

MY THERMONUCLEAR FAMILY

EXT. GRAYSTONE LAKE - DAY

Drifting out into the vast lake, LOUIS WOLF, 34, floats on his back in a large inner-tube. Isolated from his young family, Louis looks back towards the shore.

SAMANTHA WOLF, 7, playfully splashes her Brother MILES, 5, then swims away. She climbs up out of the water and onto the rocky beach to sit on a towel next to her Mother, FRANCINE WOLF, 32.

Louis keeps his eyes on his children playing, but his mind is drifting elsewhere.

Francine lathers sunscreen on her Daughter's back. With the help of a pair of inflatable water wings, Miles swims hard towards his Father's inner-tube.

MILES

Hi Daddy! Look how good I can swim.

Miles grabs hold of the rubber donut, out of breath. Louis smiles, but his gaze remains distant. Miles studies his Father's face carefully. Francine looks out at them.

FRANCINE

Louis, you're drifting!

EXT. GRAYSTONE LAKE/ WOLF FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY

Miles chases his big sister in the back yard, unable to keep up with her in a game of tag.

Francine pours Kool Aid at the outdoor picnic table.

Louis grills burgers and franks on the barbecue.

FRANCINE

Guys, food's ready! Come and get it!

Francine hovers as Samantha takes a seat next to her Brother on the back porch picnic bench. Miles immediately goes to work on a package of processed cheese slices.

LOUIS

I just don't like the prospect of being a Nanny for the rest of my life to a bunch of grown men who just want to hide tatoo guns up their a-holes while shanking, socking, and rapeing each other to netherworld.

Louis serves up the meal, placing it on the table.

FRANCINE

Honey, Stuyvesant's the best gig you've landed in a while. Take it for a couple years and move on.

LOUIS

The other Officers are a bunch of chaunceys. And then there's the inmates.

FRANCINE

(encouraging)
You gotta give it a chance.

LOUIS

You might change your tune a few months down the line if you start catching me locking myself in the garage so I can smuggle, smoke, shoot-up and beat off to contraband all night.

Francine cringes. Miles lifts his frank out of the bun.

MILES

Dad, where do hot dogs come from?

LOUIS

They grow on trees, Miles, you know that.

MILES

Samantha said that they're made from animal lips and bungholes.

Francine glares at her daughter. Samantha shrugs apologetically. Francine is unable to hold back a smile.

MILES (CONT'D)

I think it's rude to kill animals to eat.

FRANCINE

I know you do honey, but you won't be healthy if all you eat is cheese slices.

(to Louis; sugary)

Isn't that right, Dear?

Louis grabs Francine and pulls her in close, kissing her.

LOUIS

Mom's always right, Kids.

INT. WOLF FAMILY COTTAGE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Miles sits on the carpet happily running electric trains round the rails of a miniature train set. Francine is engrossed in a novel. Samantha sits on the couch next to her, pasting stickers into her diary. The kettle starts to whistle. Francine stands and walks into

THE KITCHEN

She pulls a mug down from the cupboard. Louis sits alone at the kitchen table licking a joint closed.

FRANCINE

Your gonna light firworks with the kids after you smoke that? That seem like a good idea to you?

He sparks it up, smiling innocently.

LOUIS

Wanna toke?

Francine, unimpressed, pours her tea and leaves the room.

EXT. WOLF FAMILY COTTAGE - NIGHT

The kid's excited faces are lit up by the sparklers in their hands. Francine and DOTTIE WOLF, 76, a diminutive, white-haired woman, sit on the bench next to them watching a homemade fireworks display. Dopey eyed, Louis lights a series of roman candles, Catherine wheels and fountains in the back yard. Silver rain cascades downwards disappearing into the grass.

INT. WOLF FAMILY COTTAGE - EVENING

Dottie is settled on the couch, sewing needle point, her cherubic Grandson asleep next to her. Louis enters and grabs hold of Miles, gingerly slinging the sleeping boy onto his shoulder. Francine stands, following him towards

THE KIDS BEDROOM

Louis lays Miles down on the top bunk. Francine's jaw drops as she catches sight of her daughter's activities.

FRANCINE

Samantha, where did you get those?

Sprawled on the floor, Samantha cuts up Corrections training pamphlets and manuals. Using white glue and crayons she decorates and pastes the excised images into her diary: Officers training with 37mm gas guns; a table filled with confiscated hand-made shanks, shivs and slogging devices; a team subduing a mock-riot, and so on. Samantha points to one of the Cadets in training.

SAMANTHA

He looks just like Daddy.

FRANCINE

Christ, Louis-- This is so far from
suitable.

LOUIS

Sorry. She asked. I was done with them.

Louis reaches down, seizing a discarded pamphlet segment.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Do you believe this crap? Punitive Penal
Warehousing.

(making a retching noise)

Dignity, respect and programming--

Miles perks up in his bed, wide eyed, but yawning.

MILES

Mommy, I'm awake. I'll come back down
now, OK?

FRANCINE

It's bedtime Miles.

Francine reaches down and scoops up Samantha's loot.

SAMANTHA

(crushed)

No! Mommy please can I have it back?

Pulling the nearest thing from a bookshelf, Francine
substitutes a picture book for the confiscated material.

FRANCINE

Here honey, in the morning you can cut
this up instead.

LOUIS

But, I bought her that for--

Francine shoots Louis the hairy eyeball. Louis exits the
room before digging himself in any deeper.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

G'night all.

EXT. WOLF FAMILY COTTAGE - DAY

Miles and Samantha walk towards their Father's olive drab
Toyota Land Cruiser SUV. They are followed at a quick
clip by Francine who holds a beach bag in her hand.

FRANCINE
 (miffed)
 Towels! Come on.

Francine tosses each of them a towel. Samantha stands and lays hers neatly on the seat, while Miles tries awkwardly to shove his towel under his already seated body.

FRANCINE (CONT'D)
 (calling)
 Let's go Louis! I've got a morning class.

Quickly exiting the front door and locking it behind him, Louis sprints out to the car. He opens the SUV door and climbs behind the wheel. Reaching underneath, he places a plastic shopping bag in a compartment under the seat.

FRANCINE (CONT'D)
 Do I smell what I think I smell?

Samantha sits in the back seat watching her parents.

LOUIS
 Maybe.

FRANCINE
 Not cool, Louis.

Louis starts the SUV and pulls out of the long driveway.

INT. STUYVESANT PRISON / F-GALLERY/ THIRD TIER - DAY

A difficult decade's worth of wear shows on Louis's 43 year old face. He walks up the stairs from the flats to the third floor tier in his Corrections Officer uniform.

SUBTITLE - "10 YEARS LATER"

Another CO, BRENT PEYTON, 34, a brash hillbilly with an Elmer Fudd lisp and shaved head, walks alongside Louis. The chaotic sounds of prison life are overwhelming. The officers come to a metal door and Louis unlocks it. After passing through, Louis locks up as Peyton moves onto the tier.

Louis and Peyton walk down the row of cells. Handheld mirrors poke out from the bars anticipating the officers. A PAIR OF INMATES reach through their bars to move pieces on a homemade chess set. With a teardrop tattooed under his eye, a BRAUNY CONVICT does endless pushups in the space between his cell-wall and bunk. White Power Punk music blares from the cell of a young SKINHEAD.

PEYTON

Turn that shit down!

The Skinhead stares back at the Officers with poison in his eyes. A few cells down a CLEAN-CUT HISPANIC convict, feeds breadcrumbs to a pet cockroach in a matchbox cage.

Louis and Peyton stop at one of the cells.

PEYTON (CONT'D)

F-14, shakedown.

INMATE F-14

Oh, come on CO, what the fuck?

PEYTON

Hands through the bars, eyes front.

INMATE F-14, sticks his hands through the bars and Louis puts a pair of handcuffs on them.

LOUIS

Thanks, Lazarus.

The emaciated black inmate, LAZARUS BANDA, 53, nods. His graying hair and deep set eyes betray years of adversity and abuse. Louis unlocks the cell and both officers step inside. Peyton immediately goes to work, stripping apart the cell, throwing all of Lazarus's possessions through the doorway, out onto the tier.

LAZARUS

Damn CO, why you gots' ta throw my shit out the door?

Peyton looks up from his crouched position, searching behind the toilet with rubber gloves.

PEYTON

Shut the fuck up, Mutt.

LOUIS

(quietly)

Hey, easy Peyton.

Glaring back at Louis, Peyton finishes with the toilet and stands. Flipping over the mattress, something piques his interest underneath. Lazarus stares straight ahead. Peyton steps out of the cell and faces Lazarus, holding up a metal filament: a burner ripped from a stove.

PEYTON

What's this?

LAZARUS

For making coffee.

PEYTON

Contraband, you piece of shit. You wanna stay keeplocked for ever, F-14?

LAZARUS

This on some bullshit. Nothin' you can do to Lazarus, ain't already been done.

PEYTON

You keep that sideways talk up and I'll write you up for 90 days in the SHU.

Lazarus is deflated, but tries to ignore his tormentor. Peyton holds up a worn hardback copy of 'Solidad Brother.' Opening the book, Peyton pulls out two Polaroids of a nude black woman.

PEYTON (CONT'D)

Look what else I found, Shithead. This your girlfriend? No nudie pics allowed, you know that Lover-Boy. Think I'll hang onto these.

Lazarus stares at Peyton, as he slips the pictures into his breast pocket. Louis stands powerless inside the trashed cell watching his fellow Officer.

EXT. BASTILLE HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Samantha, now 17, is dressed alterna-chic, hanging with a group of trendy SENIORS in a cubby hole underneath the front windows of the school. The kids pass a joint around the circle.

Watching his Sister from the auditorium doors, Miles, 15, has grown into a handsome but slightly pudgy freshman with braces and acne. HECTOR LOPEZ, 15, an eccentric hipster in a tweed blazer, exits the school as the bell rings and kids begin to filter back into the school.

HECTOR

Hey Miles, what class you got?

MILES

Come with me a sec.

Miles walks towards the cubby hole with Hector in tow. Feigning nonchalance, they stride up to the older kids.

MILES (CONT'D)

Yo Samantha.

(pointing to the joint)

Can we get in on that?

Samantha is embarrassed by her little Brother and tries to make him go away with a stern look and a shake of the head. NATASCHA ZIMMERMANN, 17, dressed entirely in Goth black and heavy purple make-up turns to face Miles.

NATASCHA

Hi Miles.

Miles grins broadly at the recognition.

MILES

Hey Natascha. Can we get a toke?

SAMANTHA

Miles go to class. You're not getting baked with us.

Miles glares at Samantha before turning around disappointed and heading towards the auditorium doors.

MILES

My Sister thinks she's pretty damn cool.

HECTOR

Seniors, Man. Fuck 'em. I'll cop some of my dad's hash for the weekend.

They enter the building and meld into the throngs of adolescent traffic.

INT. KAPLAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE/ THEATRE - DAY

STEVE KERCHINSKY, 22, stands in the middle of the stage behind a podium, his lively eyes darting around the theatre. A group of students sit in a semicircle looking up at the podium.

STEVE

The President's a war criminal. We can't just sit idle like our parents. Its time for change. Time to usher in a new era of civil disobedience.

Francine, 43, a hint of crow's-feet around the eyes, sits in the front row just below the stage. She takes in Steve's questionable performance with a dispirited grin.

STEVE (CONT'D)

We have to tear down the establishment!
Demolish the pillars of the Pig Empire.
It's time to tune in, turn on and--

Frustrated and fed up, Francine jumps to her feat.

FRANCINE

(interrupting; frustrated)
Steve, you've got to stop indicating.
Stop acting. It's 1971. You are Arnold
Osserberg. You're a counterculture
revolutionary hero. For God's sake, use
your sensory world, make substitutions.

STEVE

I'm not feeling it. There's nothing to
connect to. It's a bunch of ideological
drivel. Like, who was this guy?

FRANCINE

Who are you, Steve? Why are you here?
What made you decide to come to this
institution to study Drama?

Steve raises a suggestive eyebrow.

SMASH CUT TO:

BACKSTAGE - LATER

Laying on her back, propped up on a pile of colorful
hippy costumes, Francine's dress is bunched up around her
waist. Her star pupil, Steve Kerchinsky, drips with sweat
as he rams up into her body with youthful enthusiasm.

FRANCINE (CONT'D)

Harder Steve, harder.

STEVE

(mushy)
My god, you're truly amazing Prof--

FRANCINE

Shhh. Concentrate on what you're doing.

Steve squints, ramping up his physical efforts.
Francine's eyes begin to roll back into her head.

INT. LOUIS AND FRANCINE'S EN-SUITE BATHROOM - NIGHT

Samantha roots through the medicine chest in her parent's
bathroom. She reads the labels on plastic pill bottles
until she finds one that she likes the look of.

SAMANTHA

Come here for a sec.

Natascha nervously enters the bathroom.

NATASCHA

What are we doing in here?

Samantha shakes two pills out into Natascha's hand.

SAMANTHA

Take these.

NATASCHA

What, why?

SAMANTHA

Because. It'll be fun.

Natasha hesitantly follows Samantha's lead and washes back the two white Valiums with a glass of water.

FRANCINE (O.S.)

(calling)

Guys, dinner!

INT. WOLF KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Completely burnt-out, Louis nurses a beer at the kitchen table. Miles helps his Mom shuttle over dishes of chili and fixings. Samantha and Natascha enter and take a seat.

Sitting down, Francine points to one of the pots.

FRANCINE

Miles doesn't eat meat so this chili is just for him.

Natascha nods with a polite smile. Louis, exhausted, digs in and starts assembling a taco.

SAMANTHA

(to Natascha)

My Mom has to make two meals a night, isn't that right, Miles?

Miles gives his Sister a pissy false smile as he sits down across from her. Samantha silently mouths back the words 'fuck you' to her little brother. Francine catches their exchange.

FRANCINE

Let's not start guys.
(changing the subject)
(MORE)

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For the complete script please contact Jennifer Brooks at
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