

EXEC. PRODUCER: Richard Rothstein

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MISSING PG. 5

THE BATES MOTEL

Written

by

Richard Rothstein

THE BATES MOTELCAST

ALEX WEST
 SANDRA
 HENRY WATSON
 RADIO REPORTER
 DR. PHILLIPS
 DR. GOODMAN
 MINISTER
 FUNERAL DIRECTOR
 ATTORNEY
 GUARD AT DUNSMORE
 TEENAGER I
 TEENAGER II
 DRIVER
 VAGRANT
 BUDDY
 CUSTOMER
 BANK GUARD
 GAS STATION ATTENDANT
 PEDESTRIAN
 WORKMAN

SPANISH MAID
 SECRETARY
 TOM FULLER
 ARCHITECT
 SHERIFF
 SALESMAN
 WORKMAN AT MOTEL
 PASTOR
 MACHO TYPE
 CHARLIE WATERS
 BARBARA PETERS
 SAM
 PROMNIGHTER
 TONY
 BANDLEADER
 GIRL
 HANDSOME BOY
 MOTORIST
 JAPANESE GARDNER
 BUS DRIVER

(X)

SETSINTERIORS:

STATE MENTAL INSTITUTION AT
 DUNSMORE
 INTERVIEW ROOM
 ALEX'S ROOM
 CONFERENCE ROOM
 CHAPEL
 CAR
 BUS
 BATES MOTEL
 OFFICE
 CABIN #1
 CAFE
 BARBARA'S MOTEL ROOM
 BANQUET-TYPE ROOM
 MRS. BATES' HOUSE
 KITCHEN
 NORMAN'S OLD BEDROOM
 HALLWAY/STAIRS
 MRS. BATES' BEDROOM
 BANK
 FULLER'S OFFICE
 HENRY'S HOUSE
 FULLER'S CAR

EXTERIORS:

COURTHOUSE
 MAIN STREET
 MAIN HIGHWAY
 STATE MENTAL INSTITUTION
 AT DUNSMORE
 ROSE GARDEN
 ROADWAY
 GREYHOUND BUS TERMINAL
 GREYHOUND BUS TERMINAL -
 DOWNTOWN LA
 STREET
 BUS STOP - PLAINDALE
 STREET - PLAINDALE
 BATES MOTEL
 BANK
 COUNTRYSIDE
 CEMETERY
 FAST FOOD CHICKEN JOINT

(X)

THE BATES MOTEL

1 EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY - BLACK AND WHITE 1

A marble statue of blind justice stands outside a quaint county courthouse. Superimposed over this is the year -- 1960. As camera slowly pulls back we hear the hushed overly dramatic tones of a radio news Reporter who is standing in front of the courthouse.

RADIO REPORTER (O.S.)

Today, here, just moments ago, on this overcast fall afternoon, in this sleepy agrarian town that sits alongside the interstate, Norman Bates was brought to justice.

We find the Reporter still waxing poetic, speaking into a handheld microphone marked: MUTUAL RADIO. In the b.g., a few townspeople and photographers are milling around the side of the courthouse as if waiting for someone.

RADIO REPORTER

And so ends a most terrible and bizarre chapter in the history of this picture-book town, and that of a young man whose poor mind, twisted and bent out of shape like a pretzel, tortured by self-loathing and guilt, plunged headlong into a world of dementia and darkness.

TOWNSPERSON (O.S.)

There he is!

The Reporter turns to see Norman in the distance, being led out of the side of the courthouse, flashbulbs popping, and into an awaiting 1960 black Buick sedan.

RADIO REPORTER (O.S.)

Yes folks there he is, the infamous Norman Bates -- murderer? Victim? Total lunatic? You decide. Being led by his captors into a long, sleek black sedan, that signals the end of one journey for Norman, and the beginning of another.

The sedan slowly pulls away and we follow it as it makes its way down:

2 EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY 2

where it passes several shops and stores catering to their rural agrarian clientele. We can't help but be struck by the purity and innocence of 1960 America. As the sedan moves on it passes the local record store where the Everly Brothers' "When Will I Be Loved" plays over a small loudspeaker in front.

RADIO REPORTER (O.S.)

One that will take him away perhaps forever from this place that he was born, past Ivers Cutlery, where his mother used to send him to have her knives sharpened, and the Grant Hotel, where he worked after school, and first showed an interest in motel management.

3 EXT. MAIN HIGHWAY - DAY 3

The sedan moves towards us down a stretch of lonely highway, and past a billboard alerting motorists that if they wanted to stay at the Bates Motel, they missed it ten miles back -- "Clean Rooms. Quiet. Norman Bates Your Host."

RADIO REPORTER (O.S.)

A journey down a long road known as justice, and off to his new home, the State Mental Institution at Dunsmore....

4 LONG SHOT OF DUNSMORE 4

A large, pleasant-looking structure reminding us more of a plush old age home than a darkly depressing mental institution. The sedan moves into frame and heads for the front door.

RADIO REPORTER (O.S.)

...Where perhaps, just perhaps, Norman will come to understand the wrong that he has done, and through kindness and a lot of intensive analysis, will emerge from the darkness, into the light.

DISSOLVE TO

End credits.

5 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY - CLOSE ON ALEX WEST 5

A twelve-year-old boy with the innocent face of an angel, and the eyes of a sad old man. He says nothing, makes no eye contact, just stares blankly into space. As our heart goes out to this lost soul, we hear the compassionate whispers of two psychiatrists.

DR. PHILLIPS (O.S.)

He's a tough one. Just don't know how to get through. Every time I try to talk to him he just looks at me with those sad eyes.

DR. GOODMAN (O.S.)

How about the staff, other patients?

Camera moves out revealing two doctors in their thirties, studying this puzzling boy who barely knows that they're in the room as he pets what appears to be a small taxidermied bird that he has cupped in his hand.

DR. PHILLIPS

Hasn't uttered a word in the six months he's been here.

DR. GOODMAN

Since he a, dispatched his stepfather?

DR. PHILLIPS

Exactly.

As Goodman peruses Alex's dossier, Phillips continues.

DR. PHILLIPS

No brothers, sisters, mother died when he was an infant, no relatives -- just a poor innocent at the mercy of a brutalizing stepfather.

DR. GOODMAN

(referring to dossier)

Says he owned a dry cleaning store and would beat him, then lock him in a large dryer.

DR. PHILLIPS

Until one day when he crawled inside to clean it and little Alex closed the door, pressed a button, and dry cleaned him.

Goodman closes the file and speaks to Alex with a gentle bedside manner.

CONTINUED

5 CONTINUED

5

DR. GOODMAN

You've had a rough time of it, haven't you?

No response.

DR. GOODMAN

Well, Doctor Phillips and I, I'm Doctor Goodman, are going to try and change all that. But we need your help.

Alex doesn't respond, just stays inside his silent world petting the bird. Goodman and Phillips exchange despairing looks.

DR. GOODMAN

What about interests, hobbies, friends, didn't notice anything in the file?

DR. PHILLIPS

Just Jack.

DR. GOODMAN

Jack?

DR. PHILLIPS

His pet bird. What I got from neighbors is that it was his only friend 'til he returned from school one day to find it dead.

DR. GOODMAN

The stepfather?

DR. PHILLIPS

Handed him a shovel an' ordered him to bury it. Instead, he secretly stuffed it.

DR. GOODMAN

I see.

(to Alex)

Know what I think, Alex? I think you need a real friend.

Fearful that he's going to take Jack from him, Alex clutches the bird tightly to his bosom.

DR. GOODMAN

No, no besides Jack there. Do I look like the type of guy who separates good friends? I mean a buddy, someone to talk to, someone to trust. And most
(more)

CONTINUED

7 CLOSE ON ALEX'S FACE

7

now a man in his thirties. As he stares at photographs on the wall of Norman's room, we can't help but notice that this is still a boy's face, and although time has inevitably etched itself, the innocence and wonderment of youth are still there. Alex wearily sighs, moves closer to the photos, nostalgically remembering each as Goodman continues over this.... (X)

GOODMAN (V.O.)

They nurtured each other, fit perfectly together like two pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that separate could never be whole.

A photo of Norman giving Alex a piggyback ride.

GOODMAN (V.O.)

They worked and played and in time came to understand things about themselves and others that even I as their doctor marveled at ---

Alex on his sixteenth birthday -- a cake with lit candles before him -- holding up a large wrapped present which has written on it in big letters "TO ALEX, FROM NORMAN".

GOODMAN (V.O.)

-- their insights, sensitivity, their wisdom that in truth was almost like a sixth sense, and frankly at times frightened me with its power.

Norman and Alex standing before a roast turkey they obviously cook, wearing chef hats. A banner reads: DUNSMORE THANKSGIVING, 1965.

GOODMAN (V.O.)

And through it all, it was always Norman the father, the father Alex never had.

Norman and Alex holding up a placard reading: "SAVE THE WHALES," dressed in late Sixty's psychedelic.

GOODMAN (V.O.)

And Alex? What did Alex do for Norman? Well, as Norman told me many times in session, he saw Alex as himself when he was a boy, and wanted to help him have a second chance.

A now grownup Alex and noticeably aged Norman, tending their rose garden.

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED

GOODMAN (V.O.)

For you see, although Norman knew he would never again gain his freedom....

Alex pushing Norman who is confined to a wheelchair.

GOODMAN (V.O.)

...he lived with the hope, that someday Alex would.

Alex moves on, nostalgically touching a number of stuffed animals that are neatly spaced around the room. He stops at a stuffed turkey, and remembers. Suddenly he hears the door open behind him. Doesn't even look up, just keeps recollecting.

Dr. Goodman comes up behind him with a heaviness to his walk. Referring to the turkey, he quietly says:

DR. GOODMAN

Thanksgiving, 1965, wasn't it?

Alex probes his face, then Goodman begins to say something he doesn't want to.

DR. GOODMAN

Alex?..
(interrupted)

ALEX

I know, Norman is gone. I could feel it.

Alex tries to be strong, deals with his loss by gently straightening Norman's bed.

DR. GOODMAN

They did everything they could. He was rallying. The doctors were planning to release him from the hospital tomorrow...then he closed his eyes, and never woke.

ALEX

It was time. He wanted it that way.

DR. GOODMAN

...Alex...Alex, can I do something for you? Go for a walk, talk about it?

Alex momentarily stops what he's doing and gazes out the window at the picturesque countryside.

CONTINUED

7 CONTINUED (2)

ALEX

It is pretty this time of year, isn't it?

He returns to straightening Norman's bed. Understanding that he wants to be alone, Goodman lays a supportive hand on his shoulder.

DR. GOODMAN

If you need anything, I'll be in my office.

ALEX

(trying to be brave)

You know, for a guy that ran a motel, he sure was lousy at making beds.

Goodman leaves Alex to his sorrow.

8 ESTABLISHING SHOT OF FUNERAL HOME IN NEARBY CITY

MINISTER (O.S.)

Dunsmore Mental Institution personnel, doctors, attendants, Candy Stripers, and fellow inmates. Although I did not have the privilege of knowing the deceased, I have been asked before cremation of his humble remains, to say a few words.

9 INT. SMALL CHAPEL - DAY

A smallish gathering of staff members, patients, and Dr. Goodman are seated in the chapel listening to the Minister, standing on a pulpit high above the casket. Alex sits alone in the back. Nearby is the Funeral Director who is obviously into volume rather than quality, as he intermittently coaxes the Minister to speed it up, like a TV director watching the clock on a variety show.

MINISTER

For all of us, no matter how mighty or how small, how powerful or how insignificant, how saintly or --

(looks down at casket at this)

...how sinful, are entitled to be ushered from this fragile world with its pains and its joys, its sadness and its heartbreak....

10

ALEX

10

mournfully regards the casket.

MINISTER (O.S.)

...Up to the very gates of heaven, where there he will be judged. At this moment I am reminded of a rather timely story from the Bible.

11

THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR

11

Upon hearing this, gestures the Minister to speed it up. It lights a fire under him, and he nervously races to finish.

MINISTER

On second thought, perhaps it may not be totally appropriate on this occasion. Now, if there is no one who wishes to say a few words, I will conclude with a final prayer.

Hearing something in the back, he looks up to see Alex rising from his seat.

ALEX

(weakly)

I do.

All eyes turn to look, including the Director's, who tries hiding his impatience behind a saccharin-sweet smile. Alex shuns public attention at all cost, but at this moment he fights through his fear for Norman's sake. He must speak. The Director quickly ushers him up to the front, while whispering under his breath.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Try and keep it short. Do a volume business here, that's how we keep the cost down.

Alex positions himself beside the casket then looks out at all those eyes staring at him. Collecting his thoughts, he quietly begins.

ALEX

Norman Bates was my friend. To the world he was a murderer. But to me he was a friend. And I only hope that in your lifetimes, you will all be lucky enough to have one friend like him. For you see, Norman taught me many things. To laugh, have fun, and more important than anything else, to forgive.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED

11

Tears well up in Dr. Goodman's eyes.

ALEX

Norman always said to me that if I wanted to get better, I could. But I had to work at it, and that it would be hard. Like being up here now. He said that people, no matter how bad they have been treated, have to try and forget...forgive, and get the hatred out of their systems...their hearts. Because it is hatred of others that is the enemy, and doesn't make us feel better, it just eats us up inside.

He looks down at the casket one last time, and as he slowly makes his way back to his seat we could hear a pin drop. There's not a dry eye in the place. Even the Funeral Director stands in stunned silence.

12 CLOSE ON ALEX

12

sitting back down in his seat, unaware of the profound effect he has had, his thoughts only with Norman. The organ music rises up.

13 INT. ALEX'S ROOM - NIGHT

13

Alex comes out of the bathroom in his pajamas, pulls back the covers on his bed, then climbs underneath. He reaches to turn off the lamp on his nightstand, then stops and looks.

14 WHAT HE SEES

14

Norman's cremation urn sits on a table along with a few stuffed birds

ALEX (O.S.)

Good night, pal.

15 ALEX

15

smiles, then turns off the light and the screen goes black.

16 EXT. ROSE GARDEN - DAY

16

Alex is tending rows of roses in full bloom, on a bright, sunny morning -- clipping, working the dark brown earth with his hands. Dr. Goodman strides over, trying to contain his excitement.

DR. GOODMAN

Morning Alex. They really are pretty.

Alex clips one to place into Goodman's jacket lapel.

ALEX

Would you like one?

DR. GOODMAN

Sure, who said doctors always have to be stuffy?

ALEX

The Roseantus Normanous.

DR. GOODMAN

That's wonderful, Alex.

ALEX

The first rose without thorns. Norman said a rose was like a person, beautiful but dangerous. So he bred these.

(pushing it
through lapel
hole)

There.

DR. GOODMAN

Smells good...Alex, I have some good news for you.

ALEX

(tending flowers)

I know.

(off Goodman's
surprised look)

I could tell from your voice.

DR. GOODMAN

Don't miss a thing, do you?
(happy for him)

Alex, I have recommended to the board that you be released immediately.

Instead of being happy, Alex slowly walks over to a wooden bench and collapses onto it as if carrying a terrible weight.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED

16

DR. GOODMAN

Just think of it, after twenty-seven years you're going to have your freedom. You've fought your demons and the world has said you've won...Alex, what's wrong?

ALEX

(shaking head no)
I have no place to go.

DR. GOODMAN

Sure you do, there's a whole world out there -- towns, cities, movies, libraries, gardens so big you could get lost in them.

ALEX

That's what I'm afraid of.

DR. GOODMAN

Alex, Alex, you're going to be okay. I know it. And remember, it's what Norman always wanted for you.

ALEX

Doctor Goodman, this is the only place I've ever felt safe. This is where my friends are. There is no place for me out there. I wouldn't fit in.

DR. GOODMAN

Alex, don't you think I know how you feel? That I didn't consider all those things before I made my recommendations? You can be strong, I saw it in the chapel, and so did everyone else.

Slowly Alex rises, and shakes his head.

ALEX

Thank you for all you've tried to do, but it's really better this way.

Then he walks off towards the institute, leaving Goodman deflated.

17 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

17

Alex, Dr. Goodman and a few patients and attendants are seated in front of a large desk where an attorney is reading Norman's last will and testament.

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED

17

ATTORNEY

'I Norman Bates, being of sound mind....'

He looks dubiously to Dr. Goodman for corroboration.

ATTORNEY

'...do hereby declare this to be my last will and testament, and do hereby bequeath the following: to Mrs. Fisher who taught me the art of cooking, my turkey.'

The Attorney reaches under the desk and produces the taxidermied turkey and hands it to a Mrs. Fisher who is dressed in kitchen whites. She's touched.

ATTORNEY

'To Mr. Yokey, who taught me how to dance the twist and the hucklebuck, my forty-five record collection.'

The Attorney hands Mr. Yokey, a nattily dressed old vaudevillian, a box of forty-fives. He's moved.

ATTORNEY

'And to all the attendants and inmates, to be divided equally, my savings in the First National Bank of Plaindale.'

The recipients seem pleased.

ATTORNEY

'And last but not least, to my dear friend Alex, on the condition that he, upon regaining his freedom, make it a great hostelry again, a place where people can come to rest and find themselves in their journeys through life -- the Bates Motel.'

Everyone applauds for Alex, while he sits motionless, staring into space. We hold on him as the others leave. Only Dr. Goodman remains.

DR. GOODMAN

...Well Alex, now you have a place to go.

ALEX

I can't Doctor Goodman, I just can't.

DR. GOODMAN

Why not?

CONTINUED

17 CONTINUED (2)

17

ALEX

I'd be too scared.

DR. GOODMAN

And Norman knew that. But he left it to you just the same. It was his way of telling you it is time to leave. It was his way of giving you a second chance. Take it Alex, it's a great gift.

18 EXT. DUNSMORE - MORNING

18

A car moves towards us, leaving Dunsmore behind.

19 INSIDE THE CAR

19

Dr. Goodman drives, while Alex sits beside him looking like a cast-off orphan, staring straight ahead, afraid of what he will find outside the gates of this place that has been his home for twenty-seven years. Beside him is a small suitcase, and on his lap Norman's urn in a plastic grocery store bag.

20 WHAT ALEX SEES

20

The gates and the guardhouse up ahead.

21 ALEX

21

tightens his grip on the urn, tenses. Seeing this Goodman says:

DR. GOODMAN

Hey, it's gonna be okay.

ALEX

Last time I was out there people were running around screaming, 'I've gotta build a bomb shelter,' and the best show on TV was Father Knows Best.

Goodman stops at the gate and hands the Guard a piece of paper.

GUARD

Finally spreadin' your wings, hey Alex? Well, good luck to you.

Alex turns back to look at Dunsmore one last time.

22 WHAT HE SEES 22
Dunsmore far off in the distance.

23 BACK TO ALEX 23
lost in the memories. Suddenly he's startled into the present by the gate banging closed.

24 CLOSE ON GATE 24
Metal against metal, reverberating like sound passing through an echo chamber.

25 ALEX 25
eyes trained on the gate, watches it disappear behind him. Goodman gives him a supportive squeeze on his knee.

DR. GOODMAN
You're doin' fine.

Alex gratefully acknowledges his reassurance, relaxes a bit, then looks out the window at the passing countryside with those wondrous, child-like eyes.

26 EXT. ROADWAY -DAY 26
We watch the sedan disappear down the long road.

27 EXT. GREYHOUND BUS TERMINAL - DAY 27
Alex stands beside a loading Greyhound Scenic Cruiser curiously watching an assortment of passengers boarding. He overhears two guys in their late teens, carrying beat-up guitar cases, inarticulately extolling the virtues of their destination, Los Angeles.

TEENAGER I
Yeah, man, everything's gonna be great once we get to L.A.

TEENAGER II
Sun, surf, the Hollywood freeway. 'I Love L.A.'

Puzzled by this L.A. place, Alex assures himself of the bus' destination by looking up at the front -- it reads Los Angeles. Goodman exits the terminal with a ticket in his hand. Seems anxious.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED

27

DR. GOODMAN

Okay, here's your ticket, put it in a safe place and don't lose it. Now you sure you've got everything? Directions I wrote down? Money? ID? Norman?

ALEX

(good-naturedly)

Looks like you're more nervous than I am, Doctor Goodman.

DR. GOODMAN

(ironically)

Hey, who's supposed to be the strong one around here, anyway?

The Driver, ready to close the baggage compartment, extends his hand for Alex's suitcase.

DRIVER

Ready to roll.

Alex hands him his suitcase, but not Norman. Then sadly turns to say his good-bye.

ALEX

Well, guess it's time, huh?

DR. GOODMAN

(trying to be strong)

You're going to do great, Alex. I just know it.

ALEX

(fighting back tears)

Could we just shake hands...and maybe not say good-bye?

Goodman extends a handshake, and Alex clasps it, then in an outpouring of emotion Goodman embraces his patient of so many years, and Alex returns it. The bus' engine kicks over.

DR. GOODMAN

Remember, I'm always just a phone call away.

Bravely, Alex wipes the tears from his eyes as Goodman guides him over to the bus's steps.

CONTINUED

27 CONTINUED (2)

27

DR. GOODMAN

If there's something you need, any problems....

Alex turns at the top of the steps, and with a big grin sort of imitates the L.A. bound teenagers.

ALEX

Thank you.

The pneumatic door whooshes closed, and Goodman watches the bus and Alex disappear down the street. He wipes away a few tears, then joyously says to himself.

DR. GOODMAN

You're gonna be okay.

28 EXT. GREYHOUND BUS TERMINAL, DOWNTOWN L.A. - DAY

28

Alex exits the front door reminding us of Chaplin's Little Tramp, a lost soul with battered suitcase in one hand and Norman in the plastic grocery bag in the other. He cranes his head up at the intimidating skyscrapers, then gazes at the pedestrian throngs scuttling to and fro -- He shrinks back against the building, as if trying to escape the dizzying movement and the city's sharp, angular noises that are hurting his ears. Trying to overcome his fears, he straightens his tie, then removes a picture postcard from his jacket pocket.

29 INSERT OF POSTCARD

29

A faded Kodachrome photograph of the Bates Motel in its "heyday." On the other side, Dr. Goodman has written the directions -- "Take the Number 10 Bus to Plaindale".

30 ALEX

30

looks to a nearby four-way intersection with bus stops on all corners -- posted signs with numbers, routes, it's all so confusing. He goes off in search of the right RTD bus stop. Passing a few vagrants sitting on the sidewalk, he looks as lost and homeless as these poor creatures that call this street home. Stopping before a sign, he looks up.

31 WHAT HE SEES

31

A jumble of route numbers leading to everywhere.

32

ALEX

seems totally bewildered.

VAGRANT (O.S.)

Hey pilgrim....

Alex turns to see a Vagrant sitting on a bus stop bench, sharing a bottle of Thunderbird with his buddy.

VAGRANT (O.S.)

...Look a little lost. Help ya out?

Alex, not knowing what these men are, places the suitcase and "Norman" down on the bench, removes the postcard from his pocket, and hands it to him.

ALEX

If you could sir, I'm looking for this bus.

VAGRANT

Search is over pilgrim, stops right here.

ALEX

Thank you very much.

VAGRANT

(flipping over
the postcard)

Hmm, Bates Motel, nice lookin' place.
Not like these fleabags around here.

ALEX

(referring to
grocery bag)

My friend Norman always kept it very
clean.

The Vagrant is momentarily puzzled by this reference to Norman in the bag. This piques the interest of his Buddy who curiously inches towards it.

ALEX

(a little
salesmanship)

An' maybe you know, when it's all fixed
up, you gentlemen will come by an' stay
a night.

VAGRANT

Nice of ya, but tell ya the truth our
business generally don't take us that
far outta town.

CONTINUED

32

32

CONTINUED

32

He returns the postcard to Alex, then extends the bottle of Thunderbird. In the b.g. we see an RTD bus approaching.

VAGRANT

Here, have a slug, ain't much but it'll keep you goin'.

BUDDY

Hey, dude's been holdin' out on us. Got some of that Saki here.

To Alex's distress he sees the Buddy holding Norman's urn, about to pry it open.

ALEX

That's not Saki, that's Norman.

BUDDY

Norman Schmorman, all the same to me.

Alex grabs the urn, tries wresting it away. A brief tug of war.

ALEX

Hey, give that back, that's Norman...that's norman's ashes!

This gets the Buddy's attention.

BUDDY

Wait a second, you tryin' to tell me there's a stiff in here?

Alex nods, and the Buddy releases the urn like it was a hot potato. The bus pulls up and as Alex quickly gathers his things and boards, the vagrants look on, weirded-out.

32A

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

32A

The RTD bus makes its way through the San Fernando Valley, past the corn fields and farms that still shape the landscape.

(X)
(X)

32B

INSIDE THE BUS

32B

Alex sits with "Norman" on his lap in the near-empty bus, looking out the window. The pastoral countryside seems more to his liking than the loud city.

(X)
(X)

ALEX

Excuse me, but could you please tell me how much further it is to Plainedale?

(X)

CONTINUED

DRIVER
(thinking Alex
is trying to
hurry him up)
Right down this road. Why, got a train
t'catch?

Puzzled by the Driver's sarcasm, Alex innocently takes him
literally.

ALEX
Well, not today, but maybe sometime, I
like trains.

The Driver does a double-take, realizing Alex isn't an
ordinary, garden-variety passenger.

DRIVER
You're a, not from around here, are ya?

ALEX
No, I'm not.

DRIVER
What I mean is, really not from around
here. Like some foreign country or
someplace??

ALEX
Well, I have been away for a long time.
How could you tell?

DRIVER
After drivin' a bus for twenty years,
ya sorta learn t' spot 'em.

Not getting his derogatory humor, Alex just smiles. The
Driver notices his battered suitcase.

DRIVER
Figurin' on settlin' there, are ya?

Alex hands him the postcard.

ALEX
(proudly)
The Bates Motel, ever hear of it?

DRIVER
(glancing at
photograph)
Cute little joint, kinda Fifties...
(handing it back)
Can't say as I have.

CONTINUED

ALEX

(slightly
alarmed)

But this is I-17?

DRIVER

Better be or the brain cells are dyin'.
Nope ten years on this route but I don't
know no Yates Motel.

ALEX

(correcting him)

Bates...Well, I'm sure it's around here
somewhere.

Referring to Norman in the grocery bag, Alex drifts into
the past.

ALEX

My friend Norman always used to tell me
about it -- sitting right off the
interstate, surrounded by trees and
forests as far as the eye can see, and
a lovely little pond.

The Driver suspiciously eyes the bag, then says:

DRIVER

Yeah, well, I hate to burst your bubble,
but you sure you've got the right state?

ALEX

(unsure)

I think so. It's in California.

DRIVER

Got that part down pat, it's just them
forests an' that pond stuff that's a
little shaky.

He points out the front windshield at Plaindale up ahead.
And has it changed! long ago swallowed up by the great
suburban sprawl -- a giant mall, McDonald's, a Wendy's hot
an' juicy, they're all there. Yes, in twenty-seven years
Plaindale has been turned from a quaint little town, into
everything-the-same architecture that is now known as The
American Dream.

The RTD bus is stopped. The Driver places it in gear and
it leaves frame, revealing Plaindale's newest, and very
lost citizen, Alex. He coughs from the bus' fumes, then
gazes around at this enclave of commerce.

33
thru
42

OMITTED

33
thru
42
(X)

43

WHAT HE SEES

43

A customer punching out numbers on an automated teller outside a nearby bank.

44

ALEX

44

now stands behind the Customer, trying to comprehend this new form of automated intelligence.

45

WHAT HE SEES

45

The machine coughing up several twenty dollar bills.

46

ALEX

46

is amazed. The Customer, counting his money, becomes suspicious of Alex watching him.

CUSTOMER

You got a problem or somethin'?

Still transfixed by the machine, Alex hands him the postcard.

ALEX

Uh yes I do, thank you. Could you please tell me where the Bates Motel is?

CUSTOMER

Never heard of it.

(handing it back)

Sorry, I'm new in the area.

The Customer departs and still mesmerized by the machine, Alex steps up to it, regards it like a child would a new toy. He gingerly presses a few buttons, waits for it to disgorge the cash. His wait is in vain, so he places his fingers into the money chute to find out where his money is. Suddenly he spots a pair of shiny leather shoes on the pavement, nearby. Looking up he discovers their occupant, a stern-looking Bank Guard.

BANK GUARD

Mind telling me what you're doin' down there?

CONTINUED

ALEX

(sheepishly)

Oh hello, just trying to get my free money.

BANK GUARD

Look pal, only thing free around here's some good advice. Now you make yourself scarce or I'm going to have you arrested.

Intimidated, Alex gathers his belongings and walks off. He looks back as if to say something, but the Guard cuts him off with:

GUARD

And don't come back.

He watches Alex wander off towards a gas station, then shakes his head in disbelief.

GUARD

Free money.

A series of quick cuts as Alex shows an assortment of people the postcard.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT

Sorry, I just moved here.

MOTORIST

I'm new here.

PEDESTRIAN

Just moved here, myself.

JAPANESE GARDENER

Never heard of it.

A WORKMAN

Sorry, I'm new around here.

SPANISH MAID

No comprendo.

Finally, weary from asking, Alex leans up against a post in front of a fast-food chicken place. He holds up the postcard and looks at it, exasperatedly.

48 A BLACK MAN 48

in his early sixties, lunches in his 1959 truck in the fast-food parking lot, while curiously watching this poor soul. On the side of the truck is painted "HENRY WATSON. HANDYMAN".

49 ALEX 49

regroups, turns, but what he sees causes him to screech!

50 HIS POINT OF VIEW - THREE TEN-YEAR-OLD KIDS 50

are charging right at him.

51 ALEX 51

stumbles backwards and falls into the fast-food flower patch, dropping the postcard. But the kids weren't after him at all, just a San Diego Padre type chicken that stands in front of the door, distributing small favors. The kids "attack" the chicken, like kids do their favorite character at Disneyland, finally driving it back into the store.

Alex climbs to his feet, dusts himself off, then heads past the drive-in window and into the parking lot to be alone.

ALEX

(to urn)

Please Norman, I want to go back.

YOUNG FEMALE'S DISEMBODIED VOICE

Can I help you?

Startled, he spins around, sees no one. Then from behind him he hears the voice again.

DISEMBODIED VOICE

Well?

He turns again, coming face to face with the drive-in ordering station. Not yet knowing where the voice is coming from, slightly rattled, he says to no one in particular:

ALEX

Please, the Bates Motel.

DISEMBODIED VOICE

Sorry sir, but we only have crispy or original recipe.

CONTINUED

