

EARTH MINUS ONE

A Screenplay

By Matt Russell

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BLACK SCREEN. START OF OPENING CREDITS

SOUND: a crowd at a high school baseball game. A few cheers and jeers towards the young man at bat.

EXT. A BASEBALL GAME - DAY

JONATHAN swings and strikes.

The audience shouts out its disapproval.

CUT TO:

BLACK. CREDITS CONTINUE.

SOUND: an office door opening.

McFARLAND (V.O.)
Come in, Mr. Duncan.

ROBERT (V.O.)
You can call me Robert.

McFARLAND (V.O.)
Ah, yes.

SOUND: an office door swinging shut.

INT. THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPLE'S OFFICE - DAY

McFARLAND
Have a seat...Robert.

McFARLAND sits behind the desk, and ROBERT DUNCAN sits in one of the chairs.

McFARLAND

Thank you for seeing me on such short notice.

ROBERT

Oh, no problem.

McFARLAND

Well, Robert, I have your son's transcripts from the last year and a half. I'm sorry to inform you, but it's not good news.

CUT TO:

BLACK. CONTINUE CREDITS.

SOUND: the crowd still a mixture of scorn and support. A girl (probably Kendra) yells, "You can do it, Johnny!"

EXT. BASEBALL GAME - DAY

Jonathan swings and strikes.

CUT TO:

BLACK. CONTINUE CREDITS.

A moment of awkward silence, clearing of throats, etc.

ROBERT (V.O.)

Well...how bad is it?

INT. THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPLE'S OFFICE - DAY

McFarland looks over Jonathan's papers.

McFARLAND

At least one "C" in every semester. Only four "A"'s. His test scores have dropped by five percent in the

McFARLAND (cont'd)
last month. He's not involved in
any extra-curricular activities
except the baseball team, and his
performance there is, well, sub-
standard.

Robert is distraught.

ROBERT
(to himself)
Goddamn.

CUT TO:

BLACK. FINISH CREDITS.

SOUND: the crowd is mostly booing Jonathan now, shouting
"Strike him out!" and so forth.

EXT. BASEBALL GAME - DAY

Jonathan stands at home plate, looking very nervous and
apprehensive, afraid of striking out.

The PITCHER throws the ball. Jonathan swings and strikes.

UMPIRE
Y'errr out!

Jonathan drops the bat, and walks, sullenly, towards the
dugout. His classmates are still calling him names, throwing
clots of dirt at him, etc.

He takes a seat on the bench, and looks over to the
bleachers, where his girlfriend KENDRA is seated. She gives
him a sympathetic look and blows him a kiss, which makes him
feel better.

MIKE ENZ, Jonathan's best friend, sits next to him on the
bench. He pats Jonathan on the shoulder.

MIKE
It's okay, man. Next time, you'll
hit it out of the park.

JONATHAN
(almost believing)
That's right.

INT. McFARLAND'S OFFICE - DAY

Robert and McFarland consort.

McFARLAND
Look, I'm sure you know the score.
The class rooms are over-crowded.
We can't keep kids who won't pull
their weight.

ROBERT
I know, I know.

McFARLAND
I'm sorry.

ROBERT
Well, Linda was right. I guess we
can kiss his college plans goodbye.

McFARLAND
Tell me, Robert...If you don't mind
me asking...How much do you make in
one year?

ROBERT
Oh, about fifty thousand.

McFARLAND
Uh huh...And twenty thousand goes
to taxes.

ROBERT
Yeah, of course.

McFARLAND
Look, I've seen a lot of parents in
your situation. I know how you
feel. Like a failure. Well,
sometimes we fail, no matter how
hard we try. It doesn't make us bad
parents. Fortunately, failures can
be recovered from. It is possible

McFARLAND (cont'd)
to recoup your losses and start
over. It's something you should
consider.

Robert stands to shake McFarland's hand.

ROBERT
Don't worry, Mr. McFarland. We
already have.

EXT. BASEBALL GAME - DAY

Jonathan and Mike sit next to each other, talking.

MIKE
You going for ice cream after the
game?

JONATHAN
Yeah, but then I gotta get home. My
mom's cooking some special birthday
dinner for me.

MIKE
Oh shit, I forgot!

JONATHAN
And you call yourself my best
friend.

MIKE
Sorry, man. But happy birthday!

JONATHAN
Thanks.

INT. THE DUNCAN HOME/KITCHEN - DAY

JENNA DUNCAN opens the refrigerator, scanning its contents
for a snack. It holds no offerings. She shuts it.

The wall clock reads 6:30.

Jenna speaks to the empty kitchen.

JENNA

Where *is* everybody?

SOUND: a car pulling into the driveway.

Jenna goes to the front door.

EXT. THE DUNCAN HOME/DRIVEWAY - DAY

LINDA DUNCAN gets out of her car at the same time Jenna comes out of the house. They both grab bags of groceries from the back of the car, and carry them inside.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Linda and Jenna put the bags on the counter.

LINDA

Nobody here?

Jenna shakes her head.

LINDA

I told your brother to come straight home after the game.

JENNA

It should have been over an hour ago.

They start to put the groceries away.

In a moment, Robert enters. He stands in the doorway, and the mother and daughter look at him, expectantly.

LINDA

Well?

ROBERT

It's a go.

JENNA

Yes! I just wish we could get on with it. I'm starving.

LINDA

Your son's not back yet.

ROBERT

He probably went out for ice cream.

LINDA

I guess it doesn't matter. Clint won't get home from work until eight o'clock.

JENNA

I can't wait that long!

LINDA

Yes you can. Have a carrot.

Linda hands her a carrot from the grocery sack. Jenna just throws it back at her.

JENNA

I don't want a carrot.

LINDA

Fine then. Stop your whining.

Jenna sits on a chair at the table to pout.

Just then, Jonathan enters.

JONATHAN

Hey everybody.

JENNA

Thank *God*!

JONATHAN

Whoa, wait a minute. You're happy to see me, what's wrong?

LINDA

Nothing, dear.

ROBERT

Your sister is starving, what else is new?

JONATHAN

You waited for me, huh?

LINDA

It *is* your birthday. And there are guests coming.

JONATHAN

Oh yeah? Who?

LINDA

Kendra and her folks.

JONATHAN

She didn't say anything. Must have wanted to surprise me.

Jenna laughs.

JONATHAN

Isn't anybody going to ask me how the game went?

JENNA

You think we care?

ROBERT

Give it a rest, Jenna.

JONATHAN

We won!

ROBERT

That's good, son. Did you hit any home runs?

JONATHAN

Not today.

ROBERT

Well...Have you hit any at all this season?

JONATHAN

Well, no, but...

Robert turns away in apparent disappointment, which causes Jonathan to stop talking.

ROBERT

We're really not losing anything,
are we?

Linda shakes her head in agreement.

JENNA

I could've told you that!

JONATHAN

What are you talking about?

LINDA

(To Robert)

Honey, maybe you should restrain
him now. Before too much slips out.

ROBERT

Whatever you say, dear.

JONATHAN

Restrain...? What...?

Robert pulls out a pair of hand cuffs from his coat pocket.
He grabs one of Jonathan's arms and cuffs it.

JONATHAN

Hey!

Robert pulls Jonathan by the handcuffs to a narrow division
between cupboards to which he fastens the other cuff.

JONATHAN

What is this? What's going on?

JENNA

You'll know soon enough, birthday
boy!

JONATHAN

Dad, uncuff me, please.

ROBERT

No can do, son.

JONATHAN

What...Why? I don't understand...

The SMITH FAMILY arrives at the door.

CLINT
Hey, neighbors!

ROBERT
Hey, there they are.

Robert opens the door, and CLINT, MARGIE, and KENDRA come in.

MARGIE
Hope we're not too late.

LINDA
No, you're just in time.

JONATHAN
Just in time for what?

LINDA
Actually, we weren't expecting you until eight.

MARGIE
Clint was able to leave work a little early after he told the boss about our little soiree tonight.

LINDA
(To Clint)
Oh, why didn't you invite him to join us?

CLINT
Invite my boss to dinner? I don't think so.

ROBERT
Well, it's a good thing he was nice enough to let you off. Jenna was going bonkers, thought we were gonna let her starve to death.

JONATHAN
Um...Excuse me. I am handcuffed to the fucking wall and you all are

JONATHAN (cont'd)
talking about dinner. What the fuck
is going on here?

LINDA
(To Jon)
Honey.

JONATHAN
Kendra...What the fuck is going on?

JENNA
Haven't you figured it out yet? You
are dinner, you imbecile.

JONATHAN
What? You wanna run that by me one
more time?

LINDA
(scolding)
Why did you tell him that? He's
going to start screaming now.

JENNA
So gag him.

JONATHAN
Oh wait a minute.
(Smiles)
This is like some weird birthday
joke, right?

Jonathan laughs and breathes a sigh of relief, unafraid to
show how he fell for their little gag.

JONATHAN
Alright I get it. That was a good
one. A little sick and twisted, but
good.

But when Jonathan scans the room, he notices the faces are
all dead serious. So Jonathan gets serious.

JONATHAN
(bold, commanding)
Hey. Joke's over. Let me go. Now.

Everyone is unfazed, looking at Jonathan as if he's lost his mind. The cruel silence is broken by Jenna.

JENNA

Hey mom.

LINDA

Yes, sweetheart.

JENNA

(Taunting Jon)

What do you think is the best part?
Legs or arms?

LINDA

I don't know, dear.

JENNA

Who's gonna eat his ass?

KENDRA

That's all mine, girl.

JENNA

You can have it. Feet too. After
playing baseball for hours. Oh
wait...

(Taunting Jon)

You didn't do any running, did you?
I forgot.

Jonathan is momentarily shocked speechless by this unbelievable conversation.

ROBERT

There's too many bones in the foot
anyway. You're not gonna get much
meat from that.

LINDA

Well, maybe for a stew.

ROBERT

Oh yeah, that's right.

JONATHAN

This is not funny.

Jonathan struggles to get loose.

CLINT
No one's laughing, buddy.

Clint starts to laugh.

CLINT
Well, okay, I am. Sorry. It just strikes me as kind of humorous because I've always thought you were wrong for my little girl here, but there was nothing I could do about it. When your folks told me they were doing this, I couldn't believe it. All I could think was, I guess God does answer prayers.

Margie approaches Linda, who is cutting vegetables.

MARGIE
You know, Linda, I was wondering...

LINDA
Yes?

MARGIE
Well, you know my nephew is Jonathan's age, and he's growing so fast and wearing out his clothes, and I just bet some of Jon's clothes would fit him perfectly.

LINDA
Oh, of course. You can have them all. We were going to give them to the thrift store.

JONATHAN
You're not touching my goddamn clothes!

MARGIE
(Shocked)
Oh, the language!

Linda slaps Jonathan.

Margie, over it, sits at the table and continues like there had been no interruption.

MARGIE

Thank you so much.

LINDA

Think nothing of it.

MARGIE

I know Steve will really appreciate wearing something in style for a change. He's especially had his eye on those canvas shoes of Jon's. I bet he could even fit in his baseball uniform.

Something snaps in Jonathan.

JONATHAN

Help! Somebody help me!

ROBERT

Why are you shouting, son? It's not like everybody doesn't already know. Your mother's been talking about this for weeks.

LINDA

(Smiling)

Yes, it is kind of the neighborhood gossip, isn't it?

JONATHAN

What?

JENNA

Why do you think everyone's been so nice to you lately?

JONATHAN

They haven't.

JENNA

Well, some have. Getting A's on papers you didn't deserve, getting to be captain all the time in gym class.

JONATHAN

That's cos I'm the best captain...

Jenna and Kendra look at each other and laugh at that.

MARGIE

(To Linda)

Anyway, you're certainly due for a tax break.

ROBERT

That's sure the truth. In fact, we were thinking for awhile about forfeiting Jenna too, but-

JENNA

Mother!

JONATHAN

Yeah, do that! Get rid of her and let me go!

LINDA

(To Jenna)

He's kidding, sweetheart.

ROBERT

Seriously, we looked at the finances and decided one was enough. And there really wasn't much of a question of which one it would be.

MARGIE

Boys are so much trouble anyway.

LINDA

You know it, especially when they start dating.

MARGIE

Yeah, Clint pretty much decided right from the start that he didn't like Jonathan. So this makes things easier in that regard.

ROBERT

Yeah, our families have gotten

ROBERT (cont'd)
along so well, it would be a shame
to have a new source of conflict.

CLINT
Oh, I don't hold this dating thing
against you. You know how kids are.
All hormones and such. You can't
control how they act, who they
wanna fuck...

MARGIE
Well, that's true, honey, but watch
your language.

JONATHAN
*You stupid motherfuckers! This joke
ends now! Do you understand?!*

Robert goes to the refrigerator for a beer. On his way back,
he passes too close to Jonathan, and Jonathan punches him in
the face.

LINDA
Oh my God.
(To Robert)
Are you alright?

Clint gives Jonathan a threatening look.

ROBERT
Yeah. He can throw a punch as good
as he can hit a baseball.

Clint pulls out another pair of handcuffs.

CLINT
Well, we can keep that from
happening again.
(To Margie)
I told you these might come in
handy.

Clint hostilely cuffs Jonathan's other hand to another beam
between cupboards.

Linda turns to Jonathan.

LINDA

Look, I know you're upset. Try to understand this. We all have to make sacrifices. Do you think I enjoyed giving up my third child? I carried that baby eight months before they passed the two-child limit. And when they pulled that thing out of me, I cried for days.

JONATHAN

Must have been a girl.

Linda slaps Jonathan again.

LINDA

You shut your mouth.

(Pause)

I said, "I don't care about growing population in Africa, or even in our big cities. That doesn't affect me." But someone in some high place in Washington decided that it *did* affect me, that it affects everyone. I don't like it. I don't agree with it. But I don't have a choice.

ROBERT

Well look, at least they did put *some* freedom of choice back in our hands.

CLINT

That's right. Uncle Sam takes a lot less from single-child families than two-child families.

JONATHAN

Hey! I can move out! I can live with someone else!

CLINT

That's a cop-out, son.

ROBERT

Look, the point is, we're doing something for the environment. That's the thing they reward us

ROBERT (cont'd)

for. You know why that guy...oh, what's his name, Kevorkian III won the Nobel prize? He realized that the cow, deer, and chicken populations were declining because, for so many years, we neglected our most prominent food resource: *man*. And that discovery is what's going to heal our world.

JONATHAN

I've heard this shit before, at school, thousands of times. I've had friends who were almost sacrificed. But they weren't because their families loved them.

LINDA

But that's what sacrifice means, giving up something you love. And someone's got to make that choice, otherwise there would be no change.

ROBERT

I know it's kind of a jolt to realize that you yourself might be the necessary sacrifice, but that's just the nature of life. You have to just accept it. Does the cow which turns into your hamburger think, "Oh Gee, I wish it was some other cow"? No.

JONATHAN

Oh God, stop this! Please! I'm too young to die.

ROBERT

History would disagree with that statement. Did you ever hear of the Donner Party? A group of pioneer families in the mid-1800's, traveling by wagon train over the Sierras in the dead of winter. Well, they got snowed in. They ran out of food. Some starved or froze to death, and you know what

ROBERT (cont'd)
happened to them after they died?
The living used their bodies for
food. One of 'em was a 12-year-old
boy...I can't recall his name,
Murphy I think. Died on Christmas
Day. His teenage sister watched in
horror as they roasted his heart
over the fire.

JENNA
(Singing)
Brother roasting on an open fire...

Jenna and Kendra start cackling.

JONATHAN
That's a sweet story, Dad. Too bad
we're not starving to death.

ROBERT
Hey, I'm just trying to give you
some perspective.

JONATHAN
(To Kenda)
So what do you think about all
this? Say something!

LINDA
Maybe we should leave them alone
for a minute.

JENNA
Can we get on with dinner already?
You said we'd eat after they got
here.

CLINT
I don't see a need to prolong this.
My daughter's just gonna start
blubbering to go with his whining,
and pretty soon, she'll want to be
cooked up along with him.

Kendra smiles a sweet Daddy's-Little-Girl smile and takes
his hand, looking up at him.

KENDRA

That's not true, Dad. You don't have to worry. Besides, Johnny wouldn't want me to suffer with him.

JONATHAN

What makes you say that? Fuckin' bitch.

Clint lets go of his daughter's hand, and approaches Jonathan menacingly, but Robert stops him.

ROBERT

(To Clint)

Let it go.

CLINT

(To Jon)

You watch your mouth, you little shit.

JONATHAN

Why? What are you gonna do, kill me?

ROBERT

Let's all just clear the room for a few minutes.

(To Clint)

Let your daughter say goodbye.

Clint calms down.

CLINT

Yeah, fine. Whatever you say.

LINDA

(To Margie)

Would you like to go to the corner market with me? I forgot to get pop.

ROBERT

We're short on beer, too.

MARGIE

I suppose. What's a barbecue
without pop and beer?

JENNA

This is ridiculous. I'm gonna start
eating.

Jenna starts to charge at Jonathan, but Robert holds her
back.

ROBERT

You will wait for everyone else,
young lady.

JENNA

I want-

LINDA

Just go to your room, Jen. Now.

Jenna begrudgingly exits.

LINDA

We'll be back shortly.

ROBERT

Alright.

Linda and Margie go out the door.

Robert and Clint go to the other end of the room to talk
privately, but Jon can still hear what they are saying, and
it terrifies him.

ROBERT

You know, I was thinking it might
be easier to cut off some portions
and cook them separately. Otherwise
we'll just have little sections
chewed out all over, which would be
a pain to salvage.

CLINT

Well, if you cut him into six
pieces...say, limbs, head, torso,
etc., you could do part in the oven
and barbecue the rest.

ROBERT
I know what Linda would say about
that.

ROBERT and CLINT
(Together, mimicking)
"It's too hot to bake in the oven."

CLINT
So you wanna just stick to
barbecue?

ROBERT
I think so. I better go find the
briquettes. You got the lighter
fluid at your house?

CLINT
Yeah, I'll go fetch it.

Robert and Clint exit.

During that whole conversation, and continuing now, Kendra
has tried to get romantic and kiss Jonathan, but Jonathan
has been dodging her advances.

JONATHAN
Fuck off!

KENDRA
You know, we have time for one last
quickie before they get back.

JONATHAN
Does this turn you on?

KENDRA
Actually...It does.

JONATHAN
What?

KENDRA
You know, I always used to love
movies like *Jaws*. You know when
they show some guy slowly getting
eaten by a shark. I used to wonder
what went through that person's

KENDRA (cont'd)
mind, every moment while it was happening to him. What's he thinking when the shark grabs hold of his feet and starts shredding away? "I ran the bases with these feet." When the monstrous jaws are up to his knees. "No more kneeling down to pray." Mid-section...You know what that means. Then the teeth crack his ribs. Ah...

As Kendra continues relaying this information to Jonathan, she gets more and more sexually aroused.

KENDRA
When almost all of the man's body is enveloped in the giant fish, what are his last horrific thoughts and emotions?

JONATHAN
You are one sick bitch.

KENDRA
Am I? You don't know people think these things? You can call it one of my demons if you wish, but it's just me. Like there are things inside of you that you wouldn't admit to anyone.

(Pause)

Your life passes before your eyes. And so does your death. You think, "Oh my God, I am a human being with a soul and a spirit, and it's getting snuffed out by this great white beast that doesn't give a damn!" Just think! All your tastes in movies and music, everything you've ever learned at school, everything that is uniquely you and defines who you are...It means nothing to that animal. You're just food, nourishment. Imagine the humility you must feel, realizing your body minerals will provide this creature's nutrition. Guess

KENDRA (cont'd)

you'll miss that rerun of *Friends* tonight. Just one more lost ambition along with all your other hopes, dreams, and memories, and the mind and body that house them, which will soon be reduced to food. And then shit. As the pieces of your body slowly crumble away, so does your consciousness.

(Almost perky)

Just imagine!

Kendra suddenly bursts into a fit of laughter.

KENDRA

I guess you don't have to *imagine* it, do you?

Jonathan is a little in shock from what Kendra has said, and so his words have an inordinate calmness.

JONATHAN

You said you loved me.

KENDRA

So? What's your point? Look, love is good. Best thing in the world. But it's funny...One of the few guarantees you ever have in this life is that love, no matter how great or wonderful it is, will always turn into memories. It's just a question of when. Now, these memories can be bitter or they can be special. I would like my memories of you to be special.

(Pause)

I'm here tonight because of my feelings for you. I could have stayed home. But I want to be a part of this. I want you to be inside me.

JONATHAN

I've been inside you.

KENDRA
Not like this.

Kendra takes Jonathan's hand.

KENDRA
Your blood will mix with mine. Your
organic matter will mesh with my
own, and in a sense, you'll stay
with me.

Jonathan takes his hand away from her.

JONATHAN
I don't want to stay with you!
Don't you fuckin' touch me. Get
thee behind me, Satan!

Kendra is shocked by Jonathan's harsh words.

KENDRA
Fine. You wanna hurt me, go ahead.

Kendra, on impulse, slaps Jonathan.

Mike Enz has arrived just in time to witness the slap.

MIKE
(Thru the screen)
Hope I'm not interrupting anything.

JONATHAN
Oh thank God!

But Kendra is clearly very happy to see him, tipping
Jonathan off to trouble.

KENDRA
Mike! Come on in.

Mike enters. He heads straight for Kendra, and they embrace,
kissing passionately, while Jonathan stares in shock.

MIKE
I see I'm not too late. I probably
wouldn't have showed up at all if
Jon hadn't reminded me what day it
was.

JONATHAN

You backstabbing son of a bitch.

MIKE

What? What was that? What are you moaning about? Mr. Average. Everything you do is either laughed at or ignored. Now, you're finally the center of attention, and all you can do is whine. Jesus! Be a man, for once.

Jonathan realizes he has an opportunity and kicks Mike hard in the groin. Mike doubles over in pain.

MIKE

(Groaning)

Oh fuck! Goddamnit!

KENDRA

You little...

Kendra makes like she's about to slap Jonathan again, but Mike stops her.

MIKE

No. Let me.

Mike punches Jonathan in the gut, taking his wind out. He then turns and limps away, still in agony.

Kendra comes up to Mike and puts her arms around him.

KENDRA

(Sympathetic)

Oh. I can make it better, baby.

Kendra slides her hand from his cheek to his groin area. Mike makes a nonverbal gesture that they should go upstairs.

Mike and Kendra head upstairs in each other's arms.

Jonathan has been rendered speechless, and a single tear escapes one of his eyes.

EXT. A SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Linda and Margie walk along the sidewalk, both carrying a small bag of groceries.

MARGIE

I worry about Kendra sometimes. You know, she puts on a brave show, but I have to wonder if this isn't really getting to her. I know Clint wants her to participate so that she knows once and for all that it's over with Jonathan. I'm just worried about the long term effects.

LINDA

Well...Kendra's a tough girl. Resilient. Like Jenna. I know she'll be alright.

Linda puts her free hand on Margie's shoulder, a reassuring gesture.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Jonathan is now alone in the kitchen.

SOUND: sexual ecstasy from one of the bedrooms upstairs.

Jonathan attempts to tune it out. He looks out the kitchen window at the sky and setting sun.

JONATHAN

Dear God...You remember me, don't you? Several years ago, I prayed that you would let me be in little league. And you did it! I was so happy. Did I ever thank you for that? Probably not. I guess it's a little late now. I don't know what to do, God. I mean, I'm really pissed, but you probably don't listen to people when they're pissed, right? You see inside my heart, and you know how much I

JONATHAN (cont'd)

hate you if you let them do this to me. So with those impure thoughts, how can you hear my prayers?

Jonathan starts crying.

JONATHAN

Oh dear God, please let me live!
Please! Make this all a nightmare!
Make them change their minds. Or
give me a way to escape. Or kill
them, kill them all! Oh please God,
I'll do anything! Oh help me, God,
help me.

Jonathan cries for a few more moments, then gets it under control.

JONATHAN

(To God)

I believe in you. Amen.

McFarland appears outside the front door, and knocks as he speaks.

McFARLAND

Knock knock.

McFarland does not wait for an answer; he steps inside, carrying a video camera.

McFARLAND

Anybody home?

Jonathan hears, but draws no attention to himself. This is not a new source of hope.

McFarland appears in the kitchen and seems happy to see Jonathan.

McFARLAND

So...You're still alive and kickin',
I see.

JONATHAN

What are you doing here?

McFARLAND

Oh, this is just for the legal documentation. Your parents need a record of the proceedings in order to get their money.

JONATHAN

How much money am I worth?

McFARLAND

Jonathan, it's not about the money. It's about patriotism and the new world consciousness. This is so much bigger than you and me. It's a revolution in conservation. What an inspiring lesson to our students once they see the documentary and discover how everything has a purpose. Every part is used, just like whenever the Native Americans would make a kill. They don't waste a thing. Your hair will be used to make warm, earth-friendly Afghans. Your teeth and fingernails and toenails, along with all your bones will be ground up and used as a food additive in the school cafeteria.

Linda and Margie enter with a bag of groceries. They put the groceries on the counter.

LINDA

Oh Mr. McFarland, welcome. I'm sorry we had to run to the store. I hope Jon kept you company while you were waiting.

McFARLAND

Oh I was doing most of the talking, really. I was trying to explain to him the significance of this event.

LINDA

Oh. You're wasting your breath, I'm afraid. Thanks you so much for doing this. We got a video camera two years ago for Christmas but Robert still hasn't figured out how to use the damn thing.

Robert enters with Clint.

ROBERT
What's that, dear? Are you talking
about me again?

Margie laughs.

ROBERT
Honey, I don't know what the hell
happened to the briquettes and the
lighter fluid. I don't suppose you
ladies want to go back to the
store.

LINDA
Not really. I've already been there
twice. It's getting late. I don't
know about you, but my stomach is
growling.

MARGIE
Yes, I've got to get some food in
my stomach shortly.

ROBERT
Well, you know it's going to take
hours to cook.

JONATHAN
It? I'm an *it* now?

CLINT
Well, here's an idea. Why cook it
at all? We're all hungry. Let's
just eat.

MARGIE
Honey, don't you think we'll get
sick if we don't cook it?

ROBERT
I don't know why. Wild animals eat
raw prey all the time and don't get
sick.

LINDA
Don't you ever eat sushi?

MARGIE

Well, I guess there's a first time
for everything.

LINDA

Great. Let's eat.
(Calling)
Jenna! Time for dinner!

MARGIE

Where's Kendra?

CLINT

I think she's upstairs.
(Calling)
Kendra! Are you with Mike? Come on
down.

JONATHAN

Oh God, no! Please don't do this!

Jenna storms in, followed soon after, by Kendra and Mike.

McFARLAND turns on the camera.

JENNA

It's about time.

LINDA

Well, hold on a minute. We still
have to say grace.

They all, with the exception of McFarland, join hands in a
circle, bowing their heads.

LINDA

Dear Lord, we thank you for this
opportunity to be together, among
friends, this evening. Thank you
for providing for us. We ask that
you bless this food to the use of
our bodies and souls in your
service. In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.

They disband.

ROBERT

Okay girls, step back for a minute. We have to uncuff him so we can get him positioned on the table. Mike, we're gonna need your help.

MIKE

You got it.

Clint and Mike grab hold of Jonathan to pin him down, while Robert carefully unlocks the handcuffs.

Jonathan slips out of the men's grip and bolts toward the door.

Jenna trips him, and he falls on the floor.

McFarland is all around the room, catching everything on tape.

ROBERT

Come on!

Robert, Clint, and Mike grab him and lift him up, and lay him down on the dining room table. Jonathan starts to scream. Jenna, Kendra, Linda, and Margie assist in pinning him down, while Clint takes four short lengths of wire and ties his wrists and ankles to the four legs of the table. Through all this, the loud, blood-curdling shrillness of Jon's screaming.

Robert takes a knife from one of the drawers and cuts off Jonathan's shirt. Kendra slides it out from under him and throws it on the floor. This is repeated with Jon's pants.

Jenna takes a piece of fabric from Jonathan's shirt and gags Jonathan with it.

Jonathan, once gagged, quiets his screams and stops jerking his body in the futile struggle to free himself. He lays, shaking, in a cold sweat, eyes wide in terror.

Shadows start to cover his body as they lean in, to bite into him. A CLOSE UP of his face.

DREAM SEQUENCE

A series of quick flashes of daydreams are juxtaposed with the reality going on in the kitchen.

White light. The following images are brightly lit to reveal a dream sequence.

EXT. A BASEBALL GAME - DAY

DREAM: Jonathan swings the bat, and hits the ball. He starts running, as the crowd cheers.

INT. A BEDROOM - DAY

DREAM: Jonathan and Kendra are in his bedroom. Kendra, who looks different somehow, pulls him close to her and lovingly kisses him.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

SOUND: loud munching, crunching, slurping, eating sounds.

Close-up on JONATHAN's face, his eyes are in a daze. Stray drops of blood fall on his chin.

EXT. THE BASEBALL GAME - DAY

DREAM: Jonathan runs from first to second base.

INT. THE BEDROOM - DAY

DREAM: Kendra takes off Jonathan's shirt, and leads him to the bed.

INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY

Jonathan's dream is interrupted by McFarland, coming in for a close-up of his face. Blood is coming out from his mouth. The dazed look is replaced by one of extreme agony. He closes his eyes, trying to escape.

EXT. THE BASEBALL GAME - DAY

DREAM: Jonathan runs from second to third base.

INT. THE BEDROOM - DAY

DREAM: Jonathan and Kendra, under the covers, kissing wildly.

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

A shot of the backs and asses of the crowd, still gathered around the table, eating.

The crowd blocks any view of Jonathan, except for one of his legs, his ankle still tied to the table leg. Blood seeps down his leg. His foot twitches slightly, an involuntary spasm, indicating he's not quite dead yet. The blood drips from his foot to the floor, where a puddle has formed, about five inches away from Jonathan's abandoned baseball glove.

EXT. THE BASEBALL GAME - DAY

DREAM: Jonathan slides into home, and everyone stands cheering. Jonathan rolls over on his back and starts to smile. It is only a half-smile, as if this dream-Jonathan knows that it's only an illusion.

FADE OUT.

CREDITS.