act dead.

Penny lies back, into a corpse position.

NEIL
 What are you, a necrophiliac?

More chuckles. The teacher adjusts his napping position--

ENGLISH TEACHER
 Shhhh. Keep reading.

Jeff traces Penny's body in chalk. Everyone gathers around.

JEFF
 There. Ta-da.

Laughter erupts. The hungover English Teacher snaps up.

ENGLISH TEACHER
Quiet. What did I say!?! Quiet.

Everyone snickers and returns to his/her seat. Jeff grins, relishing in his role.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - AFTERNOON

Returning home, Jeff has a jump in his step. He passes his brother practicing wheelies on his banana seat bicycle.

DAVE
Hey, Jeff, wanna play?

JEFF
Can't, got some friends coming over.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jeff breezes through the kitchen, looking around.

JEFF
Dad, Mom? I have good news.

He hears some RETCH-LIKE SOUNDS, squashing his enthusiasm.

LIVING ROOM AREA

Joyce leans against the wall, quivering. Unaware Jeff is watching, she takes a cocktail of pills and swallows them with a pinch of water, growling.

JEFF (CONT'D)
Mom... Mom...

She turns to him, trembling. She BLEEPs, reminiscent of his school time spazzes--

JOYCE
Jjjeffff.

JEFF
M-mom, I thought you stopped. Wh-why don't you--

JOYCE
Shhh-shhh-uuuuu--

JEFF
Go back - go back to the doctor?

JOYCE
I'd ruther shooot myself than go back there. Arrrrrr - don't need...

Joyce drops down onto the sofa, still twitching.

JEFF

I thought you weren't--

JOYCE

Doctors don't know what I need. Shhh, I've been taking these since I was pregnant with you, just shhh, leave me alone.

She rests her face in a pillow, sweating. She sighs, waiting for the side effects to lessen.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Derf and Neil arrive in Derf's rusted Chevy Vegas. They idle during the last measures of Devo's "Mongoloid," then get out and head to the front door.

NEIL

How can you like that punk crap?

DERF

Devo's from right down the street. At least I don't listen to that Kiss crap like Kent. So Junior High.

They knock, then realize it's unlocked. They head inside.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jeff rushes toward Derf and Neil and ushers them back out.

JEFF

Hey. Why don't we hang outside?

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

DERF

Thought we were hanging in your den? I brought some bootlegs.

JEFF

Well, uh, my Mom's resting.

NEIL

So.

JEFF

And, kind of embarrassed by the pink foot stool and lace drapes.

They chuckle.

DAVE
Are you in the new club?

NEIL
What, huh?

JEFF
That's my brother. Get lost.

DAVE
My dad keeps telling Jeff he should
join some new clubs.

JEFF
Beat it, Dave.

NEIL
Hey, doesn't Wendy Watkins live just
down the street? Heard she still lives
at home, even though she graduated.

DERF
Are you friends?

JEFF
She doesn't know I exist.

NEIL
Great!

EXT. WATKINS FAMILY HOME - DAY

Jeff, Derf, and Neil edge closer to the house.

DERF
Which is her bedroom window?

NEIL
Watch this, chumps.

Neil heads to the front door and rings the bell. He puts on a serious face. Derf and Jeff hide behind a bush to watch from afar. Wendy answers the door. Her Irish Setter at her side.

NEIL (CONT'D)
I'm here for the interview.

WENDY
Excuse me.

NEIL
Huh? They said you agreed to be
interviewed. I write for the Revere
High newspaper.

WENDY
The Lantern?

NEIL
Yep, doing a story on past homecoming queens.

WENDY
Guess I could spare ten minutes.

Derf and Jeff pop out of the bushes to join.

WENDY (CONT'D)
Wait a sec. This some kind of joke?

Neil breaks his poker face. Wendy shoos him away. Neil, Derf, and Jeff scatter, laughing.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT YARD - DAY

Derf, Mike, and Kent jokingly push Jeff toward a group of students gathering around the painted school rock.

JEFF
Stop it. I'm not, no way, no.

DERF
C'mon, make your dad proud.

SWISH PAN to THE ROCK CLIMBING CLUB posing for their Yearbook Photo. Neil adjusts the camera on the tripod.

NEIL
So this is everyone for the Rock Climbing Club's Yearbook photo?

ROCK CLIMBING CLUB MEMBER
Yep.

Neil focuses the camera. Now in the b.g., Jeff continues to resist The Dahmer Fan Club's shoves. Neil snaps the photo, capturing The DFC's antics in the frame.

NEIL
Excellent!

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - CLASS ROOMS - MONTAGE CONTINUES

The Dahmer Fan Club prods Jeff into the Student Council Yearbook photo. Jeff is less resistant. Neil snaps a photo.

OLIVER
Hey, Jeff.

JEFF
 (self-consciously)
 Hey, Oliver.

THE DAHMER FAN CLUB slip Jeff into *The Lantern* photo.

JEFF STEPS INTO the KEY CLUB photo. Neil snaps the picture.

JEFF STANDS in the DISCO CLUB photo. He's the only one not imitating Travolta's iconic pose.

Jeff blankly stares at the camera in THE DEBATE TEAM photo.

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Jeff slips into the back row of the NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY photo. Near him stand Derf, Kent, and Mike. Other club members notice Jeff in line.

NATIONAL HONOR STUDENT
 He's not in National Honor Society.

DERF
 Shut your piehole.

In the aisle, Neil lines up the framing and directs a Teacher on how to snap the photo, then runs ahead to step into place.

NEIL
 On the count of three, smile everyone.
 One. Two. Three.

Everyone smiles, except Jeff who blankly stares ahead. CLICK.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Jeff and Neil enter. They find Lionel at the dining table, focused on work papers.

JEFF
 Dad, you'd be proud. I'm in a bunch of new clubs. Great for my college application.

LIONEL
 That's great, son. Which ones?--

Joyce races by and lifts Lionel's briefcase off the table.

JOYCE
 It doesn't go here.

LIONEL
 JESUS CHRIST, JOYCE, I'm working, give
 that back. Joyce. DAMMIT, JOYCE!

Jeff is embarrassed by his parents' outburst. Sensing the
 tension, Neil cordially retreats.

NEIL
 Uh. Jeff, actually, I gotta get home
 for dinner. See you in school. Don't
 let the fame go to your head.

Jeff lowers his head as Neil leaves.

INT. KENT'S FAMILY HOME - FURNISHED BASEMENT - NIGHT

The Dahmer Fan Club hang out. Jeff is fascinated - if not
 obsessed - with a mounted deer head.

JEFF
 Awesome. What do you think they do
 with the insides?

KENT
 I dunno, weirdo. You mean venison?

While others flip through a titty mag.

MIKE
 Like these girls are as old as my mom.

KENT
 I swiped my dad's collection, what can
 I say?

DERF
 Dude, just drop by my work and pick
 out some fresh ones. Shhh. I'm
 dialing...

Derf dials a number from the yellow pages.

DERF (CONT'D)
 It's ringing.
 (into phone)
 Hehwo? Burlman Intewiors. Do you sell
 swipcovers?

MR. BURLMAN'S VOICE
 Why, yes we doooo!

DERF
 And dwapery? Do you sell dwapes?

MR. BURLMAN'S VOICE

Yes, we have m-m-many colors and fabrics--

DERF

How about animal skins? Zeebwa and tiger skins--

MR. BURLMAN'S VOICE

Hey! You've called here befoore.

Mr. Burlman hangs up. Derf and his buddies crack up. Though, Jeff's laugh is a discordant, out-of-step cackle.

INT. ACME FRESH MARKET - DAY

Derf bags groceries on the register line. Dropping by, Jeff and Mike wave in his direction and head straight for the

MAGAZINE & STATIONARY AISLE

Mike scans titty mags on display, and pulls out an *Easyriders Magazine*. He slips it into a *Mad Magazine*. Derf joins.

DERF

Good timing, my shift just ended.

Inside, glossy photos of topless women straddling motorcycles. They bury their heads, googly eyed. Jeff drifts away, concealing his disinterest.

A MOTHER WITH SHOPPING CART passes, forcing Derf and Mike to hide the magazines for a moment.

DERF (CONT'D)

If you gonna, buy it tucked in like that, but don't get caught.

From the next aisle, Jeff POPS his head over the shelf--

JEFF

BAAAAA AAAA.

Startling them. They hear more spastic GRUNTS and BLEEPs, fading into the distance. They scurry to get a better look.

PRODUCE SECTION

Jeff throws a spontaneous EPILEPTIC-LIKE SPAZZ, for its own sake, spooking a MOTHER & CHILD.

Jeff KNOCKS OVER a pyramid presentation of fresh apples. Derf and Mike, as witness, snort and fall over laughing.

This encourages Jeff to go further. He swipes a stack of oranges. Tears apart a cabbage.

He FLAILS and GRUNTS on the floor. Shoppers watch in dismay.

STORE MANAGER bolts over.

STORE MANAGER

What's going on!? What's going on?!

Undeterred, Jeff continues WRITHING HIS BODY.

STORE MANAGER (CONT'D)

Stop this. Get up!

Store Manager grabs Jeff's shirt but gets entangled in his spazz and tumbles over, falling on Jeff. They TUSSLE. Store Manager wrestles his way free, then hoists Jeff to his feet.

STORE MANAGER (CONT'D)

You have any respect for property? Any sense of decency, young man?!

Jeff evades the Store Manager's scowl.

STORE MANAGER (CONT'D)

You hear me? What's your name?

Jeff grunts an indiscernible reply.

STORE MANAGER (CONT'D)

What's your name? Huh?

Jeff bleeps another reply.

STORE MANAGER (CONT'D)

Who put you up to this?

Store Manager notices Derf and Mike tucked behind the fresh corn and cabbage, muffling their laughter. He darts right to Derf. Jeff dusts himself off and bows.

STORE MANAGER (CONT'D)

Mr. Backderf. Is this your doing?

Jeff and Mike flee the scene, stolen titty magazines in hand.

EXT. ACME FRESH MARKET - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff and Mike head toward Derf's Chevy Vegas to wait it out. Derf emerges from the store, bundling up his work apron.

MIKE

Oh shit. Did you get fired?

DERF

Almost. Begged him I had nothing to do with it, need that money for college. That's it. Jeff, we can't do that stuff in public, gonna get squashed by the damn adults. It's different - teachers are zombies.

JEFF

Yep, alright.

DERF

School's safe.

MIKE

Hey dude, that's Doctor York. Doctor York!

DOCTOR YORK steps out of his shiny foreign car. Doctor York is the Neighborhood Jogger. Jeff turns demure, stiffens up.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Hey, Doctor York. What's shakin'?

NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

Hi Michael. How are your parents?

MIKE

Deathly ill.

NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

What? My gosh, how come?

MIKE

Just jiving ya. They're good.

NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

And that cough of yours?

MIKE

Went away, pretty quickly actually.

NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

Great, be good. Stay out of trouble.

Dr. York/Neighborhood Jogger heads toward the grocery store.

JEFF

He runs past my house every Monday, Wednesday, Saturday.

MIKE

Um, okay. He holds my balls when I cough. Beat that, faggot.

DERF
Sounds like you dig it.

MIKE
Spazz.

Derf nudges Jeff, and they amble off.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Lionel pulls in. A brown Oldsmobile Omega is already parked in the driveway.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Lionel places down his briefcase on the kitchen counter and heads into the den where Jeff and Dave watch *CHiPS*.

LIONEL
Who's over? One of your friends, Jeff?

JOYCE
(barges in, stands proud)
I bought it.

LIONEL
What?

JOYCE
Only two thousand miles.

Joyce steps away, drawing Lionel into the living room.

LIONEL
(follows after her)
With what?

JOYCE
I'm financing it, not to worry.

LIONEL
How?

JOYCE
I laid down a deposit, how else?

Jeff shields Dave as they eavesdrop from around the corner.

LIONEL
Without discussing it? Give me back my checkbook, that was for groceries and--

JOYCE
My name's on it.

LIONEL
You're returning it tomorrow.

JOYCE
Over my dead body. It's final sale.

Lionel stews. Then digs deep into a cabinet and pulls out a dusty bottle of scotch.

LIONEL
I need a drink.

Lionel washes down his anger with a swig and steps outside, ignoring her.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DECK - CONTINUOUS

Lionel takes in the fresh air, drink in hand. He gazes out as Joyce continues to pace inside. Her harsh words are muffled by the window.

Jeff joins his father. They share a quiet moment interrupted by the call of a bird.

LIONEL
Hear that? A Red-Eyed Vireo or a Black-Billed Cuckoo. Either way, they only nest in the same place for one year... not entirety.

Lionel's mind goes elsewhere. Jeff seizes the opportunity and sneaks a sip of his dad's scotch.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

A huddle of SLACKERS chug beers. Figg lights up a joint.

SNARKY SLACKER
Dude, keep an eye out for Balderelli. That Vice Principal is a freakin' henchman. Been giving us the hairy eyeball. Hear what he did to Finch?

FIGG
Who cares?
(passing around a joint)
Reefer High Pride, Man.

Jeff injects himself in the gathering.

JEFF
(imitating his father)
I need a drink.

SNARKY SLACKER
 Alrighty then...

The slacker hands over a beer can--

SNARKY SLACKER (CONT'D)
 Quick, quick, before the next bell.

Jeff gulps it down. RIIING.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The same pack of slackers & stoners shuffle past Vice Principal Balderelli, who scans for such lowlifes.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI
 Blakely, I didn't forget, we got an
 appointment during fifth period.
 Better have your college applications
 ready to look over. Singer, you too.

Balderelli smells alcohol and pot in the air. He reaches out and grabs Snarky Slacker on the shoulder.

SNARKY SLACKER
 Shoot.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI
 What's the smell, Mr.?

As Jeff slides by, under the radar.

EXT. NEIL'S FAMILY FARM - BACK YARD/POND - DAY

Jeff & Derf follow Neil on a trail, with fishing poles.

DERF
 How many acres does your dad have?

NEIL
 I think it's like fifty or sixty. Was
 my grandfather's farm first.

The trail opens up to a clearing.

POND - CONTINUOUS

They sit on the edge of the pond and bait their hooks.

NEIL (CONT'D)
 Not much of a lake. Hope you guys
 didn't hope for more. Next winter we
 can get a game of ice hockey going.

JEFF

I don't know how to skate.

DERF

Me neither.

NEIL

Anyhoo, there's sunfish. Whatever we catch, we gotta toss 'em back in.

They cast in their lines and wait. It's tranquil.

DERF

You hear about Victor Cramer? His mom caught him masturbating with a vacuum.

NEIL

What? Is he alright?

JEFF

With a vacuum? How?

DERF

Supposedly, he stuck his wanker - how else would you masturbate with a vacuum?

More time passes...

NEIL

What's Helen Keller's favorite color? Corduroy.

DERF

What's the difference between parsley and pussy?

NEIL

What?

DERF

No one eats parsley.

Jeff gets a tug on his line.

JEFF

Uh... Hey!

NEIL

Cool. Ya got one. Reel it in.

Jeff REELS IN a pond fish, adding Dahmerisms to the effort for their amusement.

JEFF
MAAAAAA! BAAAAAA!

Jeff FLINGS the sunfish to the ground. It FLOPS AROUND at their feet. Jeff leers at it.

NEIL
Unhook it, before it dies. Here cut the line--

Neil hands over a pocketknife. Jeff kneels down and grips the fish. He's seething, breathing heavily.

With one FIERCE STRIKE, Jeff THRUSTS the blade into the fish - THOK! CHOK! CHUNK! - slicing it open, again, again into a bloody, mutilated mess.

NEIL (CONT'D)
What the hell!?! I said throw 'em back!!

Jeff stares at the bloody knife.

JEFF
Sorry...

DERF
What'd you do that for?

JEFF
Just wanted to see what it looked like.

Bloody fish bits at Jeff's knees. Derf and Neil withdraw, disgusted and baffled by his outburst. Off Jeff, his dark rippling reflection in the pond water.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HISTORY CLASS - DAY

Penny flirts with Derf, who doodles "Dahmer On The High Seas," a cartoon of Jeff spearfishing for sea monsters. She passes him a note. Derf stops doodling and takes a peak. It's her phone number. He tucks it away.

Jeff enters with a capped Styrofoam cup in hand and plops down at an empty desk nearby. Eyes glazed over.

PENNY
What's in the cup?

JEFF
(rolls back his head)
It's my medicine.

Mr. Fedele gets the class's attention and starts.

MR. FEDELE

Alright. As you read in Chapter Fifteen, Truman shared the same view of politics as James Madison, a hundred fifty years earlier. Presidential power is the power to persuade in a pluralist world where competing factions mobilize and counter-mobilize. How so?

Kent raises his hand.

KENT

The President must persuade and bargain until policy--

PENNY

(whispers, about Jeff)
Do you smell that?

DERF

Yeah, he reeks.

KENT

(continuing)
-- Ultimately arrives at what the typical citizen would want.

Jeff sits in a daze, drunk.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - BRICK WALL - AFTERNOON

Jeff lurks behind some bushes. He drinks from a fifth of vodka. Just around the corner--

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

Derf, Kent, Neil, and other members of the Marching Band hang near an exit door where more band nerds emerge from the Band room. They wait for practice to begin.

KENT

If you think about it, we're one of the few countries not on the metric system. That in itself is a measurement that isolates us from the rest of the world society. It epitomizes our foreign policy.

DERF

You're such a pseudo-intellectual.

Jeff emerges from around the corner. He blends in.

KENT
Jeff, where's your trumpet?

JEFF
I quit.

DERF
When?

JEFF
Yesterday.

KENT
Oh.

NEIL
Are you sure?

JEFF
Yeah.

Figg swings by on his pot-dealing route.

FIGG
Hey, posers.

KENT
How's business?

FIGG
Want me to kick your ass? Wanna see something rad?

DERF
Yeah, show us.

Figg reveals a pocket knife.

FIGG
My dad used this in Germany.

DERF
He fought the Nazis?

FIGG
No, idiot, he was one. He cut a Jew's neck with it.

Figg slices into the meat of his hand, showing off. No signs of pain as the incision bleeds. He sucks on it, then smiles for everyone. Blood drips from his teeth like a vampire.

Derf, Kent, Neil, and others immediately walk away, disgusted. Figg chuckles. Jeff remains behind, captivated. Derf notices and calls back--

DERF

Dahmer, C'mon. Stay away from that dude. He's a psycho-killer, for sure.

Jeff runs to catch up to Derf et al.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK - DAY

Gym class. Coach Natale times students running laps. Several psycho-stoners and band nerds slowdown to a walk.

COACH NATALE

C'mon boys! Only girls should run ten minute miles. Get your legs moving!

On the far side of the track, Jeff trots over to Figg.

JEFF

Hey.

FIGG

Hey.

JEFF

Can you keep a secret?

FIGG

Depends. Who's asking?

JEFF

I found a new spot in the woods across the street from my house, it's deep in, where no one ever goes. Storin' my road kill. And good place to get high.

COACH NATALE

Pick it up, pick it up!

FIGG

Sounds cool. Let's check it out.

INT. GOLD CHEVETTE - TRAVELING

Figg drives with a joint in hand. Jeff rides shotgun. "Victim of Changes" from Judas Priest on the 8-track. Figg's hunting knife rattles around in the console between them.

JEFF

All my father plays is the same Neil Sedaka album, over and over again.

FIGG
 (passing the joint)
 That sucks.

JEFF
 Take a right at the cemetery onto West
 Bath Road.

FIGG
 Look!

Ahead, a HITCHHIKER sticks out his thumb.

FIGG (CONT'D)
 Let's - for a hundred points!

Figg drifts the car onto the shoulder, heading straight for the hitchhiker. Jeff stiffens up as they barrel towards him.

Yet, at the last moment, Figg swerves around the hitchhiker, cackling to himself. Jeff sighs, relieved. In passing, Jeff's eyes lock on the shaken hitchhiker.

Figg takes a sharp turn, cutting off Jeff's stare.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - TRAVELING - CONTINUOUS

They cruise through a neighborhood. Figg spots a MUTT wandering along the side of the road.

FIGG
 Even better, ahead for fifty points!

Figg guns it. In horror, Jeff covers his face.

JEFF
 Don't...

The Chevette hits the mutt. THUMP! One squeal. It's dead.

INT. GOLD CHEVETTE - CONTINUOUS

Figg laughs as the rear tires roll over it. He looks in his rear view mirror and then puts the car in reverse.

JEFF
 Stop.

FIGG
 Extra points.

JEFF
 Don't, please.

FIGG
Oh, C'mon. It's fun.

JEFF
I said STOP.

FIGG
Whatever. I'm splitting.

Figg speeds away, cranking up the volume on Judas Priest's jolting "Deceiver." Jeff's visibly shaken by the incident.

JEFF
Let me out. Let me out.

FIGG
Don't be stupid, you're gonna show me that spot--

JEFF
NO. I'm going home. I'll cut through.

Figg pulls over. Jeff gets out, all riled up.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Figg speeds off. The tires spit gravel back at Jeff. But, in his hand is Figg's knife. Jeff slips into the woods.

INT. NEIL'S FAMILY HOME - BASEMENT - NIGHT

The Dahmer Fan Club mess around with an 8mm camera. Jeff arrives, happy to see friends. He approaches like a zombie.

JEFF
How about we make a zombie movie in your backyard? Call it Ghosts in the Graveyard, or something.

MIKE
Nah. The camera sucks in low light.

JEFF
Well, you were right, Figg's crazy. But I swiped this off him.

Jeff proudly reveals the half-finished joint.

INT. NEIL'S FAMILY HOME - BASEMENT - HALF HOUR LATER

All are high. They take drags from a dwindling roach.

MIKE
... Derf's got the hottest mom.

DERF

What? Gross, no way.

KENT

Neil's mom is smokin', so is the car she drives.

NEIL

Jaguar, piece of shit.

DERF

Neil's mom is the hottest.

MIKE

I banged her, off the hook.

KENT

Yeah right, you did not?

They bust up laughing.

NEIL

C'mon Kent, haven't you slept with your best friend's mom? We all have.

DERF

Yeah, I have.

MIKE

I have.

In a stoned paranoia, Kent believes them and conforms--

KENT

Yeah, I have.

DERF

No you haven't.

KENT

I did. With Mike's mom.

DERF

Liar. When?

Kent pauses, thinking.

KENT

C'mon, you haven't slept with your best friend's mom, really, have you?

They bust up some more.

JEFF

I wish I had a best friend.

Heads turn. Jeff is sitting upright in the corner.

DERF

Gawd Dahmer, I forgot you were over there. You freaked me out.

Jeff forces a laugh, trying to fit in. It's buzz kill.

NEIL

Awkward... Okay then. Let's raid the fridge before my folks get back.

JEFF

BRRAAAA?

But everyone else is already heading for the stairs. Jeff trails, an insecure tagalong.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

Fans file back to their cars after a football game victory. Derf and Kent shed their uniforms & instruments into the trunk of Derf's Chevy Vegas.

EXT. EMPTY PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Derf drives in a circle, going round & around.

MIKE

It's gonna tip! Tip it, tip it.

Hollering. A pure teenage waste of time.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - CONTINUOUS

Derf's Vegas slows down as it passes by Jeff's house.

MIKE

Are you gonna see if he's in?

DERF

Nah.

INT. WHITEY'S BURGER JOINT - DAY

Derf, Kent, and Mike play pinball and chow on burgers.

DERF

Something about last weekend in Neil's basement creeped me out. Jeff's a little off. You know?

KENT
But that's what we like about him.

MIKE
You think how we treat him is mean?

DERF
What? Why? No.

MIKE
You sure?

DERF
Yeah, he seems to enjoy it. If he didn't, he wouldn't do it. Kent, whataya think?

KENT
I dunno.

Off Derf, as he feverishly flips to save his pinball from going down the gutter.

EXT. WHITEY'S BURGER JOINT - PARKING LOT - DAY

DERF
Who's gettin' the backseat of pain?

MIKE/KENT
I call shotgun...

Kent and Mike race through the parking lot and wrestle for the front seat of Derf's car. Mike wins.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - SAME TIME

Distracted, Jeff pitches a ball to Dave, who chokes up on a LOUISVILLE SLUGGER. Dave whiffs, then retrieves the ball. Jeff glances at the road. Jeff pitches again, another whiff.

JEFF
Dave, you have to swing through it, like a tennis racquet. No, but with two hands. Give it, let me show you.

Jeff takes the baseball bat. He gets in a batter's stance to demonstrate when, out of the corner of his eye, he spots the Neighborhood Jogger trotting up the hill. Sparks arousal.

Jeff creeps closer to the road, clenches the bat. HUFF! HUFF! The jogger approaches. Thigh muscles flex. Chest pounds. Soiled in sweat.

Jeff glares at the passing jogger. He unconsciously holds the bat upright & erect.

DAVE

Jeff, what about me?

Breaking Jeff's spell. He drops the bat and heads inside.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Joyce interrupts Dave doing homework. She gives him kisses in a chipper, manipulative manner.

JOYCE

David, honey, have you thought about what's wrong with your father?

(Dave shakes his head)

Well, let me tell you... He's selfish, he's unreasonable, he's--

Compelled to interject, Jeff approaches. Joyce glares at him.

JEFF

Why are you being so hard on Dad?

JOYCE

Get away. Has nothing to do with you.

Becomes a mother-son stand off. Jeff retreats to his bedroom.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Dave, how would you like to live near Grandma and Grandpa?

INT. OLD SALEM RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A local greasy spoon/truck stop. Lionel and his two sons eat dinner in a booth. Lionel looks stressed. Jeff plays with his food, garnering confidence to ask:

JEFF

Dad? Is Mom going back... to the hospital?

LIONEL

Why do you ask?

JEFF

She's acting a lot like she did before she went the last time.

LIONEL

How so?

JEFF

She never talks to me. Or asks how I'm doing? Am I in her way?

LIONEL

Don't be silly. So, are there any girls in school that you like?

DAVE

Mom said she's moving to Wisconsin to live with Grandma.

LIONEL

She did. When?

DAVE

She told me, I dunno. Yesterday.

LIONEL

Your mother is doing better. I wouldn't take what she says at face value, but she's doing much better than before.

DERF

(interrupting)

Jeff.

Derf with his parents - CAROL & RICHARD BACKDERF - and younger brother pass by, headed to the register.

JEFF

Hey.

DERF

Mom, Dad, this is my friend Dahmer. Jeff Dahmer.

Lionel perks up. Parents shake hands, exchanging names.

CAROL

Where's Mrs. Dahmer?

LIONEL

She's home, a bit under the weather.

DERF

Dad, Jeff's dad is also a chemist.

LIONEL

I'm at The Firestone. After ten years at The Goodyear.

RICHARD

Really. I'm at the Goodrich Research Center. No longer working on SBRs though.

LIONEL

New monomers in the mix.

RICHARD

Just spent a year on macrogalleria.

LIONEL

Really.

RICHARD

Well, it's nice meeting you.

LIONEL

Yes.

CAROL

Have a good holiday.

DERF

Jeff, did you hear? Oliver Zlatka committed suicide two days ago.

JEFF

No.

CAROL

Yes, tragic.

DERF

His photo's in the *County Weekly*.

Richard flashes the front page with OLIVER ZLATKA'S PHOTO.

LIONEL

A real shame.

CAROL

I hear... well, it's hard for some. He was teased, I hear.

JEFF

I like Oliver. He's nice.

LIONEL

They live near us. Horrible.

RICHARD

Yes. Well, anyway, nice to meet you.

JEFF
When's the funeral?

DERF
The paper said the day after
Thanksgiving.

Regret and sorrow cross Jeff's face.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Jeff attends the funeral. Graveside as the coffin arrives. Jeff finds himself SUDDENLY AROUSED. He covers his erection in his slacks. He slinks away before the coffin is lowered.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - EVENING

Jeff and Dave decorate their scrawny Christmas tree. Their parents fight in the next room--

JOYCE
You should move out in the new year.

LIONEL
YOU'RE CRAZY!

JOYCE
ME?

LIONEL
I'M ALREADY SLEEPING ON THE SOFA.

JOYCE
I WILL TAKE DAVE TO MY MOTHER'S.

Jeff swells with sadness and leaves the house, unnoticed.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - EVENING

Jeff gets on his bike and rides out.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - EVENING

Jeff peddles the moonlit road. Tears run down his face. A car buzzes past, blaring its horn.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

Jeff trolls another back road. He rides up to a FROZEN OPOSSUM just lying there. He relishes in the discovery and eagerly pulls a plastic bag from his pocket.

EXT. DEEP WOODS - EVENING

Jeff carries his stuffed plastic bag down a narrow trail, leading him deeper into the woods. Jeff arrives at a

SMALL CLEARING

Hidden among thick brush and tall trees. Jeff lays the dead opossum on a rock. He takes out his (stolen) knife and meticulously dissects the road kill, first stripping away the flesh, then fondling the entrails in his hands.

INT. CHARTER BUS - TRAVELING - DAY

CU: JEFF'S FINGERNAILS. Remnants of dried blood underneath his thumbnail. He inconspicuously scrapes it out.

It's the start of the Senior Trip to Washington DC. Jeff laughs, with his Dahmer Fan Club buddies. A more relaxed, relieved glow on his face - a break from home does him good.

DERF

And the Dahmer Fan Club has to leave our mark on DC. Something grand.

MIKE

Boo-yah, something classic. Like what?

JEFF

A spazz on the White House lawn?

KENT

You can't get on the White House lawn.

Derf looks around. He lands on CHARLIE SMITH, the one black student, a burly guy.

DERF

Well for one... Charlie, as the token black in our class, let's get some Super 8 of you on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial giving Martin Luther King's I Have A Dream speech.

CHARLIE SMITH

Good one, loser.

DERF

The Dahmer Fan Club will stand behind you like--

CHARLIE SMITH

I play football, Backderf, not charades.

NEIL

Cut!

DERF

Fine, good one. We'll think of something.

Jeff notes the brainstorm. He gazes out the window. A highway sign reads: I-70E WASHINGTON and I-76 HARRISBURG.

EXT. DAYS INN, WASHINGTON DC - EVENING

Teachers call out pairs of names and hand out room keys.

TEACHER

Jeffrey Dahmer and Charlie Smith, you have Room 327.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Charlie takes the bed by the window. Jeff hesitantly waits in the door for Charlie to settle in. From the hallway--

NEIL

Dahmer, we're right here.

(whispers)

If he rapes you in the middle of the night, just knock.

JEFF

Very funny.

Jeff drops his bag on his bed.

JEFF (CONT'D)

So, we're roommates, huh...

CHARLIE SMITH

Yep.

Charlie turns on the TV, switches it to *Three's Company*. In the clip: Janet sustains Mr. Roper's belief that Jack is gay.

CHARLIE SMITH (CONT'D)

So obvious.

JEFF

Huh?

CHARLIE SMITH

Mr. Roper's an idiot. Taxi's on in a few.

Charlie crosses to the bathroom with his toothbrush. Jeff's eyes follow. He pulls off his shirt and watches TV, shirtless. The credits roll. Jeff waits. Charlie returns, though still disinterested in chatting.

JEFF

I'm curious... is it hard being the only black kid in our class?

CHARLIE SMITH

Ehh.

JEFF

Your palms are less black. You think your insides are the same color as mine? Is my stomach and your stomach the same color?

Charlie gives Jeff an intimidating stare, silencing the chitchat. Charlie lays supine on his bed as *Taxi* starts. Jeff sneaks a couple glances at his built body.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC - VARIOUS LANDMARKS

MONTAGE as Jeff AND HIS SENIOR CLASS approach the WASHINGTON MONUMENT. Neil photographs Derf on his back - the landmark his erection.

They scale THE CAPITOL BUILDING steps where Jeff throws a quick spazz.

They line THE WHITE HOUSE fence, like jailbirds.

MR. FEDELE

Kids, since World War Two, public access to The White House grounds has been increasingly restricted. But maybe you can see President Carter through a window.

DERF

Let us in! Let me in!

Nearby, a cluster of protestors hold up signs: No Nukes, Who Needs Oil? I Ride The Bus, Don't Trust The Shah.

INT. DAYS INN - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jeff and his pals play poker, and chow on soda and snacks. Jeff wins the hand.

MIKE

Damn, Dahmer. Thought you had nothin'.

PENNY
He's got a poker face.

JEFF
Beginner's luck, I guess.

Neil deals another hand.

DERF
Dahmer, Man of Mystery. Totally my
next cartoon.

Jeff smiles, enjoying the camaraderie. It's good to be away.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC - SIDEWALK - DAY

Jeff, Derf, Penny, and Neil stroll along Constitutional Ave.

DERF
Totally bogus we didn't meet the
President. Could've met our State
Senators back in Ohio, you know?

JEFF
Let's call Carter, see if he's free.

NEIL
That's ridiculous.

PENNY
That's impossible.

JEFF
How about Vice President Mondale?

Jeff heads to the nearest pay phone stall. He steps inside.
Dorf follows, amused.

JEFF (CONT'D)
(into pay phone)
Hi. Yes, I'd like the number for the
Vice President of The United States.
His office number, please.

Dorf chuckles. Neil and Penny idle by, skeptical.

PENNY
This is pointless. It's our last day
here, we should get lunch...

Jeff talks on the phone. Dorf gestures to Penny & Neil.

DERF
It's ringing.

Jeff starts talking--

DERF (CONT'D)
He's talking to an Aide.

Derf leans in to listen--

JEFF
(into phone)
... And we're from Revere High in Ohio, just in the middle of nowhere, and my friends and I are honor students and on the school newspaper, and we're all very interested in politics, and I was wondering if we could interview you on what it's like to work as an aide to the Vice President of The United States.
(listens)
Uh, huh. Sure. We're on Constitutional Avenue. Uh, huh. Great.

Jeff hangs up.

JEFF (CONT'D)
We're in.

PENNY
What? C'mon.

DERF
Dahmer's got balls, man. He's slick.

JEFF
We have an appointment in an hour.

INT. EISENHOWER EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

The AIDE gives Jeff, Derf, Neil, and Penny a tour.

JEFF
And you get to sit in meetings with the Vice President?

AIDE
Sometimes.

DERF
Really? Where's his office.

AIDE
Down that hall. Let's see if he's in.

INT. VICE PRESIDENT WALTER MONDALE'S OFFICE - DAY

VICE PRESIDENT WALTER MONDALE reviews documents with a Cabinet Member. The teens wait in a line near the door, nervous. The Vice President approaches.

VP WALTER MONDALE

Kids, thanks for dropping by. I have a moment before a call with Indira Gandhi, who just resigned as Prime Minister of India. Where are you from?

Jeff's heart pounds, in awe.

VP WALTER MONDALE (CONT'D)

Ohio's a great state. So, what do each of you want to be when you grow up?

The Vice President looks to Derf.

DERF

I, like, want to draw cartoons, not for TV. I want to draw comics, yeah.

VP WALTER MONDALE

Well, that's great, as long as you don't draw any political ones making fun of me.

DERF

Of course not.

Jeff stiffens. The Vice President finally reaches him--

VP WALTER MONDALE

And so, what interests you?

All heads turn. His friends are curious, as well.

JEFF

Biology.

VP WALTER MONDALE

Great. You should pursue that.

The Vice President shakes Jeff's clean hand.

EXT. EISENHOWER EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

They race away from the building, soaring and giddy. They gratefully pat Jeff on the back.

NEIL

That was the coolest thing I've ever
done in my life. I can die now.
Dahmer, I can die now, thank you.

Jeff basks in their congratulations.

INT. CHARTER BUS - TRAVELING - NIGHT

The bus rumbles into the Revere High parking lot as the trip reaches its definitive end. Out the window, parents eagerly await the return of their kids. Despondent over the return, a grave curtain of darkness returns to Jeff's face.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Jeff sulks back to his father's car.

LIONEL

You have a good time? Y'alright?

JEFF

Uh-huh. It was great.

LIONEL

You don't look well. You have a fever?

JEFF

I don't think so.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING AREA - DAY

A converted living room lined with chairs. Two children babble and play, just beyond arm's length of their mother. The kids suck on new lollipops.

MOTHER

Careful.

The mother makes departing small talk and leaves with her kids. A NURSE appears with a clipboard.

NURSE

Mr. Jeffrey Dahmer.

ANGLE ON Jeff Dahmer seated against the far wall.

JEFF

Yes, that's me.

The nurse shuffles down a hallway. He follows.

INT. DOCTOR'S EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Jeff waits, seated on the examination table in his underwear. He looks around at the cabinets, jars of cotton balls and gauze, the weight scale, the eye chart.

Dr. York enters, sucking on a lollipop - it's the Neighborhood Jogger at work. He glances at the clipboard.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER
Are you running a cold?

JEFF
(represses his excitement)
I think so. I've been getting chills.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER
Always nice to see new patients.

JEFF
A physical, maybe?

Jeff stiffens as Dr. York moves in, on his swivel chair.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER
Stick out your tongue. Say Ahhh.

JEFF
Ahhhh.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER
Tonsils look good. Turn. Let me see your ears...

JEFF
Do you do surgery?

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER
No.

JEFF
Why not?

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER
I like caring for patients but I'm not the type to wanna cut someone open. So this, but almost became a podiatrist.

JEFF
Less blood.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER
Exactly.

JEFF

What about what's on a patient's mind?

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

You mean, a psychiatrist?

JEFF

My mom had one.

Dr. York puts his stethoscope against Jeff's chest and back. Jeff fights his quick breathing.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

So far, you look healthy. Okay, before I weigh you. Do you hurt when you pee?

JEFF

Huh? No.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

Are you sexually active?

JEFF

What kind, sort of...

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER

You're at the age. No growths, okay. Pull down your underwear.

Jeff pulls down his underwear.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER (CONT'D)

Cough. Cough again. Cough again.

Suddenly, a stalled silence. He returns to his clipboard. An awkward tension between them, implies Jeff became erect.

DR. YORK/NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER (CONT'D)

Pull up your pants, I'm finished.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Standing in the same position, Jeff finishes jerking off. KNOCK. Another KNOCK.

JEFF

Just a minute, go away, just a minute.

He sharpens up and pulls up his pants.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

The Dahmer Family rush out of the house. Lionel and the boys are in suits, Joyce in a dress. They scramble into a car.

LIONEL
Remember, please, behave yourself.
It's my boss and work associates--

JOYCE
Boys, he doesn't even know the groom.

LIONEL
It's my boss's son, which is all the
same. Kids, there'll be some other
kids there your age.

INT. AKRON HOTEL - RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

It's cocktail hour. Jeff approaches the bar.

JEFF
My Dad wants a Jack and coke.

BARTENDER
(distrustful)
Where is he?

JEFF
Over there.

BARTENDER
Which one?

JEFF
On the other side... I swear...

He spots Joyce slipping out with a sleazy PERENNIAL BACHELOR.

BARTENDER
Sorry, kid, he'll have to come get it
himself.

Jeff leaves the bar, then swipes an almost empty cocktail
glass from a busboy's tray.

AT THE TABLE - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff sits, sober, with his father and brother.

COWORKER
Lionel, and where's your wife?

LIONEL
She's, uh, not feeling well. Headache.
Went to rest in the car.

INT. AKRON HOTEL - HALLWAY - LATER

Lionel finds Joyce fixing her makeup in a hallway mirror. The Perennial Bachelor idles feet away.

LIONEL

Where have you been? Dinner was served a half hour ago.

JOYCE

I was fucking that guy over there.

The Perennial Bachelor slips back into the party, avoiding.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

He's your boss's cousin, staying here at the hotel. I might just stay the night. If you won't divorce me, then deal with it.

Lionel swallows his pride and anger.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

But, at home, he furiously packs two suitcases.

LIONEL

I've had enough. You're a mess and impossible... I'm done with you.

JOYCE

Good.

Lionel storms out. Jeff follows, helpless.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lionel reverses out of the driveway.

JEFF

Don't, dad, don't...

JOYCE

Finally.

Jeff runs off.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jeff stumbles through the woods, unraveling, agonizing. He WHACKS a fallen branch against a tree repeatedly... draining himself. The sound travels... A KITCHEN LIGHT turns on.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - TENNIS COURTS - DAY

Jeff WHACKS tennis balls in every direction, spazzing out for his teammates. Neil stops rallying to watch.

TENNIS COACH

Jeff Dahmer, if you don't clean up your act, you're off the team.

Jeff stops. He drops his racquet and WALKS OFF.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - BRICK WALL - DAY

Jeff pounds a fifth of gin in no time. Slurps the last drops.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

The Dahmer Fan Club hangs around Derf's Chevy Vegas, listening to Buzzard Radio 101 WMMS. Jeff shuffles by.

DERF

Dahmer. Dahmier, boy. Wanna hang?

KENT

How about later? Whitey's for burgers and arcade - they just got Death Race.

JEFF

Nah.

Jeff veers away, disengaging...

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Balderelli polices the main thoroughfare. With cunning, Jeff avoids and staggers by, gripping his leather briefcase, then BUMPS into two students. They smell the alcohol.

STUDENT

Dang.

INT. HEALTH CLASS - DAY

In a dark room, a corny 1960s 16mm anti-drug educational film unspools for students. MR. LAPOLLA monitors the projector.

TEENAGE BOY ON SCREEN

I'm glad I didn't jump off that bridge. It's much higher than it looked.

TEENAGE GIRL ON SCREEN

I really think you should talk to someone. LSD is dangerous.

NARRATOR FOR FILM

Most young people think they're stronger and have more willpower than they actually do.

Jeff opens the door, tries to slip in undetected--

MR. LAPOLLA

You're late, Mr. Dahmer. Again.

NARRATOR FOR FILM

And one of the potentials for drug traffic is the school.

Jeff trips over a student in the front row.

STUDENT

Watch it, Jerk!
(smells Jeff's boozy
breath)
Yuck, arrr, Damn.

JEFF

S-S-Sorry.

Disoriented, Jeff BLOCKS THE LIGHT from the projector. Blinded, he struggles to find a path to an empty chair.

NARRATOR FOR FILM

Here the connection can be found with these peddlers of misery who prey on the unwary, the uninformed, the curious, the thrill-seekers...

MR. LAPOLLA

Move it, Dahmer, get a seat!

NARRATOR FOR FILM

... Most young people will continue through life as normal, responsible citizens. Others, the shunted and unloved, are the candidates for the slave world of lifelong drug addiction.

Jeff drops into a chair, and lowers his sad, lonely face.

NARRATOR FOR FILM (CONT'D)

But no-one is immune. How does it happen? Where does it start? What are the signs?

EXT. WOODS BEHIND SCHOOL - DAY

A huddled cluster of upperclassmen get high and drink, along with one youthful teacher, MR. PITT. Passing around a joint-

SNARKY SLACKER
You blow up some gooks?

MR. PITT
If I told you, I'd have to kill you too.

ANOTHER STONER
Awesome. C'mon.

Nearby, Jeff drinks by his lonesome. His stash and finished bottles are tucked under a log.

SNARKY SLACKER
Shit, dude, look, Balderelli.

Heads turn. In the distance, Vice Principal Balderelli crosses the practice field, approaching.

ANOTHER STONER
Run.

The stoners and Mr. Pitt scatter. Jeff doesn't freak out and just lies down behind the log, playing dead.

Balderelli steps into the woods and looks around. Smells the pot and goes further in... ducking under branches. He passes right by Jeff, but doesn't see him. Then, spots a couple of stoners making a run for it across the practice field.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI
Hey, I SEE YOU. STOP RIGHT THERE.

Balderelli storms out of the woods and chases them down. Jeff sits back up and continues drinking.

INT. YEARBOOK & SCHOOL NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

Drafts of the yearbook layout are pinned to a bulletin board. Derf, Neil, and Mike enthusiastically rush in.

DERF
It's here!

MIKE
Dahmer's got to see this. We should get him. Neil, see if he's around.

Yet, they cannot contain themselves and rip open the package. They spread out the developed club photos. Laughter swells over sight of Jeff's face in many.

DERF

... And here he is again!

MIKE

So bad, it's so bad!

Their YEARBOOK ADVISOR enters. She's a snippy woman.

YEARBOOK ADVISOR

Good, they came in. Let's see.

She scans the photos, realizing the prank.

YEARBOOK ADVISOR (CONT'D)

What is Jeff Dahmer - he's not in any of these clubs. Who did this?

NEIL

He's not?

YEARBOOK ADVISOR

He doesn't belong in Debate or here or this one.

She grabs a wide black marker and BLOTCHES OUT JEFF'S FACE in all the club photos, a fitting symbol.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jeff stares at the wall, mouthing the lyrics to Black Sabbath's "Iron Man" playing on his cassette player.

BLACK SABBATH LYRICS

Is he alive or dead?
Has he thoughts within his head?
We'll just pass him there,
Why should we even care?

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Joyce is deeply absorbed on the phone. Jeff approaches.

JOYCE

(into phone)

Is he out of his mind? I can't believe that's his position. He's being completely irrational.

JEFF

Mom.

JOYCE
 (into phone)
 There's no way I'd give custody of
 Dave over. Never in a million years.

JEFF
 Mom.

JOYCE
 (to Jeff)
 Shhh.
 (back to phone)
 He's g-g-getting everything. I'M NOT
 BEING IRRATIONAL. YOU HEAR ME? YOU'RE
 MY LAWYER, NOT HIS. DAYS? I WON'T
 DISCUSS HIS CUSTODY.

Jeff swipes hot dogs from the fridge and slinks out.

EXT. WATKINS FAMILY HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Lurking in the bushes, Jeff lures Wendy Watkins' Irish Setter
 over to him with his raw hot dogs.

JEFF
 Good dog.

Jeff unlatches the dog from its run line.

EXT. DEEP WOODS - DAY

Jeff leads the dog to the same spot where he once tore apart
 the frozen opossum. Jeff takes out his knife. His teeth
 chatter, readying for the kill. The dog sits, panting,
 wagging its tail.

Jeff approaches, knife in hand. He pulls the dog to his
 SLAUGHTER ROCK, where remnants of rodent skulls are scattered
 around. The dog yaps. Its tail continues to wag.

But, at the last moment...

Jeff cannot do it. He TOSSES the knife aside.

JEFF
 Go on! Go! Go home. Get!

The dog runs off. Jeff drops to his knees.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HISTORY CLASS - DAY

Mr. Fedele takes attendance. He notes Jeff's absence.

MR. FEDELE

Mr. Jeff Dahmer, absent again. That's five times in the last two weeks.

DERF

(whispers)

We need our mascot back... Life's not as much fun around here.

KENT

I know.

NEIL

Maybe we should just let him be, you know? He's not--

DERF

C'mon, Neil. It's all - he likes the attention.

NEIL

Maybe so. But...

Neil keeps his thoughts to himself.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - BRICK WALL - AFTERNOON

Jeff finishes the last drop from a fifth of vodka.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Parents hurriedly pick up their kids from after-school practices & rehearsals. They pass Jeff slouched on the front steps, sobering up.

PARENT

Mr. Dahmer, another long day hitting the books?

JEFF

Yep.

He turns away to conceal his sozzled self.

EXT. ACME FRESH MARKET - PARKING LOT - DAY

In her Oldsmobile Omega, Joyce pulls into a parking spot. Dave sits in the passenger seat. Jeff sits in the back. Lionel's already there, waiting by his car.

INT. OLDSMOBILE OMEGA - DAY

JOYCE

Just a minute, before you spend the day with your father, I need to talk to him. Stay in the car.

Joyce takes a set of legal documents and gets out. Jeff quickly steals some loose cash from her purse.

Both sons hear something, and look out the rear window. They watch in stunned paralysis as:

Joyce and Lionel get in each other's faces, talking forcefully. Joyce waves the legal papers in the air.

Suddenly, Joyce blows her lid. She shoves Lionel. She slaps at him, yelling. Retaliating, veins pop out of Lionel's neck. He holds her arms down. She kicks him. He kicks her back. He shoves her away. She runs right back at him, flailing her arms, losing papers to the ground.

RANDOM ADULTS rush over to break it up. They separate Joyce and Lionel. Joyce is crying, and threatening him. All words are muffled inside the car as the kids watch, helpless.

Joyce returns to the car, fuming. She rummages for her keys. She pulls out in a rage.

DAVE

I thought we were going to see Daddy.

Jeff glares at his mom.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - MORNING

Jeff buys more alcohol from a HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT.

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT

You're my best customer.

Jeff takes the large bottle of vodka and drops it into his leather briefcase, revealing how he transports it undetected.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - LATER

Rows of parked cars. It's quiet with class in session. Coach Natale wanders through on a cigarette break and discovers Jeff behind a car drinking.

COACH NATALE

Hey! What's this? On school grounds.
What's your name?

JEFF

J-Jeff.

COACH NATALE

What do you have to say for yourself?

JEFF

(puts on an act)

It's just... My parents are splitting up and I'm pretty depressed about it and I thought drinking might help--

COACH NATALE

I'm sorry about your folks--

INT. VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI

But that's no excuse. It's not as bad as it seems.

JEFF

Little late for that.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI

It's no excuse, period. Here's the deal. You have a choice. I can either phone your parents and tell them what you did or you can take ten licks and not drink again. Your call.

JEFF

Don't call my parents.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI

Your choice... oookay.

Balderelli pulls a paddle from his desk drawer.

JEFF

Really?

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI

Bend over and grab the wall.

Jeff's stunned. He puts his hands on the wall. Balderelli winds up and WHACKS Jeff in the ass. Jeff drops to his knees.

VICE PRINCIPAL BALDERELLI (CONT'D)

Get up.

He returns to his position and receives a paddling. Each strike is worse than the last.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - JEFF & DAVE'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Alone, Jeff paces. A sore limp from the paddling lingers. A swirl of depraved thoughts, his dismantling family, his own inner-disgust brings him to tears. Haunted:

JEFF

Okay... alright... okay... alright...

Tears slide down his face. He drops onto his bed and curls up beside the DEAD NEIGHBORHOOD JOGGER, stiff and speechless. Jeff finds comfort. Jeff holds the dead jogger tight.

JEFF (CONT'D)

(mutters)

Don't leave me, don't leave me.

CUT TO WIDE SHOT of Jeff in bed alone. The dead Neighborhood Jogger is a fantasy.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

Derf doodles a cartoon of Dahmer in his notebook. Class discussion of Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* is background noise. TAP TAP on the window gets his attention. Outside the window, Jeff POPS his head up and GROWLS at him. Derf chuckles.

ENGLISH TEACHER

Mr. Backderf. Are you with us?

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

A field party. Bully-jocks, Psycho-Stoners, Band Nerds are all there. Beer cans. Making out.

The Dahmer Fan Club shotgun beers. Several Bully-Jocks impose:

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

Look, the Rah Rah band nerds drink.

KENT

Yeah, whatdya you think, we'd?--

BULLY-JOCK NUMBSKULL

Lightweights--

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

Be home playin' snare drum.

BULLY-JOCK DICKWAD

Snap.

DERF

More active than standing on the sidelines.

MIKE

Dang.

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

Good one. Y'alright for a turd. Where's your mascot, Dumb Dahmer?

DERF

He's not here--

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

He gonna be your prom date, Backderf?

DERF

Your mother might, if she can fit in a dress.

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

Dahmer's like your little court jester. 'Cept he's not hangin' with you much anymore.

DERF

The fan club lives on.

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

Really? Looks like he ditched ya.

NEIL

Just think he's confused--

BULLY-JOCK NUMBSKULL

And looks like Neil's a little protective.

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

And passing out cartoon flyers is getting kinda old, don't ya think?

DERF

He's still into it.

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF

I dunno. Seems like you're closing out your high school career shucked by the fool.

BULLY-JOCK NUMBSKULL

Makes you the fools that you are.

DERF
We'll get him to show up.

MIKE
For what?

DERF
Uh. A rockin' command performance.
He'll ante up. For sure.

BULLY-JOCK DICKWAD
Doubt it.

DERF
(aside, to Kent & Mike)
Let's just do it. Let's get him to
take his spazz to the max--

KENT
Derf, he's hasn't spazzed in weeks.

NEIL
He's not really interested in a whole
lot anymore. Better not--

DERF
Yeah but, what if we pay him? I'll put
in five bucks.
(drops cash in his cap)
Gets 'em out on a Saturday.

KENT
I'm in. It'll be killer.

MIKE
He'll surely blow it on booze.

DERF
(to Neil)
C'mon, man, put in some. I'm taking a
pot.

MIKE
Yeah, for his booze fund.

Neil shakes his head, disapproving.

NEIL
Nuh-uh.

DERF
Chill, Neil.

Bully-Jock Jerkoff pays in.

BULLY-JOCK JERKOFF
I'll believe it when I see it.

Derf and Mike start to circulate, selling more tickets.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY

Derf stops Jeff in his stuporous path. Jeff bleeps, BRAAAA.

DERF
Hey, Jeff. So, look, we got an idea
for the Fan Club...

Onlooking, Neil steps away, remarks--

NEIL
(to Kent)
We should just leave him alone. He's
not a side show attraction.

BACK TO Derf, wrapping up his plan with Jeff--

DERF
Great. Here's thirty-two bucks. It'll
be your Command Performance. We might
have more by Saturday.

Jeff nods, half-coherent.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Derf and Kent arrive in the Chevy Vegas. They head to the
kitchen door and knock. Jeff opens the door.

JEFF
Gweeetings.

DERF
Ready?

JEFF
Just a sec.

Jeff heads back to retrieve something. Derf and Kent decide
to tiptoe into the house.

KENT
(chuckling)
Where's that pink foot stool?

They head through the kitchen and discover depressive Joyce
Dahmer slouched over at the dining room table, quivering.

JOYCE
Hiii boyzzzz.

Derf and Kent stiffen up. The pink foot stool is tipped over on its side, abandoned in corner.

JEFF
Ready?

Jeff is in the kitchen, with a jacket draped over a paper grocery bag, under his arm. Derf and Kent follow him out.

INT. CHEVY VEGAS - TRAVELING - MOMENTS LATER

It's drizzling. The worn wipers stutter across the windshield. Derf drives with Kent in the passenger seat. Jeff sits in the back, straddling the center hump.

DERF
(glances in rearview mirror)
You're blocking my view. Sit on either side, Dahmer.

JEFF
I'm good.

Jeff pulls a six-pack of Busch beer from the paper bag. He pops open a can and flauntingly gulps it down like water. He crushes the can and drops it on the floor, then repeats. It's uncomfortable to watch, so they chatter:

KENT
Is Cooper coming?

DERF
He said he was.

KENT
And what about Borowski and Guentlzer?

DERF
Guentlzer is but Borowski didn't pay.
We'll see who in ten minutes.

Derf peeks in the rear view mirror. Jeff pounds another beer, then another. His "aura of doom" makes Derf twinge.

DERF (CONT'D)
I never seen ya drink like that before, Dahmer.

JEFF
Well, here I am.

INT. CHEVY VEGAS - TRAVELING - TEN MINUTES LATER

They pull into the Summit Mall Parking lot. Jeff burps in the backseat, already finished with his beers.

EXT. SUMMIT MALL - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

In a daze, Jeff follows Derf and Kent to the main entrance.

JEFF

Where we meeting these idiots?

DERF

Right in front of the Orange Julius.

JEFF

I'm psyched.

INT. SUMMIT MALL - MOMENTS LATER

Derf and Kent, with Jeff trailing, spot the pack of paid SPECTATORS, numbering nearly a dozen upperclassmen.

MIKE

'Bout time!

(hands Jeff cash)

Another fifteen bucks. Not bad.

Jeff stuffs the cash in his pocket.

DERF

Ok. Let's do this.

One teenager pulls out an 8mm camera. Others start commenting and snickering with anticipation.

DERF (CONT'D)

We present Jeff--

JEFF

Jeffrey. For this I'm Jeffrey.

DERF

The Dahmer Fan Club presents Jeffrey Dahmer in his Command Performance.

Derf pats Jeff on the back, gesturing forward...

DERF (CONT'D)

(whispers in Jeff's ear)

Welcome to the wild world of wasteful capitalism. Why don't you show them what it's all about?

JEFF
Gllllaaaaaaadddd-llllleeee.

Jeff walks down the main shopping hallway toward innocent shoppers. The teenage pack trail him at a distance.

And like its origins in the high school hallway, Jeff throws an EPIC EPILEPTIC-LIKE SPAZZ, flailing his arms and legs...

JEFF (CONT'D)
BAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

Unsuspecting SHOPPERS turn heads, spooking many. Some scurry away with children. The teenage-pack roars with laughter, snorting, falling over each other.

THE TEENAGE-PACK
Oh, Man! That was awesome. Where is he? Boo-yah. Over there? Get closer.

Jeff chases THREE MIDDLE-SCHOOL GIRLS, moaning and grunting in their wake. The girls dip into the bathroom for safety.

THE TEENAGE-PACK (CONT'D)
Did you get that on camera?

Jeff continues plodding through the mall, spooking more and more shoppers with flares of fits--

JEFF
Uh! Uh! Uh! Uh! UUUUUUUUH!

A mother grabs her child. An elderly couple scurry into a clothing store.

Jeff approaches a FOOD CLERK passing out free samples. He takes two handfuls in his mouth.

JEFF (CONT'D)
What are these?

FOOD CLERK
Toasted sunflower seeds.

Jeff SPITS THEM OUT EVERYWHERE--

JEFF
PFFFFFFFT. I'm allergic, I'm allergic... AAHHHHHH

--BUCKING AND RETCHING as he scampers away.

JEFF (CONT'D)
KOFF! KOFF! GUUUH!

Jeff approaches STOUFFER'S RESTAURANT, the main dining spot. He startles diners in a front table, then knocks over drinks at the next and slams his hands - SPLAT - into their food.

Jeff shudders into the restaurant, spazzing down the aisle.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Mr. Burrrrrrlmannnnn? Mr. Burlmannnn
where are you? Where's my stooooool?

RESTAURANT MANAGER

Hey, kid, get out--

Jeff responds with a ROARING SPAZZ, scaring all the diners.

RESTAURANT MANAGER (CONT'D)

OUT - OUT. LEAVE.

The teenage-pack howl with laughter, bringing many to tears.

The Restaurant Manager chases Jeff out. Jeff writhes his way through the tables, avoiding the manager on his way out...

MONTAGE as Jeff continues his romp in & out of more stores:

- JEFF POPS up from behind a clothing rack, scares mother & daughter.
- JEFF CREEPS OUT a gaggle of girls entering the cinema.
- JEFF CONVULSES at the feet of a family.

JEFF

Mommmmmmm, Mommmmmmm, Urrrrr, Mommmmm.

Leads to an anticlimactic end... The group's interest has dwindled. They start to break apart as Jeff's final, waning fit barely causes a reaction from a passing shopper.

INT. SUMMIT MALL - MOMENTS LATER

The teenage pack lingers, chitchat about next activities encircles Jeff, who's seemingly discarded.

KENT

... how about Rocky Horror?

Derf is the only one who senses Jeff's exclusion.

DERF

(obligatory)

That was dope, Dahmer.

But, no response. His hollow core dumps a sourness on Derf.

EXT. SUMMIT MALL - PARKING LOT - EVENING

It's still raining. Derf and Kent head to the car. Jeff shuffles behind them.

INT. CHEVY VEGAS - TRAVELING

Jeff stews in the backseat, a clenched fist. Derf's punk plays on his stereo. It's Electric Eels' "Agitated."

DERF

Or head into Akron, check out The Bank, that new punk club? Yeah.

KENT

You're alone in this punk stuff, Derf.

DERF

It's a revolution of the American dream gone bust. What could be more enlightening and unsettling at the same time?

JEFF

Me.

DERF

Huh?

JEFF

You're welcome.

A strained silence.

DERF

I missed the turn onto Granger, so I'll just take the left on West Bath back to your place. Okay, Dahmer?

JEFF

I'll go to The Bank, bang some heads around.

DERF

I'm not sure if we're--

JEFF

(mumbles)

You're welcome. Something. Thank you.

KENT

You alright, dude?

JEFF

Just let me out. Why not drag me along? Let me out.

DERF

I'm gonna drive you home.

JEFF

Pull over. Fuck. Dickheads.

Jeff HITS the back of Kent's seat.

KENT

Whoa.

Derf pulls his car over onto the shoulder. Jeff pushes Kent's seat forward before the car comes to a stop.

DERF

Chill, chill.

Jeff BLOWS his lid.

JEFF

Out, let me out.

Kent opens his door and steps out to make Jeff's exit easier.

KENT

What's the stink?

JEFF

The Dahmer Fuckin' Fan Club.

Jeff kicks the door, then the side of the car.

DERF

YO!

Jeff pounds the roof. Derf bursts out of his car.

JEFF

Why'd they make me do that?

DERF

Who?

KENT

What are you talking about?

JEFF

You. Them. Everyone. Thanks for nothing.

KENT
You got fifty bucks, dude.

JEFF
No no no no. You don't get it. Don't
get it. You don't get it. Forget it. I
thought you guys had my back.

DERF
We do, Dahmer.

JEFF
That you were my friends.

Jeff jumps at Kent, an awkward mix of a punch and hug. An animalistic, askew moment. Kent wiggles away as Derf jumps in to pull them apart. It's such an odd moment that both Derf and Kent laugh it off, which unintentionally makes it worse for Jeff.

Derf and Kent withdraw to the car, unsure what to do next.

Jeff catches his breath, wipes his runny nose.

JEFF (CONT'D)
I'm fine.

DERF
What's wrong with you Dahmer?

JEFF
Get out of here. BRAAAA. Go.

Derf and Kent get back in the Chevy Vegas. The ignition stutters before finally turning over.

KENT
Bye, dude.

They drive off. Jeff is left in the rain, deeply despondent.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff enters, sopping wet. A hollow shell of his former self. Joyce is there, uncommonly joyful and bright.

JOYCE
(listening, on phone)
Uh huh, uh huh, great. That's great
news. I will. Tomorrow, first thing.

Joyce hangs up. She turns to Jeff.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Great news. The divorce is finalized.

JEFF

Oh.

JOYCE

And I need you to promise to keep a secret from your father. I'm moving back to Wisconsin with your brother.

JEFF

When?

JOYCE

As soon as possible. Your dad is getting the house. And you can't tell your dad I'm doing this. Promise me you won't tell.

(strained pause)

Promise me, Jeff. Jeffrey.

JEFF

I won't, I won't tell.

Joyce walks away. He slinks back to his bedroom where the baseball bat waits, leaning in the corner.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - FRONT YARD - DAY

Jeff hides in the bushes with the baseball bat, anxious. He peaks out. Dr. York/Neighborhood Jogger is approaching. Jeff recoils into the bushes. His eyes beam with excitement.

INTERCUT WITH:

Dr. York's running sneakers grip the pavement. Muscles flexing. Sweat dripping down his face.

Jeff TIGHTENS HIS GRIP on his bat. Anticipation whets his appetite. Will this be his first kill? He edges out...

Just then--

Joyce Dahmer pulls into the driveway in her Oldsmobile Omega.

Dr. York runs by, saved by the interruption. Jeff keels over, simmering and unfulfilled.

Joyce pulls shopping bags from the trunk, then notices Jeff tangled in the bushes.

JOYCE

I'm not washing those jeans again.
Just went shopping for the last time,
too tired to make dinner. I'm done
making dinner for this family.

She heads inside. Jeff's tumultuous mood turns to rage.
Baseball bat still in grip, he eyes the car. He winds up,
then beats the nearest tree trunk, roaring:

JEFF

RRRRRAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

EXT. DEEP WOODS - DAY

It's a beautiful spring day. TWO KIDS, nearly 14 years
innocent, stroll on a trail.

They come around a bend and discover a DOG SKULL perched on a
stick. Flies encircle - it's a recent kill. Nearby, the
MUTILATED DOG CARCASS is nailed to a tree trunk.

Horrified, the kids run off.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PRACTICE FIELD

Students toss a frisbee, enjoying a beautiful day at the end
of the school year.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - BAND ROOM - DAY

Derf and Mike play chess.

MIKE

Not a surprise, but I heard you asked
Penny to the prom.

DERF

Yep. Been sorta on the down low.

KENT

Yeah, like non existent.

NEIL

Like overdue.

DERF

Like none of your bees wax. Check.

NEIL

Heard she asked you.

DERF

No. Actually, checkmate.

MIKE
Shoot. Who am I gonna invite?

They head to the exit door.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Not that I really wanna go--

NEIL
I heard two kids found a dead dog in
the woods, behind Bath Church.

KENT
Really. Crazy.

NEIL
Yeah, my neighbor and a friend found
'em. The kids freaked out.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

KENT
I bet it's a coven of witches.

NEIL
Coven of witches?

KENT
Totally. If you read, there's a rise
in satanic cults. I'm serious.

DERF
That's whack. Mike, maybe you can ask
them to make a wish in their cauldron
to get you a prom date.

MIKE
Buzz off.

Jeff comes from around the bushes and slinks past.

NEIL
Dahmer. Mike's looking for a date.

Jeff stares at all of them, more distant. No answer.

MIKE
Derf's putting you up for Prom King.

DERF
No we're not.

MIKE

There isn't a girl within fifty miles
that would go to prom with Dahmer.

JEFF

No?

The comment stings. Jeff stares down Mike.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Jeff stops BRIDGET, a meek sophomore, on her way to class. He uncharacteristically turns on his social charm.

JEFF

Bridget. Hi. You got a second?

BRIDGET

I was heading to French class.

JEFF

Well... I know we don't know each
other too well.

BRIDGET

Not really.

JEFF

But I heard your friend Margaret is
going to the prom.

BRIDGET

Yeah, with Brian Guentlzer. They're
friends from Debate.

JEFF

What are you doing Saturday?

BRIDGET

Some final papers are due.

JEFF

Well, what about going to the prom?

BRIDGET

Oh. With who?

JEFF

Me.

BRIDGET

Oh. I dunno.

JEFF

You could join her. And go with me.

BRIDGET

I don't think that's a good idea.

JEFF

Why?

BRIDGET

I'm gonna be late.

JEFF

It'll be fun.

BRIDGET

You're not gonna be weird or drink?

JEFF

I promise, I won't. Look, barely any upperclassmen know you but if you go to the prom, you'll be way ahead of most girls in your class. You wanna seem normal, right?

BRIDGET

I guess.

JEFF

So many freshman just wish they could be asked. It's totally normal that I thought of you.

BRIDGET

I dunno, can I think about it? Let me ask my parents.

Flattered, Bridget scurries away. Jeff smiles.

INT. COUNTRY LANE PARTY CENTER - RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

Prom Night. "Stairway To Heaven" theme, with balloons clustered together like clouds. Derf & Penny mingle with Kent and Neil and their dates. The boys are uncomfortable in rented tuxedos, and with the pressure of a dance floor.

PENNY

Where's Mike?

DERF

He couldn't get a date, I guess. Wimp.

INT. COUNTRY LANE PARTY CENTER - LOBBY AREA - NIGHT

Jeff arrives with Bridget. He's sober. He's forgone traditional prom attire and instead wears brown slacks, a vest, and a western-style bow tie. Bridget is draped in a long-sleeve, white dress. She seems tentative around him.

They immediately encounter the PROM PHOTOGRAPHER, who's starting to break-down his equipment.

PROM PHOTOGRAPHER

Oh, okay. Step in front of the back drop. You're my last of the night.

Jeff and Bridget pose stiffly next to each other.

BRIDGET

You promised me you won't drink. I told my dad you're a friend.

JEFF

I know.

PROM PHOTOGRAPHER

Get closer. Don't be scared, she's not going to bite.

Jeff shimmies closer and puts his arm around her, awkwardly.

PROM PHOTOGRAPHER (CONT'D)

Smile.

Bridget smiles. Click.

INT. RECEPTION HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff and Bridget enter the prom. Many dance to "I Love The Nightlife." Derf and his buddies idle in the back.

KENT

Look who's here. Unbelievable.

Derf and his buddies observe as Jeff & Bridget make their way through the space:

Jeff finds her a seat and retrieves punch. She's charmed.

BRIDGET

Thank you. That's sweet.

JEFF

I try.

Neil approaches.

NEIL

Dahmer. Hey. Good to see you here. Uh, hey, I feel bad. Wanna apologize for the mall, dude.

JEFF

You weren't there.

NEIL

I know. I couldn't... You know, you didn't have to...

JEFF

It wasn't bad.

NEIL

Yeah? I don't know... I'm sorry.

The music shifts to "Hopelessly Devoted To You" as Neil's date tugs on his arm. Neil withdraws, apology unfinished.

Jeff stewes. He looks around at the cruel clusters of cliques.

Silencing his naysayers, Jeff leads Bridget to the dance floor, increasingly uneasy. Sweat dots his forehead.

Jeff and Bridget dance, a bit out-of-sync with each other. But she enjoys herself. Copying couples around them, she places both arms around his neck. He turns rigid.

BRIDGET

You're supposed to put your hands around my waist.

Jeff follows her order. And grows more uncomfortable by her closeness. Her slight femininity is unpleasant to him.

Their presence on the dance floor pressures Derf, Kent, and Neil to lead their dates there as well, joining in the discomfort.

PENNY

Hi. I'm Penny.

BRIDGET

Bridget.

DERF

Hey, Jeff, good to see you.

JEFF

(muddled)
Congratulations.

DERF
Why?

JEFF
We made it.

DERF
Huh?

They all continue to dance, but Jeff's composure is slipping. The cramped dance floor, bouncing heads, loud music, his own sober alertness, all compounds. He draws back.

JEFF
(into Bridget's ear)
I'll be right back. Gotta pee.

BRIDGET
Oh, okay.

Bridget remains dancing, now without a date.

INT. COUNTRY LANE PARTY CENTER - LOBBY AREA - NIGHT

Jeff passes by the bathroom and walks out the front door.

INT. COUNTRY LANE PARTY CENTER - RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

Bridget stops dancing, now lost among the mess. She looks around. Circulates among the tables, growing increasingly upset. Jeff's nowhere in sight.

EXT. MCDONALD'S - NIGHT

Jeff sits stone-faced in his AMC Pacer, eating a Big Mac.

INT. COUNTRY LANE PARTY CENTER - RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

Visibly upset, Bridget hunches over in a chair sniveling. A pack of girls console her, now ignoring their dates. And, most everyone at the prom is wondering:

DERF
Where's Dahmer?

NEIL
He's not in the men's room.

PENNY
It's rude.

KENT
Seriously, I'm not surprised.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE PARTY CENTER - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Jeff returns. PARENT/CHAPERONE stands in his way.

PARENT/CHAPERONE

Where do you think you're going? You can't go back in?

JEFF

Why not?

PARENT/CHAPERONE

Once you've left. You've been drinking.

JEFF

I haven't. I swear.

PARENT/CHAPERONE

Rules are rules, young man.

Jeff steps away. Disappointed. Dejected. But determined to see the night through, he waits in the parking lot.

EXT. COUNTRY LANE PARTY CENTER - PARKING LOT - LATER

The prom lets out. Bridget's leaving with friends. Jeff approaches.

BRIDGET

I'm not talking to you. They're taking me home.

JEFF

Wait, no. I'm sorry.

BRIDGET

Where'd you go?

JEFF

Look, they wouldn't let me back in but I didn't drink. I just stepped out to get fresh air and it's not my fault.

BRIDGET

This is the worst night of my life.

JEFF

Let me make it up to you.

BRIDGET

No.

JEFF

Please. I meant for you to have a nice evening.

BRIDGET

How? The prom's over. Impossible.

JEFF

But, but, I promised your dad I'd bring you home safe. I promised him.

Bridget stops in her tracks, now feels guilty.

INT. AMC PACER - TRAVELING - NIGHT

Jeff drives Bridget home. Jeff breaks the silence--

JEFF

Did everyone wonder where I was?

BRIDGET

Yeah. So?

JEFF

Good.

EXT. BRIDGET'S HOME - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Like a gentleman, Jeff opens the car door for Bridget and walks her to the door. She waits, as any confused young girl might, for an obligatory kiss. Jeff shakes her hand, stiffly.

JEFF

Good night.

Abruptly, and awkwardly, ending the evening.

INT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - HISTORY CLASS - DAY

Derf and Mike sit with their eyes locked on the clock. The minute hand clicks toward 3:15pm--

DERF

Five, four, THREE, TWO, ONE!

THE FINAL BELL RINGS. They burst out of their seats.

MR. FEDELE

Have a good summer kids. Best of luck in college.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Students tear out of the school, tossing notebooks in the air. Revere High sign reads: CONGRATULATIONS SENIORS GOOD LUCK!

Derf, Kent, Mike, and Neil pile into the Chevy Vegas. They blast WMMS FM, which fittingly plays Queen's "We Are The Champions." Penny and girlfriends jump into another car to follow them out.

Meanwhile, Jeff drags his feet and files onto a school bus.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - CONTINUOUS

Jeff walks by jubilant underclassmen and sits in the back row. A sullen pout. His one safe haven has just ended.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - TRAVELING - DAY

The bus stops. The last passengers file off.

BUS DRIVER
Hey, kid. Last stop.

Jeff trudges off the bus.

EXT. WEST BATH ROAD - DAY

Jeff walks up the hill, approaching his home.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Jeff finds his mother Joyce hurriedly stuffing her last couple of suitcases and boxes into the Oldsmobile Omega.

JEFF
Mom, you're gonna miss my graduation ceremony.

JOYCE
Your father will be there. We can't be at the same place.

DAVE
Can I go?

JOYCE
No, you'll already be in Wisconsin with me and grandma. Get in.

JEFF
Now?

Joyce and Dave get in and reverse out. Dave waves, naively.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Jeff walks into the deathly silent house. Empty drawers. Missing furniture. Yet, there's the pink foot stool. Tipped over and forgotten. He takes it in his hands and BASHES it into pieces against the brick fireplace. Leads him to collapse face down on the floor. A flood of tears.

EXT. REVERE HIGH SCHOOL - PRACTICE FIELD - DAY

Immediately after the graduation ceremony. A congratulatory mood. Lionel hands his camera to another father and asks for a photo of him with Jeff, wearing cap & gown. Lionel smiles proudly. Jeff is blank.

INT. BACKDERF FAMILY HOME - DERF'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Derf stuffs his clothes into a duffel bag. Then shoves in more random items, quickly realizing he's missing something.

INT. BACKDERF FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - EVENING

DERF

Mom, I'll be right back. Gotta grab some things at the store.

CAROL

But be back soon. I'm just about to put your favorite Hawaiian chicken in the oven.

DERF

And pick up my last paycheck.

CAROL

We're sitting down, the whole family, in little over an hour.

DERF

Okay. Gotcha.

Derf bursts out of the house.

EXT. ACME FRESH MARKET - PARKING LOT - EVENING

Exiting with a grocery bag of odds & ends, Derf waves back to some fellow coworkers at the registers. He jumps back in his car and speeds off.

INT. CHEVY VEGAS - TRAVELING - EVENING

Windows down. Wind in the hair. Listening to Devo's rendition of "[I Can't Get No] Satisfaction," Derf cruises the curvy back roads of his hometown for one last evening.

Coming around a turn, his headlights catch a figure walking on the side of the road. It's Jeff. Derf pulls over.

DERF

Jeff. Hey, man.

JEFF

Gweeetings! Baaa.

DERF

Ha. Wanna ride? Headed home?

JEFF

Sure.

Jeff gets in.

DERF

I was taking the long way. I leave tomorrow morning for college. Taking some summer classes.

JEFF

No kidding.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Derf and Jeff pull into the driveway. The house is completely dark. Not even a light over the front door.

INT. CHEVY VEGAS - PARKED IN DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

JEFF

Wanna come in?

DERF

Geez, your house is dark.

JEFF

Yeah, I got it to myself. My dad's living with his girlfriend and my mom's gone to Milwaukee with my brother.

DERF

Are you bleeding?

JEFF

Nah. Just cut myself.

Jeff smudges some blood remnants on his jeans.

JEFF (CONT'D)

So you're off to Ohio State?

DERF

No, Pittsburgh, actually. Can't wait, taking art classes over the summer. What about you?

JEFF

Ah, I'm going to Ohio State, I think.

DERF

Really. So is Mike. Whataya gonna major in?

JEFF

Decowating! Thmmaaa!

DERF

Thought Biology.

JEFF

Yep.

A strained silence. Derf senses Jeff is lying.

DERF

Are you alright?

JEFF

Yep. We could pop open a beer. I got a spleef left?...

DERF

Oh, I couldn't. I got dinner with my folks soon. Look, I'm sorry - you know, I think, wait, I do. I got some in my backseat. Been packing up...

Derf reaches into the back seat and pulls out a sketch pad.

JEFF

You got some of me?

DERF

Uh, huh. Here. The whole Fan Club. And this one's you playing fife. Was supposed to be the cover of the Yearbook but it got shot down.

JEFF

Geez.

DERF

And this early one. You can have 'em.

Jeff takes a moment to look at himself in the cartoons.

JEFF

I don't want these.

DERF

Is everything okay?

JEFF

Why would you say that?

DERF

Just askin'... I dunno... you know, high school musta been hard for you.

JEFF

Just had a lot on my mind. You sure you don't wanna come in?

DERF

No hard feelings?

JEFF

I feel nothing.

A strained pause.

DERF

We were just having fun, you know?

JEFF

Yeah.

DERF

Good.

JEFF

I'm just like anybody else.

DERF

Yeah, it's gonna be great. We're all heading on to exciting stuff. Mike's blowing off the summer workin' at the pool. Neil's working for his dad, and Kent got an office job in Cleveland.

JEFF

Yeah. I'll figure it out. Just like everybody else. How 'bout one beer and all's forgiven?

DERF

Okay.

They get out of the car.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Derf steps toward the kitchen door. Moonlight spotlights the Louisville Slugger left against the garage. Jeff is a couple of strides behind him.

Jeff reaches forward and opens the door for Derf.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

It's dark. Derf steps in. A strange heaviness jars him. He turns around. Jeff happens to be oddly close, right in his face.

DERF

Oh. Hey, on second thought.

JEFF

What?

DERF

I, uh, really should get a move on...

Jeff looks at Derf in a weird way, confirming Derf's instinct. Derf slides past Jeff.

EXT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Derf heads back to his car.

DERF

Sorry, my mom will kill me if I don't get back for dinner. See ya on the flipside, Dahmer.

Jeff picks up the bat, following Derf to the car. A few steps behind as Derf swiftly shuts his door and reverses out.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Jeff heads back inside and lurks around the living room. No lights. An eerie glow of splintered moonlight casts through the windows. Those monstrous thoughts bubble up:

JEFF

Okay... alright... okay... alright...

EXT. BACKDERF FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - NEXT MORNING

Derf gets farewell hugs from his proud parents, Carol and Richard. He tosses his duffel bag in the passenger seat.

CAROL

We're so proud of you, John.

RICHARD

Call us when you get to your dorm.

CAROL

We love you.

DERF

Love you too, guys.

INT. CHEVY VEGAS - TRAVELING - LATER

Derf slows down and looks over at Dahmer's home. The lights are still all off. No life in sight. Derf slowly rolls past, then continues up the hill and is gone.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Empty beer cans on the carpet. A pizza delivery box too. Seated on the sofa, a disheveled JEFFREY DAHMER stares blankly out the large wall of open windows. Summer air and the sounds of birds swoop in.

Jeffrey checks the refrigerator. It's practically empty.

INT. DAHMER FAMILY HOME - DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Jeffrey gets in the AMC Pacer and tears out of the driveway. 101 WMMS blares on the radio.

DJ DENNY SANDERS

And this next song is dedicated to everyone headin' home from the Michael Stanley concert at Chippewa Lake. He's one of Cleveland's hometown favorites. You're turned to Buzzard Radio 101 WMMS.

INT. AMC PACER - TRAVELING - LATER

Jeffrey cruises along Cleve-Mass Road with a six-pack of beer on the passenger seat. He pounds one, then another.

APPROACHING SUMMIT MALL

Jeffrey spots a SHIRTLESS HITCHHIKER, 19, dark complexion and washboard stomach, with his thumb up - hoping for a ride. Jeffrey passes by, then impetuously decides to pull over. He leans over and opens the car door. Via the rear view mirror, Jeffrey watches the Shirtless Hitchhiker run to him.

JEFF

Hey, you just get out of the concert too?

SHIRTLESS HITCHHIKER

Yeah! Great show.

JEFF

Where you headed?

SHIRTLESS HITCHHIKER

I got this far, headed back to Akron.

JEFF

Wanna party some more?

Jeff offers a beer.

SHIRTLESS HITCHHIKER

Sure.

JEFF

Get in. My name's Jeffrey.

Shirtless Hitchhiker gets in.

SHIRTLESS HITCHHIKER

Steven Hicks. Nice to meet you.

EXT. CLEVE-MASS ROAD - BATH, OH - DAY

They drive off into the distance.

SUPER:

On June 18, 1978, Steven Hicks returned to Jeffrey Dahmer's home.

He was never seen again.

FADE OUT.