

THE FANCY DANGER

CLOSE-SHOT: ORGAN KEYBOARD

A hand flicks on a switch, and the old organ pulsates to life. Quickly the hands release all the stops. The fingers come down on the yellowed ivory keys and we hear the ~~fixxx~~ opening voice of a BACH FUGUE.

MONTAGE: INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - TOWN OF COTTONWOOD, MONTANA

The church is old and in disrepair. This is not a wealthy parish. Yet the ~~RE~~ remains a magnificence to the STAINED GLASS WINDOWS, the ALTAR of imported Italian marble, the CARVED PEWS of good Victorian yellow oak.

Scattered in the pews are the PARISH REGULARS, about 15 of them, mostly women over 40. They kneel or sit quietly in contemplation of the music. There is a conspicuous absence of young people.

CLOSE-SHOT: THE ORGANIST - FATHER THOMAS

He is a YOUNG PRIEST, 28 years old, dressed in a black priest's cassock. He is blond-haired and handsome. But there is a certain exhaustion about him as the heavy fugue begins to weigh upon his spirits.

He looks up into the small organist's MIRROR in which he can view the parishioners below him as he plays. In the mirror, his eyes travel to a DARK FIGURE in the shadows of the last row of the poorly lighted (for financial reasons) ~~(w)~~ The figure is staring up at Father Thomas as he plays. Surprised by a brief eye contact through the mirror, Father Thomas quickly averts his eyes back to the keys.

Around the walls of the church are murals depicting scenes from the life of a local pioneer, Father de Smet, and his Jesuits as they worked to convert the Indians. The murals are faded and draped with cobwebs. A crack from a recent earthquake runs up the wall, running right between the eyes of one of the Jesuits, shifting one eye upward and giving him a kind of crazy look.

FATHER THOMAS glances again in the mirror. The dark young man continues to stare up at him. The wild intensity of his eyes carries over the distance. This time, Father Thomas returns the stare a beat longer.

Abruptly, Father Thomas breaks off the fugue. Furiously, he pulls out some different stops on the organ and crashes into the bizarre modernist chords of a piece by Gabriel FAURE.

CONTINUED

Several of the good ladies of the church turn around and look up at Father Thomas as he exuberantly whales away at the four keyboards and the foot pedals like the Phantom of the Opera. The ladies are both startled and pissed at being so rudely jolted from their meditations by Father Thomas' little joke.

The DARK YOUNG MAN is also again looking up at Father Thomas - with a big grin on his face.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFESSIONAL - FATHER THOMAS (CREDIT SEQUENCE)

He sits quietly, patiently in front of the grill that separates him from the parishioners, as he listens to their typically small-town confessions.

He hears the curtains part as someone enters the booth and clumsily sits down. The ensuing VOICE is that of a drunk, middle-aged woman on the verge of tears.

DRUNK WOMAN'S VOICE

Father forgive me, for I have sinned. It has been two weeks since my last confession.

FATHER THOMAS

What are your sins, my daughter.

DRUNK WOMAN'S VOICE

(rambling in a drunken slur)

Father, I know I ought to stop drinking, but I just can't. Harry always has his drinks after lunch and after supper and then he just falls asleep in front of the television, so he's no company for me. And my daughter treats me terribly. Can't you speak to her. She says the worst things to me. I know she's mad at me because I drink, but I get so lonely. She's never home anymore. She and her boyfriend - he's such a nice boy and I spoke with his mother on the phone once and she seemed awfully nice - but Susie-Ann and him, they always go off in his car, and some days she doesn't even call me to tell me where she is...

Father Thomas rests his forehead on his hand listening in sober silence.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONFESSIONAL - FATHER THOMAS

A SECOND VOICE, that of an OLD LADY, comes through the confessional grill to Father Thomas. Now there is a hint of an affectionate smile on his face.

OLD LADY'S VOICE

Now let me see, Father, you must forgive me but I guess my mind must be going because I can't remember...now did I do repentance for my sin of gluttony? I had three pieces of Jenny Ogilby's devils food cake, but - of course, that was two weeks ago Friday. or was it Thursday? Anyway I must have confessed that last week. Of course I know I'm still drinking too much tea.

FATHER THOMAS

For your penance, before each meal, or whenever you are tempted to overindulge, you should meditate on the poor and hungry of the world who are less fortunate than you.

OLD LADY'S VOICE

Oh, Father - can't you give me an old-fashioned penance, perhaps 10 rosaries?

FATHER THOMAS

(with a deep sigh)

Very well. For your penance, say 3 Our Fathers and 3 Hail Marys, and, if you feel you need any more penance, then meditate on the hungry of the world.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONFESSIONAL - FATHER THOMAS

A THIRD VOICE, that of a TEENAGED GIRL, is in the middle of confession.

TEENAGER'S VOICE

...and I've been discourteous to my mother...

FATHER THOMAS

Yes...

CONTINUED

TEENAGER'S VOICE

And I smoked some pot at my Mom an' Dad's house when they were away in Butte for the K of C convention...

FATHER THOMAS

Yes...

*Change to Mrs. Shoup*

TEENAGER'S VOICE

And **Robbie** Sanchez tried to kiss me, and he put his hand, you know, where it's not supposed to be...?

FATHER THOMAS

Did you try to stop him?

TEENAGER'S VOICE

Yes!... Well, I sorta tried. But I didn't let him go no further!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CONFESSIONAL - FATHER THOMAS

Another VOICE, that of a MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN, is confessing.

WOMAN'S VOICE

And I have lusted after another woman's husband and have had carnal thoughts about him...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONFESSIONAL (END CREDIT SEQUENCE)

As the MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN leaves the confessional, crosses herself and walks away down the aisle. No one else immediately enters.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - FATHER THOMAS

Assuming he has heard the last confession for the evening, Father Thomas starts to rise to leave when he hears a man's footsteps approaching the confessional. The curtain swishes and the man kneels heavily into the confessional. He is evidently drunk. His head presses against the wooden lattice, and Father Thomas can see dark, wavy hair pushing through the openings. Clearly it is the dark young man he had seen earlier in the organ mirror.

CONTINUED

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE  
Father? You in there?

His hand grips at the grill, his fingers curling tensely through the openings.

FATHER THOMAS  
Yes, I'm here.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE  
(all worked up)  
Father, I.....shit!

FATHER THOMAS  
It's alright. Relax.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE  
Yeah, well, man, the thing is - I've had a few drinks.

FATHER THOMAS  
I can see that. You've smoked a little grass, too.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE  
(sarcastic)  
Hell, I forgot to eat a mint.  
(then serious)  
Look, I seen you around town. I figure maybe I can talk to you. I can't fuckin' talk to old whats-iz-name.

FATHER THOMAS  
Father Vance?

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE (sarcastic again)  
Yeah. Hail Mary full of grace and God forgives you.

FATHER THOMAS  
We're not here to pass judgement on you - and there's no point in trying to shock me with your disrespect for the Church. If you're willing to turn to God for help, God is ready to help you.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE  
(gloomy)  
I don't think God will help me.

CONTINUED

FATHER THOMAS

If you're truly sorry for  
your sins, the Lord will  
forgive you.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

(taunting him)

Mine aren't your usual  
run-of-the-mill sins, Father.

FATHER THOMAS

If you've invented a new sin,  
the world will beat a path to  
your door. But I can't help  
you if you don't tell me what  
it is you've done.

The young man snorts in amusement at Father Thomas' wry humor.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

You're alright, man. But the  
thing is, I don't know if I'm  
ready to confess tonight. I  
need to think this out a little.  
Ya know? Maybe if I could talk  
to you a couple times...maybe  
you could like counsel me.

FATHER THOMAS

That's what I'm here for.

There is silence a moment from the young man. Then suddenly he  
strikes his hand violently against the lattice separating them.

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

I can't talk through this  
goddam thing! It's like fuckin'  
jail again!

FATHER THOMAS

Would you prefer that I come  
outside?

YOUNG MAN'S VOICE

Yeah. Face to face.

EXT. CONFESSIONAL

Father Thomas comes out of the Confessional. The church is empty  
now except for the dark young man who Father Thomas now recognizes  
as VIDAL STUMP, the town's most notorious troublemaker. Vidal is  
about the same age as FATHER THOMAS, late 20's. He is dressed in  
levis and a leather jacket. Vidal's wild eyes make hard contact  
with Father Thomas' - a challenge which Father Thomas meets with  
a quieting calm.

CONTINUED

FATHER THOMAS  
(indicating a pew)  
We can sit here if you like.

Vidal continues to stare; then, deciding he trusts him, sits down opposite Father Thomas in the pew.

FATHER THOMAS  
Tell me about yourself, Vidal.

VIDAL  
(surprised)  
You know who I am?

FATHER THOMAS  
Vidal... Stump, isn't it?  
It's a small town. We've  
passed on the street a few  
times.

VIDAL  
(suddenly shy)  
*And* You remember ~~that~~  
*me*

FATHER THOMAS  
You said you'd like to talk.

Vidal looks suspiciously around the church.

VIDAL  
Do we have to do it here?

FATHER THOMAS  
No. We do counseling at the  
rectory. I have my own office.  
It's completely private. And  
anything you may wish to talk  
about there will be held as  
strictly confidential as here.

VIDAL  
(continuing to stare)  
Okay. Can I come tomorrow?

FATHER THOMAS  
(shaking his head no)  
Tomorrow I play the organ  
for Father Vance's high mass  
at nine. And then I'm driving  
into the city to see my folks.  
I only get in once a month,  
and it's my mother's birthday.  
Could you come Monday ~~evening~~  
at 7:30?

CONTINUED

Vidal nervously punches his fist a few times into the palm of his other hand - an expression of pent-up frustration. Then he slaps his Indian-style black hat on his head and stands up.

VIDAL

Okay.

FATHER THOMAS

Monday at 7:30 then?

Vidal pulls on his leather jacket, without confirming the appointment.

VIDAL

Goodbye, Father.

Vidal turns and walks away. Father Thomas stands watching him. He notes Vidal's distinctive catlike swagger.

Vidal disappears out the door into the evening light. The door bangs shut. Moments later, the sound of a motorcycle coughs to life outside.

Father Thomas smiles and shakes his head in amusement and curiosity.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH - EVENING

Father Thomas walks pensively from the church and enters the rectory - a one story, red brick Victorian house overgrown with lilacs.

INT. RECTORY

As Thomas enters the small dining room, FATHER VANCE, his plate already cleaned of dinner, sits reading the local newspaper.

FATHER VANCE

(gruffly)

You're late.

FATHER VANCE is a priest of the old tradition, now slowed down by arthritis. He is something of an institution in the town of Cottonwood and doesn't take kindly to Thomas' new ways.

THOMAS

I'm sorry, Father. Just at nine, someone wanted to confess.

FATHER VANCE

And you played that modernistic music again, didn't you! Even after I asked you to stick to the nice old hymns everyone is familiar with.

*add  
hymns*

CONTINUED



Thomas restrains himself from answering. He does not want to get into another argument about modernizing the Church. The housekeeper, MRS. BIRCHER, brings Thomas a plate of food.

MRS. BIRCHER  
I kept your ~~stew~~ <sup>steak</sup> on the back burner nice and warm, Father Thomas.

THOMAS  
Thank you, Mrs. Bircher.  
I'm sorry I'm late.

Father Vance looks up again from his newspaper as Thomas digs in.

FATHER VANCE  
I understand that young troublemaker Vidal Stump was in church tonight.

THOMAS  
(not looking up)  
Yes. In fact it was he who came in at nine.

FATHER VANCE  
(impressed)  
Hmnp! I guess if God's grace can reach him, it can reach anybody!

Thomas smiles secretly at this grudging acknowledgement of his accomplishment.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. RECTORY - SUNDAY MORNING

A red Triumph sportscar backs snortingly out of the driveway. Father Thomas is driving. He wears black trousers, a black turtleneck sweater, and a sports jacket. This is one of his rare days off.

*his social uniform.*

MONTAGE: COTTONWOOD, MONTANA

As Thomas drives through the small town.

He passes slowly along narrow residential streets lined with large old houses with neatly trimmed lawns; then down Main Street past an unprosperous-looking business district; then past a few bars, gas stations, and a teenage hangout. As he passes, the kids at the hangout wave to Father Thomas, who they clearly consider a friend.

CONTINUED

Signs everywhere promote the upcoming COTTONWOOD RODEO AND COUNTY FAIR.

At a stop sign, MRS. SHOUP, the town busybody, waddles across the street in front of Father Thomas, eying his sportscar disapprovingly. Thomas gives her a top-of-the-morning type nod and smile. MRS. SHOUP curtly returns the nod with a forced smile.

On the outskirts of town, Thomas passes the popular new shopping center that has stolen most of the business from downtown, then turns on the access road to the Interstate Highway, heading South toward Helena, the state capitol.

EXT. THE OPEN ROAD

The surrounding mountains are shedding the last of their snow, and the rolling foothills are green with a slight hint of the coming rash of wildflowers.

Quickly, the signs of town are behind him. The countryside is devoted entirely to ranches and farms.

Exhilarated by the open road and spring air, Thomas guns the throttle, purposely challenging the 55 mph speed limit. He turns on the radio, quickly flashing by a few inspirational programs and the latest quotes of wheat and corn prices - to KGLM, Butte, a country music and soft rock station.

EXT. HELENA, MONTANA

As Thomas approaches the capitol city, the traffic increases, and the countryside gives way to new suburban developments, the usual McDonald's and Holiday Inns, and the modest skyline of the old central city, now updated with a few new highrisers.

EXT. WEST SIDE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Thomas pulls into the driveway of a towered Victorian brick residence in this upper middle class old part of town. This is where Thom grew up, and he takes pleasure looking around the pleasant yard, noting how very little has changed since his youth.

He bounds up to the old porch, but the door opens before he can ring it; and there stands his MOTHER, flushed and glowing and all smiles. She is a small woman, and even in her 50's, she still looks girlish and smart, fresh from the hairdressers.

MOTHER  
Thom my!

They hug and kiss.

CUT TO:

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE

Thom, his mother, and his FATHER sit around the formal setting of Sunday dinner, while ROSIE, their 66 year old maid, clears away the main course. Thom's FATHER is a semi-retired banker, gentle and impish in a baggy suit and bifocals.

*more relevant  
IRA  
Women's movement*

MOTHER

...and so the Historical Society wants me to run for Chairperson; but it's such a responsibility. Do you think I should do it, Tommy?

Her question brings Thom out of a reverie - he has been staring out the window.

THOM

I'm sorry - what did you say?

MOTHER

You seem miles away today, Tommy.

THOM

I'm sorry. I was thinking about a parishioner I'm counseling. A very tough case.

FATHER

How are things at St. Marv's, Thom?

THOM

Oh, same as always - absolutely bananas. St. Michael's over in Riverdale has closed down now, so we're the only parish left in the Valley. And we're living on macaroni and burning wood to conserve energy and only half lighting the church.

*my things are black & blue from bumping into posts*

FATHER

And how's dear Father Vance?

THOM

Oh, he seems to be having a lovely time - back there in the 19th Century.

They all laugh.

THOM

(continuing)

At least I have the Parish Council and my adult education classes - so I'm involved in what's going on in the community.

THOM  
(continuing)

And every once in a while we even seem to make some progress. But then that's usually offset by our self-proclaimed guardian of public decency, Mrs. Shoup, who seems to think the Supreme Court's decision upholding local standards on pornography means we should ban "Catcher In the Rye" from the school libraries.

MOTHER  
Not really.

THOM  
Oh yes. Not to mention Hemingway and Oscar Wilde and a few of those other well-known pornographers.

FATHER  
Hemingway!

THOM  
Yeah. "The Old Man and the Sea." The Old Man relieves himself over the side of the boat.

They all make amused noises of disbelief.

THOM  
I kid you not.

There is a lull in the conversation, and Thom looks at his watch.

THOM  
I've got to run along to my appointment with Father LeMatt pretty soon - or I won't make it back to Cottonwood under Father Vance's ten o'clock curfew. And then he'll feel obliged to smell my breath to make sure I haven't been out hitting the bars or cavorting with loose women.

Just at this moment, Rosie, the maid, enters the room carrying a birthday cake with 5 candles on it and starts singing "Happy Birthday To You..." Thom and his father join in as the cake is set in front of his mother, who beams in her spotlight.

CONTINUED

THOM

Now make a wish.

She closes her eyes a moment making her wish, then glances a loving look at Thom - as if the wish perhaps concerned him.

CLOSE-UP: THE CAKE

as she blows out the candles.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: ALTAR CANDLES

as a NUN in a short modern habit lights the candles.

INT. HELENA CATHEDRAL

Walking past the altar in this large cathedral are Thom and his spiritual advisor, FATHER LeMATT. LeMatt looks like a Jesuit Ichabod Crane, standing an angular 6'6", with a large skull and high-bridged nose. *they walk briskly together through the cathedral, then outside through the grounds of adjacent college campus.*

LeMATT

Every young curate has that moment when he suddenly realizes that the Church is a sinking ship and that he is the chosen rat who's got to stay aboard and save it.

THOM

Seriously, Father, I don't want you to misunderstand. I like it in Cottonwood. I like dealing with the people. I get very involved in their problems - I suppose maybe too involved. Sometimes I lie awake worrying: Did *Jania May Shoup* have the abortion anyway? Did old Mr. Hoover really hear me when I asked him if he wanted to confess, or had he already lost too much blood...?

LeMATT  
(interrupting)

Pray.

Thom stops walking and looks down at the ground as if this is not a satisfactory answer for him.

CONTINUED

LeMATT

(sternly)

You have very little inward life, so you have no defense against all the stresses. I've told you before. Obviously you've made very little progress.

THOM

(miserable)

I know. To be honest with you, I feel very close to my parishioners, but very far from Our Lord.

LeMatt shakes his head in disbelief.

LeMATT

You're one of the casualties of what they call the new spirituality. Actually I'm not sure it is spirituality. Back in the 60's, we threw out the litanies, the novenas, the rosaries - all in the name of reform. But the rosary was at least better than nothing - when you were down and out. It was a start - a place to focus your thoughts. I'm not sure your generation has found anything to replace that. A priest without a spiritual life is just a glorified social worker.

They walk on a bit in silence. Thom is particularly gloomy.

LeMATT

I shouldn't get your hopes up, but perhaps you should know. Bishop Carney is going to need a new secretary this Fall, and you're one of the men being considered.

Thom visibly brightens at this news.

LeMATT

(critical)

You'd like to have your feet on the yellow brick road that leads to monsignor, wouldn't you.

CONTINUED

LeMATT  
(continuing)

Well Bishop Carnev has a special regard for your Father Vance, and he's not 100% sure he wants to take you out of Cottonwood. So don't get your hopes up. Just...

THOM  
...pray.

LeMATT  
(slow smile)  
Sometimes our fantasies and God's will coincide.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET, COTTONWOOD - NIGHT

Thom stops his Triumph at a red light on Main Street. There is what sounds like a fistfight going on in the adjacent alley behind the old Rainbow Hotel and the ~~bus~~ <sup>RAILWAYS</sup> bus terminal. THREE MEN are slugging it out, crashing over garbage cans. From the flash of the "~~Pancy Dancer~~" studs on the back of a leather jacket, Thom realizes that Vidal is one of the three.

Checking quickly to see if there are any other cars around (there aren't), Thom guns his car through the red light and wheels into the Hotel parking lot. He jumps out of the car and runs to the alley.

A WOMAN opens a window from up in the Hotel and yells down at the fistfighters:

WOMAN  
Hey, shut the fuck up,  
down there!

In the alley, Thom now clearly sees:

(SLOW MOTION) Vidal is taking on TWO ~~GUYS~~ <sup>GUYS-</sup> ~~GUYS~~. They've been at it a while and all three are bloody and stumbling around. To Thom's eyes, it appears almost as a ballet.

(NORMAL SPEED) Momentarily evading his two assailants, Vidal stumbles toward the end of the alley, where, silhouetted from behind ~~and dressed in his black priest's cassock~~, Thom's 6 foot frame looms tall with Christian rectitude.

The two ~~guys~~ <sup>guys</sup> pick themselves up and start after Vidal, but they stop, surprised, when they see Thom.

Vidal stumbles up to Thom and, drunkenly, crosses himself.

CONTINUED

VIDAL  
Hail Mary full of grace...

THOM  
(firm)  
Come with me!

He motions Vidal toward his Triumph in the Hotel parking lot.  
(The Two ~~Thugs~~ <sup>Thugs</sup> are not pursuing - ~~they're probably Catholics~~).

The very drunk ~~Vidal~~ <sup>Vidal</sup> suddenly lurches back in the direction of the ~~thugs~~ <sup>thugs</sup>. Surprised, Thom looks after him as if he were crazy.

Vidal searches around in the garbage in the alley and comes up with his black Indian hat. He bangs it on his knee to get the dirt off and plunks it on his head. The thugs still aren't making a move. Feeling cocky, with a big grin on his face, Vidal turns back toward Thom.

VIDAL  
My hat.

In the distance is heard a police siren.

THOM  
(coaxing)  
C'mon. Before Chief Wheeler gets here.

~~Thom~~ <sup>Vidal</sup> turns once more toward the ~~thugs~~ <sup>thugs</sup> and gives them an "up yours" with his finger. They lunge at him and he jumps back and hightails it for Thom's Triumph, Thom following quickly behind him.

They scramble into the car. Thom turns the ignition and they screech out of the parking lot and up Main Street.

Once in the safety of the car, Thom has trouble catching his breath. Vidal sits there drunkenly watching him drive. Thom slows down to a normal speed.

A POLICE CAR, its lights flashing and siren going, whizzes past from the other direction. Thom keeps on driving. Vidal turns his head to watch as the flashing lights disappear into the distance behind them. Then he turns back to Thom.

VIDAL  
Dont you want to see me punished for my sins?

Vidal suddenly opens the door of the moving car and starts to get out. Terrified, Thom slams on the breaks.

THOM  
(aghast)  
What are you doing!

CONTINUED



Vidal stumbles out of the car.

VIDAL  
Gotta take a leak.

He stands on the sidewalk, back to Thom, and proceeds to relieve himself against the neon-lit display window of Fowler's Jewelry Store.

Thom is truly shocked. He just sits there with his mouth open and watches.

Vidal finishes urinating and with a backward hunch of his hips pulls himself back into his pants. He turns and stumbles back toward the car, trying to rebutton his fly as he goes. But he's too drunk, so as he falls back into the car, he stops trying.

VIDAL (*to himself*)  
Fuck it. ~~Let it all~~  
~~hang out.~~

He now looks over at Father Thomas and catches the shocked look on his face.

VIDAL  
(grinning)  
Ooops, sorry, Father.  
Too much beer.  
It won't happen again.

With this he breaks out chuckling. Thom doesn't see what's so funny. He starts driving again.

Suddenly Vidal starts to open the door again.

VIDAL  
Let me off here.

Again, Father Thomas screeches on the brakes. This again amuses Vidal. Thom is quite confounded by him. Vidal points to the shadowed form of a motorcycle parked in the alley by the Main Street Bar.

VIDAL  
My bike.

THOM  
Oh!

Vidal stumbles into the darkness toward his cycle. Something crashes in the dark.

THOM  
(startled)  
Are you alright?

CONTINUED

VIDAL'S VOICE  
(at some inanimate object)  
Goddam fuckin' shit!

There's another crash. Then the sound of the cycle kicking to a start. Vidal weaves out of the alley on his bike and makes a clumsy stop at Thom's window.

VIDAL  
(emphatic)  
Monday at 7:30!

He adjusts his hat and guns his bike off down Main Street.

CUT TO:

INT. RECTORY

As Thom walks in still a little dazed from his street encounter. Father Vance has been waiting for him.

FATHER VANCE  
You're late!

Thom looks at his watch. It is 10:21.

THOM  
(lying)  
I, ah, my Mother's birthday party. She was having such a good time, I ~~couldn't tear myself away.~~ **lost track of time.**

Thom moves quickly off toward his room before he can be interrogated any further. Father Vance mumbles after him:

FATHER VANCE  
Wouldn't ya know I'd get a no-good hippy pilgrim with a fancy sports car who can't even bring himself to respect the rules of the rectory...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. FATHER THOMAS'S OFFICE - MONDAY EVENING

A teenage girl sits with her head down, weeping, the tears running down her face. She is MEG SHOUP, daughter of the town busybody.

Father Thom sits opposite her on the edge of his desk.

FATHER THOM

Meg, think about what I told you. Don't do anything foolish. This house I told you about in Helena can help you, but you'll have to tell your parents ~~have you thought about how you'd come to deal this to your parent.~~

*Takes good care of girls in your situation*

MEG

(rising)

I gotta go, Father.

THOM

May God be with you.

Meg stands and goes to the door, wiping her tears from her face. Thom walks with her and opens the door, giving her a reassuring squeeze on the shoulder.

In the small waiting room outside the office sits Vidal Stump. Meg passes quickly out of the room.

THOM

(to Vidal)

Come on in.

VIDAL

Does everyone leave your office crying their eyes out?

Vidal's face is still a little bruised from the alley fight. But he has combed his hair and wears clean levis and a white Yucatan wedding shirt. He seems particularly shy and subdued as Thom nods him to be seated in the office. Vidal carries his hat in his hand, and plays with it nervously as he stares at the floor.

VIDAL

(clearing his throat)

Hey look, I'm sorry about last night. I was really drunk.

THOM

(simply)

There's nothing to be sorry about.

CONTINUED

VIDAL  
Yeah, well I'm sorry anyway.  
(looking up at Thom)  
That's what confession's  
all about, isn't it?

Thom smiles, then gets down to business.

THOM  
You're from ~~up~~ Browning,  
aren't you?

VIDAL  
*Yeah.* I'm one quarter Indian.

THOM  
Were you born on the reservation?

VIDAL  
Hell, I was born right in  
Browning there. My folks  
are town Indians. The fullbloods  
up in the hills at Heart Butte  
kinda look down on us. Went  
to high school in Browning.

*elaborate on  
fullblood*

THOM  
What about college?

VIDAL  
Yeah - for a year. Had a  
scholarship to Montana U.  
You know, promising young  
Injun. Studied hard. I was  
even engaged for a while to  
a girl there - Georgia Keough.  
Her old man's in the state  
legislature now.

There is a rising bitterness in Vidal's voice. He stops talking,  
ruminating on these memories.

THOM  
(gently)  
What happened?

VIDAL  
Guess I just wasn't cut out  
to wear a suit. That summer,  
after my first year at  
Missoula, I went back home  
and raised a little hell.  
Guess I was tired of living  
up to everybody else's  
expectations but my own.  
Anyway, my ~~dad~~ came down on me  
real hard. *old man*

CONTINUED

THOM

What does your father do?

The subject of Vidal's father evidently hits a real nerve. The blood starts pulsating through the veins in Vidal's neck.

*Old man?*  
VIDAL  
My ~~Dad~~ He's what you'd call a tribal pig - a reservation cop. He tried to... knock some sense into me. And that gave me all the more reason to.... Well, to make a long story short, I did something real dumb. Robbed a liquer store. One of the regular town cops caught me. They put me away for 3 years - with my father's blessing. Got out in 2 - for "good behavior".

Vidal glances challengingly at Thom, then snorts bitterly.

VIDAL

(continuing)

But you probably don't know what that means - good behavior.

THOM

What does it mean?

VIDAL

It means you do whatever anyone asks you to do - and then you say thank you. (he snorts again ironically) So then I was out. I'd lost my scholarship. So much for school. Went down to L.A. Met my... wife there. You musta heard about her - the retard?

(he smiles maliciously) Hitched up with her down there. So L.A.'s different, but the air's bad. So we came back up here. Prison placement service gets me this job as a mechanic. I'm good with my hands. An' it pays me enough to support my bad habits.

(he looks at Thom)

I do all the talkin' - that's the idea, huh?

THOM

If you like.

CONTINUED

VIDAL

Well, Father, the thing is, I'm a young man on the way down. But I'd like to stop. I'd like to turn things around - get a sense of commitment back. Purpose. I've tried by myself, but, ah, as you've seen, trouble and me seem to have an affinity.

Vidal has evidently finished what he has to say. There is silence for a moment.

THOM

Is that all?

Vidal sighs deeply and nods yes.

THOM

(softly)

I don't believe you.

VIDAL

(amused)

Okay. You don't believe me. What else do you want to hear?

Thom is momentarily stymied. He changes the subject.

THOM

Where do you get that ~~top~~<sup>grass</sup> you're always smoking?

This really breaks the ice. Vidal grins broadly.

VIDAL

That's Indian weed, Father. High grade stuff. Grows wild over in Bitterroot. Want some? I'll get you some.

THOM

(shaking his head no)

That wasn't what I meant.

VIDAL

No? Ain'tcha ever been high? Real spiritual stuff, this!

THOM

(musing)

I used to smoke - a little. Back in college in the 60's.

CONTINUED

VIDAL

Yeah, the 60's. Hot shit times. The 70's really suck. How'd you spend the 60's, Father? I don't know why the ~~fuck~~ I'm callin' you Father - we're 'bout the same age. How old are you?

THOM

Twenty-eight.

VIDAL

I'm 27 come July. Why you wanta be a priest anyway? In this day and age. Everyone knows the Catholic Church has had it. You really believe in all that old shit about abortions and ~~divorce~~ and sex?

THOM

To be honest with you, the way things are right now, I believe the only thing a person can do is follow his conscience. And the only real judge of that is God.

VIDAL

(intense)

So, if I had sex with a person, and it was against what the Church said, but I really believed I'd done the right thing, then everything'd be okay?

THOM

If you really believed you were right, you'd be okay.

(he rolls his eyes)

If Father Vance heard me say that, he'd crucify me - but that's what I believe.

There is another lull in the conversation. Father Thom looks at his watch, then back at Vidal.

THOM

What's really on your mind? In Church the other night, you acted like someone who's pretty disturbed about something.

CONTINUED

Vidal looks around the office uneasily, suddenly feeling closed in again.

VIDAL

This place is almost as bad as that little box in the church. I don't like talking here.

THOM

Maybe you'd like to talk somewhere else?

VIDAL

Do they let you have supper with people?

THOM

There isn't any "they". I'm not a prisoner here.

VIDAL

No? Then why don't you come to my house for supper tomorrow night.

THOM

*Tomorrow night is Bingo night.*  
How about Wednesday?

VIDAL

(standing)

Okay. Wednesday. I've sure wasted your time, haven't I, Father?

THOM

Not unless you think you have.

VIDAL

You know where I live?

Thom shakes his head no.

VIDAL

(continuing)

Okay - you take **Main** down and cross the river...

DISSOLVE TO:



EXT. COTTONWOOD - WEDNESDAY NIGHT

It is raining as Father Thom drives his Triumph through the poorer section of town on his way to Vidal's house for supper.

Through the windshield, as the wipers move rhythmically back and forth, the bridge crossing the Cottonwood River passes by.

Thom is wearing his social uniform again: his black turtleneck and sports jacket.

OFF SCREEN, we continue to hear Vidal's instructions on how to get to his house.

VIDAL (V.O.)  
(continuing)  
Turn left on Willow  
Street and on over the tracks...

The car rumbles over a set of railroad tracks. Willow Street is dotted with trailer homes and cheap pre-fab houses, and looks all the more dreary in the rain.

VIDAL (V.O.)  
(continuing)  
My place is the last house  
at the end of the street.

Thom pulls up in front of a little clapboard house, its upkeep long neglected, surrounded by a yard overgrown with weeds. Vidal's motorcycle is up on the dilapidated porch - out of the rain.

Thom hurries to the door and knocks.

It is a couple minutes wait before Vidal finally opens the door. He is wearing his usual levis, an ~~undershirt~~ <sup>undershirt</sup>, and no shoes. His hair is wet and slicked back. *He has a drink in his hand.*

VIDAL  
Hi. Just took a shower.  
Come on in.  
(then, in a low voice)  
Now don't pay any attention  
to my wife. She can't help  
the way she is.

INT. VIDAL'S HOUSE

Thom looks around at the squalid interior.

Two muddv mongrel dogs are sleeping on a sagging sofa. There is a chintzy fake Oriental rug on the floor, well stained and apparently never swept. Among the debris on the floor are well-chewed dog bones, a couple old corn cobs, a baby's rattle, and seeds scattered from a parakeet's cage at the window. A beat up old black and white TV is blaring loudly. A bundle of greasy mechanic's overalls and dirty diapers lies on one of the armchairs.

CONTINUED

The walls are covered with colored pictures cut out of magazines and pasted up into a mural celebrating a consumer's Garden of Eden: wild animals, movie actresses, glimmering glasses of jello, flowers, bombs bursting, American Beauty roses.

Looking through the doorway into the kitchen, Thom can see piles of dirty dishes, scattered cereal and cracker boxes on a table. One of the kitchen chairs is tipped over on the floor.

*pulls on an undershirt, then*  
Vidal turns the TV down a little bit.

VIDAL  
The Ritz it ain't, but sit  
down anyway, Father. Just  
kick the mutts off the couch.  
I got whiskey or wine.

THOM *(out of character)*  
Whiskey. *immediately*

Vidal drags a bottle of Jack Daniel's from a cabinet and pours an inch or so into each of two tumblers. He hands one to Thom.

VIDAL  
(as he downs his straight)  
To the Pope.

Thom laughs, truly amused at Vidal's persistent sacrilege.

VIDAL  
You want to smoke some grass?

THOM  
Oh no. No thank you.

Vidal shrugs, then calls out into the kitchen.

VIDAL  
Hey Patti Ann!

Patti Ann comes shuffling shyly into the room. She's carrying a baby over one arm and an old beaded handbag over the other - as if she were going out. Other wise, all she is wearing is a dirty taffeta slip, several sizes too big for her. Her ash-blonde hair is a rumpled mess. Her big brown eyes are strangely vacant. She appears to be about 19 years old.

Vidal groans when he sees her.

VIDAL  
Awh shit, Patti Ann!  
(to Thom)  
~~Just an hour ago,~~ I had  
her all cleaned up. *a second ago.*

CONTINUED

Patti Ann looks down at the floor like a scolded child. The baby, dangling precariously from her arm, gurgles happily.

Vidal turns her around and aims her toward the bedroom.

VIDAL

Father, would you help me  
with her?

Thom follows them into the bedroom. It is as squalid here as in the rest of the house.. The bed is just a mattress and boxsprings on the bare floor, with its dirty sheets in a tangle. A large old veneered dresser is overflowing with assorted items of clothing, which are similarly strewn about the room.

Vidal sets the baby on the bed and starts trying to re-dress Patti Ann, who just stands there passively.

VIDAL

Now Patti Ann, I told you.  
We got company, so I want  
you to keep your clothes on -  
you hear me?

(to Thom)

Father, could you grab that  
hairbrush there and see if  
you can't do something with  
her hair?

Vidal points to the top of the dresser. Next to the hairbrush is a half-eaten peanut butter and jelly sandwich, long forgotten. Somewhat reluctantly, Thom picks up the hairbrush and gently begins brushing Patti Ann's hair. At his touch, Patti Ann rolls her eyes up and stares pathetically at Father Thom.

VIDAL

Just like playing with dolls,  
huh, Father? Ever play with  
dolls?

Patti Ann's stare quickly becomes unnerving for Thom. He looks around the room.

On the opposite wall above the bed is a large poster - the kind specialty shops blow up from your favorite snapshot. The poster is of a young Indian in full dance regalia performing a native dance, with a crowd of spectators out-of-focus in the background. The dancer wears an eagle-feather bonnet, a ~~red satin shirt~~, a beaded vest and loin cloth and moccasins. There is a feather bustle strapped over his buttocks, and his legs are wound with strings of little bells.

THOM

Who's the poster?

<sup>^</sup>  
That in

CONTINUED

VIDAL *The Fancy Dancer*  
 That's me - ~~when I was 19~~  
~~I was a "fancy dancer"~~  
*or at least I was once.*  
~~I was~~ <sup>THOM</sup> *when that picture was taken.*  
 What's a fancy dancer?

VIDAL  
 It's one of the traditional  
 ceremonials on the reservation.  
 There's the *Eagle Dance*, the  
*War Dance*, and the *Fancy Dance*.  
 I was pretty good at it. It's  
 about the only really Indian  
 thing I ever did. Didn't make  
 me feel like an Indian, but it  
 made me feel free - real free.

*0422*  
*me feel like an Indian*  
*but it*  
*made me feel free*

THOM  
 You don't dance anymore?

VIDAL  
 (abrupt)  
 No.

Vidal finishes buttoning Patti Ann's skirt. He pats her in the direction of the kitchen.

VIDAL  
 Okay, Angel, you're all set  
 now. You go back to the  
 kitchen now and boil us some  
 water for the tamales.

Patti Ann picks up the baby again and her beaded bag and starts to shuffle out of the room. At the door, she turns and gazes back bashfully at Thom with her big brown eyes. Then she disappears into the next room.

Thom sits down on the edge of the bed next to Vidal looking after her.

THOM  
 How did she get like *that*?

VIDAL  
 Hell, I don't know.

THOM  
 Have you taken her to doctors?

VIDAL *anyone*  
 I don't think ~~there's a doctor~~  
~~alive who~~ can do anything for her.

CONTINUED

THOM  
But how ~~she~~ she manage?  
Does she ever go out  
of the house?

VIDAL  
Not hardly. I go do the  
laundry and all the shopping.

THOM  
What about the baby? Don't  
you worry leaving her alone with it?

VIDAL  
Yeah, sometimes. I've thought  
about putting him up for  
adoption. But you'd be  
surprised. She's pretty  
careful with him.

THOM  
(shocked)  
You'd put your own son up  
for adoption!

Vidal sighs and walks to the other side of the room, then turns  
back to Thom.

VIDAL  
Father, I've told you a  
few lies.

THOM  
I know.

VIDAL  
Patti Ann ain't my wife.  
And the kid's not mine either.  
She latched on to me down  
in LA. When I decided to  
come back up here, I figured  
she'd make me a good cover,  
so I brought her along.

) elaborate

THOM  
A cover?

VIDAL  
Yeah. So the local rednecks  
won't get any ideas about me.

THOM  
(cautious)  
What kind of ideas.

CONTINUED

VIDAL  
Ideas like wondering why  
I never make it with any of  
the ~~local girls~~  
*chicks here.*

Thom looks confused.

VIDAL  
Put 2 and 2 together, Father.

Thom still looks confused.

VIDAL  
The thing is, I'm not so  
~~interested in making it~~  
~~with women as I am with men.~~

*i'm only interested  
in making it with  
men.*

Thom is really taken aback. Vidal stands there staring at him, waiting for him to say something. Finally, Thom stumbles out some words:

THOM  
Is that your problem then?

VIDAL  
What?

THOM  
That you're... homosexual.

Vidal just stares back at him without answering. When he finally speaks, it is with a motion to the next room.

VIDAL  
Let's see how Patti Ann's  
doing with supper.

He walks out of the room. After a beat, Thom stands and follows.

*bolts his drink*  
DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN

Thom, Vidal, and Patti Ann sit around the kitchen table eating in silence. Supper consists of creamed corn from a can and frozen tamales cooked in boiling water. Patti Ann mostly plays with her food.

The Jack Daniels bottle is also on the table. Vidal pours himself another drink. He motions the bottle toward Thom, but Thom shakes his head. He is still nursing his first drink.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VIDAL'S HOUSE

Vidal is walking Father Thom to his car. It has stopped raining. Vidal is quite drunk.

VIDAL  
You're shocked, aren't you, Father.

THOM (coldly)  
Not exactly. To be honest with you, it's something I'm pretty green at. I've never counseled someone with your problem before. I guess the important thing is, do you want to change?

Vidal looks at Thom again with that challenge in his eyes. He shakes his head slowly - no.

THOM  
Then I don't know what I can do to help you. You must be aware of the Church's ~~stance~~ on homosexuality.

VIDAL  
I thought the Church's policy was to follow your conscience.

THOM  
No. That's my policy.

VIDAL  
Then maybe what you can do to help me is be my friend. I ain't got no one my own age to talk to in this town.

Thom gets into his car. Vidal leans in the window.

THOM  
It's the Church's policy that a priest shouldn't form friendships with his parishioners.

VIDAL  
Yeah? And what's your policy?

THOM  
I don't know.

He starts the engine. Vidal withdraws from the window. Thom drives off. Vidal watches the lights disappear down the street.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECTORY - THOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The small room is illuminated only by a 10-inch black & white Sony portable television set that has been left on, but with the sound turned off. *An old vampire movie is playing.*

In the flickering light, Father Thom lies on his back on his small cot, staring blankly at the ceiling. He is still fully dressed.

CLOSE-UP: THOM

His blank troubled eyes.

The silence is suddenly broken by a screaming voice, on the verge of hysteria.

VOICE (V.O.)

Where is he! I want to  
see Father Thomas!

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM - RECTORY

The voice belongs to Mrs. Shoup. She has barged into the waiting room followed quickly by Father Vance and Police Chief Wheeler, who are trying to calm her.

MRS. SHOUP

He knows where my Meg is -  
and he's going to tell me!

CONTINUED



The door to Thom's office opens, and Thom steps out, curious at the commotion. Mrs. Shoup immediately accosts him.

MRS. SHOUP  
Where's my daughter!  
You know. I know you  
know. She came here and  
talked to you.

THOM  
(concerned)  
Is Meg missing?

Chief Wheeler steps between Mrs. Shoup and Thom.

CHIEF WHEELER  
She hasn't been seen since  
yesterday afternoon. Do  
you have any idea where  
she might be?

THOM  
Meg Shoup did come to see  
me Monday evening. She  
wanted to confess. But you  
must understand, anything we  
discussed falls under the  
seal of the confessional.

MRS. SHOUP  
Then you do know *where she is!*

THOM  
No, I don't know. She  
didn't talk about running  
away. In fact she was  
supposed to come back and  
talk to me again this week.

MRS. SHOUP  
What did she talk about?  
Was it drugs? Surely you  
can tell us something!

Thom shakes his head, unable to answer. Father Vance tries to explain to Mrs. Shoup.

FATHER VANCE  
You must remember that my  
curate is strictly within  
his rights and his sacred  
obligation to uphold the  
seal of the confessional.

CONTINUED

MRS. SHOUP

(yelling)

Sacred obligations! A child's life is in danger and you talk to her mother about sacred obligations! I have a notion to have you both prosecuted for withholding information from the police.

CHIEF WHEELER

Mrs. Shoup, please!

Mrs. Shoup turns to Thom, her eyes blazing.

MRS. SHOUP

You're one of those frivolous young priests our seminaries are turning out nowadays. You have no sense of what's right and what's human. And I intend to expose you, if it's the last thing I do. ~~in this town.~~

*ranting*

With this, she turns and stomps out of the room, followed quickly by Chief Wheeler.

Father Vance turns to Thom and gives him an approving nod.

FATHER VANCE

Well, pilgrim, you got more backbone than I gave you credit for.

THOM

Thank you, Father.

FATHER VANCE

So I'll overlook the fact that you got in ten minutes late again last night - ~~the third time in a week~~ - and assume you had your reasons.

*with whiskey on your breath*

THOM

(wearily)

Thank you, Father.

Thom turns and heads back to his office.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. TRINA'S CAFE - MAIN STREET - MORNING

Vidal's bike is parked on the sidewalk. From the crowd inside, it is clear that this is a popular breakfast spot.

INT. TRINA'S CAFE

Vidal and Thom are sitting together in a booth over bacon and eggs. All around them are groups of ranchers and farmers having business breakfasts, talking loud and raucous.

Thom looks around to make sure no one is watching them, then withdraws a small yellow booklet from his pocket. It is a pamphlet outlining the Catholic Church's position on homosexuality. He slides the booklet across the table to Vidal.

THOM  
Have you ever seen this?

Vidal also raises his eyes to make a paranoid reconnaissance around the cafe, ~~then settles back in the corner and~~ thumbs through the pamphlet.

A couple ranchers at the nearest table are talking about race horses.

1ST RANCHER  
So you gonna run ole Bessie in the endurance race?

2ND RANCHER  
Hell, I'm gonna run ole Bessie to the glue factory!

*new world importance of the race.*

3RD RANCHER  
I hear Vern Stuart's been working out ~~Black Beauty~~. **ARAB SON**.  
That'll be the horse to beat.

1ST RANCHER  
Wouldn't count out that stud mustang those guys over in Drummond are grooming either...

Vidal finishes looking through the booklet and pushes it back across the table, face down, to Thom. Vidal puts a big fake smile on his face for the rest of the cafe - to conceal the bitterness in his voice as he tells Thom what he thinks of the pamphlet.

VIDAL  
I've heard all this crap before. And I'll tell ya - it doesn't jive with the reality I live in, or that anyone else lives in for that matter.

*(and is brilliant)*

*specific examples?*

CONTINUED

*stymied.*  
Thom appears rather crestfallen. He fishes for the right thing to say.

THOM  
Then you don't feel guilty  
about the way you are?

The fake smile remains frozen on Vidal's face as he slowly shakes his head no.

THOM  
(attempting a joke)  
Then I guess it's my duty  
to try and make you feel guilty.

Vidal laughs, genuinely amused.

TRINA, the owner of the cafe, comes sauntering by their table with the check. She is a tiny Chicana with her black-lacquer-hair up in a bun. She's wearing a sexy red silk dress and has little gold-bead earrings in her pierced ears. She likes to flirt with the customers, *especially Vidal.*

TRINA  
'Allo, Vidal, you gorgeous  
bike man, you. When you  
take me out on your bike, eh?

Vidal looks her up and down as if considering the proposition. Then he shakes his head.

VIDAL  
I'll have to ask my wife's  
permission.

Trina pouts, then turns to Thom.

TRINA *me not*  
'Ey, Padre, you gonna make a  
monk out of this gorgeous hombre?

THOM  
I guess he's so fond of his  
wife, he already is a monk.

They all laugh, and Trina goes off to another table. Thom and Vidal start to get up to leave.

VIDAL  
~~So~~ I'll see you tomorrow?

THOM  
Tomorrow?

CONTINUED

VIDAL

I eat here every morning.  
Any reason why you can't?

THOM

(hesitant)

Well, I... No, I guess  
there's no reason I can't.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: FATHER LeMATT

He is talking to Thom on the phone from Helena.

LeMATT

Homosexuals are the toughest  
cases. You've got to have a  
heap of patience and compassion *with them -*  
~~to bring them around.~~ And  
firmness. You have to be firm  
with them. But don't expect  
results overnight....

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP: THOM

On the phone, listening to Father LeMatt.

LeMATT (V.O.)

Frankly, just between you and  
me, the success rate is ~~pretty~~ *very*  
low. Pray for him. Pray hard.

THOM

(nodding obediently)

Pray...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TRINA'S CAFE - ANOTHER MORNING

Through the window, Thom and Vidal can be seen at a table talking.

THOM (V.O.)

Are you actively involved  
with any ~~other~~ men ~~right~~ now?

VIDAL (V.O.)

In this town! You kidding?  
The nearest gay bar is 80  
miles from here.

CONTINUED

THOM (V.O.)  
(joking)  
You must be as celebrate as  
I am then.

VIDAL (V.O.)  
(a slow drawl)  
Yeah..... except I can  
~~masturbate~~, and you can't.  
**SACK OFF**

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECTORY

Father Vance looks up from his coffee as Thom enters.

FATHER VANCE  
They found Meg Shoup.

THOM  
They did? Where?

FATHER VANCE  
Seattle. Seems she's 5  
months pregnant and was  
looking for her boyfriend.  
*Police picked her up.*

THOM  
What's going to happen to  
her now?

FATHER VANCE  
Mrs. Shoup's ~~putting her in~~  
~~a boarding house in Butte-~~  
~~'til she has the baby.~~

*arranged to put her  
in a good Catholic  
home in Boston*

Thom nods thoughtfully.

FATHER VANCE  
Mrs. Shoup's still got it  
in for you, though. So you  
better watch your step.

THOM  
Oh?

FATHER VANCE  
Seems she's seen you and that  
Vidal Stump at one of the local  
cafes. She told me she thought  
it was a most unsuitable  
friendship.

CONTINUED

THOM

And what did you say?

FATHER VANCE

Far as I can see, your counseling's having a good effect. I hear he's staying out of the bars and showing up regular at his job.

THOM

I'm encouraging him to go back to school. Underneath all his show, he's an intelligent guy.

FATHER VANCE

Well, he's not in heaven yet. So don't let up on him.

THOM

I won't.

CUT TO:

INT. COTTONWOOD AUTO SERVICE - DAY

The phone is ringing. The OWNER of the garage answers.

OWNER

Yeah? Hold on.

He calls out toward a battered Volkswagen that is up on a hydrolic lift.

OWNER

Hey, halfbreed! Telephone!

Vidal emerges from under the car. He wipes some of the grease off his hands and proceeds to the phone.

VIDAL

Hello?

It is Thom.

VIDAL

Yeah. I can get away. How about going on my bike, or are you too chicken?  
(he smiles at Thom's answer)  
Alright. I'll pick up some eats. Sure. See ya then.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE

Vidal guns his motorcycle along the back roads of Cottonwood with Thom close on the seat behind him holding on, ~~tightly~~, his arms around Vidal's ~~chest~~, <sup>waist</sup>, as the wind whips their hair. Thom is exhilarated.

They speed on through acres and acres of wheat and pastureland, up into the rolling foothills of the distant mountains.

Suddenly Vidal downshifts his bike. Ahead is a vast hayfield. Along it, near the road, stands a lonely clump of quaking aspen trees. A little ditch of green water runs along the edge of the field, which has been recently mowed, the grass lying in windrows to dry. Vidal brings his bike to a halt.

VIDAL  
How's this for a picnic?

THOM <sup>(real pleased)</sup>  
(happy as a lark)  
It'll do. <sup>Great!</sup>

They climb off the bike and look around, breathing in the good air. Vidal takes a paper sack from his saddlebag and heads toward the shade of the aspens.

They both sit down under the trees. Vidal extracts 2 beers and a couple sandwiches from the sack. With hardly a word exchanged, they relax into the pleasant setting, drinking their beers and enjoying their picnic lunch.

Vidal takes a hand-rolled cigarette from his pocket and lights it, taking a deep drag. Casually, he offers it to Thom. Clearly it is marijuana. Thom looks at the offered joint a beat, then reaches for it. Vidal smiles broadly as Thom takes a hit.

The wind in the trees, the birds, the water gurgling in the stream - all seem magnified into a sort of symphony of the sounds of nature. A warm sun shines playfully through the gently moving branches above them as they share the joint.

Vidal gives a tug at the hem of Thom's cassock, inching it up his leg a little.

VIDAL  
Hey, Father, I've always wondered - what do priests wear underneath their cassocks?  
<sup>these things</sup>

Thom pushes his hand away, playfully.

THOM  
That's <sup>my</sup> secret of the profession.

CONTINUED

dialogue?  
LONG SHOT: THE IDEAL SETTING



VIDAL  
(teasing)

Yeah? You got lots o' secrets, I bet - locked away in that head of yours. All those dirty thoughts and indiscretions people must tell you about in their confessions. Any of the locals ever mention me as the object of their sinful thoughts?

THOM  
(laughing)

I'll never tell.

VIDAL  
Yeah? Shit.

THOM  
(a sudden idea)  
Can I ride your bike?

VIDAL  
Huh?

THOM  
Can I ride your bike?

VIDAL  
Sure. You ever ride one before?

THOM  
Just a scooter ~~I had for~~ *my roommate had*  
a ~~little while~~ in college.

VIDAL  
Yeah, well this ain't no scooter.

THOM  
Principle's the same?

VIDAL  
Okay.

They get up and walk over to the bike - a big ~~Honda~~ *Harley* 750. In order to straddle the bike, Thom has to hike up his cassock to his knees.

VIDAL  
(grinning)  
Nice legs...

CONTINUED

THOM  
(ignoring the crack)  
Just show me how to start  
this thing.

VIDAL  
Here...

Vidal turns on the ignition and kicks it to a start. Thom plays with the throttle, revving it a few times, ready to go.

THOM  
Well climb on!

Vidal grins, a little apprehensive, and gets on behind Thom - but he steadies himself by holding the back of the seat rather than putting his arms around him. Thom looks back over his shoulder at him, enjoying the reversal of their roles.

THOM  
Ready?

VIDAL  
You sure you know how  
to do this?

Thom laughs and kicks it into gear. The cycle lurches forward - Vidal practically falling off. It lurches again, and Vidal holds on for dear life to the seat.

Instead of going onto the road, Thom starts circling cautiously through the field - a bumpy ride, and he's not in all that much control of the machine. Vidal is having a hard time staying on. He gives in and puts his arms around Thom.

Thom is having a ball. He accelerates and slips into a higher gear. They are both bouncing off the seat.

*Seeing around the bales of hay -*

Suddenly the cycle hits a gully between two plowed rows and throws them both flying through the air. The bike flops over and comes to a halt in the loose soil. Vidal and Thom land together in the dirt, ~~rolling over one another until they come to a stop with Vidal's body lying squarely on top of Thom's.~~ Realizing that no damage has been done, they both start laughing.

VIDAL  
*Hey!* You're crazier than I am!

Thom lies back and shuts his eyes, catching his breath. Vidal looks down at him. He lowers his lips to Thom's and kisses him lightly, tentatively. Thom makes no attempt to turn his lips away. He lies there caught up in the moment.

Vidal withdraws from the kiss and looks intently down at Thom. Thom's eyes ~~open and~~ look up into Vidal's. *eyes*

CONTINUED

Then Thom recovers his senses. He tries to make a joke out of it.

THOM  
What's going on here?

Thom tries to sit up, but the weight of Vidal's body holds him pinned down.

THOM  
(nervous)  
C'mon. It's getting late.  
We better get back.

With a sigh, Vidal gives in and rolls off of Thom. He sits up and watches as Thom stands and goes over to check the bike.

THOM  
Hope nothin's been damaged.

He pulls the bike upright, then glances back at Vidal, who has not moved, but continues to stare at Thom broodingly.

THOM  
(insistent)  
C'mon. I have to be back.  
Father Vance will throw a fit.

Without a word, Vidal gets to his feet. Thom steps aside as Vidal takes over the bike. Vidal straddles the engine and kicks it to an easy start. He continues to stare straight ahead as Thom climbs on behind him.

As the bike lurches forward, Thom ~~puts his arms around Vidal, but less tightly than before.~~ *starts to hold on to Vidal, but reconsiders and grabs on to the seat instead.*

They move off back to the road, then quickly disappear down the hill.

CUT TO:

EXT. RECTORY

As Vidal drives up and lets Thom off, Vidal turns and looks at Thom.

VIDAL  
See you tomorrow.

When Thom makes no immediate reply, Vidal takes off.

Before Thom reaches the door of the rectory, Father Vance comes hurrying out carrying the kit of holy oils for administering ~~extreme unction.~~ *last rites.*

CONTINUED

He takes one look at Thom's dusty cassock and, in a fury, thrusts the kit into his hands.

FATHER VANCE

Get up to Malley's ranch quick! Clem Malley's had an accident with a baler *machine*. Hurry!

Thom snaps to, grabbing the kit and jumping into his Triumph. He screeches out of the driveway and off up the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. MALLEY'S RANCH

Thom pulls his Triumph to a stop by a hayfield where an ambulance, a squad car, and a small crowd has gathered by a baling machine. Thom runs up to the scene of the accident.

Sheriff Wheeler is standing to the side talking in hushed tones with Mrs. Malley and her teenaged son, who are stunned and weeping. Another policeman and a ranch hand and two MEDICS are bent over a bloody form on the ground.

{ The BODY is so mangled that it no longer looks human. Even the head has been hacked nearly in half, and the eyes are falling out of the sockets. Evidently, the man fell into the baling machine, for the machine is splattered with sun-dried blood.

Thom is horrified by the sight, but quickly recovers and kneels by the ~~remains~~ *body* to administer the holy oils.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RECTORY - LATE AFTERNOON

As Thom returns, pale and shaken, from the ranch.

Father Vance is waiting for him and mad as a hornet.

FATHER VANCE

If you hadn't been out gallivanting around the countryside with that half-breed friend of yours, you might have been in time to save Clem Malley's soul.

THOM

(tired and irritated)  
The only way I could have ministered to Clem Malley's soul was if I had been there before he fell into the baler - 'cause there wasn't anything left to minister to afterward.

CONTINUED

FATHER VANCE: The soul stays in the body for fifteen or twenty minutes. The faculty of hearing is the last to go. Clem Malley might have heard you if you'd been there to confess him sooner. Your carelessness might be the difference between his going to heaven or hell; or the degree of grace he might have in heaven; or the amount of time he'll spend in purgatory. TAKE YOUR PICK YOUNG MAN.

TOM: May I ask why you didn't take the call? You were on duty.

FATHER VANCE: I went out on a sick call. When I got back I was told that Mrs. Malley had called five minutes earlier.. I was just leaving when you came. If you had been here...

TOM: Wait a minute. With all due respect , Father, not even the Pope knows how long the soul remains in the body before it departs. And I was not on/call----you were. Your judgment in leaving was just as bad as mine was in coming back late.

FATHER VANCE: Don't you get flippant with me young man! A priest who's not there when he's needed is the same as no priest at all.

TOM: I was counseling...

FATHER VANCE: Counseling my foot! You smell of beer. You're running around a little too much with that half-breed friend of yours. Get out of my sight!!! I've probably lost a soul because of you.

FATHER VANCE  
Don't you get flippant  
with me, young man!  
A priest who's not there  
when he's needed is the same  
as no priest at all.

THOM  
I was counseling...

FATHER VANCE  
Counseling my foot! Get  
out of my sight, and don't  
let me see you for the  
rest of the day.

As Thom walks away, Father Vance yells after him:

*Thom* { FATHER VANCE  
Maybe you should consider  
taking breakfast at the  
rectory for a while!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THOM'S BEDROOM

As before, the only illumination is the flickering screen of his  
portable TV, as Thom lies on his back, unable to sleep. *the halo*  
*is down-eyed*

CLOSE-UP: THOM

As he lets his eyes close a moment.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: VIDAL

From Thom's POV, (recalling the kiss in the wheatfield), Vidal's  
face stares down at him, then moves closer for the kiss.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

CLOSE-UP: THOM

Forcing his eyes open again.

But quickly his weariness again overtakes him. Once more his  
eyelids close.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT: THE BALER

*repeat  
sequence  
p. 44* {

As a body is wrenched through the machinery, blood spraying all  
through the yellow bales of hay.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. TRINA'S CAFE - MORNING

Vidal's bike is parked as usual on the sidewalk. But, through the window, Vidal can be seen sitting alone and dejected. He keeps glancing out the window, hoping for Thom to arrive.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

CLOSE-UP: THOM

As he hears confession. He rests his forehead on his hand, himself troubled.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
Bless me, Father, for I  
have sinned...

Thom closes his eyes in weariness.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. TRINA'S CAFE

Vidal sits alone at a table, uninterested in his breakfast, anger in his eyes.

Trina approaches him.

TRINA *bikeman.*  
Hey, handsome *ride.*  
How cum Father Thom he  
don't eat breakfast at  
Trina's no more?

VIDAL  
(purposely mean)  
? Maybe he ~~doesn't like the~~ *thinks the food sucks.*  
• ~~food here!~~

He pushes himself abruptly from the table, throws down a couple bills, and stomps out of the restaurant. Trina looks after him, hurt and perplexed.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

CLOSE-UP: THOM

Hearing confession.

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
Father, I have lain down in  
sin and am unfit before  
God's eyes.

FADE OUT

# V.O. Q. DREAM SEQUENCE

## FATHER LAMATT

INSERT B

top of p. 46

V.O. as TOM continues to toss and turn.

Beware of friendships that distract you from the love of God.  
The priests loneliness exists to be filled with the love of  
God.

You have no friends for the same reason that you have  
no wife and children.

You belong to no one so that you can belong to everyone.

INSERT C

TOP OF P.47

~~From the close-up of Tom's eyes we match dissolve to two pool balls~~

Close-up: BALLS BEING positioned in a rack. These are  
all tight shots of hands, balls, cue stick being chalked. It  
is very apparent the person playing pool has spent a lot  
of time in pool halls. A few seconds before the break we  
pan up the arms and see it is a very angry and slightly  
drunk VIDAL. He breaks with all the force he can muster.  
He bolts down a shot of tequilla followed by a long pull  
of a bottle of Bud. When he shoots he is shooting extremely  
hard and misses three or four shots in a row. A few bar  
customers step back out of VIDAL'S way sensing his  
anger and frustration. After he misses another shot he  
swings the pool stick at the balls and bats several off  
the table. He then takes the pool stick and smashes it on the  
table.

BAR PERSON: Hey man...are you crazy? You broke a good  
stick.

VIDAL: (as he storms out) SHOVE IT UP YOUR ASS. He jumps  
on his bike and goes roaring off.

FADES OUT



FADE IN

CLOSE-UP: VIDAL

He is standing in a darkened bar, drinking. He downs a mixed drink, then smashes the glass to the floor.

A couple BAR PEOPLE around him jump back to avoid the flying glass.

BAR PERSON

Hey, man, are you crazy!

VIDAL

Fuck you!

FADE OUT

FADE IN

CLOSE-UP: THOM

Waiting to hear the next confession. The voice is Vidal's, and he sounds angry and drunk.

VIDAL

Tom!

Thom is startled, almost fearful. His face goes pale.

THOM

Vidal, I've stayed away from you for your own good...

VIDAL

(spitting out the words)  
I'm not in the mood for any of your priest bullshit tonight!

Thom sits there stunned, as Vidal rages on.

VIDAL

So don't lay your Catholic morality on me, you faggot! ~~You are, you know. You're~~ *you're as gay as I am.*  
~~as big a faggot as I am~~ - but you don't have the balls to admit it to yourself. My own good, huh? You're in love with me, aren't you? But then, you're a Christian. You love everyone. You love God. You love the world. What the fuck do you know about love? You don't even love yourself, 'cause if you did, you could be honest with yourself. You'd ~~face~~ *face* up to what you really ~~want~~. Why don't you get in bed with me, you holier-than-thou faggot *hypocrite* and I'll show you what love really is.

CONTINUED

INSERT  
C

INSERT D

BOTTOM P.48

VIDAL: You're trapped in your own closet... And I didn't trick you. At first I wasn't after anything. I thought you were probably straight and I just wanted to be near you. I could never forget the first day I saw you walking down the street. You were looking so butch and so free. And you had a wonderful smile on your face. And I fell for you. I couldn't get you out of my mind. I went crazy thinking about you. I drank. I got in fights. Finally I got so crazy I thought I'd just try hanging around you. Do you know how gorgeous you are? If you went to L.A. and walked down Hollywood Boulevard you'd have every guy in town chasing after you.

TOM: Stop it. Please. Please.

Thom suddenly feels trapped inside the confessional, panicked by the truth of Vidal's words.

*SLOW MOTION:*

FLASH CUT TO:

(THE BALER *Thom himself falling into the baler machine, pulled into the*  
~~As the machinery pulls the screaming body through the turning blades, and the blood sprays.~~)

BACK TO:

CLOSE-UP: THOM

Trapped in the confessional.

THOM

*Get out of here!*  
~~Leave me alone.~~ It's not true. You're drunk!

VIDAL

I'm drunk alright. But what I'm saying is true, and you fuckin' know it! All these weeks I've been playing along with you - waiting for you to wake up and admit you're attracted to me - just like I am to you. And when I kissed you, you liked it, didn't you? You didn't stop me, did you? Then you got scared.

THOM

So you lied to me! You didn't want help at all. It was all a lie - a trick!

VIDAL

Don't talk to me about lies! *You're the one*  
You who won't face up to what you are and what you want!

*EXPAND WITH INTENT*

Vidal has said his piece. He stops his accusations. Thom can hear him breathing heavily on the other side of the booth.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP: VIDAL

In the confessional. His anger spent, his voice becomes suddenly softer, almost a romantic pleading.

CONTINUED

VIDAL  
You liked it when I kissed  
you, didn't you.  
(then more insistent)  
~~Hub?~~ Didn't you?

After a long pause, Thom finally speaks - so low Vidal can hardly hear him.

THOM  
Yes.

VIDAL  
What?

THOM  
(louder)  
Yes.

*VIDAL  
And you are attracted  
to me, aren't you?  
THOM  
Yes.*

Vidal smiles in relief. Now it is his turn to interrogate Thom.

VIDAL  
Have you ever had sex with  
another guy?

THOM  
No.

VIDAL  
With a woman?

*more  
about  
passion*

THOM  
I was engaged once. I did  
what was expected of me.  
But it wasn't right.

VIDAL  
Then you must have had  
feelings about men.

CUT BACK TO;

CLOSE-UP: THOM

As he is forced to recall painful memories, tears well up and stream down his face.

*INSERT E*

THOM  
I had a friend.

VIDAL  
Tell me about him.

CONTINUED

INSERT E

bottom p. 49

TOM: One friend in high school, Eddie Machin. He was on the football team with me and we went to the same church in Helena. (pause) I would have died for Eddie. (almost losing control). One day I put my arm across Eddie's shoulders and the parish priest saw me do it and he told me that men who do things like that, even little things, are automatically damned. He told me it was the unforgivable sin.....

VIDAL: And the other one?

To top of p. 50

THOM

It was in the seminary. His name was Doric - Doric Wilton. We never touched each other, but Father LaMatt, he could see that something was going on between us. He told me that it was a dangerous friendship and that it had to stop. He must have talked to Doric too, 'cause that was the end of it. Since we were ordained, I never saw or heard from Doric again.

*we avoided each other after that.*

VIDAL

So were ~~we~~ <sup>you</sup> the only ones?

THOM

Yes --- except for you.

There is silence for a moment, then:

VIDAL

Meet me tomorrow.

THOM

I can't. Tomorrow's Sunday. I'm supposed to go into Helena and see my folks - and Father LaMatt.

VIDAL

Alright. All the better then. **OKAY. HERE'S WHAT WILL DO:**

~~THOM~~

*Thom looks at him questioningly*

VIDAL

You know the Holiday Inn on the Interstate?

THOM

Yes.

VIDAL

I'm going to drive up there tonight and get a room. Then I'm going to call you and tell you ~~what the story is~~ <sup>where to stay</sup>. I'll call you in your office - at eleven o'clock ~~tonight~~.

THOM

No. We shouldn't...

CONTINUED

VIDAL  
No more bullshit from you.  
You just be at that phone  
when I call.

THOM  
And if I'm not?

VIDAL  
(laughing)  
You'll be there. Eleven  
o'clock.

Thom can hear Vidal stand up and push his way out the curtains,  
then his footsteps going down the aisle.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: TELEPHONE

The phone rings once, twice.  
~~The phone rings.~~

INT. THOM'S OFFICE

Thom sits next to the phone, staring at it in indecision - as it  
rings a third time. He picks it up.

VIDAL (V.O.)  
Coward. You were sitting  
right there, and you were  
too chickenshit to answer.

THOM  
Don't rub it in.

VIDAL (V.O.)  
I'm in room 203. You don't  
even have to go in the front.  
Just park in the lot and go  
in the side door, like you're  
going to your own room.  
Nobody will notice you.  
They're a million people here.  
Go up the side stairs and *Rm 203 -*  
~~you come to the corridor that~~  
~~my room is on~~ the third door  
on the right. Got it?

THOM  
I don't know...

VIDAL (V.O.)  
You got it. What time do you  
~~leave there tomorrow?~~ *will you be here.*

THOM  
Around ~~10:30.~~ *10:00*

CONTINUED

VIDAL (V.O.)

~~Then you should be here by eleven. I'm going down to the bar now and have a couple drinks. See ya tomorrow, Tom. Sweet dreams.~~

THOM

~~Yeah. Sweet dreams yourself.~~

He hangs up the phone.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. RECTORY - MORNING

Thom is hurriedly packing a few things into his Triumph, not noticing that Father Vance is approaching behind him.

FATHER VANCE

Tom?

Thom jumps, not having been aware of Father Vance's presence. He turns and smiles nervously. Father Vance looks at him curiously. Thom's guilt is showing.

FATHER VANCE

On your way out of town,  
drop by and see Missy Oldenberg.  
She's in pretty poor shape.

Irritated to be detained, Thom glances at his watch.

FATHER VANCE

(noticing his irritation)  
That's not so much to ask, is  
it? I'm sure your parents will  
understand if you're a little late.

THOM

No, no, of course I'll drop by.

Father Vance continues to stare after him, as Thom backs his Triumph out and drives away.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLDENBERG FARM

As Thom drives up. It is a former dairy farm. The roof of the old barn has long ago fallen in, but the farmhouse has been kept up.

CONTINUED



Working in a small vegetable and flower garden by the side of the house is CLARE FAUX, a small, cheery woman in her 70's, wearing a big straw hat with daisies on the brim and overalls. She greets Thom warmly and leads him into the house.

INT. FARM HOUSE - MISSY OLDENBERG'S BEDROOM

Thom sits by the bed holding the hand of MISSY OLDENBERG, also in her 70's, who lies in bed, sick. The rouge on her cheeks does not hide the pallor of her complexion.

Clare Faux sits nearby in a rocker, crocheting. The bedroom is cheery, with lots of cut flowers and sunlight flowing through the open windows. Everywhere is evidence of the 2 ladies' handiwork: patchwork quilts, crochet-work, and knitting.

MISSY

(her voice quavering)  
I'm so lucky to have Clare,  
you know, Father.

THOM

You both are very fortunate  
to have each other.

MISSY

If it weren't for Clare,  
they'd have taken me away  
to the Old Peoples' Home.

Thom pats her hand consolingly.

MISSY

But what's going to happen  
to Clare When I'm gone?  
They'll come and take her  
away.

CLARE

Don't you worry about me,  
Missy. You just think about  
getting your health back.  
No one's goin' to take me  
anywhere, lessen it's at the  
point of a shotgun.

MISSY

Make her listen, Father.  
Make her think about the  
future.

THOM

I'll try.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOLIDAY INN

As Thom drives in and parks. The parking lot is crowded with cars. Nervous, Thom walks straight to the side door, trying to act as normal as possible.

INT. CORRIDOR

Thom walks along the plush red carpeting and knocks softly on the door of room 203.

It is several painful moments before the door opens. There stands Vidal, wearing only his levis, ~~his chest and feet bare~~. His face shows strain. With no words exchanged, Thom enters, and the door closes.

INT. MOTEL ROOM

Vidal is strangely silent. He walks across the room to a picture window (with a spectacular view of the mountains). He leans against the window and looks out.

THOM  
What's the matter?

VIDAL  
(turning back to Thom)  
I thought you'd stood me up.

THOM  
I had to visit an old lady  
on the way. She's sick.

VIDAL  
You could have phoned.

THOM  
I'm sorry. I figured you'd  
understand.

Unsmiling, expressionless, Vidal watches as Thom crosses the room to join him at the window.

Thom raises both hands and cups Vidal's unshaven face affectionately, looking into his eyes.

THOM  
I just want to talk  
to you.

VIDAL  
(smiling ironically)  
Talk away.

Vidal's hands reach up and close around Thom's wrists, pulling him closer. Thom closes his eyes. His fingers find their way into Vidal's hair, to the nape of his neck.

CONTINUED

They kiss, moving into a tight embrace.

LAP DISSOLVE INTO:

MONTAGE: LOVEMAKING, THOM AND VIDAL

Slow and sensuous, male flesh moves over male flesh - tentative, exploring, then urgent.

*Stranger* We hear Thom's voice, describing the experience, as one would recall it later on:

THOM (*v.o.*) *slowly, dreamily*  
I was drifting alone through space...the void...oblivion. And I knew... I felt that I'd been there before - that I'd always been there. And the feeling was serene - serene, but lonely. So very lonely. And I said to myself: this is the place we go after we die, and this is the place we were before we were born. And then it occurred to me that being born is a choice - a decision. A decision to seek out that which we are not - to know the other side - to quench the loneliness - fulfill the yearning.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: THOM

Lying on his back on the deep red carpet, his eyes glazed into some oblivion.

He turns to Vidal, who is lying beside him, ~~smoking a cigarette.~~

THOM  
It was strange, because I had no identity any more. I had no name. No past.

Vidal looks at him a little curiously.

VIDAL  
(down to earth)  
Yeah, well I kinda got off on it myself.

Suddenly he sits up.

CONTINUED

VIDAL  
I'm starved! You want  
some food?

THOM  
Food?

VIDAL  
Yeah, food. Or don't  
you get hungry - out  
there in the void.

Vidal stands and goes to the phone. He dials room service.

VIDAL  
(in the phone)  
Hello, Room Service please.  
Yeah, this is Room 203, and  
I'd like to order a real  
big breakfast. ~~Four~~ <sup>double order</sup> eggs  
over easy, a ~~lot~~ <sup>double order</sup> of bacon, <sup>a double order of</sup>  
~~some~~ toast, and a ~~couple~~ <sup>a hot pot of</sup>  
~~large~~ coffees. Yeah.

He hangs up. Thom sits on the floor gazing up at him.

VIDAL  
There!- something substantial  
to bring you back to Earth.

THOM  
You're making fun of me.

VIDAL  
That's one of the privileges  
of lovers.

THOM  
Lovers? I didn't hear you  
say you loved me.

VIDAL  
You're very free with that  
word "love" in your profession.  
You'd think it was a basketball,  
the way you bounce it around.

Thom is disappointed. He suddenly becomes aware that he is  
naked and reaches out for his shirt - to cover himself with.

VIDAL  
Oh, now your feelings are  
hurt. What do you want me  
to say? I never waited so  
long or so hard for anyone  
in my life as I have for you.  
And it was worth the wait.

CONTINUED

*LOVERS?  
different  
agony*

DISSOLVE  
IN SCENE

Vidal lowers himself again to Thom. He removes the shirt from Thom's groin. Quickly, they are kissing and moving urgently against each other again.

Suddenly there is a knock on the door.

VOICE  
(outside the door)  
Room Service!

Thom freezes in panic.

THOM  
Oh my God!

He looks at Vidal as if to ask: what do we do now? Vidal is grinning, but quickly changes his expression to a faked look of seriousness.

VIDAL  
Quick! Grab your clothes  
and hide in the bathroom!  
(then, toward the door)  
Just a minute!

Thom grasps wildly around gathering up the clothes which are strewn all about the floor. He bundles them up and retreats toward the bathroom. Vidal stops him.

VIDAL  
My pants!

He grabs his levis out of the bundle of clothes, causing Thom to drop everything again. Thom frantically gathers them back together and disappears into the bathroom, pushing the door shut behind him.

Vidal can't help chuckling as he pulls on his levis and hops to the door. He is still grinning maniacally as he opens the door and takes the tray of food from the Room Service boy.

VIDAL  
(to the boy)  
Thank you. You're very  
fast.

The boy looks at him curiously, but Vidal can't wipe the grin off his face. He pulls a dollar bill from his pocket and tips the boy.

*He signs the bill and*

BOY  
Thank you, Sir.

CONTINUED

Vidal shuts the door and carries the tray over to the bed. Then he goes to the bathroom door and knocks on it.

VIDAL  
(disguising his voice)  
Alright, I know you're  
in there. Come out with  
your hands up!

After a beat, the door opens a crack, and Thom sticks his head out to see if the coast is really clear. As the door opens, we can see that he has hurriedly gotten dressed.

Vidal laughs at him.

THOM  
Well I'm not used to  
these things.

VIDAL  
You'll get used to 'em -  
real quick. You'll become  
a master of deceptions.

The word "deceptions" has an instant sobering effect on Thom.

THOM  
Yes... deceptions.

VIDAL  
Why don't you come have  
some breakfast and don't  
think about those things  
right now.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE-UP: THOM - INT. MOTEL ROOM

He is on the phone - talking to his mother.

THOM  
Hello, Mom?...Yeah. No.  
I'm alright. No, I'm in  
Bernsville. Trouble with  
the car. No, not serious.  
But I guess I'm not going  
to make it today. I'm sorry.  
Yes. Mom? Would you do me a  
favor? Call Father LaMatt  
at the Seminary. Tell him  
I'm not going to make our  
appointment. Yes, thanks  
Mom. Tell Dad I'm sorry.  
We'll make up for it the  
next time.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

THOM  
(continuing)  
(on the phone)  
What? Ah, I'm calling from  
the Holiday Inn. Yeah, they  
let me use the phone. No, I  
won't. I'll call you when I  
get back to the rectory - so  
you won't have to worry.  
Okay. Thanks, Mom. Bye.

As Thom puts down the phone, Vidal grins up at him from the bed.

VIDAL  
You're learning fast.

*THEY MOVE TOWARD EACH OTHER.*  
CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - COTTONWOOD

The congregation chants the liturgical responses of Sunday Mass.

CONGREGATION  
Holy, Holy, Holy -  
Lord God of Hosts.  
Heaven and Earth  
Are filled with Thy Power and Might.

Thom is at the altar, preparing the Consecration. Behind him,  
the congregation kneels in prayer.

Thom raises the wafer.

THOM  
This is my body.

He bends over the chalice.

THOM  
This is my blood.

Behind him, soft footsteps shuffle up to the altar rail, as the  
first people come forward to receive Holy Communion.

Thom comes down the altar steps holding the ciborium of  
consecrated wafers. There in the front row pew, staring at him,  
sits Vidal - a mask of religious indifference settled firmly on  
his face.

Without daring so much as a glance at his <sup>Vidal</sup> ~~lover~~, Thom moves along  
the row of kneeling people at the altar rail, slipping the wafers  
into their open mouths.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VIDAL'S HOUSE

Patti Ann slips a potato chip into her mouth and munches away. She is sitting in front of the television set, totally engrossed in an afternoon cartoon show.

Behind her, Vidal, dressed only in his levis, quietly shuts the door to the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM

Thom sits on the bed, taking off his cassock. He looks up at Vidal at the door. Vidal stares back, as he undoes his belt and lets his pants fall to the floor.

VIDAL  
This is my body...

As Vidal steps toward the bed, the CAMERA PANS UP to the Fancy Dancer poster on the wall.

VIDAL (O.C.)  
This is my blood.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. RECTORY - MORNING

Vidal is mowing the rectory lawn with an old manual lawn mower. He is shirtless and sweating in the hot summer sun.

In the distance, Father Vance is trying, without success, to start his car - an old black 1955 Buick.

Father Vance gets out of his car and approaches Vidal. Vidal looks up from his work.

FATHER VANCE  
So he's got you working now.

VIDAL  
I volunteered.

FATHER VANCE  
I see.

VIADL  
I've never exactly been  
famous for my Christian acts.

CONTINUED



FATHER VANCE  
Un-huh. Well it's never  
too late. I hear you're  
a good mechanic.

Vidal shrugs modestly.

FATHER VANCE  
Maybe if you're so full  
of Christian spirit these  
days, you'd be willing to  
take a look at my car.

Vidal stops mowing and wipes the sweat from his face with a  
handkerchief. He grins at Father Vance.

VIDAL  
What's wrong with it?

FATHER VANCE  
It doesn't seem to want  
to start.

VIDAL  
Let's take a look.

They walk over to Father Vance's Buick. Considering its age, the  
body is still in excellent condition.

VIDAL  
She's a beauty. What is  
this? '56?

FATHER VANCE  
'55.

VIDAL  
You the original owner?

FATHER VANCE  
(proudly)  
That I am.

VIDAL  
(running his hand over the car)  
Nice.

Vidal opens the hood and looks inside, testing the wiring.

VIDAL  
Try starting it now.

Father Vance gets in the car and turns the key. It starts.  
Father Vance is delighted.

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Billy Shoup runs away  
Abortion Convention in Helena, Thom bumps  
into Father Adrian. They are staying at  
the same motel.

<sup>in the middle of the</sup>  
That night, Vidal shows up at the motel  
drunk and bloody from a fight - he wakes  
Thom up with a blow job. Thom is ice cold.  
Vidal suggests their affair is over.  
"What if I want a priest?" "You are a priest."  
Breakfast with Adrian and his lover and Vidal.  
Thom and Adrian drive together to the  
convention. Thom breaks down, saying  
he is leaving the church.  
Thom is too worked up to stay at the  
convention and leaves early. He  
catches Vidal in bed with the blonde.  
Thom drives to the REST STOP and gets  
arrested.

p. 13 - add Vidal fixes Father Vance's car  
- Vidal points out notorious REST STOP

EQUALIZE THE EXTREMES THAT ARE THE SOURCE  
OF SOCIAL DISCONTENT AND THEREBY CREATE  
JUST AND EQUABLE CONDITIONS.

FOD GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE  
THE LAST JUDGMENT

Men hate feminism  
and love the medical  
629608453200W



~~WHEN~~

A WISE MAN TAKE OFFENSE AND DRAWS BACK,  
FEELING SELF PITY

MODESTY SETS ON TO CREATING ORDER  
AND INSPIRES ONE TO BEGIN BY DISCIPLINING  
ONE'S OWN EGO AND ONE'S IMMEDIATE CIRCLE.

THE COURAGE TO MARCHAL ONE'S ARMIES  
AGAINST ONESELF TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING  
REALLY FORCEFUL.

KEEP THE 2 LOVERS IN THE FOREFRONT

A VISIONARY EXPERIENCE (FOR VIDAL)

WITCHES:

Child of Heaven

Child of Hell

You are both

And all is well.

- Q Do you like big cock.  
A. It depends on who's  
big cock you're talking  
about?  
Q. mine.

They go to  
Larry's bar.  
a cowboy bar  
in Helena

Everyone tries to grope Thom  
and he loves it.  
The next morning, he says:  
I don't think I can go on  
as a priest.

↓ The place gets busted by vice police -  
Thom is arrested. And 3 townsfolk  
deny being a priest when the cops  
look at his ID and ask him if he  
is a priest. He is finally released  
under his own recognizance.

Mrs Shoup finds out about the arrest.  
It comes out in the Cottonwood papers, but  
most of the townspeople stand behind Thom.

Thom is declaring his vow of Chastity,  
and his own definition of the mustwood,  
which he confesses to his confessor.

~~Thom is told that he must~~

The ~~church~~ confessor takes a hard line. Thom  
must bow to the will of the Church.

The confessor suggests that he go  
immediately into retreat and there  
await the judgement of the Church.

As he confesses to his old friend in retreat.

Vikal

That's one place where  
you and me agree, Father.

Neither of us thinks  
the world is such a great place to be.

The saint cannot  
fight the Demon  
and remain untouched.

# Why Did Thom become a Priest

Vidal

Don't you have desires,  
Father, like other people?

Thom

I have energy  
which I direct  
into activities  
which are different  
from those which  
preoccupy a lot of the world

I wanted to disassociate myself  
from the world that I saw  
growing around me in the  
early 70's. And yet I  
wanted to be useful.

It was a practical decision.

Vidal  
Did you want to exorcise demons?

Vidal

No religious ecstasies?

The Virgin didn't  
appear to you and

touch you with her white light.

Thom seems quite troubled by this remark.

Thom

Who are you?

Vidal: Hah! Who am I?

Jim Vidal Kapler,  
the local good-for-nothing -  
A future bum.

When Vidal is  
drunk, Thom  
suddenly asks  
him a series  
of hard questions  
so if he were  
talking to a demon  
who had to be  
exorcised.

Thom

Why did you say  
that about the Virgin?

Vidal

Oh then then she  
did come down and  
touch you with her  
white light.

Thom

Why are you so scornful.

Vidal

I'm jealous.

Vidal  
~~Thom~~

Arise all Saints looking  
for a Demon to exorcise?  
A Test?

Thom

It would be a  
sin of pride

to go out looking for a test.

Vidal

But if you were to run ~~to~~ into a test,  
you would not turn and run away.

Through their exchange we gradually  
move toward exposure of both

Vidal's and Thom's

more unconscious motivations or impulses.  
They challenge each other.

①

CREDITS

TAKES PLACE IN THE SUMMER

Opens on CU: GIRL IN CONFESSORIAL

she tells story of Vidal vs Erving  
we see her fantasy.

Outside Confessional:

2 girls pass; one giggles

Inside Confessional:

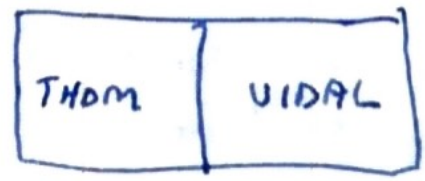
2nd Girl Did many Lou just tell  
everything Marilyn said  
like a story about her  
and Vidal ~~the~~ Lofgren?

was just a story she  
made up. I don't hear  
to it, but I was only kidding

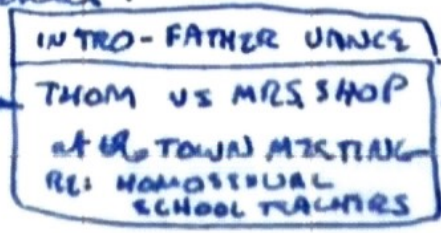
3rd Confession

Old woman (comedy)

4th Confession: Vidal



Thom and Vidal meet face-to-face  
out confessional.



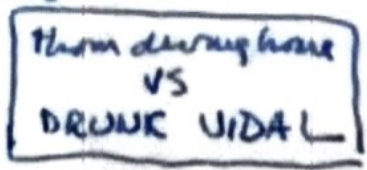
Mrs Shop's son, the  
Boy Scout, is in  
Carolyn's class.  
Boy Scout is tagged as  
a spy, ~~lets~~ Tattle-Tale.

add old woman  
not grand.  
if old ladies  
who sing well songs.  
THE LADIES AUXILIARY

Mrs. Shop bumps up the measure  
an impassioned speech. ~~she~~  
then gives opposing view.

It goes to a vote and the town  
overwhelmingly votes not to put  
it to a referendum.

Carolyn thanks Thom.



Ladys Auxiliary sing "School's out forever"

song "DIAMON LOVER"

AFTER the disco number

DISCO:

A long scene with  
several incidences

lost in a drugged-out  
languor.

Ladys Auxiliary don strange demonic  
costumes. They call themselves

"The Old Witches"

They play the organ to accompany  
them ~~then don't know~~



# The Fancy Dancer

A story in 3 acts

1. SEDUCTION
2. AFFAIR
3. DISSOLUTION OF AFFAIR

	Thom	Vidal
SEDUCTION	Alone and SNUG the own secure definition of the universe UNINVOLVED AN OBSERVER	ALONE + CONFUSED, IN ANGUISH SCARED BECAUSE HE IS DRIFTING AIMLESSLY Thom has the Church Vidal has NOTHING - its all about gods & him He is bitter
AFFAIR	<del>Thom becomes</del> changing - a crisis -	REVENGE PASSION SCORN Profaning the sacred out of disbelief in the sacred.
DISSOLUTION	Disillusion at realization of Vidal's motives. But clinging What is his new life at end? Where is he going?	Its still, you have the Church & have nothing

Thom tends to be over-worldly. The Church sent him to the small town to go make him deal with everyday reality. To teach him compassion.

Thom goes on to a broader base to carry on his fight for the good, mellowed by his own experience of things earthly.

Thom is going up the ladder - recognition for his good work. He has mixed feelings about it, but we know that he will measure up to the new challenges ahead of him.

## THE HONEYMOON

Camping trip together

to a mountain lake,

they so skinny dipping in the cold water,

then they make love in the tent. We are outside and hear them, ~~and~~ but only see where their bodies press on the outside of the tent.

(They are overseen swimming in the nude together - by Mrs Group's son)

Mrs Group's son is the altar boy: Billy Gumbo

Carolyn Burgess, the Lutheran school-teacher who Mrs. Group wants thrown out.

NO HORSE RACE

NO cowboy friends

Lots of old women

All the old women on the Church council who are so fond Father Thom. Their lives are so filled with reasons not to take action, they they welcome Thom's new ideas and energy.

Thom was sent to this town by the Church he didn't choose the town.

NO Older priest.



Coro:

Thom: I didn't say that. I just say that like I measure you & see some prayers for yourself.

Thom: You're a Catholic aren't you?

Vidal shakes his head: no.

Thom: (insistent) your parents were Catholic. You were brought up Catholic.

Thom: That's not true. Jim prayed for you. Vidal: Don't do me any favors.

Thom: That was before I actually met you. Vidal: Oh, so you're going to stop now.

Vidal (still shaking his head) Not any more Father. I am Catholic I ~~wasn't~~ <sup>just</sup> been Catholic since I discovered sex.

Vidal: My mother wasn't raised Indian so much as she was raised Catholic. She was a nun!

Vidal: (moved) Yeah, she was the only one who prayed for me. I can assure you there's no one praying for me now.

Vidal: My mother was a nun!

(Thom looks skeptical. Vidal starts laughing, knowing Thom does not believe this.)

Vidal: No really, she was when she was young. I think they must of kicked her out. Then she and her flapper friends started hanging around the Fort Evans. My father was in the Army, stationed there that's how we met. He was dumb as a rock. I hated him. And my mother - well... she was psychotic.

Thom: I know your mother she used to come to mass faithfully and she always prayed for you.

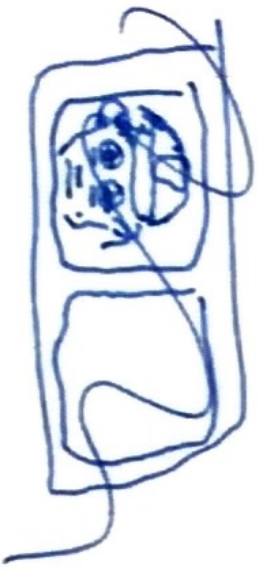
Thom: a promise I made. No, it was your mother who said. I heard her last rites. She asked for me to continue her prayers for you, and I said I would.

Vidal: you really mean you say prayers for me!

SOCIETY VS Youth COPS  
ON ELISA TOR  
Cursing jokes sends message  
and down to elevator.  
"S Debbie Ford?"

r

Debbie Ford - as she handles &  
and that's because -  
"that's mine to an  
atomization by far God!"



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oh!  
at your in me.



- as she hands &  
joannes -  
turns to an  
action before God!



①

Vidal: How long have you  
been here, father

Thom: 4 years

Vidal: Whew! That's a long  
sentence.

Thom: I'm not in a jail here.

Vidal: NO. Well I am. But  
I'm going to be getting  
out soon.

Thom: What does that mean?

Vidal: That means I'm not hanging  
around here much longer

Thom: What about Peggy Sue and the baby?

Vidal: What about 'em.

Thom: Aren't you responsible for them.

Vidal: Haven't you heard father,  
I ain't responsible for no one.  
(he laughs) I ain't even  
responsible for myself.

A shrink once told me that,  
I ain't responsible for no one  
an' no one responsible for me, got it?  
thom: I am responsible  
for you.

Vidal: (Contingent)  
Don't you do  
yourself any  
favours, father.  
Cont:

The girl is relating her sexual fantasy about Vidal Laflour. She claims she was riding on the back of his motorcycle when the racing fight occurred.

We see the story through her ~~eyes~~ of her fantasy:

EVIE BRICE  
(internal)  
Father forgive me for I  
have sinned?

PREST (H.O.S.)  
How many days since  
your last confession,  
my daughter.

EVIE BRICE  
(internal)  
No been seven days  
(suddenly her tone changes  
to a more familiar, external tone.)  
Father, it was my fault.  
It was that Vidal Laflour.

Garnings pulls up beside him and  
revs his machine challenging him to race.  
They do and Garnings cut him off,  
Vidal ~~does~~ has to swerve into oncoming  
traffic and causes a crash, but  
Vidal and Evie Brice just barely escape.

Vidal drives a motor cycle through a store window.

Vidal vs motorcycle Hell's Angel type who wears his motorcycle Honda key ~~as~~ <sup>go</sup> dangling for his ear as an earring.

Vidal rips the earring from the guy's ear and struts his motor cycle, crashing it through a plate glass window.

We see his crash through the window <sup>with the bar,</sup> and moments later comes he comes staggering out of the bar and off down the street.

Opens with Vidal vs earring <sup>with California plate</sup> in a motorcycle encounter, where earring plays a dirty trick on Vidal

~~the~~ intercut with Father Thom hearing confessions (like ~~of~~ teenage girls who confess to having the keys for Vidal).

or Old ladies gossiping about Vidal (we don't see Thom's face, ~~but~~ just what he says to the confessor through the

Thom uses a lot of the old rituals  
in his mass.

Thom: I believe in the value of the old  
rituals of the Church.  
I ~~also~~ hold value in the  
Divine Mysteries.

Thom lives alone in the old Parson  
house. His room is just ~~has~~ a  
mattress on the floor, bare walls,  
a writing desk and a ~~cross~~ on the wall.

He cooks his own meals.

But Thom + Udal never make love  
in the Rectory.

Thom has a rather conservative image  
in town

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1  
1  
6

save: Thom at the abortion convention  
outside: Christ died ~~ago~~ for you.  
inside: the growing fetus  
Cuthom: crying, breaking down.

---

Character:

~~Thom~~ - Thom's would be lover from  
GARY - Seminary school.

---

SHORT, VISUAL scenes, loosely connected  
but not a hard storyline, more an  
exploration of 2 characters.

No heavy melodrama, but many  
divergent incidents,

---

Carolyn:  
Father, thank you for your support.  
I know that your church does  
not look kindly on ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> priest who  
comes to the defense of homosexuality -  
so I realize it was a brave thing  
for you to do.

Thom -  
you don't need to thank me.  
For me to take any other  
stand would be gross hypocrisy  
on my part, ~~but to see the~~  
~~issue of homosexuality is clear~~

Carolyn - Will thank you anyway,  
I'm not Catholic, but I think  
you are a true man of the cloth.

As a priest you learn a lot about the traumas of other people's lives, but you are removed from ~~being~~ ~~really~~ ~~involved~~ their problems. It's an odd choice of a profession and it requires a certain temperament.

He became a priest in the early 70's, after going to college in the late 60's, having at least a taste of the psychedelics. ~~that~~ He had a visionary experience that led him to become a priest.

P  
TRAP  
3  
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J

Vidal causes a drunken disturbance outside the Wednesday Night Bougo meeting because he is pissed off that Thom spends the evening with the old ladies and not him.

He has a big old church but it is almost empty - very minimal congregation.  
He is more like the caretaker of the architecture



Vidal grew up in this town. He  
has recently returned on ~~the~~ the death  
of his father and taken over the house -  
and the care of his 16 year old half  
sister and her baby. It is not  
Vidal's intention to be there long  
and it was certainly not his intention  
to take on responsibility of Betty-sue.  
But, at the end, he does take Betty-sue  
and the baby with him.

Betty-sue is the retard who does nothing  
but watch TV in the brother-down house

Vidal hated his father.

Vidal keeps saying: "I'm going  
back to San Francisco."

Vidal - who all lovers, they ~~love~~  
lie in bed after sex and they talk  
other about their lives - the truth  
about their childhoods, their parents.

---

Thom's parents know his gay. And  
I think ~~my parents~~ they prefer  
me being a saint than bringing  
home a lover.

Visit Thom's parents.

Visit Vidal's mother - she shows them  
the childhood picture of him when  
he was <sup>in college?</sup> young - as a fancy dancer.  
He steals the picture and tears it up

Vidal is both getting revenge on the Church  
and jealous of the Church as Thom's real  
lover.

Yeah - Jim married to Patti-Sue  
and you're married to the Church.  
What a joke.  
What a fucken joke.  
Life is just one big fucken joke.

They took turns screaming at us and then when my sister died, my mother went nuts with guilt. I was an altar boy. I wanted to be a priest when I grew. Later I became a priest, then I went to college - for a while, looking for terrible

① Opening:

interest Thom saying mass with Vidal in a fight - Vidal is French Canadian with Indian blood "Canook"

"In part Coyote and part Canook" Indian blood, but my parents were just dumb Catholic ethnics

Vidal laughs: that's not what Thom supposed to say! I wish I take my own words from students.

② confessional My mother a nun - you know she Father Thom listening in the dark. my father was drunk

Vidal drunk and weeping - almost psychotic Thom goes to the garage where Vidal sometimes works, but is told "Mrs, he didn't come in today."

2nd meeting - Vidal is sober (like Jekyll + Hyde) He apologizes to Thom, saying "I sorry. I was real drunk. In not really to religious sort - he doesn't want to confess. Thom tries to persuade him to confide in him - that he needs help.

Vidal keeps being surprised by Thom's answers - keep saying "like you!"

T What really is the matter.  
V It's a small town, Father, that's the problem. <sup>Things are kinda dull here</sup> Everyone wants to know too much about you - so I guess I put on a show for them.

T- And you put on a show for me too. Have I become that provincial a village priest Vidal laughs. Well, as I said, Father, in not a much religious man. I suppose I have some chips on my shoulder - about a Catholic upbringing - Thom - Do me a favor - Tell it out on me.

They make an appointment (at Thom's residence) but Vidal does not show up.

The 3rd meeting is drunk on the street. Vidal talks sex with Thom intimately - a sort of dare.

Vidal  
You got a big  
cock father.

Thom  
what!

Vidal  
Big cocks can  
get you into big  
trouble. Not right  
for a man of God  
to have a big cock.

Know what I mean? then he opens  
the door to take  
a look.

Vidal is almost SATANIC - he scares  
Thom.

Vidal makes a living "turning over cars"  
buying local junk and reselling them  
in the city where "people think they're  
antiquers."

Thom: There's a season when priests  
remain celibate — not just  
in the Catholic religion, but  
in most <sup>of the world's</sup> religions.

Thom has tasted love in the past, but consciously decided it was too much trouble - there were higher things to be done. Romance was too earthly for his taste.

But now, after several years of celibate life, someone enters his life with whom he crafts romance - and they have an affair.

It ends a little bittersweet - breaking up to follow other paths. They realize that there is no future for them together.

# FANCY DANCER -

TALK with a real GAY PRIDE!

Drop all Indian complications.  
Wdyl. 10 ~~10~~ a college drop-out from a  
poorly childhood. The local bad boy.

---

Thom's parents — one scene only,  
as Thom brings Vidal to dinner  
to meet his parents. ~~they are~~  
the parents are a problem — ~~as~~ very  
Puritanical and Vidal gets  
very drunk — but into it off  
with Thom's ~~also~~ retired alcoholic  
father.

Episodic love affair — the adventures  
they have together.

Vidal is from a Roman Catholic background  
and resents priest — there is an  
element of getting back at the church  
by seducing the Priest.

Maybe Mrs Shoup has the Alton Borg melior  
to fall in love with the Priest — to entrap him.

Meet with Gail

Meet with MICHAEL NICOLA

and get the parameters of what  
is needed set.

Throw copies of all your old scripts  
on his desk.

Pay me the money you owe me  
to get into the writer's guild  
and ~~to~~ give me all the  
established parameters to the  
story and I will deliver to you  
an <sup>written</sup> ~~copy~~ approach & a script  
that, if followed, will produce  
an ~~approved~~ accepted 1st draft.



A young husband woman, a local teacher, is the current scandal - she lives with another woman, her lover and this gets out.

Father Thom defends the husband teacher against Mrs. Shoup and Mrs. Shoup loses. Then she catches air of what's happening between Thom and Vidal.

Thom is naive about sex and love, but gives himself over wholly - a true Romantic.

Vidal lives with his wife and kid and, ultimately, will maintain responsibility for them.

The Church might lay a heavy tax on Thom, but he is not torn with guilt over his sinfulness.

Thom finds he must choose again between the Church and a lover.

Thom and Vidal take a trip to S.F. together, where Vidal really introduces Thom to the world of the flesh, but Thom quickly realizes this is not for him.

The conflict remains the conflict with the Church & just an absurd invitation.

LIGHTEN UP

Thom goes on a camping trip together early in their romance.

Set in small town Montana.

What ~~if~~ Thom knows about his homosexuality, but <sup>from early dalliances in college</sup> has chosen to ~~sublimate~~ it the Church as his lover, wanting to be a saint — until ~~he~~ ~~so~~ love sneaks in and knocks him off his feet.

The trauma with the Church is minimized — by today, a young priest can know that he is gay without it causing a massive trauma.

## NO GAY GUILT

But still, Mrs Shoup can cause a problem for them — like Father Bryant Mrs Shoup wants to lead a local anti-gay crusade — aimed at school teachers and ~~monks~~ priests and others who influence the young.

WRITE A SONG for the DISCO SCENE

## SECOND SIGHT

pilot for TV series

w. Suzanne Bowen as BIRDY NEWHURST

Peter Conradt as DR. BAWLER

{Drene Roseen  
Stephane Andruan as Avnil Chatozer

groze Lafleur as Nick Malare

susan Polansky as Annie Simon

as Tad

Sadie as Bruno

Mitch Gould as Mark Braward

# Church to gay sheep: Get lost

Anguish and Dignity: The dilemma of being homosexual and Catholic

by Dianne Dumanoski

"Today I'd like to offer a pre-holiday Mass, a liturgy of inner peace and trust," the young priest says, explaining that he too sometimes finds himself depressed in what is supposed to be a season of joy and festivity. It is Sunday evening during Thanksgiving week, and the narrow, high-ceilinged room is overflowing. There are perhaps 150 worshippers, those who weren't lucky enough to secure one of the metal folding chairs stand in the back and the congregation dribbles out into the corridor. A two-dimensional painted crucifix has been attached to the wall behind the priest. His altar is a table covered with a white cloth and adorned with a single large candle. To his right sit two young men with guitars who are fervently singing a lyrical hymn entitled "Peace I Bring You."

Outwardly, the service is quite ordinary, a singing and celebrating folk Mass of the kind that has flourished in hundreds of progressive parishes since Vatican II. But despite its familiar form, this is an unusual Mass indeed. Unusual if only because in Boston, a city of innumerable Catholic churches, it is being celebrated in a chapel at the Unitarian Arlington Street Church. None of the parishes in Boston, it seems, could find room for this community of worshippers, gay Catholics, men and women who insist on belonging to a Church which, by and large, would prefer to ignore them and the issue of homosexuality. Many at this Mass are members of a national or-

and who are in danger of death," offers one young man. The prayer is a sober reminder of the high rate of suicide among homosexuals.

Another testifies to the love and support he has found in this community. "I'd like to offer thanks for everyone who has been so kind and has shown so much affection for me this past week. Without it I don't think I could have gotten through it."

A man in the center of the chapel stands. "I offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the presence of my parents." The discomfort of the white-laced couple beside him had been evident earlier as they had watched men kiss and embrace in greeting before Mass.

"I'd like to pray for my lover," Sullivan, declares a voice from the back. When the bread and wine are distributed, almost everyone comes forward to receive them. Afterward, two young men who have taken communion together clasp each other's hands and bow their heads to pray.

Being gay can undoubtedly be painful in a society whose worst attributes are expressed by Anita Bryant, being gay and remaining Catholic seems, at best, a farce, to be an exercise in masochism. As many a straight Catholic can testify, growing up Catholic and heterosexual





**HOLIDAY JOY**

October 17, 1977

Mr. John Dorr  
9026 Norma Place  
Los Angeles, California 90069

Dear John:

Enclosed is \$300 which will be compensation for your services in the preparation of a story for the book we discussed.

As a signatory producer with West I strongly suggest you order that we can execute this on a later date.

Please begin work on this whether back East or not. The negotiations as they stand.

Looking forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

*Richard Arlett*

RICHARD ARLETT

RA:vv

Enclosure

Mr. John Dorr  
9026 Norma Place  
Los Angeles, California 90069

TELEFILM productions

TELEFILM productions

October 17, 1977

Mr. John Dorr  
9026 Norma Place  
Los Angeles, California 90069

Dear John:

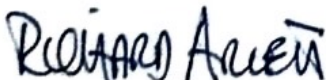
Enclosed is \$300 which will apply to our agreed compensation for your services in connection with the preparation of a story/outline/treatment based on the book we discussed.

As a signatory producer with Writers Guild of America West I strongly suggest your joining the Guild in order that we can execute a more formal agreement at a later date.

Please begin work on this project as soon as possible whether back East or not. I will keep you posted on the negotiations as they progress.

Looking forward to working with you on this project.

Sincerely,



RICHARD ARLETT

RA:vv

Enclosure

---

TELEFILM productions



Richard W. Arlett

October 17, 1977

John H. Dorr  
9026 Norma Place  
Los Angeles, California 90069

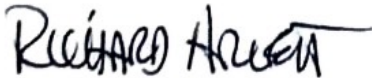
RE: FANCY DANCER

Dear John:

This will confirm our agreement for you to commence work on the story/treatment/outline of The Fancy Dancer motion picture.

You will be paid \$150.00 a week for a minimum of four (4) weeks. In addition, formal arrangements will be made for your membership in to the Writers Guild including the initial membership dues upon completion of said writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Arlett". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

RICHARD ARLETT

CURTIS

415-648-1716

---

GP  $\rightarrow$  R

written SEXY  
but not X

1110 DELORES ST

SF 94110

p.82 your lover, not?

THOMAS  
~~THOMAS~~

~~P.45 TRAILWAYS BUS TERMINAL~~

~~P.52 and vampire movie~~

~~P.55 ARAB SON~~

P.45 INSERT A - DELETE

P.45 INSERT B - DELETE

P.47 INSERT C - TOO LONG, JUST AS MUCH A CLICHE  
see. P 92 SEQUENCE

P.48 RESTOR LEAVE ME ALONE

P.48 INSERT D - REWORK

P.49 INSERT E - OKAY

~~P.55 INSERT F - see P. 92~~

~~P.56 COVER also. P.78, P.82 (P.87)~~

~~P.66 FOOTLOCK~~

~~P.75~~

~~P.84 add conversation~~

~~P.86 You should see the other guys!~~

~~P.89 MRS. TURNER~~

~~P.89 HIPPIE~~

~~P.90 SCISSOR SHOW~~

P.71 TAPPING HER FINGER? NO!

~~P.91 CHRIST ON THE CROSS~~

VIDAL  
(motioning toward  
the photograph)  
That's me - The Fanny  
Dancer. Or at least  
I was - once.

FATHER VANKE reveals  
himself to be something  
of a matchmaker  
between Thom and Vidal -  
regarded Thom through it all.

cut: ~~Queenleopard~~  
cut: JAMIE OGILVER

MINIMIZE  
EXPOSITION

① PRE-CREDIT:

Organ music — <sup>Back, old women at mass, montages</sup>  
<sup>at church interior, murals.</sup>  
~~Zoom in on town, into church,~~  
Tom sees Vidal in the mirror. From Bach  
& Fauré

② CREDIT SIGNATURE: MONTAGE

Various confessions establishing minor  
characters + their problems, the tone of  
small town sin. Comedy: his bored  
reaction to old women etc

END CREDITS

Tom is about to leave, when VIDAL enters confessional

③ TOM AND VIDAL in church

④ TOM clashes with Father Vance. Criticizes  
his modern music. Amazed that Vidal came to  
confession. Some gossip about Vidal?

~~FAM~~  
⑤ Sunday, Tom gets into his red triumph: montage  
establishing ~~the~~ small town (passes disapproving  
who shop <sup>in</sup> street), Montana countryside,  
rock music, ~~city of Helena~~. enters the  
city of Helena. News on the radio bad state of  
agriculture business; to parents house.

⑥ TOM + parents: exposition

⑦ VISIT to Father Matt — his ambitions, his lack  
of inner life. The advice to pray.

⑧ Returns VIDAL from fist fight.  
He kisses the blood-soaked handkerchief

(make Mrs. Shoup a comedy character)

⑨ Counseling Mrs. Shoup → counseling Vidal.

MMM127 Exposition

"The only thing a person can do is follow his conscience."

⑩ Driving to Vidal's house to meet night. Mrs. Shoup's simple-minded wife reveals he is gay.

⑪ Tom returns to his room. Gazes blankly at the TV set, volume turned off.

⑫ Phone call to Father Hamath for church's attitude toward homosexuals.

⑬ Run-in with Mrs. Shoup over Mrs. running away.

⑭ Breakfast with Vidal at Trina's Cafe.

Gives his church literature on gays.

Overhears rednecks talk about horses.

⑮ Alone in prayer: Hears Father Hamath's words:

~~Are~~ Beware of friendships that distract you from the love of God... you belong to everyone.'

⑯ EXT. TRINA'S CAFE: Vidal + Tom are again have breakfast.

Vidal on gay life in Montana

"You must be living as celibate as I am" — "except I can masturbate and you can't."

⑰ THE SEDUCTION

INT. RECTORY - THOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The small room is illuminated only by a 10-inch black & white Sony portable television set that has been left on, but with the sound turned off.

In the flickering light, Father Thom lies on his back on his small cot still fully dressed, asleep. The only sound is his deep breathing.

We moves slowly in toward the TV. The Late Show is an old Vampire movie.

TV MOVIE (THOM'S DREAM):

The full moon shines in the open windows into a Victorian bedroom. The wind lightly blows the long lace curtains into the room. A dark figure steps in through the curtains. It is DRACULA. He unfurls his long black cape and gazes hungrily toward the bed.

In the role of Dracula is Vidal Stump!

Vidal/Dracula moves toward the bed - an elaborate four-poster. His hand pulls back the sheet from a sleeping figure. There is a silver cross around the sleeping figure's neck; but (contrary to most vampire movies) the cross does not deter this vampire. He kneels next to the bed and leans over the sleeping figure.

CLOSE-UP:

As Vidal/Dracula sinks his teeth into the victim's neck, the victim's eyes snap open. It is Father Thom!

His eyes glaze into a strange ecstasy as the vampire drinks from his neck.

The silence is suddenly broken by a screaming voice, on the edge of hysteria.

VOICE (V.O.)  
Where is he! I want to  
see Father Thomas!

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM - RECTORY

The voice belongs to Mrs. Shoup. She has barged into the waiting room followed quickly by Father Vance and Police Chief Wheeler who are trying to calm her.

MRS. SHOUP  
He knows where my Meg is,  
and he's going to tell me!

CONTINUED



TOM'S DREAM (OTTRIP) His description to Tom as they make love.

Tom: "I was drifting through space and I was lonely serene, but lonely.

I felt like <sup>my</sup> birth was a conscious choice - a decision, a fulfillment of a yearning. And then was a dark mysterious man in my

dream - an intruder from some other reality - and you were that dark man. (You were the vampire)

My tale has such a legend. But it is the coyote who is man-beast. T

TOM'S vampire dream

The handsome vampire sits with him in the car in the rain. The vampire turns and kisses him on the cheek - when he the vampire thrusts its fangs into Tom's neck, he falls, willingly into a dark oblivion.

When Tom and Vidal first make love, it becomes as a dream sequence to Tom. IT DISSOLVES, with Tom's V.O. overlapping, into the 2 in bed together afterward as Tom is describing his dream to Tom. ~~rough Tom's~~

# SEDUCTION

~~NOTE:~~

REVERSE-CONFESSION

MOTEL

LARRY + WILL INTRO

DRAG DANCE

TAKES VIDAL TO VISIT PARENTS

MISSY OLDENBERG'S DEATH

DENVER TRIP

CHRIST'S DEATH DANCE

VIDAL'S DECISION TO RETURN TO COLLEGE

CLARE FAUX'S NEW LIFE.

FATHER MATT'S PHONE CALL

VISITS LARRY + WILL ALONE

FATHER JANCE + MRS. SHOUP'S ACCUSATION

TRIES TO PLAY ORGAN, BUT CANT.

BISHOP'S JOB OFFER

MOTHER + FATHER REVEAL THEY HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN

VISITS VIDAL'S PARENTS: THE FANCY DANCER

THE FAIR - MRS FAUX'S EXHIBITS - WILL + LARRY'S HORSE WINS

VIDAL'S EXIT - BUS

PLAYS ORGAN AGAIN

~~Thomas~~

~~Thomas's mother + father  
as like Dad and Nancy  
she's an alcoholic  
his a dirty old man~~

Thomas is from a large family - he has  
grown up <sup>with</sup> brothers and sisters who have  
children.

~~Thomas wants:~~

The Fancy Dancer is a coyote costume  
who Vidal identifies with.

The Vampire is how Thomas sees Vidal -  
thus Vidal goes to the costume  
party as a vampire.

THE JESUS DEATH DANCE - another  
of Thomas's VISIONS! ~~It~~ Combine the  
reality and the nightmare into  
one fantasy sequence.

Vidal enjoys his taking risks of exposure  
as gay - because he can always leave.

Maybe Vidal gets Thom to smoke a little dope.

BEOTHUR THOMAS

# A ROMANCE

When the 2 go off on their motorcycle, Vidal ~~off~~ bumps out a joint. He hands it to Thom as a friendly gesture and an inviting smile.

Thomas makes a fast decision and smokes the grass. The sounds of nature all around them <sup>romantic</sup> submerge the soundtracks in a symphony of sounds ~~as a~~ <sup>over the</sup> sensual montage of Thom and Vidal's ~~the~~ wrestling match, ending in the kiss --- and the nervous breaking off.

VIDAL is always a heavy drinker.

Vidal is cruel to him - tells him he was ~~only~~ not so interested in saving my soul as in cursing the priest.

WAITRESS to Vidal: Hey, handsome kid,  
Why Father Thom no  
come no more have  
~~summer~~ breakfast  
at Trinias.

VIDAL

(being purposefully mean)

I guess he doesn't  
like the food here.

VIDAL stomps old and has a few more  
dinners

(perhaps we see the scene where he gets  
int. trouble)

REVERSE CONFESSION scene

---

Tom meets Vidal at Trinias

- ① shows him Catholic pamphlet on homosexuality  
he says he's happy - Thom says it's his job to make him unhappy.  
[Trina do her "gorgeous woman" line  
+ Thom agrees to get breakfast there every morning]

② Telephone call to Father Kattell

- ③ Asks how he feels about women? - John: anyone mention Vidal in  
About Pathe Ann? (P. 75)  
I might as well feed a corpse  
(P. 81) masturbate line.  
Vidal calls him Tom.

④ Father Kattell asks  
about Vidal - gives Thom  
a free lunch. Tom calls Vidal.

HARD ~~cut from Vampire & ecstasy~~

TO:

C.U. MRS SHOUP - accusing Thom.  
The police chief and her husband  
are in the background - Father  
Vance is also present.

Afterwards, Father Vance commends  
Thom for standing his ground.

CUT TO.

VIDAL and THOM at breakfast  
the discussion about the  
churches views on friendships  
Vidal's line about masturbation  
Vidal starts calling him "Tom".

---

Another Breakfast talk.

THOM: The Church says that homosexuality  
is anti-life.

VIDAL: Look 10 years ago everyone  
told us that if the world population  
didn't stop growing that over population  
would destroy the world. So maybe  
that's why there are so many people are  
into ~~to~~ not having babies.

metaphors:

Mustangs ~~love~~ free and are a strong breed because of it. But by bringing the mustang into culture, they have a race-winner.

Will Vidal, like the Mustang, become civilized. Perhaps... The metaphor story about winning the race suggests an optimism for the future.

What the mustang means to Vidal's nature, Wherry and Clare means to Thomas.

Clare: When I lose my lifelong companion, I don't stop living. I embark on a new beginning, not romantic, but positive.

When Vidal decides to leave Thom  
is the same time they are getting  
reposed as lovers by Mrs Shoup.

But Vidal has somewhere to go -  
~~maybe~~ maybe he work part time - maybe  
he take a few courses night courses of  
something. I need to find a profession

### THE RETARDED WIFE

At the end, Vidal decides to go  
back to LA. But they will meet again.

Vidal to Thom: Yours is by nature  
a very solitary profession. I'm a  
lover myself and a dancer. ... a fancy  
dancer

Vidal to Thom at end: you see. I'm a  
fancy dancer. I have to be free to dance.  
to be true to my nature

Ending: He puts Vidal on the bus ~~the~~  
and goes to play the organ.

Vidal predicts the Thom will take the  
Bishops offer and ~~will~~ take over this new  
responsibility

Vidal:

Vidal: Our paths will cross again.



I have sinners. It has been 4 weeks since my last confession.

VOICE OF THOMAS: What are you sins my daughter.

① CRYING DRUNK WOMAN -

Children grow up and leave the nest. Don't worry Jim sure Susie Ann still loves you

Father, I know I ought to stop drinking, but I just can't. <sup>Hardly</sup> you always has his ~~own~~ <sup>after lunch and after supper</sup> ~~company~~ and then he just falls asleep, <sup>in front of the television</sup> so he's no company for me. And my daughter treats me terribly. I know she's mad at me because I'm drunk, but I get so lonely <sup>and she says the worst things to me and</sup> she's never home any more. I ask her to bring her boyfriend over here - his <sup>name</sup> such as me boy and I spoke with his mother once and she seemed awfully nice, but Susie Ann and him, they always go off <sup>in his car</sup> to ~~two~~ <sup>some</sup> place and some days she doesn't even call me to

<sup>tell me where she is</sup>  
FATHER - Have you spoken with AA

WASBE DISSOLVE TO:

④ MAN'S VOICE

Father, <sup>am</sup> ~~am~~ heartily sorry but like Pawling, you know, who's my neighbor, he stole 2 inches of my water from the main ditch - water that my ~~so~~ wheat needs - ~~Jim Pawling~~ and I was <sup>to</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>surely</sup> tempted to just <sup>take</sup> my 44 and ~~shoot~~ <sup>shoot his brains out</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>man</sup> out or a least give him a good scare. But I resisted the temptation with the help of my good wife and, father forgive me, but I guess I abused her in word and thought, which I know was wrong, cause she's always stood by my side and I do love her.



Add scene:

James Oglivy and Thom are talking  
when Vidus arrives on his bike.

JAMES

~~I think it's awful~~  
I don't think  
Father Vance is fair  
in the way he treats you,

THOM

One hopes people will  
put up with us when  
we're older.

SSR COMMUNION (TO KYRIL REASON) - *Thom warning*

LOVE-MAKING AT VIDALS *- they are the son from the pen. m father him Vidal repeats "this is my body" and "this is my blood"*

VIDAL MOWING RECTORY LAWN / ~~REPAIRING CAR~~ *Father Vance seeks him to Vidal, in exchange, gets Vance permission to take Thom back packing, means he needs to get away.*

INT. CHURCH JAMIE OGILVIE'S CONFESSION *Vance permission to take Thom back packing, means he needs to get away.*

BACKPACKING - *could come off, Thom asks "where are we" need, going this time?*  
LARRY + WILL - MUSTANG

DISCO

VISIT THOM'S PARENTS *(Vidal notices that Thom's father is staring at him curiously)*  
FATHER LAMATT SUSPECTS

MISSY OLDENBERG'S DEATH

FUNERAL

DENVER AIRPLANE  
MEETS DORIC/HIS LOU  
VALIUMS  
MASS AS DANCE  
THOM/VIDAL CAN'T  
DORIC: LEAVE THE  
MRS SHOUP  
THOM/VIDAL ARG

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CLARK FAUX'S NEW LIFE  
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THOM VISITS LARRY  
MRS SHOUP'S ACCUSATION  
BISHOP-CARNEY'S OFF

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MRS SHOUP'S ACCUSATION

BISHOP-CARNEY & OFF

F

D

FUNERAL

DENVER

AIRPLANE

MEETS DORIC/HIS LOU

VALIUMS

MASS AS DANCE

THOM/VIDAL CAN'

DORIC: LEAVE THE

MRS SHOUP

THOM/VIDAL ARG

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