56 CONTINUED: 3 56

RON
That girl you took to the prom?

STEVE
Want you to come over and meet her. Got a beautiful little kid. Jessica. A beauty... yeah, Massapequa's changed Ronnie, it's no Mom and Pop operation anymore. The old fucks in Congress can't rep this District anymore... Prices, real estate values -- everything's shot up. The Marchesi brothers are cutting down Sally's woods for a sewage disposal dump... Can you believe that...

Moving with RON through the operation to his OFFICE.

STEVE
...I wanna push out Ronnie. Copiague, Jericho, Bayville, Valley Stream -- I wanna make "Boyer's" a whole Long Island thing, I want something better for the people of Long Island than McDonald's and Colonel Sander's... This is our town now Ronnie...

57 INT. STEVE'S OFFICE - DAY 57

There in Stevie's Inner Office with telephone, scrawled notes, pictures on the wall addressing business groups, receiving an award. A magnetized football game, a new color TV...hitting the Long Island map on the wall.

STEVE
...and I want you to come to work for me.. with me...

RON looking at a picture of STEVE'S new wife and the little child.

RON
What do you mean...I mean what are you...

STEVE
I mean I want you to come to work for me. You're part of it Ron, this is the time to get in on it... You're a war hero and you can benefit...you <u>should</u>.

RON
What...what do you think I could do?

STEVE
Well...I mean...eventually you could be a manager of one of these places...right here in Massapequa if you want...just like your Dad...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

CONTINUED: 57

RON
I never managed a store Steve.

STEVE
Nor would I start you there Ronnie... You could learn...

RON
Yeah, but I...I don't really want to be in a store y'know why... It's not for me...

STEVE
You gotta keep busy Ronnie, y'know, and I think in a few years with hard work you could be a rich man...

RON
It's real nice of you Steve but y'know, I get 17 hundred a month from the Government and I just wanna look around a little bit right now y'know.

STEVE
Ronnie, that's charity money. This isn't.

A troubled look from RON, who then conceals it, wheels around the little office looking at objects. STEVE doesn't realize.

STEVE
I'm saying, you gotta put the war behind you Ron, you gotta forget about that chair you're in.

RON
(soft)
Yeah...sometimes you know I think people.. they know you're back from Vietnam, their face changes...the eyes, the voice...the way they look at you...

STEVE
(reflective)
...yeah...the people here...they don't give a shit about the war Ron. To them it's a million miles away. And it's all bullshit anyway. The government sold us a bill of goods and we bought it. And we got the shit kicked out of us! For what? For lies -- for bullshit lies...

RON
(softly)
Whaddaya mean "we" Steve? You were in college...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

57 CONTINUED: 2 57

STEVE
Hey, I mean we all <u>believed</u> it Ronnie. We saw it on Television. We all lived...

RON
On television? What are you talking about Steve, I don't know what you mean, you saying nobody believes it now?

STEVE
(defensive now)
...it was you bought that Communist bullshit Ronnie... They were gonna take over the world, Finelli, you, Walsh, the whole town was devastated...for what? For bullshit...

RON
Hey, no...no...don't tell me that Steve. I didn't <u>know</u> nothing. I didn't know.. anything... I believed -- I <u>believe</u> -- in that fucking war okay? ...and I'm not too crazy about people running around saying...

STEVE
Hey Ronnie I didn't mean...

RON
I mean I gave three quarters of my body for that war Steve and if you give three quarters of your body for something you'd better believe it man, you'd better fucking believe it...

STEVE
Look Ron...hey peace brother...

He flashes a peace sign.

RON
Steve I don't...

STEVE
Ronnie, Ronnie, I understand your anger...I sympathize with it...and you got every right in the world... but you can sit in that chair and you can piss and moan about the war all you want, you can go down to Times Square and pass out leaflets, you can demonstrate, but it ain't gonna change a thing...but if you wanna job...if you wanna start over again and put it behind you...then I'll give you one... I'm here for you...but if your head's not gonna be there Ronnie...then I don't know what I can do for you...I don't know...

RON looks...nods...about to say something but doesn't...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

57 CONTINUED: 3 57

STEVE
You okay?

RON
...okay Steve...okay...I gotta move on now okay... It was good seeing you, really good... We'll talk again.

A big hug...with a smile that doesn't smile... STEVE is sincere in his hugging...but RON has been turned inside out. And isn't...

STEVE
...you think about it now, okay boy...take your time -- peace man...

Flashing the peace sign once more.

DISSOLVE TO:

58 EXT. 2nd 4th OF JULY PARADE - DAY (1969) 58

A BANNER flapping in the breeze:

WELCOME HOME RON KOVIC

SUPPORT OUR BOYS IN VIETNAM.

Silence, surreal.

JULY 4, PARADE - MASSAPEQUA, harking back to the nighttime parade sequence when Ron was a young boy. But now it is a harsh summer sun - DAY - burnt out streets. A glare...and the silence.

THE CROWD shading its eyes from the glare - a tension in the air.

THE HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND is almost past...a DRUM FX in the distance...something coming up the street.

THE SOFT PURR of a big CADILLAC CONVERTIBLE moving down Broadway, FX of this SOUND strong in surrounding SILENCE as we MOVE UP into the car and see a LEGION DRIVER and LEGION COMMANDER, both in peaked hats, waving to the crowd... and MOVING

... into the back seat, RON looking out at the crowd with a tight nervous smile. A flag is draped across the back of the car...

PAST THE 7 & 11 STORE - TEENAGERS coming in and out with purchases, pointing...PAST THE CROWD, silent, few of them waving, just staring at RON like a ghost come back from the dead - uneasy; an aquarium feeling with the yellows of the sun bouncing off the Massapequa architecture...PAST Sparky the Barber's ("Unisex Haircuts Now $4.96") and SPARKY in his barber's uniform waving ...

The town has truly changed -- modernized, more commercial, more signs, the sixties finally crawling over the fifties...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

58 CONTINUED: 58

RON watching...DRUMS in background...once he was staring from this sidewalk, up at his heroes. Now he is the hero - and he's a Martian.

A LITTLE BOY at the edge of the sidewalk turns to his MOTHER.

LITTLE BOY
Who is he, mom?

MOM
(in conjunction with the silence)
He was wounded in Vietnam, shhhhh...

A beat. The LITTLE BOY looking back at him, worshipful.

LITTLE BOY
When I grow up, can I be in the parade like him?

MOM pulls her child closer.

59 EXT. FOURTH OF JULY CEREMONY - DAY (1969) 59

A WOODEN PLATFORM with red, white, blue bunting. POLITICIANS, DIGNITARIES...

A CHOIR of CHILDREN sing "Oh say can you see..." as RON rolls down the platform past them, directed by one of the LEGION COMMANDERS to his position on the podium

TIMECUT TO:

59A THE LEGION COMMANDER is a vigorous middle-aged man of Korean vintage, speaking effectively at the podium.

LEGION COMMANDER
Today is July the Fourth and I <u>believe</u> in America!....and I believe in Americanism.

THE CROWD fighting the heat and the glare. A FATHER catching his 6 year old son and spanking him hard.

FATHER
I told you never to do that!

RON on the platform, looking out into the crowd seeing

HIS FAMILY close to the platform MOM and DAD holding hands...with

TOMMY, JIMMY (18), SUSANNE (23), PATTY(13), JACKIE (8)....

LEGION COMMANDER (continuing)
- and most of all, most of all, I believe in victory for America.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

59 CONTINUED: 59

LEGION COMMANDER (continuing) (cont'd)
Some people are starting to say the war is wrong, that we shouldn't be there. There are some people who would like to tear our country down -- but who're the kids who are defending their right to protest?...

He turns and points at RON.

LEGION COMMANDER
These are the kids who care about this country. These are the kids who went over there, just like we did once, who are putting their lives on the line everyday for Freedom and Democracy, so you and I here in Massapequa can live free...

A GROUP of TEENAGERS watching - silent.

A GROUP of BUSINESSMEN - equally silent...

RON watching, uncomfortable at being singled out.

LEGION COMMANDER
...These are the kids...from Massapequa and all the towns across the country, the kids who never had the chance to go to college, kids who respect their flag, their parents, their Government, and their religion...kids like Joey Walsh. He was the first and we got a street over in the park named after him.

THE PARENTS of Joey Walsh, a mid-40's blue-collar couple, looking down.

LEGION COMMANDER (OVER)
And Danny Topinka...Billy Vorsovich...

A WITHERED WOMAN with her equally pale DAUGHTER, like a Wyeth painting.

LEGION COMMANDER (OVER)
Phil and Larry Powell...

The WOMAN makes a shivering gesture of the head, like a wounded bird.

LEGION COMMANDER - very emotional now.

LEGION COMMANDER
...and Tommy Finelli...six boys from Massapequa, all of them knew what honor, duty, and sacrifice meant...

RON listening - ironic he is not dead.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

59 CONTINUED: 2 59

LEGION COMMANDER (OVER)
...they paid the highest price, they died for it.

CROWD AND COMMANDER -

LEGION COMMANDER (OVER)
This town's been hit hard, it's always been hit hard...Ask Doc over there, he was in the First War, a lot of us were in the Second, and Mayor Vorisak and me were in Korea... and that's why we can't give up, that's why we're gonna win in Vietnam ...because ...because Massapequa's been there before and because of those six wonderful boys and...
(voice quivering, pointing his finger)
and because of him!

RON inclines his head and stares into his lap.

THE CROWD clapping - fighting the heat and the glare.

His parents clapping but TOMMY obviously doesn't share this feeling, looking down. His MOM pushes him on the shoulder. DAD restrains her.

COMMANDER motioning.

LEGION COMMANDER
Ron, come over here and say a few words.. would you, please?
(to crowd)
Ron Kovic, folks, was born on the Fourth of July, 1946 - so let's give him a big hand on this great birthday...

RON looking - why does he have to speak? APPLAUSE, OFF.

SHARP LOW ANGLE with FX SOUND - as HANDS move reluctantly onto wheels of the chair and spin it towards the podium where the COMMANDER waits...across squeaky wooden flooring, bumping, SOUND, magnified with the tension he feels in the chair.

RON moving to the podium in FG with CROWD in BG - the first time he has addressed a crowd. RON - shifts in his seat, very nervous.

RON
I - uh - just want to say...for all the guys in Vietnam...that we're...doing our best...

His legs start to spasm, and he tries to control it -- making flurries of movement - hands to chest, to belly, onto wheel.Gulps hard, suddenly, as if trying to breathe...more and more hesitant, a circle closing tighter and tighter on itself.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

59 CONTINUED: 3 59

MOM putting away her tiny little U.S. flag, looking at DAD, concerned.

TOMMY also picks up on it as does SUSANNE.

RON
...and the boy's morale over there is real high...and...we're gonna win that war.

He gulps hard again, the wave rising up involuntarily from his belly area, his hands going there, surprised and writhing in his seat, trying to find a more comfortable position.

RON
and you can be, you can be real...

His head drops forward, he gulps. He can't go on. He's crying.

RON
I'm sorry...I'm sorry...

ANOTHER ANGLE - linking RON and the CROWD waiting.

MOM worried...

THE COMMANDER and DIGNITARIES looking at one another; the COMMANDER moving RON off...

...past the banner: WELCOME HOME OUR VIETNAM VETERAN RON KOVIC.

RON'S FAMILY comes up to the platform, as they get him down to the ground.

DAD
You okay Ronnie?

MOM
It's alright, Ronnie, it's gonna be okay.. You did your best.

TOMMY
...just give him some air willya Mom.

The CROWD watching. An embarassing silence before the LEGION COMMANDER gets back to the podium...

LEGION COMMANDER
...and we'll continue fighting 'cause of boys like Ron Kovic and the sacrifice he made will not be in vain...like he said, we're gonna win that war! Now let's have a round of applause for the man who's done so much for Massapequa...
(etc. introducing Mayor Vorisak)

RON being wheeled away from the podium trying to get some air. Just wants to be alone. A VOICE calls out.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

59 CONTINUED: 4 59

TIMMY
Ronnie! Ronnie...Ronnie!

RON would rather not respond but then is confronted by:

TIMMY emerging from the crowd -- with a loose-fitting Marine fatigue shirt on.

TIMMY
Ronnie!

RON under his breath, shocked, almost doesn't recognize his friend.

RON
Timmy? That you?

TIMMY
O'Jesus man!

HUGS RON really tight, burying his face in his shoulder. The CROWD watching all around them.

RON
(over Timmy's shoulder)
...I heard you were still... When'd you get out?

As TIMMY pulls back, RON is shocked:

TIMMY - the same boyish look, light skin, freckles, but a SCAR now, like a clean crack in an eggshell, all the way across his forehead.

The face is old, now permanently wounded, the eyes where death lives.

TIMMY
Man, I...Man I...Man I...

THE CROWD, curious, pressing closer.

TIMMY feeling their stress, looks back at RON who is silent looking at his friend's scar.

TIMMY
C'mon, let's get out of here... Let me help, Mr. Kovic.

DAD
Yeah, sure, Timmy...

As TIMMY takes the back handles of the chair and begins pushing him

THROUGH THE CROWD - a silence as people part for them...the two cripples, one pushing the other, forging their own parade.

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

60 INT. KOVIC LIVINGROOM - NIGHT 60

The television is on (now a color set)...

TELEVISION CLIP -- A WAR PROTEST IN WASHINGTON, D.C. - Chaos, anger, teargas, confusion briefly seen...

MOM
It's starting...

As DAD flips the channel to:

TV CLIP -- "Laugh-In" lead in.

The camera moving to the BACKYARD...

61 EXT. KOVIC BACKYARD - NIGHT (1969) 61

NIGHT - RON and TIMMY, in semi-shadow, at a table...drinking beer, insect sounds, the moon drifting by...

RON
You see that hedge? Right over there?

TIMMY
Yeah...?

RON
...that second telephone pole?

TIMMY
Oh yeah...yeah.

RON
Yeah, I hit 60 home runs over that hedge one summer. I think I counted every one of them.

TIMMY
Yeah, you were the best, Ronnie, the best I ever saw. You shoulda gone to that tryout for the Yankees...when that...

RON
...tag?...remember...in Sally's woods?

TIMMY
...tag on Hamilton Avenue...

RON
...tag down at the beach...

TIMMY
...tag on the roof...

RON
...tag in the supermarket...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

61 CONTINUED: 61

TIMMY
Running bases, stickball, whiffleball, that day, I cut my wrist?

RON
You slipped on an acorn or something.. running bases.

TIMMY
I slipped on an acorn? Yeah I cut my artery and I thought I was going to die fosure.
(giggles)

RON
(chuckling)
You were a mess...That time you hit that foul ball right into ole Mrs. Brink's window and she came out screaming, remember?

TIMMY
Yeah - but then we painted her fire hydrant pink...

RON
And she called the cops!

TIMMY
Yeah...an' my old man really beat the shit out of me! (laughing, then a pause).

RON
I wonder what happened to her.

TIMMY
Dead I hope.

RON
I wonder what happened to Donna?

TIMMY
Donna Peters, oh yeah... oooh, nice right? I heard she went upstate...to college.. Syracuse...

RON
Yeah?

TIMMY
Real bright...gonna be a lawyer or something...

RON
(embarrassed)
I used to write to her, y'know... long letters from Nam. Real crazy stuff, y'know...how much I loved her, and everything...God!

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

61 CONTINUED: 2 61

TIMMY
She write back?

RON
Kind of. Couple of times. I didn't know what to say. I guess I sounded like a jerk.
(shrugs)
Who else used to play?

TIMMY
You know...

RON
Come on, tell me.

He wants to hear the names again.

TIMMY
Well, let's see, Bobby Moore at first, Harry Silvanti at short, Grady Rogers third...

RON
No! No! Rogers got sick...it was Finelli at third.

TIMMY
...Yeah, you're right! Tommy Finelli. He hit .512 one year. I remember that year, yeah...He got hit in the First...an RPG.. just blew him away...they couldn't even find him.

RON
Rick Jones in left...Billy Vorsovich in right, he could hit, he had the power!

TIMMY
Yeah, but he was always flunking English.
(starts to giggle)
He had a hard time with English. You know he got killed by one of his own mortars up at the DMZ.
(giggling)
That's really crazy man.

ANOTHER ANGLE - Ron can't help it, starts to laugh too - the kind of laugh with hysteria in the eye of it.

RON
Shit! I heard about that...and Phil and Larry Powell? I can't believe it...

TIMMY
They were great wrestlers, weren't they fucking tough...You know when Phil got killed...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

61 CONTINUED: 3 61

TIMMY (cont'd)
Larry - he wasn't too much in the brains department either - he went and joined up the next day.

RON
(laughing harder)
Oh God!

TIMMY
...And then he got it... There was a land mine or something and he got hit in the head with a tree. Isn't that funny? He goes all the way over there and gets killed by a fucking tree... You know it's funny. I think the whole fucking town got devastated. I don't think we have a fucking friend left. I think it's really funny.

They laugh...MOM comes to the backdoor, glances at them, then goes back to her TV.

RON
Yeah, yeah - when'd you get hit?

TIMMY
Hunh?...Oh, September 18 - near Dong Ha...
(pause)
...lotta bad shit up there, things I don't wanna talk about...it was crazy over there.. you know what I mean, you understand? .. shooting anything that moved?

RON
Yeah...yeah...

TIMMY
...we burned down a whole village one day.. there was this gook with her baby...we torch the whole fuckin' hut and she was screaming...

RON listening, thinking back...

TIMMY
Where'd you get hit?

RON
Me. Oh January 20th, someplace I don't even remember...near some river up in the DMZ... Walked into a whole fucking battalion of 'em... I was shot in the foot, no big deal...and I was running around like...it was the woods again, like I was John Wayne or something..."come on Charlie Motherfucker, rat tat tat rat tat tat"...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

61 CONTINUED: 4 61

RON (cont'd)
and then there was this crack right above my right ear and...
(shifts, sighs)

TIMMY
How was the hospital?

RON
Bad. Really sucked.

TIMMY
Yeah. I know. Sometimes I get these really bad headaches at night you know and I'm thinking the dummies in the hospital - they put this plate in backwards or something, man - like I'm going crazy you know, they just come over me...they just come...and I feel like - like I'm not me anymore -- like I'm somebody else.

RON
How do you handle it? How do you take care of it when that happens?

TIMMY
(giggles)
Well mostly I do a lot of drugs. You just try to get through it man, any way you can.. you know what I mean...

RON
When I was in the hospital -- I kept thinking it wasn't so bad y'know, it made sense...

TIMMY
Whaddaya mean it made sense?

RON
(pause)
...cause I failed.

TIMMY
Whaddaya mean?

RON
'Cause I...'cause I killed somebody one night.

TIMMY
We all killed somebody Ronnie, you can't feel bad about it, you had no choice, that's something those demonstrators will never understand, it was either them or us...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

61 CONTINUED: 5 61

RON
...but that night it changed my life...it's as if nothing's ever gonna be the same again...
(shifts, takes a deep breath, doesn't speak)

TIMMY
You don't gotta talk about it Ronnie. It was insane over there man, it was...

RON
...but there's times, there's times I'd just wished...I'd just wished I'd run back to the rear that day -- the first time I got hit, when I took the shot in the foot, I could've just run back you know, I had the million dollar wound, I mean who gives a fuck now if I was a coward or not. I was paralyzed and castrated that day -- why? 'Cause I was so stupid -- and I'd have my dick and my balls now and I think... I think I'd give everything I got... everything I believed in, all my values -- just to have my body again...just to be whole again....

Pause. A look between them. RON's got tears in his eyes.

RON
...but I don't...I never will...and that's the way it is, isn't it?

62 INT. TRAIN - SYRACUSE, NEW YORK - DAY (MAY, 1970) 62

NINE MONTHS LATER.

RON on the train, the platform bypassing the window as the train pulls to a stop... Looking out ill at ease in his best shirt, jacket.

63 EXT. STATION PLATFORM - SYRACUSE - DAY (1970) 63

RON coming out of the train onto the PLATFORM - looking...not there. He's wearing a white shirt and tie.

PASSENGERS hurrying to the exits, then: DONNA appears coming the other way - looking for him. She has grown into a beautiful, young woman.

RON sees her - before she sees him. A leap of the soul. As if for one moment he can stretch up out of the chair and walk to her again.

DONNA sees him, across exiting PASSENGERS - a flash in her eyes, starts towards him, as if also suspending her disbelief...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

63 CONTINUED: 63

HER POV - PAST exiting PASSENGERS - then RON appears on the platform, fully revealed in THE CHAIR...

DONNA continuing - but a flash of the head, the inner collapse of spirit. It is him.

RON, smiling now, friendly - SHE approaches -- stretching his arm in a comradely fashion, holding her - as they kiss hello. Two strangers...

DONNA muted, smiling - saying something. He nods.

64 INT. STUDENT COFFEE SHOP - SYRACUSE - NIGHT (1970) 64

RON and DONNA share a pizza and some cheap red wine in a student hang out. Posters against the war, black arm bands on the KIDS, a charged electricity in the shuffling, talking. DONNA seems a little distracted.

RON
(embarrassed)
Remember those letters... I wrote you from over there?

DONNA
Sure.

RON
Crazy stuff, hunh? Long letters. I guess I told you a lot of stuff I couldn't tell you in school.

DONNA
They were beautiful letters.

RON
Yeah?

DONNA
They were...

RON
I don't think the spelling was too good.

DONNA
Who cares if you can spell. There was a lot of feeling in the words...
(Pause)
...I'm so sorry for what happened to you Ronnie. My mother called me. I wanted to reach out to touch you. I felt so frustrated...I just stood there in the hallway of my dorm shaking and...and I couldn't say anything.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

64 CONTINUED: 64

As she remembers the moment, we see the loving look in RON'S eyes. If anything this now is the moment he has earned through his chivalry. How sad it seems...she pushes back her tears, angry at herself instead.

DONNA
...We grew up believing all that stuff Ronnie, never questioning a thing. Nothing they told us was the truth. I even opposed the demonstrators at first, my mother told me to stay in the dorm, not get involved, to study and I wouldn't get into any trouble. "Stay in the dorm", "don't rock the boat" that's the way everybody from Massapequa is (laughs) "don't rock the boat", "play it safe"...but there's a world out there and it's bigger than Massapequa...

RON looking at her as if he agrees with everything she said. She takes it as a signal to go on...

DONNA
Did you see the killings on television? Kent State? It's as if the war's happening right here, now. That girl laying in that pool of blood in the parking lot. I feel so angry Ronnie, I don't believe anything they say anymore. That war is <u>wrong</u> Ronnie. I'm sorry I sound like I'm giving a speech but all that crap they taught us in High School -- about America always being right. And did you see that poster...that picture of the children killed at My Lai? They killed babies Ronnie. <u>Babies</u>! ...Vietnam's ruining our country. I don't believe in any of it anymore. I don't even believe in God anymore Ronnie. It's all a buncha lies!

Pause. RON suddenly feeling anxiety, takes a deep breath.

A YOUNG RADICAL interrupts...pressing some leaflets on DONNA.

RADICAL
Donna, need help getting these out.

DONNA
I can't right now. Later.

RADICAL
Don't forget nine o'clock we got the meeting...

He goes, eyeing RON...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

64 CONTINUED: 2 64

DONNA
(distracted)
I'm sorry, it's so crazy right now. We got a Kent State demonstration tomorrow. Part of the national protest. I'm on the Organizing Committee... We...
(breaks off seeing RON'S look)

RON
Can we get outta here, take a little walk...a few minutes?

She pauses.

DONNA
Sure...

65 EXT. SYRACUSE CAMPUS & TOWN - NIGHT 65

DONNA pushes RON past the QUAD where the STUDENTS are gathering, exchanging information. A LOUDSPEAKER announces tomorrow's demonstration.

LOUDSPEAKER
FOUR STUDENTS HAVE BEEN KILLED AT KENT STATE. BEGINNING AT NINE O'CLOCK TOMORROW MORNING WE'LL BE ASSEMBLING AT LINDSEY HALL AND MARCHING TO THE FEDERAL BUILDING. BRING YOUR POSTERS AND BANNERS AND PICKET SIGNS...

Some of the STUDENTS smoking marijuana, listening to some acid rock on their transistor...OTHERS handing out leaflets...a sense of urgency in the air...

RON looking on as if on another planet.

RON
So what are you gonna do with yourself after school?

DONNA
...I don't know. Six months ago I woulda told you I was gonna be a lawyer. I knew exactly what I wanted to do. But now I don't know what I want to do. It's so crazy now. Each day is so intense, you don't know if there's gonna be a tomorrow, you know what I mean?

RON
Yeah...I been thinking about a lotta things too. I been thinking about leaving the country...

DONNA
Massapequa?

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

65 CONTINUED: 65

RON
No. The whole country. America. I feel like getting out. Seeing the world. Mexico. South America maybe. Some place far. Some place in the sun...

DONNA
Why now? It's an exciting time in this country...

RON
I wanna get away from everything. The whole thing's been so crazy Donna. The war. The hospital. My Mom. My Dad. Everybody in the town. I just can't face those people. They remind me of Vietnam...of everything I was before. I just gotta clear my head out...

DONNA
Then you should do it Ronnie, get out of Massapequa,...like I did. Find yourself...

RON
Yeah...I should...
(glances at her, a pause)
what are you...? You seeing anybody, you got a boyfriend.

Trying to sound casual but it hangs there tense suddenly in the air...DONNA delicate...but her eyes cannot help but smile...

DONNA
Yes...someone. I've been living with him 'bout a year now...

RON
(quick)
Oh that's nice...Your parents know you're living together?

DONNA
Oh God no! They'd have a fit if they did... yeah, I think you'd like him, he's really sensitive. He got out of the draft, his father got a doctor to write a letter. He took me down to Washington to a couple of big demonstrations against the war. It's really incredible y'know -- the vibes.

RON
Yeah.

DONNA
They come from all over the country. Like an army. There's this <u>togetherness</u> about the people Ron, ...young and old...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

65 CONTINUED: 2 65

DONNA (cont'd)
and all the music, have you heard Jimi Hendrix's "Star Spangled Banner", it's wild, ...and the love, and anything goes, you should come Ron -- you could really help...we're building a whole new community, we could change the World, Ronnie. Do you believe that Ronnie, we could change the world?

RON
Oh I don't know Donna, I don't know...I'm just starting to think about all these things y'know...

DONNA
Have you ever read about the life of Mahatma Gandhi Ronnie or Henry David Thoreau on "Civil Disobedience"? That essay changed my life -- it taught me that people have a right to stand up and speak out when an injustice is being done -- that it's their obligation, their duty as human beings. Gandhi believed that one person with the Truth was a majority...could win...even women are fighting for their rights Ronnie...

They are in a secluded area of the quad, under a tree. She stops, comes around, thrusting out her breasts defiantly at him in her t-shirt.

DONNA
I'm proud of who I am as a woman. I believe in Woman's Liberation. I feel like nothing's holding me back now. I can do anything I want to do, be anything I want to be. I never felt prouder than I do right now about being a woman, Ronnie. Nothing can stop us.

RONNIE looking at her. All healthy sexuality, pride, defiance. He's inspired.

RON
It sounds really beautiful Donna...

Cicadas buzzing in the Spring night...a COUPLE making out quietly near them...guitar music from the distance...feelings of nostalgia invade him.

DONNA
(inviting)
Then join us Ron...you can make a difference, we need people like you...

He rocks in his chair, to an old memory of music, as if it's a night long ago.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

65 CONTINUED: 3 65

RON
... remember the night of the prom Donna? Remember? "Moon River...wider than the sea...my huckleberry friend..."

Singing, eyes closing, weaving in the chair like a happy idiot, willing to make fun of himself in front of her but enjoying the memory...

But to DONNA it has another sadder implication which she can't transcend. She hates the out-of-fashion romanticism...and is surprised by it here and now...

RON
Remember?

DONNA
Of course.

RON
(singing)
"Moon River...for me" (finishes) Boy was I crazy that night. Running through the rain to get there...to dance with you. What an idiot hunh.

DONNA nods, sickened. He seems to have totally missed the point of her woman's liberation theme. She attempts a smile, trying to share the spirit. Everything he says now sounds totally misplaced, yet felt.

RON
I just had to dance with you 'fore I went in, y'know... It was like... It was like I knew it...

He doesn't notice her discomfort, takes her hand.

RON
...an' I made you that promise that I'd come back...an' I'd love you forever...

DONNA
(knowing where this is going)
Oh Ron, please don't...you don't have to...

RON trying to keep it light, nostalgic, but...

RON
No. I wanted so much... I wanted to keep it together for you Donna, you know, to come back from that war a bigger, better...Man. A hero...whatever...(a little laugh, embarassed) I think that's why I always tried to be the best -- baseball, wrestling...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

65 CONTINUED: 4 65

RON (cont'd)
I wanted you to see me at my best, I don't know why that is with people, but...you know it's like...it's never enough... It's like you do something at twelve 'cause you wanna show everybody you can be fifteen, and when you're fifteen you wanna be eighteen, and when you're eighteen you wanna be twenty-one, you really wanna be a man so you go out and join up and you go to...War...and War is like this big secret see -- it's something only a few people in this country really know about -- and you think if you know what that secret is...then you think ah! Then finally at last, I'll be a man... and when I'm a Man -- then I'm gonna have you "Donna" -- ...like you're part of a timepiece you know... when I'm twenty-one I'm gonna have Donna and that's just the way it is...and everything... everything I ever did, hitting that home run that day you were up in the stands with that stupid guy and that crazy song playing "awalking in the rain...awhooo whooo whoo whoo..." was for you Donna...it was for you. (pause). I wanted to shine. I really wanted to shine for you, Donna...'cause I loved you...goddamnit I really loved you...I just never told you.. (exhales, a long beat) Jeesus!

He's crying against his will as she reaches out, bewildered, lost, her eyes shut with pain, and puts her hand on his cheeks, trying too late to erase the tears.

66 EXT. SYRACUSE CAMPUS - DAY (1970) 66

The STUDENTS have taken over a BUILDING -- waving protest banners and flags from the windows. Starting to trash the place now -- desks, papers, file cabinets being thrown out the windows onto the lawns.

CHANTS
FUCK THE PIGS! FUCK THE PIGS! ONE - TWO - THREE - FOUR WE DON'T WANT YOUR FUCKING WAR!! FIVE - SIX - SEVEN - EIGHT, WE DON'T WANT TO ESCALATE!

The COPS are forming at two ends of the quadrangle, emptying out of their vans...LOUDSPEAKERS shouting orders...

...as RON looks on with DONNA and her BOYFRIEND, a tall, lean intellectual young man of pleasant demeanor..."Peace Now" and "Stop the War" buttons. They are in a LARGE GROUP in the center of the quadrangle listening to one of the SPEAKERS, a young, black Veteran in cut off fatigues, his medals pinned to his chest.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

66 CONTINUED: 66

On the platform behind him are OTHER YOUNG VETS mixed with STUDENT LEADERS, the UNIVERSITY REVEREND, and a few TEACHERS...

The SPEAKER is a fiery, moving man, waving a document in the air.

SPEAKER
It says right here People -- in the Declaration of Independence, if the Government fucks you over, it's not only your RIGHT but YOUR FUCKIN DUTY, PEOPLE...to BRING IT DOWN!!!

A huge roar from the agitated crowd, sensing the POLICE closing in.

CHANTS
RIGHT ON! POWER TO THE PEOPLE MAN! REMEMBER KENT AND JACKSON STATE!

RON has never heard words like this...his eyes hungrily roving through the crowd...

...to a FEW HIPPIES all painted up, long hair, flowers, one of them breast-feeding a BABY...A tab of acid being passed in a priestly manner.

...guys and girls passing joints..a guy beating a drum...

...a

SPEAKER
...If Jefferson and Tom Paine and those dudes were here today, d'you think they'd be with Nixon or with us? (ad lib answers "WITH US!") Shit yes, Nixon's the same as King George!

On the loudspeakers, the COPS are advising the STUDENTS to get out of the Dorms...

LOUDSPEAKER
YOU ARE ORDERED TO DISPERSE. YOU HAVE FIVE MINUTES. THIS IS AN UNLAWFUL ASSEMBLY. IF YOU DO NOT DISPERSE, YOU WILL BE ARRESTED.

SPEAKER
First he invades Cambodia and bombs the shit out of it, and then he kills four kids at Kent State 'cause they tried to protest. This guy's gotta go!!!
(ROARS -- "BURN BABY BURN!")
Right on! The people of this country been fucked over cheated and lied to by all of 'em, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson. The whole war is a big rip off... people are dying over there to make some fat cat capitalist businessmen rich, this whole generation's being sold out People...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

66 CONTINUED: 2 66

SPEAKER (cont'd)
and we GOTTA DO SOMETHING. WE GOTTA GET RID OF THIS GOVERNMENT NOW. (Roars -- "BURN BABY BURN! POWER TO THE PEOPLE!").

A YOUNG VETERAN walking through the CROWD, spots RON, comes over... Seeing him, RON tries to shrink back as the VET gives him a high-fiver... The VET seeming to know RON is a vet.

VET
Hey brother, Larry Boyle, what's happening man.

RON
Ron Kovic.

VET
Welcome brother...to the War at home... You gotta get up there, man, say a few words to these dudes. Wake 'em up man...

RON
No. No. Not today. Thanks anyway...

VET
(looking him right in the eye)
Peace, Ron...and welcome home...

He goes... RON stirred, something in him reluctantly moved by the man... DONNA noticing it, smiles...

SPEAKER
We're the ones put our bodies on the line -- for people who didn't even care about us when we came home. I loved this country once...

The SPEAKER now rips the medals from his chest and brandishes them in his hands...

SPEAKER
...And all this I won over there...the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, all the Commendation Medals and the rest of this garbage...<u>don't mean a thing</u>. FUCK THIS SHIT.

Shaking with emotion, he hurls them into the distance...

RON is shocked. He's never seen or heard something like this. As he catches DONNA'S eyes for a moment.

She has her fist in the air yelling "RIGHT ON, BURN, BABY, BURN!" Beautiful yet cruel in her anger, she embodies the revolution, RON looks away.

The CROWD is getting crazier -- now lighting up a straw effigy of Nixon, a mask of his face at the top.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

66 CONTINUED: 3 66

CHANTS
ONE - TWO - THREE - FOUR WE DON'T WANT YOUR FUCKING WAR!

BOYFRIEND
(to Donna)
The pigs are gonna come down. We better get him outta here. It's gonna get heavy...

DONNA
You take him. I wanna stay...

RON seeing this exchange...

BOYFRIEND
Come on Ron...

RON
Donna, you gonna be okay....

A friendly rushed smile, wheeling him out...his POV on DONNA receding, swept away in the angry CROWD... A quick look to him but she has no time caught up in the NEXT SPEAKER, the ANGRY REVEREND.

ANGRY REVEREND
Is this going to be another Kent State? Is that what you policemen want? Do you have to kill your kids to protect your government, your authority, your homes? Do you think they're a bunch of bums like Spiro Agnew said? They're not bums...

The first of the gas cannisters goes off...

...as the COPS charge the Building and the Rally at the same time...trying to break everything up at once...

Police cars...Sirens...gas cannisters...

The COPS are charging into the occupied Building... Pulling out the STUDENTS chanting...

CHANTS
THE WHOLE WORLD'S WATCHING! THE WHOLE WORLD'S WATCHING!

DONNA yelling at the COPS, retreating with the mass of STUDENTS.

RON being wheeled over the grass at full speed by her BOYFRIEND.. into a sequestered doorway...

BOYFRIEND
Stay here. I gotta get Donna!...
(exits running)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

66 CONTINUED: 4 66

COPS run by...gas...They move in Roman phalanxes of might, hitting their clubs on their leather gloves in a rhythmic chorus of sound, sweeping all before them, the triumph of the State.

CHANTS
(STUDENTS from buildings)
THE WHOLE WORLD'S WATCHING! THE WHOLE WORLD'S WATCHING!

A STUDENT being beaten by PLAINCLOTHESMEN...pushed into a car and driven off...

RON watches it all...the dawn of a new war...repelled yet seduced.

67 EXT. ARTHUR'S BAR & STREET - NIGHT (1970) 67

ARTHUR'S BAR - MASSAPEQUA - late NIGHT. Disco music, lights.. COUPLES necking in their cars, doors slamming, stumbling, SHOUTING matches between disillusioned lovers -

68 INT. ARTHUR'S BAR - NIGHT (1970) 68

Psychedelic lights PRESENTING MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE - a Credence Clearwater "SUSY Q" type sound, amplified bass beat - a young local group, with long hair, sullen demeanors...their gals dancing in strapless tops, chewing gum; working class mamas with short hair in green t-shirts ("Sure I raise Hell, So What?") and black shiny slacks; the papas in jeans, a hint of Presley in their hip rolls as they dance; college boys swilling beer in sweat shirts with signs on them, 'Olympic Drinking Team', sockless loafers, long sideburns, the hair getting longer...

THE BACK ROOM - A GIRL, JENNY, in jeans playing pool, cigarette to lips, lining up a shot.

RON is in his chair on the outside of a corner booth with TIMMY, several beer pitchers in front of them. With them are TWO GUYS in their 40's, crewcuts, windbreakers with 'Brigadeer Factory Renegades Baseball Team' written across the back. A sign on the wall over them: 'If You're Drinking To Forget, Pay Before You Start.'

RON
(a glassy stupid look)
That's what the hospital guy said, "you can take your Vietnam and shove it up your ass"...that's what Vietnam's all about and you can take it and shove it up your ass.

MAN #1
(yelling at the waiter)
Double rye, beer chaser...they never fought that war to win anyway. Should nuke fucking Hanoi y'ask me and get all our boys outta there...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

CONTINUED: 68

MAN#2 is sullen, off to the side, an edge of drunkenness. As RON glassily looks over at the Dance Floor...a slow tune now, the couple shuffling head to head. Moving down to their feet. A beat...

RON turning back to TIMMY -- unconsciously itching his own nipple...

RON
Vyet...Nam...Vyetnam, somebody oughta write a song...about something got under your skin... Remember Del Shannon..."Runaway".
(crooning)
"As I walk along I wonder what went wrong with our love A love that was so strong awhoo whoo whoo whoo"...OOOH Vyet Nam... I'll tell you what went wrong, awhoo whoo whoo -- Vyet Nam baby. It was the wrong fucking war when you gotta come back to a dogshit hospital where they don't give a fuck if...

TIMMY
Okay, Ronnie, okay, knock it off, come on...

RON
...when it was just "a waste of fuckin' time, and it was all one big fuckin' mistake right and I'm sorry but you can take your Vyet Nam and shove it up your ass..."

MAN #2
Why don't you shove it up <u>your</u> ass pal.. okay? Just 'cause you're in a fuckin' wheelchair you think everybody's gotta feel sorry for you?

RON
What?

MAN #2
You ain't the only Marine here. I was on Iwo Jima. We lost 6 thousand the first day. So don't go crying in your fucking beer to me You served, you lost, and now you gotta live with it. You're a Marine, semper fi, they didn't pick you, you...you picked them so stop moaning and pissing about it!

RON
(to Timmy)
Who is this guy?
(to Man #2)
I think guys like you are assholes that's what I think.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

68 CONTINUED: 2 68

MAN #2
Yeah, I bet you do buddy, you sorry motherfucker...'cause you know if they win.. if they win...it's guys like you they're gonna put up against the wall first...'cause they know you sure as hell can't trust a traitor.

RON rolls up to him eyeball to eyeball...

RON
You called me a traitor!

MAN #2
Man, if you weren't in that fucking chair...

RON
Well I am in the fucking chair, so come on, motherfucker! Go ahead, go ahead take a fucking swing, take your best shot. I'll fight you sitting down...top of the ninth, motherfucker!

As RON pulls his siderail out and wields it like a bat. A shoving match starts. The MAN stands, ready to haul off on RON as MAN#1 and TIMMY jump in, separating them.

MAN #1
KNOCK IT OFF BOTH OF YOUSE...TAKE IT OUTSIDE...PHIL!

MAN#2 breathes hard, eyeballing RON, then shrugs contemptuously, and exits... MAN#1 following...

RON upset, breathing hard...

RON
FUCKING BULLSHIT!

RON rolling past the dance floor to the jukebox, a bottle of beer in hand, desperately aggressive now; at the jukebox JENNY, the pool cue girl,19, shaking her ass, picking records.

RON
Hey, what's happening? What's your name?

TIMMY
(following)
C'mon, Ronnie, let's go.

JENNY
(chewing gum, relaxed)
Jenny.

TIMMY
...Ronnie?

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

68 CONTINUED: 3 68

RON
Lemme alone, go find somebody, willya.. Jenny? Jenny, how'd you like to go to Mexico tonight?

TIMMY drifts off.

JENNY
Mexico? Whadaya mean - Mexico?

RON
I think you're really beautiful, that's what I mean.

JENNY
Oh yeah?

RON
Yeah! Come on, come on, let's go to Mexico.

JENNY
What do you got in Mexico?

RON
I know this really special place, it's in the sun...on the ocean...we'll go tonight, we'll get a plane.

JENNY
I think you're crazy, man.

RON
Yeah. I am. I'm crazy. You wanna see me walk? (makes a funny face) Hey, you want to dance? I can dance. I dance crazy.
(rocks around in his chair)
Come on -

RON throwing a 'wheelie' on the dance floor, riding the back legs of his chair, like an athlete twisting and shaking his shoulders, his eyes popping open and closed, sweating a lot, set to "Midnight Train to Georgia".

STEVE coming in with a DATE, and OTHER GUYS and ANOTHER GIRL, intersecting the BARTENDER.

STEVE
(to the BARTENDER)
Hey Bill.

BILL
Steve.

STEVE
(looking around)
What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

68 CONTINUED: 4 68

BILL
Same old shit.

STEVE spotting RON on the floor, amazed.

STEVE
Let's get a table -

JENNY spinning.

JENNY
Bet you practiced a lot?

RON
Yeah...crazy!

Looking at her.

Breasts bob as she dances.

RON, more and more agitated, takes one of her hands and spins her around his head - she's pushing the dance to a reckless point.

RON POPS a big "wheelie" and CRASHES onto the floor...

THE BAND keeps blasting. SOMEBODY steps past him trying to get out of the way. A WOMAN laughs. Then the BAND STOPS.

WOMAN 1
You okay...you all right? I didn't mean to laugh...(giggling)

MAN #1
Is he okay?

MAN #2
Him again?

MAN #3
Fuckin' shitfaced!

STEVE'S VOICE
Hey Ron...Ron?

RON, looking upwards groggily.

HIS POV - STEVE and TIMMY leaning over him, Steve predominant in the frame, Timmy more receded -

RON now crawls along the floor, reaching for his toppled chair. HANDS reaching in to help; he shakes them off.

RON
Lemme alone...I can do it. Where's my chair? Gimme my chair.

THE FACES looking at him -

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

70 EXT. KOVIC HOUSE & STREET - NIGHT (1970) 70

The car drives away. RON is soaking wet in the rain, wheeling up the ramp alone and BANGING through the front door. His pant are off almost down to his knees, half naked.

71 INT. RON'S BEDROOM/BATH/HALL - NIGHT (1970) 71

HE THUMPS against a wall in his ROOM, muttering something incomprehensible.

RON
Shitzagod fuckout!

Coming face to face with himself in the MIRROR - and the CRUCIFIX ('Let the Beauty of Jesus be seen in me')...

...a crazed concentrated look, sweat, rain, a bruise from the forehead where he fell...he can't stand himself - feels the body on the crucifix, grasps it as...

MOM comes in, wrapping her bathrobe, worried - followed by DAD.

MOM
What is...?

RON
Oh Mom...howya doing?

She freezes, seeing his state.

MOM
Ronnie what are you doing?
(to Dad)
He's drunk...he's drunk. I knew it. We have a drunk for a son ...Eli!

DAD is moving past her, ignoring her outburst, starting to prepare RON'S bed.

DAD
Go to bed, honey, it's okay.

Passing **RON** who is waving the crucifix at his Mom -

RON
Look, Mom, look at the cross, isn't that what you believe in?

MOM
(looking away)
Oh God! Eli!

RON
But I don't, I don't believe in him anymore. You know why? 'Cause he only spent 3 days up there and me I gotta spend the rest of my life. I wish I were dead like him -

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

68 CONTINUED: 5 68

TIMMY
Leave him alone. Let him get in himself. He knows how to do it. Give him some room.

MAN #2
(distant)
Get him the fuck outta here, he's drunk.. get'im home.

STEVE
(leaning in close)
It's okay, it's okay...he got hurt in 'Nam... Ron? Lemme help?

RON dragging himself into the chair, a painful muscular movement, shaking his head.

RON
(gasps)
Leave me alone!

Stalls, strains - then pulls himself in...his head bobbing sickly from side to side.

RON
(murmuring)
I'm fine. Come on. - Let's dance.

STEVE
Denny, get the car.

69 EXT. ARTHUR'S BAR & STREET - RAIN - NIGHT (1970) 69

RON, shitfaced, is lifted into Steve's CAR, a big Cadillac with room for 3 on the front seat, Ron in the middle propped up - FIGURES around him, lost in shifting shadow...RAINING now... doors slamming.

RON
(yelling)
Where's Jenny? Hey Jenny!

STEVE
Hurry up, let's go!

TIMMY
You okay?

ANOTHER ANGLE - RON being propped up on the seat...the car MOVING - windshield wipers.

STEVE
That's right, that's good now.

A GIRL LAUGHING.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

69 CONTINUED: 69

MAN #1
Shut up, willya Janet.

RON
Who is this chick?

TIMMY
Are you okay - is everything all right?

STEVE
He's really smashed, we got to get him home right away.

RON
(at Steve)
Y'know this car looks like shit, Steve - you got no taste!

STEVE
Fuck you.

RON grins, leaning over on a shoulder with imitation fur, bleary-eyed, mocking Steve.

RON
Yeah, you're full of shit Steve... You're just a greedy fuck man. All you care about's yourself man -- Stevie Boyer who rented us baseball gloves. Hey "peace brother" (flashes the Victory sign)...

TIMMY
Come on Ronnie, come on.

RON
...but you don't really give a shit about Vietnam or the guys who died over there, Stevie. You're just eating hamburgers counting the money man. How much you make today Steve?

STEVE
Fuck you I don't gotta listen to this shit, you shitfaced fuck...

RON
To you it was a waste of fucking time and I was a schmuck for going. Yeah, you know everything Steve, all you college boys know everything except one thing -- FEELING, man, feeling somethin'... pain, suffering, compassion, somethin'...I don't know. You got no sense of nothing outside your own personal Fucking Self...I feel sorry for you...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

69 CONTINUED: 2 69

STEVE
SHUT THE FUCK UP. What are you saying!! I tried to help you man, Fuck...

JENNY
Whatza he saying?

RON
I love you man...you're like my brother, we grew up together but you're never gonna understand...you're never gonna understand...

TIMMY
He don't mean it Steve, he's...

JENNY
Whatza he saying?

RON
(into her fur)
I wanna make love to you...have babies, lot's of babies...go to your place...

JENNY
Whatza he saying?

TIMMY
Howza his legs, his legs okay?

JENNY
Fuck! (astonished) He's pissed all over the fucking seat! (moving) Look, my dress! Oh God, how dey gonna clean dis dress? Two hundred dollars!

TIMMY
Shaddup.

MAN #2
Hey asshole, you just peed all over Janet's dress. (grabbing Ron)

RON
How 'bout dat! Whatza address?

STEVE
Leave him alone, he's fuckin' nuts, he's outta his skull.

MAN #2
(insane paranoid)
Get the bum home! Get him home! Drop him off! I don't want to see him!

TIMMY
Awright, awright.

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

71 CONTINUED: 71

MOM
Oh! You don't know what you're saying...

RON
...but see that's the problem Mom. I'm not dead. I gotta live. I gotta walk around and remind 'em of Vietnam and they don't wanna know, they don't wanna see us, they wanna hide us! They wanna hide us 'cause it's a can of SHIT! That's why...and I'm the fucking dummy...

MOM
(to Dad)
He won't listen, he won't change.

DAD
(calm, to Ron)
Ronnie, please...

RON
...'cause I believed everything they told us Mom. Go fight. Go kill. Sergeant man, Marine Corps!...
(a drunken salute)
Yo, Squad left, right, lef-rye, LEF-RYE, ABOW FACE!!!

HE wheels around and violently, sweeps all his baseball and wrestling trophies off the bookshelf.

MOM
RONNIE!

RON
IT'S ALL A LIE MOM. THE WHOLE THING'S A LIE!

72 INT. KOVIC HALL & LIVINGROOM - NIGHT 72

MOM rushes out of the bedroom...RON chasing after her now, followed by DAD.

MOM
STOP IT! GO TO BED! He won't lissen...He won't change. WHAT DID THEY DO TO YOU IN THAT WAR! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU!! YOU NEED HELP RONNIE. YOU NEED HELP!

RON
NO! YOU NEED HELP MOM -- WITH ALL YOUR GOD AND YOUR BULLSHIT DREAMS, IT'S ALL A LIE, YOU'RE A LIE, THE WHOLE COUNTRY'S A LIE.

TOMMY, JIMMY, SUSANNE, PATTY, JACKIE all sticking their sleepy heads out of their rooms, hearing this slamming of doors...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

72 CONTINUED: 72

TOMMY
Whatza? ...Ronnie, what going on!!

RON, THUMPING against the narrow walls in the corridor, chasing Mom.

MOM
GO TO BED. PATTY...SUSANNE!...GO TO SLEEP..
TOMMY, GET YOUR BROTHERS OUT...
(to RON)
YOU'RE GONNA WAKE UP THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD!!

RON
I DON'T CARE. LET 'EM ALL KNOW!! TELL 'EM ALL!!

73 EXT. KOVIC HOUSE - NIGHT 73

The VOICES carrying out into the night through the thin walls.

RON
I DON'T WANNA HIDE IT ANYMORE. THE LAMBS, THE CASTIGLIAS, THE WALSHES, LET 'EM ALL KNOW...

74 EXT. THE BLOCK - NIGHT 74

LIGHTS coming on in various windows...A HEAD peeks out.

A NEIGHBOR steps out of his front door...

RON
LET 'EM ALL KNOW. LOOK WHAT THEY DID TO ALL OF US. THIS WHOLE BLOCK. THIS WHOLE COUNTRY. THEY LIED TO ALL OF US! THEY LIED TO ME AND THEY LIED TO YOU. THEY SENT US OVER THERE TO FIGHT COMMUNISM AND ALL WE DID WAS SHOOT WOMEN AND CHILDREN. FOR WHAT MOM!

75 INT. KOVIC LIVINGROOM - NIGHT 75

RON in a primal rage.

RON
THEY SAID IT WAS OUR SACRED DUTY AS CATHOLICS AND AMERICANS. THEY SAID THAT COMMUNISM WAS AN INSIDIOUS EVIL. THE CHURCH BLESSED THE WAR, THEY TOLD US TO GO, THEY BLESSED THE BURNING VILLAGES AND THE KILLING. THOU SHALT NOT KILL MOM THOU SHALL NOT KILL WOMEN AND CHILDREN MOM...REMEMBER MOM YOU TAUGHT IT TO ME -- ISN'T THAT WHAT THEY TAUGHT US. THAT COMMUNISM WAS AN INSIDIOUS EVIL MOM.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

75 CONTINUED: 75

RON (cont'd)
BUT THEY'RE THE EVIL MOM, THEY'RE THE ONES WE SHOULD BE FIGHTING. THEY LIED TO ME GROWING UP, THEY LIED TO ALL OF US BUT IT'S NOT GONNA WORK ANYMORE...NOT FOR YOU. FOR ME. FOR ANYBODY ELSE.

MOM
STOP IT STOP IT! AS LONG AS YOU'RE IN THIS HOUSE YOU WILL NOT TALK THAT WAY...ELI, PLEASE STOP HIM...

76 INT. MRS. KOVIC'S BEDROOM 76

As she flees the livingroom for her BEDROOM, filled with religious objects. RON pursues her, brandishing the crucifix...

DAD
RON. COME ON NOW. YOU MADE YOUR POINT. NOW...

RON
NO I DIDN'T MAKE MY POINT. TELL HER DAD. THEY'RE KILLING EVERYBODY NOW. IT'S ALL FALLING APART MOM. KING. KENNEDY. KENT STATE. WE ALL LOST THE WAR MOM. FUCKING COMMUNISM WON. IT'S ALL FOR NOTHING...
(in a quieter tone)
Tell her Dad, it's all a lie, tell her God's as dead as my legs...there's no God and there's no Country! ...it's just ME... and this wheelchair...forever...for nothing...me and this dead penis...

ANOTHER ANGLE --

As he grabs the rubber tubing of the external catheter taped along the inside of his thigh, he shreds the tape...he's pissed all over the seat. The leg bag is broken. He's soaked.

MOM
ELI! OH PLEASE! PLEASE. I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE!

MOM shudddering, doesn't want to see it, cornered in her bedroom.

DAD horrified, reluctant to challenge RON's emotion. The CHILDREN behind him, staring through the open doorway, fascinated.

DAD
RON...NO! NO! NOT WITH YOUR MOTHER! FOR GOD'S SAKE!

RON
...The church they say it's a sin if you play with your penis, but I sure wish I could...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

76 CONTINUED: 76

MOM
Don't say "penis" in this house!! Oh Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Why Why Why!...He won't let go, he won't let go!! What can I do! What can I do!

RON
...I didn't even get time to learn how to use it Mom -- it's gone in some fucking jungle over in Asia...Gone for...

MOM
ENOUGH!!!!

As she slams the BEDROOM DOOR on the whole FAMILY, a SHRIEK blasts down the block...

77 EXT. THE BLOCK - NIGHT 77

MORE PEOPLE gathered...listening...the silence now hangs over the torpid night air...

78 INT. MRS. KOVIC'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 78

MOM and RON are alone in the bedroom...the silence...MOM is crying now, broken by the strain...the tears coming like a little girl.

RON staring at her, realizes her pain...in a quiet voice...

RON
"Enough"...yeah I know...I'm sorry Mom you gotta be so upset...I'm sorry it happened this way...

MOM
Oh Ronnie Ronnie...why, why did it happen this way?...I loved you...I loved you most of all Ronnie. I remember when you came back from the hospital and I stayed up with you all night... I <u>prayed</u> for you over there Ronnie, you didn't know how much I prayed...you were always the best, the brightest little boy... that little smile of yours could light my heart up Ronnie, such a little devil you were, God! God!!!
(sobs)
I loved you most of all Ronnie...

He sighs, rolls over to her...he puts his hand out, runs it over her tears... He kind of laughs, thinking the strangest thought at this moment, then in a confessional tone:

RON
You know Mom...I never made love to a girl.. once in my life...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

78 CONTINUED: 78

MOM looking up at him, questioning eyes...

RON
No. Not in school. Not as a Marine. Not here...No place.

He waits. They share a look.

MOM
What can I do Ronnie? What do you want me to do?

She reaches out, touches his face, tenderly...

RON
I don't know...I don't know...

Bewildered. He doesn't know. He sighs and in one powerful gesture, not fraught with malice but with anger and confusion, he SNAPS the plastic crucifix in two pieces and...

ANOTHER ANGLE -- tosses the pieces at her feet.

RON
Keep it...

79 INT. RON'S BEDROOM/BATH/HALL - NIGHT 79

DAD lifts RON from his chair to his bed. In his arms. A moment. The two pieces of the crucifix. RON's two arms flopping over and his pants down, DAD gently lowers him into the bed...then removes his piss-soaked pants...undoes the broken urine bag...

Runs a warm washcloth along the legs, cleaning him. A stoic calm tenderness.

RON
(regretful, eyes closed)
I'm fucked up...I'm fucked up.

DAD
Ronnie...maybe a little trip is all you need...that place down in Mexico you were talkin' about? Maybe some rest...

RON
I don't wanna go to Mexico. I don't wanna go no place.

DAD
(rubbing him)
What can I do Ronnie, what do you want?

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

79 CONTINUED: 79

RON
(murmuring)
I want a woman, Dad, I want somebody to love me...I wanna be free again. I wanna walk in the backyard on the grass. I wanna put my bare feet in the ocean. I wanna run along the sand and feel it on my feet. I wanna stand up in the shower with the hot water streaming down my legs, in the morning...I wanna explode, Dad. I wanna get out of this crazy fucking body I'm in...
(about to cry)
I wanna be a man again...I just wanna be a man again.

DAD moving rigidly, now connects RON's catheter tube to the long plastic tube that runs adjacent the bed...and closes the bedside lamp.

In the dark, a quiet sob.

RON
Good night Dad...

DAD
Good night...son.

DISSOLVE TO:

80 EXT. VILLA DEL SOL - MEXICO - DAY (1970) 80

SUBTITLE READS: VILLA DEL SOL, MEXICO (JULY, 1970)

Moving along a vista of Caribbean, rocks, beach, a scalding red sun setting over the horizon...WHEELCHAIR MEN moving along the oceanfront, LOCAL AIDES in jeans and workshirts...MUSIC THEME.

81 EXT.VERANDA - DAY (1970) 81

A POKER GAME in progress at the center of the village - red sun setting in background.

HARDCORE AMERICAN TYPES, exclusively paras and quads, with cowboy hats, boots, colorful clothing, and big-busted LOCAL WOMEN, their skirts up, sitting on the edges of wheelchairs, their arms thrown around their MEN, rubbing their tits.

Piles of tens and twenties on the table; high stakes. Mescal, tequila, rompopo, beer bottles -

CHARLIE
Hey big brown eyes - what's your name?

RON
Ron...Ron Kovic.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

81 CONTINUED: 81

CHARLIE
Where from?

RON
Massapequa...Long Island.

CHARLIE
Hey, you guys, say hello to Ron Kovic. Just got in from the States

Their heads bob up - mumble greetings, ad lib, and quickly back to the game:

VET 1
Why don't you bet. You got all the fucking money.

VET 2
(folding)
Fuck you.

VET 1
Son of a bitch - won't bet.

VET 2
(reaching for his woman on his lap)
Put your hand in my crotch baby. My fucking dick ain't been hard in fucking months.

VET 1
(irrational)
Son of a bitch - won't bet -

RON
What's your name?

CHARLIE
Charlie...Charlie from Chicago.

RON
How long this game been going on?

CHARLIE
55 hours.

RON
Yeah...how long you been down here?

CHARLIE
A hundred fucking years.

RON
Yeah?

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

81 CONTINUED: 2 81

CHARLIE
Yeah and I'm never going back. Fuck the States. I got my room. I got my woman. I got my bottle. That's all the fuck I need, it's simple. I want something simple. Fucking V.A. - nobody understood, nobody cared. Nobody gave a shit and the women.. the fucking women, they didn't even want to look at me, the goddamn fucking women. The fucking States. I ain't ever going back...
(reaching for his woman who is six months PREGNANT)
Come here baby, you're beautiful, ain't she beautiful.

RON
(drinking)
Yeah -

CHARLIE
Get on down to town and get yourself one, man. Fuck the shit outta you even if you're paralyzed. Ain't that right, Martha?

Presses her mammoth tits. She squeals - and slaps him up on the side of the head. He grins madly.

WOMAN
You're no good.

CHARLIE
Fuckin A! You know when you're really drunk on this mescal shit -

Producing a mescal bottle with a dead worm floating near the quarter mark.

CHARLIE
- is when you swallow the fucking worm, and you don't even know it!

RON laughs. A LOUD EXPLETIVE from across the table.

ANOTHER ANGLE - as VET 1 slams his losing cards on the table.

VET 1
FUCK!

VET 2, snuggling his GIRL, laughs.

VET 1
Laugh. Motherfucker - go ahead, you're gonna get yours.

VET 2
(laughing)
You oughta stick to gin rummy, Meyers.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

81 CONTINUED: 3 81

VET 1
(menacing)
Yeah? Just when you're humping that Mexican jumping bean, I'm gonna blow you away. I got a gun...I got a fucking gun...

A SKELETAL VET 3 rolls over, intersects RON very briefly - with haunting eyes.

SILENT VET
Don't stay here man, get the fuck out!

CHARLIE
(drinking from the bottle)
Y'ever try fucking with a blowdryer?

The SILENT VET pulling away.

RON
(bewildered)
No...never.

CHARLIE
On the nipples, over the ears - it ain't bad.

A somewhat malevolent cast to his face -

CHARLIE
You know what they say. If you don't have it in the hips buddy, you better have it in the lips...
(obscene movement with his tongue and lips)
Big Ass!

Pinching her in the ass hard, she squeals.

82 INT. MEXICAN WHORE BAR - DUSK (1970) 82

SOUND - A FAT MADAME blows a wrestling coach's whistle DOOR OPENS -- and 25 WHORES file out, sniffing the customers...

HIGH ANGLE - BAR - some 20 MEN, local and tourist types, wait at the various tables. RON is the only paraplegic, drinking tequila. The patterns in the room shift and settle as the whores sit with the chosen customers, leaving Ron conspicuously alone, aware of his isolation.

THE PAINTED FACES, all ages...a jukebox PLAYS...A YOUNG WHORE, snapping her pocketmirror shut, comes over to him, a gold tooth in her mouth, a look like a mouse around a crippled cat...

RON nervously looking away from her stare, drinking.

WHORE
Are you from the Villa del Sol?

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

82 CONTINUED: 82

RON
Yeah. Yeah.

WHORE
Do you want to sleep with me?

ANOTHER ANGLE -

RON
No!...No.

She waits. Fidgeting he steals another glance at her.

RON
I..was..just...I'd just like to look around...come in...yeah I'd like to sleep with you...yeah, yeah, I'd like to...yeah...

WHORE
Then come.

83 INT. WHORE'S CUBICLE - NIGHT (1970) 83

A tiny CUBICLE - dirty mattress on the floor, dirty windows a wooden crucifix, a squashed candle which she lights...shadows... her FACE coming towards him...glows...

RON
(genuine)
Nice place...

WHORE
What?

RON
Nothing.

WHORE
Dinero...Quince dollares...

Movements, paper sounds as he passes his roll, uncaring. She takes what she wants...and a little more...

RON, tense, slowly taking off his shirt on the bed watching as

THE WHORE, glowing reddish against the curtains, takes off her clothes in two quick easy gestures...

WHORE
(indicates his pants)
Why don't you take off?

RON
I can't...I can't take them off...they were paralyzed in the war.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

83 CONTINUED: 83

WHORE
Vietnam?

RON nods 'yes'. Curious she indicates his crotch, moves closer.

WHORE
You let me see?

RON
(deeply uncomfortable)
No. No...I can't move it. It's no good.

WHORE
Yes!

Moving to undo his pants' buckle.

RON
No, please! Please no!

Prevents her. The WHORE points to his chest.

WHORE
Que es? Que es.

ANOTHER ANGLE -her finger pointing to a tiny bullethole in his right shoulder, reddened scar tissue.

RON
That's where the bullet went in...

THE WHORE nods back. Then:

WHORE
Your cock? Can move?...can stand up?.. sometimes?

RON
No...never...my spine. It broke my spine. It...

THE WHORE - a moment. She reaches out, touches his face gently. He closes his eyes, trying to respond to the touch.

She shifts, slowly pushing her breasts towards his face. He inches his lips into them, burying his mind -

TIMECUT TO:

83A HER LONG HAIR tumbles down over his face, lashing it like a wave.

She pulls him downward, her breasts raking his chest.

HER HAIR trails down past his eyes which now react in surprise as

She sucks his nipple...FX sound...around and around. It is very painful for RON.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

83 CONTINUED: 2 83

Each second a realization of what he's lost on an even deeper level.

HIS POV - the top of her head splayed with black hair circling in smaller and smaller patterns as:

PROFILE - her LIPS make fast lizard-like steps around the nipple.

HER TWO HANDS spread upwards across RON's face...caressing, scratching...

RON -- sweat all over his chest, neck, face -- a painful beauty in his eyes. The awareness of his loss, mixed with the wonder of the first time, bring tears to his eyes...

OVERHEAD ANGLE -- flesh moving, the crucifix...

HIS CRYING EYES -- buried between her thighs...

WHORE
Si! Si! Es guapo! Bonita!

THE WHORE arching, thrashing as he licks her off...she is muttering something like "Ay Dios! Que signes, que bueno...mata, mata!"

TIMECUT TO:

83B RON holds the WHORE in his arms, in the candlelight, exploring her facial contours with his fingers, her eyes...

A KNOCK at the door.

VOICE
ELENA! AHORA!

WHORE
...minuto!

RON, uninterrupted, gazes upon her as if the first woman ever made, worship in his eyes.

RON
(excited, shifts)
I want to show you...okay?

She nods, confused.

MOVING to his pants...RON undoes them...exposing himself off. THE WHORE, not that interested, looks, frowns...

WHORE
Si...is nice cock...baby skin...

He doesn't notice the layer of her reaction underneath.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

83 CONTINUED: 3 83

RON
(laughs)
Yeah, that's fosure...Never been touched...
(caresses her)
I like you very much. Mucho amor in mi corazon...

She giggles, pushes him away. He's silly.

WHORE
You come and see me tomorrow...yes, four o'clock good time...

RON
I'll come every day...Maybe we could live in the village hunh...and I'd never have to go back to the States...

She's dressing, giggles.

WHORE
Si...you get dressed hokay?

RON
...we'll live right by the sea, we'll go fishing together...

WHORE
Si, guapo...we get married...
(she cackles at that thought)

RON
Why not! That'd be great!

WHORE
Hurry up now...(exiting) Tomorrow okay?

RON
Manana...

WHORE
Yes - manana...

84 EXT. RON'S MEXICAN BUNGALOW STREET - NIGHT (1970) 84

RON, in a happy mood, wheels back towards his casa in the VILLAGE that NIGHT. Snatches of GUITARS off, RADIOS...intersecting VET 2 from the poker game. He is motorized in an electric wheelchair, his head bobbing as he croaks a MEXICAN SONG to himself...

We FOLLOW him as RON wheels past.

VET 1 from the poker game is hunched in shadow atop a cement ramp leading to one of the casas, an insane look on his face, he rolls forward suddenly with a YELL right down the ramp - building up a burst of speed.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

84 CONTINUED: 84

SLAMMING into VET 2, sideswiping and toppling his chair over. VET 2 scrabbling around in the grass as VET 1 laughs like a maniac.

VET 1
Laugh, motherfucker, why aren't you laughing now?

VET 2
You son of a bitch! I'll fucken burn your tires with a zippo lighter when your not looking!

85 EXT./INT. RON'S ROOM & RAMP - NIGHT (1970) 85

RON up the ramp into his room. Very austere, one bed, one chair, one table, a glass and tin pitcher of water. A whining VOICE from an adjacent room, separated by a cheap partition.

VOICE
Nina?...Nina? Is that you? Who's that!

RON
It's me. Ron.

VOICE
(slurring)
Is that you? Will you get somebody for me? Will you get Nina for me? Somebody?...Ron?

A detached voice, with no body. RON, trying to ignore it, pours himself a shot from the mescal bottle on the cheap coffee table.

86 EXT. JEWELRY SHOP - MEXICO - DAY (1970) 86

THE NEXT DAY - RON peers into the cluttered window of a little JEWELRY SHOP in town - and rolls in, all excited.

87 INT. MEXICAN WHORE BAR - DAY (1970) 87

RON wheeling into the BAR of the same WHOREHOUSE later THAT DAY, intersecting the FAT MADAME with her whistle around her neck.

RON
Por favor? Elena?

MADAME
She upstairs now, she come down...beer?

RON
Mezcal.

TIMECUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

87 CONTINUED: 87

87A MOVING to RON waiting at a table with a bottle of mezcal - a gift-wrapped box on the table in front of him, which he picks up as

The WHORES at the bar glance at him.

THE GIRL now comes down the stairs...

RON looking as

HIS POV - She is now followed by a PORTLY AMERICAN who good-naturedly reaches over and pats her ass...

and she returns the intimacy with a good firm squeeze of his nuts...

RON watches, smiling.

HIS POV - the MADAME intersecting MARIA ELENA at the foot of the stairs and telling her something and MARIA ELENA now looking over with a tired expression...now fixing a smile as she sees him.

ELENA
(to Madame, in Spanish)
Oh, the one from Vietnam...Si....

RON sees it and draws the GIFT-WRAPPED PRESENT discreetly across the table and into his pocket, ashamed that he's gone too far as:

She is next to the table now, with a weary smile.

ELENA
So - today we get married no?

RON
Sure, why not -

She plants a kiss on his cheek...his eyes.

A SECOND BUSINESSMAN intersects, patting her ass.

MAN
Hey, Elena, c'mere, c'mon...Sweetheart.

ELENA brushing him away.

ELENA
I'll be with you later...
(turns to RON)
You want drink or we go fuckee fuckee now?

RON
Uh...yeah...yeah, let's go, sure -

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

88 EXT. 2ND MEXICAN WHOREHOUSE - NIGHT (1970) 88

RON wheels down a row of GIRLS in a REAR COURTYARD, an expert now...NIGHT, a bizarre lighting setup in the courtyard coming from the ground up -

WHORE
(calling to him and fading as he passes)
Hey Meestah, you wanna suck my teetie...look this big teetie. I fuck you good, come... Hey'merican, you taste my pussy...is hot. Hey guapo I geeve you blow job, you never have like this - (pulls up her dress)

RON
(wheeling to a stop, at ONE GIRL, indicating with his head)
Okay.

A FACE, somewhat lost in shadow, clicks her shoes off the wall and makes her turn into a lighted doorway.

89 INT. 2ND MEXICAN WHOREHOUSE - NIGHT (1970) 89

RON is using a blowdryer on WHORE'S pussy. She's not too wild about it, a sullen not too bright young lady.

2ND WHORE
Is too hot...not too close.

RON
Is fun...

2ND WHORE
Feenish!
(sits up, he clicks the dryer off)
Dinero! 500 more...

RON
You said 300 was it.

2ND WHORE
500 more. I really show you good time...I love you baby. (touching him)

RON
Sure you do...Fuck...
(dishing out the money)
You're a liar and you know it...

2ND WHORE
No! I no lie...is too hard with you make love...you no pay enough...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

89 CONTINUED: 89

RON
Fuck you...you're just lazy...suck my nipples...
(lies back)
No fuck it! Fuck it! You keep the money...I don't want you to touch me. Fuck you...take the money and get outta here, bitch...
(crawling off the mattress into his chair)

2ND WHORE
You go. Is my place. You get out. No come back...
(cursing him in Spanish, "impotent, crippled, gimp...")

She starts laughing at him in a savage, low key way. He glowers back at her...wanting to hit her...catching himself...

90 INT. RON'S CASA & RAMP - DAY (1970) 90

RON drinking more mezcal as he tries to scrawl a postcard home. He tears it up...pulls out a rumpled old letter he's never sent; folded into little parts from his address book...he unfolds it.. nearby we notice copies of "Jonny Got His Gun", "All Quiet on the Western Front", a biography of Gandhi...

His eyes reading the old letter, water marked.

INSERT: LETTER: "Dear Mr. and Mrs. Wilson...I don't know how to tell you this. I knew your son in Vietnam. He was..."

He stops...something defeated in his eyes. He knows he will never send this letter... he ponders it as the VOICE from the other side of the wall becomes onerous...

JOE
(slurring, crying)
Nina!...Nina!...Nina!...Nina!

RON
Shit!

JOE
Nina! Nina! Where are you!

Exasperated, RON puts the letter back in the address book, rolls to the door of the bedroom.

91 INT. JOE'S ROOM - DAY (1970) 91

RON rolling in.

RON
SHUT UP WILLYA JOE - JUST SHUT THE FUCK UP!

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

91 CONTINUED: 91

JOE
(in mocking echo)
Nina...is that you Nina?...Nina.

The room is dark and JOE, 20, is wallowing in his own filth in his bed, on his belly - bedsore holes the size of fists in his naked buttocks...

...bottles of liquor strewn around the bed, half eaten food, cockroaches, the smell of death. RON approaching - into the darkness...

JOE rises up, and stares at RON. He has the most beautiful pathetic eyes, now watery with pain and delirium, and a body like a skeleton, incandescent with high fever, close to death.

In a weak moving voice, obstinate:

JOE
Is that you Ron? ...Can you help me? Can you help me?...

RON reaches his hand in - and soothes JOE'S face.

RON
You're hot Joe...You gotta bad fever...you gotta go back to Dallas, Joe. Have you seen your bed sores, they're gettin' worse all the time. You gotta go back to the V.A..

JOE
(shaking his head)
No way man...never gonna go back!

RON
You got blood in your urine, Joe. Let me call somebody for you, let me call somebody.

JOE
Nina...get Nina, Ron.

RON
Nina's gone, Joe! She won't come back. She left 3 months ago. She won't come back.

JOE
(shaking his head)
She wouldn't leave me - Nina - she wouldn't leave me -(drooling on his chin)

RON
Oh hell with you, Joe!

Rolls away - angry, guilty.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

91 CONTINUED: 2 91

JOE
Ron, can you help me...can you help me? Ron? Will you get somebody for me?

RON
Fuck you!

AS RON slams the door of the CASA, departing -

JOE (OFF)
Nina?...Nina? Is that you...Nina?

92 INT. RON'S ROOM - NIGHT 92

The Nightmare...Images, fragmented...

WILSON running up in slow-motion over the dune with the grey light...

RON firing three times...over this JOE'S VOICE: "Nina...Nina...is that you Nina?...get Nina Ron"

RON waking up startled, silent...His heart beat way up...An old nightmare...As he listens. The sound of the waves. The heat. The sweat...the mosquitoes...

93 INT. 3RD MEXICAN BAR - DAY (1970) 93

RON, drunk, in another BAR, counting his dwindling cash reserves...

ANOTHER ANGLE - reaches over without even noticing it, empties the bottom of the mezcal bottle, worm and all, into his mouth. Looks around, barks at the BARTENDER.

RON
Mas!

VOICE
(yelling)
That goddamn fucking slut!

CHARLIE from the poker game, a sombrero on his head and a serape, rolls out from the curtains in the back, angry and drunk and hurt.

CHARLIE
I'm gonna kill dat hoor laughing at me! She can't talk to me that way!

RON
(recognizing him)
Charlie! Hey Charlie!

The WHORE screaming something from a backroom. The action mounting in speed as CHARLIE intesects RON, hardly recognizing him.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

93 CONTINUED: 93

CHARLIE
That bitch thinks it's funny I can't move my dick. Fuck you. Fuck all you Mexican motherfuckers! They made me kill babies man...they made me kill babies...

The BARTENDER coming over -

BARTENDER
You don't like the place, get out!

CHARLIE
Fuck your syphilitic mother!

RON
Hey leave him alone, he's my friend. Hey!

A FLASH of the WHORE, bleeding from the nose, trying to get out the back room, restrained by ANOTHER WHORE and a PIMP.

WHORE
(in Spanish)
GET HIM, GET THAT PIG!

BARTENDER
Get out, get the fuck out, I don't want to see you in here again.

CHARLIE
Don't touch me! Don't touch me!

RON
...goddamit you hear me!

CHARLIE
She made fun of my fuckin' dick! I wouldn't be here if it weren't for that fucking war!

94 EXT. STREET - MEXICAN VILLAGE - DAY (1970) 94

BARTENDER
...blow both your fucking heads off!

RON
...fuck you, fuck all of you, fuck MEXICO!

CHARLIE
...babies, man babies! They made me kill fuckin' BABIES!

95 INT. "NOWHERE" TAXI - DAY (1970) 95

In the back of the cab - moving along a dusty road in the middle of an empty mesa.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

95 CONTINUED: 95

RON
(Worried) You sure you told him the right place?

CHARLIE
Villa Rosa - I told him Villa Rosa.

RON
Villa Rosa?

CHARLIE
Villa Rosa.

DRIVER
Si!

CHARLIE
Great fucking whore house there, wait till you get there.
(remembering)
That goddamn fucking slut! That MEXICAN scumbag cunt!

RON
Fuck her, she ain't worth shit. I think I saw a sign - Villa Rosa, Charlie. Ten minutes ago.

CHARLIE
Fucking A she ain't worth a shit. That fucking hoor, man, making fun of me. Making fun of me. And they made me kill babies, man. On top of that - they made me kill babies.
(to the driver)
Hey how far the fuck you going - tacohead!

RON
You sure it wasn't that turn back there...the sign that

CHARLIE
He's fucked us! He's fucked us!

RON
Who!

CHARLIE lashes a slap up against the head of the cabdriver.

DRIVER
Caraho!

RON
Charlie - hey!

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

95 CONTINUED: 2 95

CHARLIE
Look at that meter, it's rigged, he's rigged the fucking meter. Hey - asshole!

Slaps him again.

DRIVER
Pendeho! Es hombre loco!

Hits CHARLIE back. Slaps traded. The car almost goes out of control.

CHARLIE
I told you fucking Villa Rosa!

DRIVER
Vaya par carajo!

RON
Hey what are you...

Trying to restrain CHARLIE from jumping over the seat and throttling the DRIVER, RON gets accidently smacked by the driver and now hits back - all THREE of them flailing and shouting.

96 EXT. MEXICAN LANDSCAPE "NOWHERE" - DAY (1970) 96

CHARLIE and RON circle each other like worried vultures in the middle of nowhere, a silence all around, the sun setting angry and red in the

LOW HILLS of the MESA - the CAB disappearing in a cloud of dust a mile away as:

RON
Now what are we gonna do?

CHARLIE
Fuck em...

RON
Sure...yeah. How we gonna get outta here?

CHARLIE
...Fuck em all! Fuck the whores, fuck the cabdrivers, fuck MEXICO, fuck Nixon, fuck Vietnam, fuck em all!

RON
Yeah I know, Charlie - but how we gonna get outta here?

CHARLIE
...They made me kill babies man - little gook babies. You ever have to kill a baby?

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

96 CONTINUED: 96

RON
Yeah - okay - come on, let's go...let's get a ride...let's get back to the Villa.

Wheels out, down the side of the road, going nowhere - nothing in sight - CHARLIE following.

CHARLIE
Fuck you...whaddaya mean "okay" - whaddaya mean "okay" - you ever kill a baby - you ever kill a little gook baby?

UP THE ROAD - RON wheeling, lathered with exertion, hoping for an upcoming vehicle, CHARLIE still on his tail.

CHARLIE
Did you! Did you!

RON
What!

CHARLIE
Did you ever have to kill a baby?

RON
HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE FUCK I DID!

CHARLIE
Yeah, I didn't think so. I didn't think so. You're full of shit.

RON
No, you are. Leave me the fuck alone willya. You're nuts. You're fucking nuts! The fuckin' sun's going down and who knows what the fuck comes out here at night. We gotta get outta here...

CHARLIE
Yeah - you never looked at yourself in the fucking mirror. You're a scumbag! You're like all the rest of them gimps, like...

RON
Will you shut up, will you just shut up! How the fuck do you know...you don't know nothing. Maybe I killed...babies. Maybe I did.

Circling back behind CHARLIE, trying to get away, very uncomfortable but CHARLIE cuts off his path, grabs his chair.

CHARLIE
You're full of shit Kovic. You never killed babies!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

96 CONTINUED: 2 96

CHARLIE (cont'd)
You never <u>had</u> to kill babies because you never put your <u>soul</u> in that war. You never put your <u>soul on the LINE MAN</u> -

RON
How do you know! How do you know what the fuck I did over there! Maybe I did kill babies. Maybe I killed more babies than you did, you fuck, maybe I killed a WHOLE BUNCHA BABIES but I don't talk about it!!! I don't have to talk about it.

CHARLIE
WHY NOT KOVIC. WHY THE FUCK NOT. WHAT ARE YOU HIDING! WHAT ARE YOU -- BETTER THAN ANYBODY ELSE! YOU A HERO! IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE -

KOVIC -- a flash now...<u>what</u> is he hiding? Why? It's all very puzzling in the heat with this madman staring him in the face. His eyes like red saucers of pain, hurt, terror...

CHARLIE
(repeats)
What the fuck you hiding, Hero! ...don't shit me Kovic, you never killed a baby...ANYBODY ANYTHING! Did you Kovic...did you?

RON
Did you?

CHARLIE
Did you?

RON
Did you!

CHARLIE
You ever look at yourself in the mirror Kovic?

RON
Did you?

CHARLIE
Fuck you.

RON
You!

CHARLIE turning fast - etched and blackened out by the SUN flaring hugely behind him in a ghostly bath of light - looming up over RON suddenly.

CHARLIE
No!! You!!! Fuck you!!!

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

96 CONTINUED: 3 96

Spits full in RON's face. RON lashing out - a headlock.

Dumping him out - CHARLIE pulling RON down with him. They roll in the dust, socking, scratching, biting - drunk and ridiculous, in the midst of this vast, empty landscape.

ANOTHER ANGLE - fighting. Curses. RON getting the upper position as they drag their legs through the dust behind them.

RON
FUCK YOU!

CHARLIE
(resilient)
NO. You...FUCK YOU!

RON hitting him...hitting him...

CHARLIE'S FACE CLOSE - pain, hurt - but he smiles through the mashed nose bleeding on his face.

RON realizes what he's doing...his movements lessen, and lessen, and he stops.

TIMECUT TO:

96A A BATTERED VEGETABLE TRUCK brakes to a stop on the road, and an amiable-looking MEXICAN gets out, puzzled at the toppled chairs looking over at,

THE TWO FIGURES lying exhausted in the dust, side by side, still. CHARLIE looking at the DRIVER motioning.

THE TRUCK DRIVER picking up one of the chairs. RON - a mess, looking up through the dirt and scratches disfiguring him at the sky - sober.

RON
(off)
You okay?

CHARLIE
(bleeding mouth)
...fuckya, you're full of shit -

RON reaches over and grabs CHARLIE'S forearm, tight.

RON
I had a town once Charlie. I had a mother and a father and there was a <u>place</u> I believed in, there were <u>things</u> that made sense Charlie. You remember? Things that made sense, things you could count on before...we all got so lost...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

96 CONTINUED: 4 96

CHARLIE
(deeply sad)
Yeah...yeah...
(tears)
...yeah.

LONG SHOT - the DRIVER slamming the door of the truck. RON AND CHARLIE huddled together inside...and the TRUCK pulls out, framed by the hills.

MUSIC THEME -

97 EXT./INT. BUS IN GEORGIA - DAY (1970) 97

DAY - riding past farm fields, down a road - now in a Greyhound Bus.

RON looking out.

PAST A ROAD SIGN - MILLAN, GEORGIA - POP: 9,901.

98 EXT. GEORGIA TOWN BUS DEPOT - DAY (1970) 98

RON wheels off the BUS at the DEPOT - a spartan Main Street, agricultural community. He hesitates - almost ready to get back on the bus, which now departs.

99 EXT. GEORGIA CEMETERY - DAY (1970) 99

A CEMETERY -- hundreds of tombstones, mostly marked with Confederate flags indicating Civil War dead...

A BLACK CABDRIVER waits by his cab in the sleepy air...

RON rolls through the tombs, looking...

ANOTHER ANGLE -- he finds it...slowly coming to face it...

A TOMBSTONE is marked simply "William Charles Wilson, Born 1948. Died 1967 -- In the Service of His Beloved Country" ...

He falls into a state watching it...Him and Wilson. Locked in this strange cosmic dance across time...Interchangeable. He dead. Wilson alive. His ghost calling from the grave. "Remember me. Remember me...Tell them how I died. Tell them. That I did not die in Vain, Stumbling Confusion. Remember Me..." And RON is now hearing the SOUNDS of that last struggle on the windy grey beaches of Vietnam and the obscene CRASH of SHOTS and the gnashing, struggling SOUNDS of MEN screaming and dying...and WILSON'S BREATHING through his windpipe, gurgling in his own fetid blood as he dies, his big eyes staring up...as he rolls over and dies...and the SOUNDS die...

...and a voice breaks through time...snapping him out of it...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

99 CONTINUED: 99

MAN'S VOICE
Hey, Bobby! Over here! ...come on...

A BOY, about 12, scampering by, looking at RON, a toy gun in his hand...

...as his DAD waves him over to another section of the cemetary. His MOM planting a flag on a grave there.

RON looks around. Back in present time. Knows what he has to do now...as he looks at the grave a beat longer, then unlocks his brakes and executes a military like right face and goes...

100 EXT. GEORGIA FARM & ROAD - DAY (1970) 100

The battered TAXI pulls up in a cloud of reddish dust towards at a FARMHOUSE isolated in flat, rolling hills. Some hanging cypresses shade the yard. It is hot, muggy, a broken swing, dilapidated porch, barn, peeling paint...

RON is getting out as DOGS bark off...

The MONGRELS running up, surrounding the taxi as RON waits in his chair.

MR. WILSON emerges from the house, curious, shooing the dogs away. He's in his late 50's, a poor farmer, sun-creased frame, deep rural accent.

MR. WILSON
Don't worry, they won't bite...Come on now, get away now, get yourselves away...they probably jes afraid of that chair there...

MRS. WILSON peeking through the screen door, holes in it, flies...a suspicious frown.

RON and MR. WILSON - the dogs have ceased barking, sniff around.. they're edgy around each other...

RON
...hello Mr. Wilson...I'm Ron...Thanks for...

MR. WILSON
Any friend of Billy's a friend of ours.
(gruffly)
Well, why don't you come on in, my wife fixed up some chicken you want some...
(turning back to the house)

CAROLYN WILSON, his gaunt wife now comes out onto the porch -- followed by a YOUNGER WOMAN, early 20s, JAIMIE, a tragic look on her face. With her is a BOY about three, a dumb look on his face...

RON seeing them from his approaching POV in the dust...

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

101 INT. WILSON'S HOUSE - DAY (1970) 101

CAROLYN serving coffee in the small LIVING ROOM to RON who is glancing through a photo album on his lap - flipping the pages politely... yet in total agony, the parents feeling it, wondering, fearing what is going to happen.

RON
Thank you...

MR. WILSON
Yes sir, it was some funeral. Marine Honor Guard came all the way down from Atlanta in their fancy uniforms, fired their rifles up into the sky, the drums were beating...

Sitting on the couch, bounding the LITTLE BOY, 3, in his lap.. JAIMIE in her chair, docile...mementoes from World War Two on the mantle next to a picture of Billy.

MR. WILSON
Course it was nothing like the Big War hundred years ago down here but there was.. Billy...and Bruce - Bruce Crabtree...and Andy Henderson.

MRS. WILSON
And the Rutledge boy...Lance.

MR. WILSON
Yeah...Lance, nice boy.

RON looking over at JAIMIE.

JAIMIE looking at him.

MR. WILSON
For the life of me, I still can't quite figger that war out...why we had to go all that danged way to fight it...why's we had to lose all those young men. I can't figger that out - but... we got a proud tradition in this town. Billy's great grandfather, he was at First Bull Run, and my pa was over in France in 16.

MRS. WILSON
- and don't you forget now you were over in the Pacific in 44. Guadalcanal...

RON
- Is that right?

MR. WILSON
Yeah...well we probably fought in every war this country's ever had

Fondling the BOY on his lap, stoic.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

101 CONTINUED: 101

MR. WILSON
- an I reckon we're ready to do it again if we have to...

A look of pain on the MOTHER's face...RON about to speak - checks it. His eyes falling on the photo album across his knee.

A PHOTO of BILLY - in full combat gear, grenades, rifle, bandoleers - chest puffed out, a big grin, especially staged for his wife and parents back home...

ON RON - grief...a lot of grief all of a sudden.

MRS. WILSON
Course they never quite knew how it happened and all. There was this letter from his Colonel, I think it was...

RON
Colonel Moore...

MR. WILSON
That's right, Colonel Moore. And it said there was this real bad ambush one night. Told us Billy "distinguished" himself in the fighting. Told us Billy died real quick. That's good...he died real quick.

A pause. Everybody looking around the room now, bounding looks off each other...

RON
I was...his squad leader. I didn't know Billy real well. He was new, kinda quiet.. We didn't talk much to the new guys...he was about 19 wasn't he?

MR. WILSON
That's right. 19.

Pause.

RON
Yeah I think he told me he was married and you were pregnant...

JAIMIE says nothing but EYES.

RON
...I was there the day he was killed...It was a strange day. We went out on a patrol near a beach area. It was very confusing...there was a lot of screaming and firing and it was getting dark...and... and there were these children...these babies...that we killed... by mistake. We shot up a whole bunch of villagers...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

101 CONTINUED: 2 101

THEIR FACES. Sensing what's coming... THE MOTHER shaking her head...

MRS. WILSON
How awful...

RON
(struggling now)
...then it got ral dark and we had to pull back...and we...and we got all scattered up and down, in the dunes...in the dunes we got scattered...we were feeling real awful about the babies...people were making no sense, they were yelling anything, firing at anything...it was...it was a nightmare.. and...that's when your son was killed...
(pause)
...that was when it happened. He was the last one to come back over the dune and.. this is very difficult for me to say...but I think...
(pause)
I think I may have killed your son that night. I think I was the one...he was coming at me. And I was scared. I was confused. And I raised my rifle three times... the shots...and the body fell in the dune...

The SOUNDS of the battle lightly etched in over the Speaker. Haunting him...

The face of JAIMIE...moving to MR. and MRS. WILSON... mute as if they knew...or really what difference did it ultimately make who killed their son. Their pity, their terror is not for themselves or their boy, dead long ago...but for RON who's in agony, crying now...

RON
...I'm sorry. I just had to come here to tell you. I've been afraid for years to come here...But...I've lived with this long enough. I can't live with it anymore... I can't bring him back. Forgive me...I want to live. I want to go on with my life. I'm sorry but that's what happened. That's the way it happened...and I can't change a thing...

It sits there in the air...the eyes of JAIMIE say it all...

MRS. WILSON
We sure understand, Ron, we sure understand the pain you've been going through.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

101 CONTINUED: 3 101

MR. WILSON
...we understand, son, we do understand the way...these things happen...in war...
(pause)

MRS. WILSON
...can I get you some more coffee Ron?

Silence. Both older people are very shaken, maintaining a calm surface. The eyes of JAIMIE concede nothing. RON knows -- the forgiveness can only be given by himself.

RON
I gotta go now...I know you want to be alone...I'm sorry...

As he goes...

JAIMIE
(at the door)
...what's done is done, sir. I can't ever forgive you. But maybe the Lord can...

He looks back. Her eyes. Haunting, forever-accountable eyes. He goes.

102 EXT. WILSON HOUSE 102

LONG OVERHEAD ANGLE -- as RON exits the house and rolls down the steps...the dogs barking again...the MUSIC drifting up of light pipe and drum chords set soft to "When Johnnie Comes Marching Home Again -- hurrah hurrah..." carrying into the next scene...

103 EXT. MIAMI CONVENTION CENTER - NIGHT (1972) 103

MUSIC - BOOTS on pavement...MOVING UP to:

A PIPER AND A DRUMMER AND ANOTHER YOUNG MAN carrying a U.S. flag with the stars and stripes sewn upside down on the cloth - all of them in Vietnam Veteran fatigues, utilities, boots, medals, the drummer wearing a symbolically bloodied bandage across his forehead...

FOLLOWED by a ragtime army of YOUNG PEOPLE whistling in haunting rhythms to "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again" down a large MIAMI AVENUE fringed by palm trees - many of them women, many of them vets with bush hats, medals, long hair, beards, mustaches, tough eyes, road tired...their cars draped with slogans and VC or VVAW flags...

SUBTITLE READS:

ONE YEAR LATER - THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION - MIAMI, FLORIDA - MONTH, 1972.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

103 CONTINUED: 103

The WOUNDED now appear - blind vets, amputated vets, proudly escorted, parting now onto RON and two other PARAS abreast of him in chairs pushed by FELLOW VETS. RON now has a full mustache and is unshaven, his hair longer than ever...a banner above their heads: STOP THE WAR - VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR -- "hurray! hurrah!" up from the song...

As SPECTATORS watch from the sidewalks or porches...ANGRY MEN.. CHEERING MEN...OLD JEWISH LADIES on their verandas...mostly neutral, curious looks...

SECRET SERVICE cars trailing...suits, earplugs, walkie talkies.

COPS in full riot gear filing out of a TRUCK on a quiet street. STATIC of a walkie talkie..."proceed to 5th and Cyprus...cordon off...contain...separate...the hippies...marijuana busts...traffic violations..." ...SOUNDS of the WHISTLING MARCHERS in the distance.

104 INT. MIAMI CONVENTION CENTER - NIGHT (1972) 104

Into an ocean of thundering SOUND...

RON and the TWO OTHER PARAS are in the hall, wheeling their way closer to the stage...

with them is a FOURTH MAN, a redheaded guy with a beard, floppy bush hat, jungle fatigues who is pushing RON at the parade. He's inside now, and helping push RON and the TWO OTHERS.

...past the YOUNG REPUBLICANS yelling "FOUR MORE YEARS. FOUR MORE YEARS!!"

...past MEN and WOMEN in summer suits with happy Republican pink faces looking with some concern and possibly apprehension at these three scruffy Vietnam Vets rolling into their midst...

A NEWS CAMERA filming them. RON angling into the camera, playing the crowd looking for people to listen.

RON
Do you hear me? Can I break through your complacency? Can I have an inch...a moment of your compassion for the human beings who are suffering in this war...do you hear me when I say this war is a crime... when I say I am not as bitter about my wound as the men who have lied to the people of this country...do you hear me?

But they hear nothing. Deaf, blind, dumb, roaring for their leader as he now appears...the sound waves rolling up the hall...

CLIP - NIXON now coming to the podium. A huge smile. A pause before he streches out his arms in his famous victory pose. The ROARS pound over RON and THREE COMRADES continuing to wheel closer.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

104 CONTINUED: 104

Like assassins, deep in enemy territory; their POV -- the hall looming like a jungle far away. The tension in RON -

CLIP - NIXON

NIXON
Mr. Chairman, delegates to this convention, my fellow Americans...

105 INTERCUT RON speaking at the same time to a NEWS CAMERA. 105

RON
WHY DO THEY WANT TO HIDE US? Why won't they let the veterans of that war speak tonight? Because they don't wanna know, they don't wanna see us, they wanna hide us because they've lied and cheated to us for so long -- but we're not gonna run away and hide anymore, we're going to win because we LOVE this country. We love this country more than they could ever know. We fought for it, we gave our bodies because we loved it and believed in everything it stood for and tonight we're ashamed of it, and we've come from all the little towns, thousands of us to get this country back again, to make it whole again. Truth, honesty, integrity - this is the lost American dream here tonight, and we're gonna take it back!

106 INTERCUT CLIP - NIXON 106

Talking about Vietnam. The completely counter argument about ideals, patriotism, ideology - the basis of the Cold War. Cognent, coherent, something we've all heard before -- and totally false to its core.

107 INTERCUT RON -- to the cameras. He has become a professional orator now, his voice and eyes and overall intensity the same RON but older now, polished, a political leader. 107

RON
We're never never gonna let the people of the United States forget that war, because the moment we do, there's gonna be another war and another, and another, that's why we're gonna be there for the rest of our lives telling you that the war happened, it just wasn't some nightmare, it happened and you're not gonna sweep it under the rug because you didn't like the ratings like some television show...this wheelchair...this steel is your Memorial day on wheels, your yankee doodle...

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

107 CONTINUED: 107

A BIG FAT GUY with a "Four More Years" button runs up and shouts in RON's face.

FAT REPUBLICAN
TRAITOR!...

He spits in his face. A commotion starts. The REDHEADED VETERAN pushing the FAT REPUBLICAN. The TWO OTHER PARAS joining in...

RON
Is that what we get! Spit in the face! I've got as much right to be here as any of these delegates! I FOUGHT FOR THAT RIGHT. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO STOP ME! YOU'RE NOT GONNA TO SHUT ME UP! I'M GONNA REMIND YOU OF THIS WAR FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE SO WHAT HAPPENED THERE NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN...

THE SECRET SERVICE AGENTS now making their move to shut the commotion down...a GROUP of them rush down, throwing up their arms, surrounding the wheelchairs, trying to block the TV coverage on RON.

PARAPLEGICS
STOP THE BOMBING STOP THE WAR STOP THE BOMBING STOP THE WAR

ANOTHER ANGLE -- RON yanking his chair around. Locking his brakes and linking arms with his TWO COMRADES, all of them yelling.

PARAPLEGICS
STOP THE BOMBING STOP THE WAR!

CLIP - NIXON

Continuing his argument. Nothing can be heard of the PARAS at this distance nor does NIXON show any expression except his smile as:

108 INTERCUT - THE PARAS AND THE SECRET SERVICE 108

The war in the pits is on. The angry or surprised REPUBLICANS looking on as the AGENTS struggle with the PARAS pulling at their handles but the chairs are braked and won't give. They heave with all their strength, then start jerking them backwards, bouncing their chairs....

AGENT 1
Get 'im outta here! Now!

AGENT 2
Where are the fucking brakes on this thing! Come on, let's go...

AGENT 1
(shoving the cameras away)
Get 'im outta here, get 'im outta here!

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

108 CONTINUED: 108

PARAPLEGICS
STOP THE BOMBING STOP THE WAR! THEY'RE SHOOTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN!

109 INT. MIAMI CONVENTION TV BOOTH - NIGHT 109

T.V. MONITOR - RON and HIS TWO COMRADES being lifted in their chairs by a BEVY OF AGENTS who hustle them down the aisle.

NEWSMAN (OVER)
...disabled veterans protesting the war in Vietnam. We're gonna try to get a mic down there and...

110 INT. MIAMI CONVENTION CENTER - NIGHT 110

RON in the midst of FOUR AGENTS, yelling.

RON
...is this how they treat their wounded veterans! What are you doing! What kinda country is this! What kinda country is this!

T.V. MAN and SOUNDMAN following, blocked by the AGENTS.

PAST PEOPLE in the CROWD holding their thumbs down like it was a gladiator match, motioning him out with their arms - get him outta here!

CROWD
THROW HIM OUT. THROW THE BUMS OUT..
TRAITORS...COMMUNISTS!

RON
Why don't you people listen to me! Why are the men who've fought for this country being GASSED AND BEATEN in the streets outside this hall! Why won't you listen to them - why!

A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN IN A SUMMER DRESS looking at RON with a pathetic patronizing sneer...

AGENT 2 blocking RON'S face with a souvenir book as he tries to speak to the TV CREW...

THE REDHEADED VETERAN is motioning to the AGENTS, leading the way out of the Hall...

RON
I've got as much right to be here as any of these delegates. I FOUGHT FOR THAT RIGHT!!!

RON taken out of the hall -- as NIXON keeps on going OVER.

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

111 EXT. MIAMI CONVENTION CENTER - NIGHT 111

RON AND HIS TWO COMRADES are wheeled out past the GATE in the outter fence. Confusion in the streets all around. RON separated from the TWO OTHER PARAS who are put under arrest.

AGENT 2
Get the car, get the car!

RON
What's going on, what are you doing! You have no...

Suddenly the REDHEADED VIETNAM VETERAN is leaning over him, from behind, grabbing for his hands trying to handcuff him in an angry voice.

REDHEAD
SHUT THE FUCK UP. YOU'RE UNDER ARREST KOVIC!

RON doesn't quite understand, resisting...

RON
What?

AGENT 2
(helping to handcuff)
Come on you bastard. You're going to jail.

RON
I'M A VIETNAM VETERAN. I HAVE A RIGHT TO SPEAK OUT. I GAVE THREE-QUARTERS OF MY BODY IN VIETNAM...

REDHEAD
YOU SHOULDA DIED OVER THERE YOU FUCKING TRAITOR...GET IN THERE.
(handcuffing, to Agent 2)
I'd like to take this creep and throw him off the roof...

RON
(urgent)
I DON'T HAVE ANY BALANCE!

Squirming to avoid the cuffs, angering the AGENTS, RON is flopping from side to side in the chair without balance.

AGENT 2
SHUT THE FUCK UP!

RON
I DON'T HAVE ANY STOMACH MUSCLES, DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I DON'T HAVE ANY BALANCE, I'M PARALYZED!

AGENT 2
GET HIM THE FUCK OUTTA HERE!

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

111 CONTINUED: 111

REDHEAD
SHUT UP YOU SONUFABITCH!

As he tips the chair and RON crashes to the pavement, flailing.

REDHEAD
GET YOUR FUCKING HANDS BEHIND YOU!

RON, his legs twisted awkwardly beneath him, thrashing, trying to fight back as the RED HEAD, in his Vietnam uniform, pins him to the pavement like a steer yanking his arms hard up his back and cuffing him like he was a normal adversary...

RON
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND! I CAN'T WEAR CUFFS! I CAN'T!

The REDHEAD tearing the medals from RON'S chest.

REDHEAD
SHUT UP YOU SONUFABITCH

AGENT 2
GET HIM THE FUCK OUTTA HERE. CAMERAS!

INTERCUT TO:

VETS running, escaping the candlelit GAS FUMES...VETS coughing, gaging, it looks like war,

VET 1
KOVIC'S GETTING BEATEN! IN FRONT OF THE HALL! LET'S GO!

OTHER VETS repeating it...running...

INTERCUT TO:

The REDHEAD hauling RON up now, arms clamped in cuffs like a dead sack of grain, and throwing him back into his chair...

REDHEAD
Stay put!

Nervously now looking around, some guilt in his expression after his catharsis, the other TWO AGENTS yelling...

AGENT 1
GET HIM OUTTA HERE. CAMERAS...GET HIM OUTTA HERE...

A CAMERA CREW running up...

The REDHEAD dragging RON in the chair to...

The SECRET SERVICE SEDAN rolling up, red light revolving on its hood.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

111 CONTINUED: 2 111

REDHEAD
Get in there, you fucking traitor.

Hauling him out of the chair and trying to stuff him in the back seat...RON yelling with pain and frustration...as we hear another LOUD YELL and...

HALF A DOZEN VETS converge on the REDHEAD and AGENT 2 -- surging over them - separating them...beating them...pulling RON away...

VET 2
RON! RON! YOU OKAY?

RON
Get me my chair! Get me my chair.

A BIG BLACK VET throws RON over his shoulder and runs out of there, reminiscent of a similar image on a battlefield long ago, and ANOTHER VET grabs his chair...

MORE SECRET SERVICE AGENTS AND POLICE have joined the fray -- now clubbing and beating down the VETS who fight back as best they can...

INTERCUT TO:

THE BLACK VET slinging RON to a safety area...

VET 3
You okay man?

RON, through the blood on his puffed lips:

RON
I'm okay. I'm okay...Where's the cameras? Get the cameras over here. We gotta get this on TV. They gotta see this!

A CAMERA CREW running up in the near distance...

THE VETS circling RON who becomes a focus of leadership.

VET 4
(runs up)
Eddie's been arrested. They beat Peterson. McClosky...he's gased real bad. Cavastani's got a concussion. It's a mess over there by the front of the convention. They're attacking our people.

VET 5
(joining them)
We gotta help 'em! They got twenty of our people trapped on the side of the hall. We gotta stop 'em. They're trapped!

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

111 CONTINUED: 3 111

RON
Okay, okay, let's go...

As he wheels out in the lead, bypassing OTHER VETS, directing their energies, motioning in his direction.

RON
Let's go...let's go...one more time.

THE VETS falling in behind him.

A PHALANX OF COPS forming now to prevent them from moving around the Hall, sticks at the ready, gas fumes drifting away in the night.

MORE VETS falling in abreast and behind RON -- more and more. Carrying their brothers limping, gas masks hanging from their necks.

Camera moving backwards with them as the CAMERA CREW films RON wheeling, himself in the apex of the army of YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN.. blood all over him...

THE COPS moving forward as one...faces unseen in their riot helmets.

BULLHORN
You are ordered to disperse. You are in unlawful assembly. You have thirty seconds to disperse.

RON AND THE VETS - moving forward against them, the ranks filling in now...a silence of determination.

RON
Spread it out! Spread it out!

THE COPS MOVING - an overwhelming armed force. Hitting their clubs against their leather gloves.

THE LINE OF VETS - MOVING

RON at the center out front, his eyes fixed on the enemy, ready to die. ANOTHER PARA rolls up out of nowhere alongside, angry and ready for the fight!

PARA
Let's go brother.

RON
(acknowledges him)
We gonna win this thing brother. Keep going, keep going. We got 'em, we got 'em.

THE T.V. CREW filming from the side as RON AND HIS COMRADES swing past us and on into the breach.

(CONTINUED)

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library

111 CONTINUED: 4 111

THE COPS surge, the clubs about to come down...

FREEZEFRAME TO:

112 INT. DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION - MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - 1976 (CLIP)

THE SUBTITLE READS: "FOUR YEARS LATER - THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION - MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, NEW YORK CITY, JULY 15, 1976"

From a very wide shot of the Convention, where RON is introduced by the LOUDSPEAKER, we cut to an EXTREME CLOSE UP of RON as he starts his address, pulling out to reveal his face...the podium..the flags...as he speaks...

RON
I am the living death. You're Memorial Day on wheels. I am your Yankee Doodle Dandy. Your John Wayne come home. Your Fourth of July firecracker Exploding in the grave... Twelve years ago when I was 18 years old, I left Massapequa, Long Island and joined the United States Marines...I wanted to serve my country...I wanted to be a good American... I couldn't wait to fight my first war, and I went with the others like our fathers before us with hope in our hearts and dreams of great victory...

Blending into the MUSIC THEME now...of tragedy overcome. Of life renewed...

The music is joyous as we can cut to a series of SHOTS of the Veterans marching down Manhattan streets in their 1984 Welcome Home Parade -- and the real RON KOVIC as he is now in 1988 -- still fighting for "Truth, Justice, and the American Way".

THE END

Script provided for educational purposes. More scripts can be found here: http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/library