

Screenplay

By

Melanie Hunt

FADE IN:

EXT. - CORRAL / DREAM SEQUENCE - DAY

SLOW MOTION: ANDREA (ANDY) HEMINGSWORTH, a young girl of eleven years with long fair hair and hazel eyes, races excitedly toward her horse corral. She catches herself on the railing and watches hopefully as a sweat-soaked, chocolate brown MARE struggles to her feet. She is astonished to find that the mare has just given birth to ... a basket of KITTENS!

Andy crawls inside the corral and is horrified to find not just a basket of them, but hundreds of KITTENS, in all colors, shapes and sizes, crying feverishly. Andy tries desperately to quiet them. Unable to do so, she panics and runs for help.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE / DREAM CONTINUES - DAY

Andy fights her way through fierce wind and pouring rain toward the front door of her house. Contact! She turns the door knob. Boom! The door flies open and she is sucked inside.

INT. - FAMILY ROOM/ DREAM CONTINUES - DAY

Andy trips and falls to the floor, which she is shocked to find covered with screaming KITTENS!

Horrified, she wheels around and sees screaming KITTENS everywhere; on the furniture, clawing their way up the drapes, climbing the walls and pawing incessantly at closed windows, trying to escape. One by one, they cling to her, as if begging for her help.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A calendar with pictures of horses hangs on the wall and is opened to the month of September. "SCHOOL STARTS!" has been written in pencil below Monday the fifth. "BELLE GOES TO MORNING STAR!!!" has been written in red ink below Sunday the twenty-fifth and is circled in a rainbow of colors. Numerous arrows point to it. It is obviously the most important event of the month.

Andy sleeps restlessly. Her mother, JEAN, opens the

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curtains. The room is flooded with bright September sun. Startled, Andy bolts upright. She is still entranced by her odd dream.

JEAN

Rise and shine. Hey-dee-ho and up
we go.

Jean is a hard woman of forty three, sporting pink curlers and cigarette. She tidies up Andy's room as she speaks.

JEAN

I'm fixing pancakes for breakfast.
Get dressed and come on out ... And
make it snappy, I want to get to
the office before noon.

Jean exits, closing the door behind her.

Andy's love of horses is apparent: Posters and drawings of horses cover the walls. Bookcases are filled with books about and replicas of horses. Toy horses adorn the bed and floor. Special riding equipment is stored carefully in a corner, and a well-worn copy of a book titled YOUR FIRST FOAL lies on the nightstand next to her bed.

Trophies and ribbons from horse shows are displayed proudly around the room, along with awards, certificates and report cards from school.

Whoosh! Andy comes to and jumps out of bed. She clumsily pulls on jeans, sweatshirt and cowboy boots. She bounces to her bed and grabs YOUR FIRST FOAL. She opens it to a dog-eared page and commits passages to memory.

ANDY

(reading)

'The mare should arrive at the
breeding farm several days before
her next scheduled heat period ...
During her heat period, she is
covered by the stallion ...
Ovulation probably occurs toward
the end of the heat period... The
mare may be assumed to be in foal
and returned home if she does not
show to the stallion again twenty-

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one days following the last cover.'

She puts the book down and picks up MR. BEAR. It is a sorry old rag of a teddy bear, but loved none the less. She reaches into a hole near the Mr. Bear's bottom and pulls out a wad of money. She kisses the money gratefully and slides it into her pocket, then kisses Mr. Bear.

ANDY

What do you want, Mr. Bear, a baby brother or a baby sister? We're going to be the happiest family ever! I love you! Bye!

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

Andy sits at the tired old table with her father, MARTIN, a beer drinking hardware store employee in his late forties. They eat breakfast while Jean stands at the stove drinking coffee.

While no one is looking, Andy sneaks a sugar cube from the table and hides it in her pocket.

MARTIN

Delicious.

ANDY

(mouth full)

Mmm hmm.

Martin devours the last of his breakfast. He holds his hand out to Jean and snaps his fingers.

MARTIN

Quick, Jean. Gotta have some money.

JEAN

What for now?

MARTIN

Football.

Jean sighs and rummages through her purse, mumbling angrily.

JEAN

Here.

MARTIN

Better leave Russell the keys to your car. I won't be back 'til late.

JEAN

Well how the hell am I supposed to get to the office?

MARTIN

It's Sunday. Just go in early tomorrow.

JEAN

(sarcastically)

That's a great solution.

MARTIN

Better leave him some money, too.

JEAN

Don't worry.

Jean arms herself with more pancakes and turns toward the table. Martin rises to leave.

JEAN

Finished already?

With her head down, Andy conscientiously consumes the last bite of her pancakes.

MARTIN

Yep, gotta run.

JEAN

Oh, fine. I stay home to cook you breakfast and you don't even want to eat it.

Jean looks at Andy, who looks as though she's reached her limit.

JEAN

How about you?

With a full stomach but a heart wanting only to please, Andy nods her head.

ANDY

Mmm hmm...

Andy watches silently as the pancakes topple from Jean's spatula to her plate.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - DAY

Andy explodes from the front door, struggling with the sleeves of her jacket as she runs toward the horse corral.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

The redwood fencing has seen better days. Several of the rails have been chewed through or have rotted away. Many of the vertical posts are weak and lean unattractively in one direction or the other. All of the quick and dirty repairs over the past years leave it looking something like a patchwork quilt.

Inside the corral, Andy makes a clucking noise to get Bellamy's attention. She is the same mare from the dream: A beautiful Thoroughbred with a sleek chocolate brown coat, black mane and tail and bright, shining eyes. She has elegance unworthy of the fence that surrounds her.

Andy is suddenly very animated and talkative, a stark contrast to her quiet behavior in the house.

ANDY

Hi girl! Hi Belle! Hi pretty lady!

Andy pulls the sugar cube from her pocket and offers it teasingly to Bellamy. She pulls the cube away and runs giggling across the corral to the tack room. Bellamy chases her, determined to get the sugar cube.

Outside the tack room, Andy again offers the cube to Bellamy, this time allowing her velvety smooth muzzle to pluck the cube from her hand. Andy kisses her on the cheek.

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ANDY

I love you, Bellamy! Wait here now.

INT. - TACK ROOM - DAY

Andy gathers a halter, lead rope and grooming supplies.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Andy expertly halters Bellamy and ties her to a hitching rail. She sings and hums as she performs the grooming ritual.

Andy curries Bellamy's belly. As though she were laughing, Bellamy reaches her nose high in the air and curls her upper lip. Andy giggles and grooms on.

EXT. - STREET - DAY

Outside the corral, Jean boosts Andy high atop Bellamy's bare back. Andy adjusts her reins and posture. She has excellent riding form.

ANDY

Doesn't she look gorgeous today,
Mom?

Jean distractedly checks the time on her watch.

JEAN

Beautiful, kiddo. Ready?

ANDY

(nodding affirmatively)

Yup!

JEAN

Let's go.

Jean pulls a pack of cigarettes from her pocket and lights up. She inhales hungrily.

ANDY

Want to ride on back, Mom?

JEAN

No, I'll walk, thanks.

Andy rides Bellamy proudly. Jean, cigarette in hand, walks on foot at their side. Moments later, they encounter a young COUPLE on HORSES. Andy stops and greets them.

ANDY

Hi!

MR. BYRNE

Hi there!

ANDY

Mom, this is my teacher, Mr. Byrne, and his wife, Mrs. Byrne.

JEAN

Hello, nice to meet you both.

MR. BYRNE

So we meet at last, Mrs. Hemingsworth. I was beginning to think you never came home from work.

JEAN

Only when I have to.

Mr. and Mrs. Byrne exchange uncomfortable glances.

ANDY

(giggling)

Mr. 'B', your headstall is on wrong.

Andy jumps off Bellamy and fixes the headstall on Mr. Byrne's horse.

MR. BYRNE

(to Jean)

We're still pretty new at this.

ANDY

There. See, Mr. 'B', this is the brow band, it goes over his *forehead*, not his nose. And you're holding your reins way too loose.

Mr. Byrne picks up the slack in his reins.

MR. BYRNE

Is that better?

ANDY

Much better. That's how you keep contact with the horse. Well, we better go. We're on our way to Morning Star.

MRS. BYRNE

For stud service?

ANDY

Yup!

MR. BYRNE

We've got our fingers crossed for you. Tell me all about it tomorrow in class.

(to Jean)

It was nice meeting you, Mrs. Hemingsworth.

JEAN

Same here.

MRS. BYRNE

Nice to meet you, Mrs. Hemingsworth. Bye, Andy. Thanks for your help.

ANDY

Bye, Mrs. 'B'. Bye, Mr. 'B'.

Jean, Andy, and Bellamy continue their journey.

EXT. - MORNING STAR RANCH - DAY

Andy, Bellamy, and Jean enter a ranch situated adjacent to the elementary school where Andy attends the sixth grade. A sign reading MORNING STAR RANCH hangs over the entrance.

The grounds are old and worn, but sufficient. There are horses and ponies everywhere. A sign reading OFFICE hangs over the door of a small, dusty trailer house.

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Andy rides Bellamy to a small corral where a tiny black filly nurses from a lovely chestnut mare.

ANDY

Oh my gosh, how cute! Mom, look!

JEAN

Sweet.

From behind, HERB JOSTEN approaches. He is a rather portly fellow with a big heart to match his big belly.

HERB

Well, hello there!

JEAN

Oh, hello. We were just admiring the filly.

HERB

Pretty one, isn't she? Her sire is Don Dalio, same as we're breeding your mare to.

ANDY

Really? Where is he?

HERB

(pointing)

He's busy at the moment.

Jean and Andy follow Herb's lead to a corral where DON DALIO, an exquisite black Arabian stallion with a thin white blaze, mounts a DAPPLED GRAY MARE.

ANDY

Oh, my. He is busy, isn't he?

HERB

Yes, indeed... I've got some papers for you to sign, Mrs. Hemingsworth. It'll only take a minute.

JEAN

OK.

Andy pulls her wad of money from her pocket.

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ANDY

Here, Herb. I saved up for half the fee.

HERB

I sure wish my kids were like that, Mrs. Hemingsworth. How'd you do it?

JEAN

Just luck, I guess.

HERB

(to Andy)

You and Belle stay put, we'll be right back.

Jean follows Herb into the office. Andy studies the mating horses curiously while waiting for them to return. She is thoroughly absorbed and doesn't even notice when they do.

HERB

OK, little one, climb on down and pass me the reins.

ANDY

What? Oh!

Herb giggles at Andy's innocent wonder. Andy jumps off and awkwardly hands him the reins.

HERB

Thank you kindly... She'll be ready to go home about thirty days from now.

ANDY

October twenty-fourth.

HERB

Exactly. Feel free to stop by and visit in the meantime.

ANDY

OK!

(CONTINUED)

JEAN
Ready, kiddo?

ANDY
Yup.

Herb offers a hand to Andy.

HERB
Ms. Hemingsworth, it's a real
pleasure doing business with you.

Andy shakes the offered hand.

ANDY
Thank you!
(to Bellamy)
Bye, Belle.

Andy follows Jean toward the exit, but stops for one last look at Bellamy. She whispers quietly to herself.

ANDY
Mr. Bear and I are counting, on
you, Belle.

Jean checks her watch, then turns and prompts Andy.

JEAN
Come on Andrea, chop-chop. I've got
to get to work... I hope your
brother is back with the car.

Andy runs to her mother's side. Jean fumbles with her empty cigarette package as they exit Morning Star Ranch on foot.

JEAN
Jesus H. Christ...

EXT. - SCHOOL YARD - DAY

With the sound of a bell, the second best part of any Monday has just commenced: Lunch time! Eager grade school children pour out of classroom doors and head toward the lunch area.

Heading the pack at an extended trot is an electric Andy and her best friend, TRACEY RANDALL, a dark haired darling. She is also Andy's classmate and neighbor. Classmates and

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sometime friends KRISTEN, BARBIE, and LUCINDA follow close behind.

EXT. - LUNCH AREA - DAY

The girls gallop through the lunch area and are beckoned from behind by the booming voice of MR. KILLIFER, the school principal. They freeze.

MR. KILLIFER

Ladieeeeeees... Slowww dowwwn.

The girls turn and smile apologetically at Mr. Killifer.

GIRLS

(in unison)

Yes, Mr. Killifer!

The girls resume their travels at a reduced speed. They giggle nervously amongst themselves.

EXT. - PLAYGROUND - DAY

Safely past the lunch area, Andy authoritatively brings the giggling girls to a halt. She points across the field to a fence, on the other of which is Morning Star Ranch.

ANDY

OK you guys, we can see her from over there. Follow me!

The girls take off like a mad stampede across the field.

One by one, they stagger up to the fence and catch their breath. They peek through cracks in the wood and see Bellamy, who is in a teasing pen not more than one hundred yards away.

KRISTEN

I see her!

LUCINDA

Me too! Gosh, Andy. She sure is beautiful.

The others agree. Andy is pleased.

KRISTEN

Where's Don Dalio?

ANDY

He's the black stallion in the corral next to her. See? He's *pure Arabian*.

The girls swoon.

KRISTEN

Shouldn't they be in the same stall?

Andy giggles knowingly.

ANDY

Not yet... Don't you know how horses do it?

The girls focus their attention on Andy.

TRACEY

Do you?

The girls plead with Andy for details. She waits until they just can't stand it anymore.

BARBIE

Come on, Andy, do they do it laying down or what?

KRISTEN

Tell us!

ANDY

Well, it's all very scientific. First of all, when you take the mare to the breeding farm, she's put in the teasing pen. That's where Belle is now. They keep her there until she swings into heat, ya know, gets horny. For Belle that'll be Wednesday or Thursday...

BARBIE

Get to the good part!

ANDY

Calm down. When the mare's ready, they put her in with the stallion and they do it, see?

BARBIE

But *how* do they do it?

ANDY

The mare stands real still while the stallion rears up on his hind legs and climbs on the back of her.

BARBIE

And?

ANDY

And... His thing comes out, he sticks it in her hole and they do it! Simple as that!

BARBIE

I want to see!

ANDY

You'll get to because they do it the whole week she's in heat.

BARBIE

Cool!

ANDY

After that, she goes back in the teasing pen for about twenty days until her next heat period, just to make sure she's covered, you know, pregnant. If she is, she won't swing into heat until after the baby's born. At least, she shouldn't. Got it?

KRISTEN

Does he stick his balls in, too?

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Barbie laughs uproariously.

LUCINDA
Yuk, Kristen!
(to Barbie)
You would laugh, you weirdo!

Andy quiets the girls and continues.

ANDY
No, the stallion does not stick his
balls in. Only dogs do that. Horses
just use their wiener's.

LUCINDA
Are you sure about that?

Andy looks to Tracey for support in the matter.

ANDY
Well, yeah... Haven't you ever seen
dogs do it?

TRACEY
I'm sure, Lucinda. You didn't know
that?

LUCINDA
Gross.

Lucinda turns to Kristen and Barbie.

LUCINDA
Hey, let's eat and get in line for
handball, OK?

BARBIE
Yeah, I'm hungry.

Barbie, Lucinda and Kristen skip back toward the lunch area.
Kristen stops long enough to consider Andy and Tracey.

KRISTEN
Coming?

Andy and Tracey exchange decisive looks.

TRACEY

Nah. We'll see you guys in class.

KRISTEN

OK. See ya.

Andy looks at Tracey.

ANDY

Trace?

TRACEY

Yeah?

ANDY

Do dogs really stick their balls
in?

TRACEY

Heck if I know! I thought you knew!

EXT. - BUS STOP - DAY

A big yellow school bus rumbles to a stop. A handful of grade school children disembark and hurry toward their homes. Tracey and Andy are the last out. They are quiet and walk lethargically.

TRACEY

So, what do you want to do today,
anyway? Can't ride together until
Bellamy's back. Want to play toy
horses?

ANDY

Hmm...

TRACEY

We could draw or play on the dirt
pile or ride skateboards, or
something.

ANDY

I guess we could play horses...
Want to do it at your house?

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Can't. My mom's going shopping and I'll have to go with her unless I can stay at your house.

ANDY

(playfully hesitant)

I don't know...

Tracey kneels and pleads theatrically.

TRACEY

Please let me stay at your house, shopping with my mom is the worst! It's so-o boring!

ANDY

OK, OK. Go get your horses and come on over.

TRACEY

Right-o!

Tracey skips off toward her house. It is a beautiful one-story home with an immaculate yard and pipe horse corral. There is a for-sale sign out front.

Andy is beckoned by J.P., a trouble-making thirteen year old neighbor boy with long hair and pimples. He is sitting on his bike at the side of the road.

A.

Hey, brain.

ANDY

Shut up.

B.

It's a free country, I can say what I want. Brain.

ANDY

Shut up!

C.

Make me, brain.

Andy turns and stalks off. J.P. rides up behind her and

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snatches a pencil protruding from her notebook.

ANDY
Give it back!

Andy lunges at J.P. and takes a swing.

D.
Ha ha! Missed me by a mile!

ANDY
Jerk!

E.
Brain, brain, brain!

ANDY
Shut up! Leave me alone!

J. peddles around in circles with Andy chasing him.

F.
Brain!

K. breaks the pencil and drops the pieces in the dirt. Satisfied, he peddles away. Andy watches him angrily for a moment, then turns and stomps toward home.

She walks toward her house and looks dejectedly at the unkempt yard, where eucalyptus trees lean uncomfortably close to the house and overgrown plants and weeds grow wild. There is an unsightly pile of dirt where the problematic septic tank has been uncovered. The pile is adorned with an assortment of small toys belonging to Andy and Tracey.

ANDY
(under her breath)
What a junk yard.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Andy pulls armfuls of toy horses from her shelves and places them carefully on the floor, preparing for play. She works silently and conscientiously.

Spying Andy from outside, Tracey sneaks up and squashes her face and hands against the window. She looks frightful.

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Aaaaaghhhhh!

In a frenzy, Andy gasps and clutches her heart. Seeing her friend, she squints her eyes and motions for her to come in.

ANDY

You retard! Go let yourself in!

Andy realizes her chance for divine revenge: A hamper full of dirty socks. She reaches in and grabs the most soiled of the bunch and slips behind the door.

TRACEY

I'm here! Got all my stuff and...
Where are you?

Suddenly Andy leaps out and squishes the smelly sock under Tracey's nose and into her mouth.

ANDY

Dirty socks! Dirty socks! Gotcha!

Tracey laughs and squirms helplessly. Andy exclaims her victory and continues to torture her.

ANDY

Ha, ha! That'll teach you to mess
with me!

Andy releases Tracey, who staggers to the opposite side of the room and pulls the sock from her mouth. She has been laughing so hard she is weak.

TRACEY

Barf out, that was the grossest!
Your socks stink so bad! They taste
so sick!

Both girls hold their stomachs and laugh painfully. Tears streak down their red faces, making them laugh even harder.

Crash! From the kitchen comes the sound of dishes being smashed to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY AND TRACEY

Russell!

Slam! A cupboard door is shut with a splintering force.

ANDY

Quick, under the bed!

The girls scurry under the bed and pull a blanket down close to the floor for camouflage.

TRACEY

I should have gone shopping...

ANDY

Sshh! He'll hear you.

Andy's words are lost to the sound of Russell chanting and shrieking. His words are punctuated by fierce crashing and slamming noises.

RUSSELL (O.S.)

That bitch! That stupid bitch! God,
I want to *kill* her!

The girls listen fearfully as Russell loses all control. It sounds like World War III.

ANDY

We'll make a break as soon as he
stops.

Smash! Glass shatters into a million pieces. Russell cries out like a demon.

RUSSELL (O.S.)

Aaaggghhhh! I'll kill her! That
stupid bitch!

The frightened girls wait for their moment to escape.

Finally, there is silence. Andy scrambles out from under the bed and pulls Tracey out after her.

ANDY

Now! Let's go!

The trembling girls clutch each other for support. They open

(CONTINUED)

the door and race out of the house, still holding each other tight.

EXT. - HOUSE - DAY

The girls stagger out just in time to see Jean pull her car into the driveway. They relax.

Danger! RUSSELL walks out of the house. He is a small man of eighteen, an unemployed high school drop-out and an obvious drug addict. His head seems disproportionately large for his overly thin build. His body is tense, his blue eyes bulge.

He approaches Jean, hand extended. He glares menacingly, saying absolutely nothing. He takes the keys, gets in the car, and skids away.

The girls remain frozen. Jean proceeds as if nothing happened.

JEAN

Hi, girls. Keeping busy?

ANDY

Uh huh.

Andy releases her grip on Tracey as Jean disappears into the house.

ANDY

Wait for me in the corral, Tracey.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

Jean busily clears the wreckage from Russell's explosion: Broken dishes, open cupboard doors, a toppled trash can, and more.

JEAN

Oh, *hells bells*.

ANDY

Hi, Mom.

JEAN

Hi, kiddo.

ANDY

How was work?

JEAN

Fine. Busy, as usual. I need to go back after dinner to finish up. How was school?

ANDY

Good. I got an A-plus on my Father Junipero Serra report.

JEAN

Good for you. Do you have homework?

ANDY

I did it on the bus.

JEAN

Oh, OK. Where did Tracey go? You should play before it gets dark.

ANDY

Yeah... Mom, why does Russell do this?

JEAN

Oh, Andrea... He'll straighten out once he gets a job. Don't worry about it.

Andy turns and exits defeatedly. Jean sighs.

JEAN

This is the *last* thing I need.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH CORRAL - DAY

TRACEY

How did you do?

ANDY

Struck out *again*.

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

One of Andy's classmates, MICHAEL, reads aloud from THE ADVENTURES OF JOHNNY TREMAINE while the other kids follow

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along. He struggles with the big words.

MR. BYRNE
Thank you, Michael. Next?

Andy thrusts her hand in the air, begging to be picked.

MR. BYRNE
Andrea, would you pick up where
Michael left off?

ANDY
Yes, sir!

Mr. Byrne admires Andy, his prized pupil, as she reads skillfully aloud.

EXT. - SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Andy and Tracey walk toward the line of kids waiting for the school bus.

ANDY
I'm going to see Bellamy. Want to come?

TRACEY
How are you going to get home?

ANDY
Walk... Come on; you'll be able to see Don Dalio up close.

TRACEY
Maybe some other time, Andy. My mom would kill me if I walked all that way.

ANDY
OK... See you tomorrow.

TRACEY
Yeah. See you.

Andy sets off for Morning Star Ranch.

EXT. - MORNING STAR RANCH - DAY

Andy strokes Bellamy's soft nose and whispers softly.

ANDY

Hi, Belle! Miss me? I sure miss you. Just think; you're going to be a mom and I'm going to be a grandma!

A hand taps Andy on the shoulder. Startled, she whirls around.

HERB

Hello there! Did I spook you?

ANDY

Sort of...

HERB

Sorry about that. Come to visit Bellamy?

ANDY

Yep. It's hard to be without my horse.

HERB

Hmm... Maybe there's something I can do about that. Timothy didn't show up today and I've got a pony that needs a work out. Interested?

ANDY

You bet I am!

HERB

OK, partner, follow me.

EXT. - HILLSIDE TRAIL - DAY

Andy and the spunky PALAMINO PONY gallop gleefully into the hillside. Andy raises her free hand to the heavens and laughs happily.

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ANDY

Yahooooo!

INT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

The hour is late. Andy is on her way in just as Jean is on her way out.

JEAN

There you are.

ANDY

Mom, Herb let me ride one of his ponies!

JEAN

That's nice, Andrea. Dinner's on the stove; you'll have to re-heat it. I'm going to the store for cigarettes.

ANDY

OK.

INT. - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Andy maneuvers to the stove and sees Martin passed out and snoring at the kitchen table. She goes to him and shakes him lightly.

ANDY

Dad? Dad, wake up... Dad?

MARTIN

Yeah? Yeah, babe?

ANDY

You should go to bed, Dad. *Dad?*

Martin passes out once and for all. Andy gives up and goes back to the stove to re-heat her dinner.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The alarm clock sounds. Andy jumps up and out of bed, bursting with vitality. She dresses in her usual jeans and sweat shirt. Jean knocks on the door.

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JEAN (O.S.)
Hey, ho, kiddo. Are you up yet?

ANDY
Yes, Mom.

JEAN (O.S.)
Breakfast is ready.

ANDY
Be right out.

Andy drags a comb through her tangled hair, then kisses Mr. Bear good-bye.

ANDY
Bye, Mr. Bear. You keep an eye on things while I'm gone. I love you!

Andy hustles to the kitchen.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

Andy falters when she sees that Russell is seated at the kitchen table eating breakfast. She looks nervously at her mother, who fills her thermos with fresh coffee.

JEAN
Chop-chop, Andrea. Before it gets cold.

Andy maneuvers cautiously to her seat at the table. She settles in and eyes the salt shaker beside Russell's plate.

ANDY
(to Russell)
Salt, please?

Russell explodes. He violently slams his fist on the table and knocks his chair to the floor.

RUSSELL
Leave me alone, you little fucker!
Both of you, just stay out of my way! *Stupid bitches!*

Russell storms to his bedroom and slams the door with a crashing force. Andy is petrified; Jean seems unaffected.

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JEAN

Eat up, Andrea. Food's getting cold.

ANDY

I'm not really hungry. I'll see you later.

Jean watches as Andy gathers her books and leaves the house. She checks her watch and hurries off to prepare for work.

EXT. - SCHOOL LUNCH AREA - DAY

Andy and Tracey are crowded around a table with Lucinda, Barbie, and Kristen. They eat their lunches and gossip excitedly. Andy, however, keeps quietly to herself.

BARBIE

So I heard that Wendy and Patrick are going steady, and I also heard that she stuffs her bra!

KRISTEN

Her boobs are so huge, she must stuff!

BARBIE

That's for sure. No training bras for her, industrial strength all the way!

LUCINDA

What do ya think she and Patrick do together?

BARBIE

I'll bet they *do* it! You know, she was playing with her pen yesterday in class, pushing the pen part in and out of the outside part, going 'Uh, uh, uh, oh, uh, uh uh!'; making noises like she was *doing* it!

LUCINDA

No way! They're only eleven! They can't be doing it already!

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Why not? I saw this TV show once where they were talking to girls our age who had babies. Some of 'em were even younger!

LUCINDA

Oh my gosh, I can't believe it! Do you really think Wendy and Patrick do it?

BARBIE

Yep.

KRISTEN

I think so, too.

TRACEY

You never know.

ANDY

I couldn't care less. Wendy's just a stupid bitch anyway.

The girls are shocked by Andy's use of foul language. It's not her style.

TRACEY

Andy!

ANDY

Well, it's true. She's a stupid bitch.

The other girls glance at each other, uneasy about Andy's change in character.

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

The school bell rings. It's the end of another long school week. The students sigh and collect their belongings.

MR. BYRNE

OK, we'll finish this up on Monday.
Class dismissed. Have a nice weekend.

Andy approaches Mr. Byrne and hands in her paper.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Here, Mr. 'B'. I already finished.

MR. BYRNE

Most impressive, Miss Hemingsworth.
You have a wonderful weekend.

ANDY

Thanks. You too.

EXT. - SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Andy and Tracey head out toward the bus area. Jean stands in the parking lot near her car. She waves and calls out to Andy.

TRACEY

Hey, what's your mom doing here?

ANDY

I don't know. Wait here, Trace.

Concerned, Andy runs to her mother.

ANDY

What's up, Mom?

JEAN

Andrea, we have to to get Bellamy
and take her home.

ANDY

Why?

JEAN

Don Dalio kicked her in the leg and
she had to have stitches.

ANDY

Stitches? Oh my gosh! Is she OK?

JEAN

She'll be fine, but she needs to be
at home where you can take care of
her. Dr. Gaurdino gave me some
medicine and wraps this afternoon.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

But what about the foal?

JEAN

Andrea, she probably hasn't been there long enough to get pregnant.

Andy's eyes swell with tears.

ANDY

I can't believe this! This is so unfair! This can't happen!

JEAN

I know. C'mon. Let's get going so I can get back to work.

Andy tries unsuccessfully to hold back her tears as she waves and shouts to Tracey, who waits on the sidewalk.

ANDY

Tracey, I got to go. Something's happened to Bellamy.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Unable to shed even one more tear, Andy lies in silence on her bed, surrounded by crumpled tissues. She clutches Mr. Bear and stares at the ceiling. Her eyes and nose are puffy and red. An untouched cup of hot chocolate sits next to her on her nightstand.

She rolls over and studies Mr. Bear's face. She sits up and cradles him gently in her arms.

ANDY

Don't cry, Mr. Bear. We're not giving up.

Determined, Andy picks up YOUR FIRST FOAL and skims through the table of contents. She spots a chapter titled "Diagnosis of Pregnancy."

ANDY

Bingo. Page fifty-nine.

Andy flips to the the proper page and begins to read. Suddenly, heavy metal music pounds at maximum volume from

(CONTINUED)

Russell's stereo.

Unable to concentrate, Andy opens her door and looks across the hall at Russell's bedroom door. Though it is closed, the music is still intensely loud. She shuts her door.

ANDY

Dang it, Russell... Jerk.

Frustrated, Andy grabs a pencil and paper and scrawls a note to Jean.

ANDY

'Mom, I'm spending the night at Tracey's. See you tomorrow. Andy.'

(to Mr. Bear)

Come on, let's get out of here!

Andy places the note neatly on her pillow, stuffs YOUR FIRST FOAL and Mr. Bear into a back pack and leaves.

EXT. - RANDALL HOUSE - NIGHT

Russell's music penetrates the night air. Andy stands in the beautifully manicured Randall yard and spies through Tracey's bedroom window. She disguises her voice and whispers hauntingly.

ANDY

Traaaceeey! Trrrraaceeey
Rannndaaalll! Traaaceeey!

Tracey gets up from her bed, where she was drawing, and walks to the window.

TRACEY

Whooo's there? Is it Aaandyyy?
Aaandyyy Hemingsbutt?

ANDY

You jerk! How'd you know it was me?

TRACEY

Easy. You always sneak up to my window and do that.

ANDY

Do not! Not always... Hey, maybe I should spend the night tonight, huh?

TRACEY

Sounds good to me! Wait there while I ask my mom.

Andy looks past the for sale sign in the Randall's front yard and studies her dark and dirty house across the street. She looks carefully again at the Randall's lovely, peaceful home. The difference between the two houses is like night and day.

Moments later, Tracey gleefully bounces back to the window.

TRACEY

All systems go! Do you need to ask your mom?

ANDY

Nope.

TRACEY

Then come around to the front door and I'll let you in!

INT. - RANDALL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Andy is welcomed by Tracey's parents, GREG and LOIS, who are seated on the sofa. Greg is a handsome man of thirty two, an up and coming star in the real estate business. Lois is an attractive and fashionable woman, also thirty two, who takes pride in her career as wife, mother and homemaker.

LOIS

Hi there, Andy. Feeling better?

ANDY

Yes, thanks.

GREG

What's all that racket coming from your house?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

It's just my brother testing his stereo. It broke and he fixed it.

GREG

Hmm. Sounds like it's still broken.

LOIS

Have you eaten, Andy?

ANDY

No, not yet.

TRACEY

We'll eat later. My mom made spaghetti yesterday and it was really good. We can have leftovers.

ANDY

OK.

TRACEY

Come on, let's go to my room.

INT. - TRACEY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tracey leads Andy into her charmingly neat and tidy room.

TRACEY

Is your brother *really* testing his stereo?

ANDY

Nah, I just didn't want your mom and dad to think he was weird or something.

TRACEY

But he is.

ANDY

I know, but... I don't know. Hey, I have something I need you to help me with.

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Name it.

INT. - FORT - NIGHT

Having just finished a sumptuous spaghetti dinner, Andy and Tracey push their dishes aside and read from YOUR FIRST FOAL in a fort constructed of blankets and sheets.

ANDY

(reading)

'After forty-five days, a Friedman test may be performed. Blood withdrawn from the mare is injected into a virgin rabbit.'

(to Tracey)

What's a virgin?

TRACEY

You don't know what a virgin is?

ANDY

Well, yeah... It's like the Virgin Mary, right?

TRACEY

(giggling)

A virgin is a woman who's never done it before.

ANDY

Oh, right...

(reading)

'In a positive test result, the rabbit's ovaries show enlargement due to the gonadatropic hormone circulating in the mare's bloodstream. This test is ninety-nine percent accurate.'

TRACEY

And listen to this:

(reading)

'A veterinarian can also detect pregnancy by rectally palpating the uterus and ovaries, noting the consistency, size and contour of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

(cont'd)

the organs. There are also characteristic changes in the cervix as seen by a vaginal speculum.'

ANDY

Hey:

(reading)

'From six months, the movements of the foal can be seen in the area of the mare's flanks or near her naval.'

TRACEY

Cool! Let's write some of this stuff down.

ANDY

Perfect. I'll talk and you write... What do you think about the name Whickery?

Tracey recalls the name with great fondness.

TRACEY

The horse in BORN TO RACE!

ANDY

Yep. That's what I'm going to name the foal.

TRACEY

Whickery... I love it! And it won't make a difference if it's a girl or a boy!

ANDY

Exactly.

INT. - TRACEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The sun peeks through the window and touches the top of Andy and Tracey's fort. It is an ambitious structure that covers the majority of the floor.

INT. - FORT - DAY

Andy and Tracey slumber soundly. YOUR FIRST FOAL and several pages of hand written notes lie between them.

ANDY

(yawning and stretching)

Grrrrrrrrrr! Tracey? Wake up.
Tracey?

Andy gently shakes Tracey into consciousness.

TRACEY

Huh?

ANDY

We got to get up so we can have a meeting with my mom.

TRACEY

Right. I'm up. Let's get ready.

INT. - TRACEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The girls crawl out of the fort and get dressed.

TRACEY

I dreamed about this last night; I dreamed we talked to your mom and Bellamy had twins. Then it turned out it was Sox who had the twins, not Bellamy. Weird, huh?

ANDY

Yeah... Mine was *creepy*.

TRACEY

What was it?

ANDY

I dreamed there was a parade of monsters marching through my house.

TRACEY

What kind of monsters?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Eew... There were giant lizards and werewolves and swamp creatures... And Indiana Jones was my father.

TRACEY

Indy?

ANDY

Yeah, but he wouldn't do anything about the monsters. So I went out to get Bellamy... But she was gone.

TRACEY

Huh. Creepy... Ready?

ANDY

Yep. Let's go! You carry the book and I'll bring the notes.

INT. - RANDALL LIVING ROOM - DAY

Andy and Tracey pass Greg and Lois on their way out the door.

LOIS

Where are you girls off to?

TRACEY

Andy's house.

LOIS

Not on an empty stomach, you don't.

TRACEY

Oh, Mom! Come on!

LOIS

There will be plenty of time after breakfast.

TRACEY

But Mom, this is important! We've got to talk to Andy's Mom about some stuff we read that'll tell us if Bellamy's going to have a baby or not! Please?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Please, Lois? We worked real hard on this.

LOIS

Oh... If it's alright with your father.

TRACEY

Dad?

GREG

Well, this does sound very important.

(to Tracey and Andy)

Promise you'll come back and eat breakfast as soon as you're through?

TRACEY

Promise!

ANDY

Cross our hearts!

GREG

OK then. Don't be too long.

ANDY AND TRACEY

Thanks!

Tracey and Andy trot out the door, book and notes in hand.

INT. - JEAN AND MARTINS' BEDROOM - DAY

Andy and Tracey stand outside Jean's open bathroom door, trying desperately to conduct their meeting while Jean readies herself for work.

JEAN

Andrea, aren't you going to be late for your lesson?

ANDY

Nope. We've got plenty of time.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN

Well, I don't. I've got a *mountain* of work to do and I don't want to be late.

ANDY

Then we'll talk while you get ready. OK?

Jean sighs.

JEAN

OK... But I'm leaving in five minutes.

Andy takes a deep breath.

ANDY

Mom, you got to call the vet tomorrow and tell him we want him to do a Friedman test.

JEAN

A *what?*

INT. - RANDALL BREAKFAST NOOK - DAY

Andy and Tracey pick sadly at their morning meal.

TRACEY

I guess I don't get to be Whickery's godmother...

ANDY

You will, too. Bellamy *is* pregnant. I *know* she is.

EXT. - LINDA'S ARENA - DAY

Unhappy, Andy sits on the fence and watches as Tracey, riding hunt seat, gets a rigorous workout from instructor, LINDA. She and her dappled gray gelding, SOX, who indeed has four white socks, work an intricate pattern of jumps.

LINDA

Good Tracey! That was much better. One more time, from the top, and watch those lead changes!

(CONTINUED)

Tracey and Sox begin the pattern again.

LINDA
Elbows in! You look like a bird!

Tracey tucks her elbows in and continues.

LINDA
Good!

Tracey completes the pattern and turns to Linda for a critique.

LINDA
Excellent, Tracey! Walk him out for few minutes, let him rest. He was a good boy.

LINDA
(to Andy)
What'd you think, chief?

Andy shouts so Tracey can hear.

ANDY
I think Tracey stinks!

TRACEY
What???

ANDY
Just kidding. I think she's good, but I'm better.

TRACEY
Dream on, Hemingsbutt!

LINDA
Well, I think you *both* stink.

ANDY AND TRACEY
What???

LINDA
Just kidding...

The girls giggle and relax.

ANDY

I *did* get first place and high-point for equitation at the County Horse Mastership last spring...

TRACEY

Yeah, but I beat you in the July Fourth pleasure class.

ANDY

Well, that was only 'cause...

LINDA

Ladies! You're both very good, but you *both* still have a long way to go. Now, apologize and *be nice*.

ANDY

Sorry, Trace.

TRACEY

Me too. Sorry, Andy.

LINDA

That's better. Class dismissed, I'll see you both next weekend. Andy, get Bellamy back on her feet so she can join us.

ANDY

I'm workin' on it.

EXT. - ROAD - DAY

Andy, Tracey, and Sox head for home.

ANDY

Tracey, I really am sorry. I'm just in a bad mood because of Bellamy.

TRACEY

It's OK. I understand.

ANDY

Thanks... I'm really going to miss you when you move to Maryland. You're my best people friend in the whole world, you know that?

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Yep. You're mine, too. I don't know
what I'll do without you.

INT. - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Andy enters the house and removes her boots. She listens for a moment to Russell, who paces about and curses to himself in another room.

RUSSELL (O.S.)

Shit!... Fuck!... Shit!

INT. - JEAN AND MARTIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy listens for a moment from the outside of her parent's closed door. Hearing only Martin's occasional snores, she tip-toes in. Martin is sprawled out on the bed, asleep.

INT. - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jean sits on the floor in the bathroom, surrounded by reports and papers from work. In her left hand is a twenty dollar bill and a set of keys. At her side is a half empty cup of coffee and an ash tray, filled with cigarette butts. Elevator music plays quietly on her radio. She is just about to get up when Andy enters.

ANDY

Hi, Mom. What are you doing?

JEAN

Oh, Andy. Good. Go give this to
Russell.

Jean hands the money and keys to Andy, who hesitantly accepts them. Jean returns to her paperwork.

JEAN

How was the lesson?

ANDY

Good.

INT. - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Russell paces by the kitchen and watches Andy as she nervously places the keys and the money on the counter.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY
Here, Russell...

As soon as Andy steps back, Russell swoops in and grabs the offerings. Without a word, he races out of the house and slams the door in his usual fashion.

INT. - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Andy returns to the bathroom and waits for Jean to notice her.

ANDY
Mom?

JEAN
Mmmm?

ANDY
When's Russell going to get a job?

JEAN
Soon, if he knows what's good for him.

ANDY
Think *maybe* Bellamy is going to have a foal?

JEAN
Andrea, can't you see I'm working? Go fix yourself some dinner.

ANDY
Yes, ma'am.

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

The date on the chalkboard reads October third. The students finish their history exam while Mr. Byrne prepares their next assignment at his desk. Andy completes her exam and hands it in.

ANDY
All done, Mr. 'B'.

(CONTINUED)

MR. BYRNE

Very good, Miss Hemingsworth.

ANDY

It was easy. History's my favorite.

MR. BYRNE

Everything's your favorite, Andy.

ANDY

Well, *especially* history. Mr. 'B'?
You got change for a dollar? I have
to make an important call.

MR. BYRNE

Oh?

ANDY

I'm going to call Dr. Guardino.
Nobody else thinks Bellamy is going
to have a baby, but I do, and I'm
going to prove it. I'm going to
have him give Bellamy a test that
will settle it once and for all.

Mr. Byrne smiles proudly at Andy.

MR. BYRNE

Sure, I've got change. Hold on.

EXT. - LUNCH AREA - DAY

Having just made her call, Andy bounces over and joins
Tracey, who saves a place for her in the lunch line.

ANDY

All systems go!

TRACEY

Yeah! Give me five!

ANDY

Next step, get organized. Then, I
got to get the money.

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Think your parents will pay for it?

ANDY

They don't care. I'm going to pay
for it myself.

TRACEY

I'll help!

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy counts days and fills in her calendar with important information while Tracey paces and reads from pages of notes.

TRACEY

So the Friedman test is November
twenty-eighth...

ANDY

Just fifty-six days away! I can't
wait!

TRACEY

Me either. Now, it'll be six months
before we can see Whickery move.
When's that?

Tracey continues to pace.

ANDY

March... Hold *still*.

TRACEY

I can't. I have to pee, steaming
bad.

ANDY

Well, go then. We'll finish when
you're done.

Andy continues her calendar project. Moments later, she hears the toilet being flushed and races out of her room.

INT. - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Andy shouts at Tracey from outside the bathroom door.

ANDY

Tracey! You're not supposed to flush it! Come out, quick!

TRACEY (O.S.)

I can't! The door is locked! I can't get it open!

ANDY

Well, you're not supposed to close it all the way! What'd you, forget?

TRACEY (O.S.)

I'm sorry! I won't forget again! Just get me out!

Andy tries unsuccessfully to open the bathroom door.

ANDY

I can't get it! Hold on.

Seconds later, Andy appears with her father, Martin, who totes a screwdriver. It is obvious from his embarrassing appearance and jolly behavior that he has been drinking, again. His pants ride extremely low on his hips, his shirt is pulled partially up, exposing his great white beer belly.

MARTIN

Hang on, Tracey, I'll rescue you!

Martin works the door open. Tracey stands on the edge of the bath tub, humiliated and apologetic. The floor is covered with waste from the toilet.

TRACEY

I'm sorry, Mr. Hemingsworth. I accidentally flushed the toilet and it overflowed. I'll clean it up.

MARTIN

Oh, no, no, no. It's no problem. You kids go play. I'll get it after the ball game.

(CONTINUED)

Andy shrinks in embarrassment.

MARTIN
Hey, know what I heard?

TRACEY
Sheep!

MARTIN
Know what I saw?

TRACEY
Wood!

MARTIN
Oh, gosh! They know all my jokes!
What'll I do?

Tracey laughs enthusiastically. Andy stomps back to her bedroom.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy changes into a dirty t-shirt and shorts from her laundry hamper. She is obviously upset.

TRACEY
Your dad is so nice. Hey, what's wrong?

ANDY
I'm so embarrassed. I hate this house, I hate this family!

TRACEY
It could be worse. I mean, what if your dad made you clean up that mess?

ANDY
Tracey, I *am* going to clean up that mess. You'd better go home, unless you want to help.

TRACEY
No, I'll help... I'm the one who flushed it.

EXT. - MORNING STAR RANCH - DAY

Instead of her usual jeans and sweat shirt, Andy is dressed in pleated gray pants and a pink button-down shirt. Her hair is combed neatly and pulled back into a barrette. She knocks on the office door.

HERB (O.S.)

It's open.

INT. - OFFICE - DAY

Andy enters the office and greets Herb, who calculates last month's expenditures.

ANDY

Hi, Herb.

HERB

Well, hello! What can I do for you, Andy?

ANDY

I'm trying to save up for a Friedman test and I was wondering if maybe you need some extra help around here? I can clean stalls or groom or exercise the horses, or all three.

HERB

A Friedman test, huh? You know, just so happens I *could* use another hand around here. Three dollars an hour OK?

ANDY

Wow, that'd be *great!*

HERB

How about two hours after school Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays?

ANDY

When can I start?

EXT. - MORNING STAR RANCH - DAY

With shovel in hand and wheel barrel at her side, Andy conscientiously cleans stalls. She is sweaty, dirty and wears a satisfied smile on her face.

EXT. - STREET - DAY

Exhausted, Andy walks home in the setting sun.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH CORRAL - NIGHT

Andy cleans Bellamy's wound and applies a medicated dressing while Bellamy devours her evening meal.

INT. - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jean smokes a cigarette and cooks dinner at the stove. Andy wearily steps in and greets her. Her once pink shirt and gray pants now look brown.

JEAN

Hi, kiddo. Hungry?

ANDY

Starved.

JEAN

What on earth did you do to your good clothes? Andrea!

ANDY

I'm sorry, Mom. I'll wash them.

JEAN

No, I'll do it. I do everything else around here. *Jesus H. Christ.*

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy fights to keep her eyes open as she does her homework. Finally finished, she drops off to sleep, too tired to remove her dirty clothes and put on pajamas, or even put her books away.

INT. - SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Andy and Tracey sit together in the front seat on their way to school.

ANDY

So, what'd you come up with?

TRACEY

Well, my dad increased my allowance to five bucks a week, and my mom's going to pay me ten bucks to wash and wax the cars this weekend. And I've got forty-four dollars saved up.

ANDY

Cool! I got a job at Morning Star three days a week. All I need is a job for the other two...

INT. - BYRNE BARN - DAY

Andy, dressed in grubbies and boots, shovels manure into a wheelbarrow. Mr. Byrne pokes his head in through the top of the dutch door.

MR. BYRNE

Looks good, champ. I'm going out for a ride, so just go on home when you're finished. I'll see you tomorrow in class.

ANDY

OK, bye. Have a good ride.

Andy watches Mr. Byrne grapple and climb aboard his perturbed horse. She laughs out loud.

ANDY

Oh, Mr. 'B'... Jump off and let me show you how it's done.

MR. BYRNE

That bad, huh?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Well... Let me show you a *different* way.

Andy takes the reins in her left hand and the saddle horn in her right and neatly hops into the saddle.

ANDY

See? Now watch this.

Andy reverses the process and dismounts.

ANDY

Now you try.

Andy coaches Mr. Byrne step by step.

MR. BYRNE

Reins in my left hand?

ANDY

And horn in your right. Now hop twice and swing your leg over... Good! Now dismount and try it again.

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

The students work on their math assignments while Mr. Byrne grades papers at his desk.

Having completed her assignment, Andy turns her paper over and picks up her reading book. The class bully, TODD, comments.

TODD

Brain!

ANDY

Shut up, you little fucker.

TODD

Mr. Byrne?! Andy said the 'F' word!

ANDY

Nark!

(CONTINUED)

MR. BYRNE

Andy, Todd, step up to my desk,
please.

ANDY

Yes, sir...

Andy and Todd approach Mr. Byrne.

MR. BYRNE

Did you say the 'F' word, Andy?

ANDY

Sort of...

TODD

Liar! She *did*!

MR. BYRNE

Shush.

(to Andy)

What do you mean, sort of? You did
or you didn't?

ANDY

Yes, sir. I did.

MR. BYRNE

Very well. Todd, you may have a
seat.

(to Andy)

Andy, you may not use that language
in my classroom. You don't talk
like that at home, do you?

ANDY

Sometimes...

Mr. Byrne studies Andy for a moment, pondering her
statement.

MR. BYRNE

That doesn't make it *right*. You
know better than to use that type
of language.

ANDY

I said I only do it *sometimes*.
Doesn't everybody?

MR. BYRNE

I don't.

ANDY

You *don't*?

MR. BYRNE

No.

Andy looks at Mr. Byrne respectfully. She thinks to herself for a moment.

ANDY

I won't do it again, Mr. 'B'. I
promise.

MR. BYRNE

Good girl. You may return to your
seat.

EXT. - BUS STOP - DAY

Andy and Tracey walk home and are greeted by J.P., who peddles around them on his bicycle. Andy tightens.

A.

Hi, Andy.

Andy forces herself to ignore J.P.

B.

Got a *pencil* I can borrow?

TRACEY

Bug off, moron.

C.

Is *your* name Andy?

L. swoops in and knocks Andy's note book to the ground. Pens and pencils scatter everywhere.

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Bug off, jerk face!

ANDY

Just ignore him Tracey.

Tracey helps Andy pick up her belongings while J.P. continues to taunt her. They walk quietly away from him.

A.

Andy the *brain!*.. Why don't you take another swing at me? Come on... I dare ya... Brain!

INT. - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Andy sips hot chocolate and works on a jigsaw puzzle. Russell rudely breaks the silence.

RUSSELL (O.S.)

You fucking bitch! Stay out of my room! Stay out or you're *dead!*

INT. - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jean loads a pile of Russell's filthy clothes into the washing machine, which sits in a closet. Andy races to investigate and trips over a garden hose that serves as a makeshift drainage system, transporting water from the washing machine to the outside of the house.

ANDY

Damn! I mean, *dang!*
(to Jean)
Mom, are you OK?

JEAN

I was just getting Russell's laundry. Go finish your puzzle.

ANDY

But, Mom...

JEAN

Andrea, *please!* I have work to do!

Jean returns to her business at the washing machine. Confused, Andy runs out the front door and slams it behind

(CONTINUED)

her.

EXT. - CORRAL - NIGHT

Andy sits on the ground angrily throwing feed pellets at the fence. Bellamy nuzzles and comforts her.

ANDY

I hate him, Bellamy! I wish he
would just go away!

Andy stands and throws her arms around Bellamy's neck. She squeezes tightly.

ANDY

You got to have a foal, Belle! You
just got to! You and I will have
our own family and we'll be *happy!*

INT. - LIBRARY - DAY

Andy stands in an aisle searching for a book. She makes a selection and settles in at a table next to Tracey, who studies a page in an encyclopedia.

TRACEY

Andy, look... Maryland. And see?
Baltimore; that's where I'm moving.

ANDY

Gee... It's awfully far away.

TRACEY

Yeah... But that doesn't mean you
can't come visit. And we can call
each other every day... And we can
write...

The girls hide behind their books; each one too sad to look at the other.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy sits on the floor, surrounded by books and papers. She studiously completes her home work. Suddenly, she hears a door slam and Russell screaming.

(CONTINUED)

RUSSELL (O.S.)

Give them to me, damn it! Now!

JEAN (O.S.)

Go away!

Andy jumps up runs to see what is happening.

INT. - JEAN AND MARTIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy and an inebriated Martin both arrive at the same time. They find Jean locked inside in the bathroom for safety and Russell trying to break the door down.

RUSSELL

Give me the damned keys, bitch!

MARTIN

What's going on here?

ANDY

Mom!

RUSSELL

I need the keys to the damned car!

Martin quickly hands over his own keys and fishes from his pocket two five dollar bills and a ten.

MARTIN

Here, take mine. Need a couple bucks?

Russell grabs the keys and all the money and promptly exits. Martin and Andy stand perfectly still until they hear the front door slam and the car drive away. Jean comes out of the bathroom.

MARTIN

Why can't you two get along?

JEAN

Get along? All I did was suggest he get a job and buy his own car, damn it!

MARTIN

You don't need your car tonight.
What's the matter with you?

JEAN

How do you know I don't need my car
tonight?

MARTIN

What, to go to the office? Why
don't you just *move* there?

JEAN

At least one of us works around
here! Go back to your goddamned
beer, you good for nothing S.O.B.!

MARTIN

Don't you talk to me that way, you
bitch!

Horrified, Andy covers her ears.

ANDY

Stop it!

Andy runs to her room.

MARTIN

You should be ashamed of yourself.

Fed up, Jean grabs her coat, cigarettes and purse.

MARTIN

Where are you going? We're not
through talking!

JEAN

Oh yes we are! I'm going back to
work. I'll be back when you're
sober!

Jean pushes past Martin and makes a fast exit.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy lies on her bed, sobbing. Her face is buried in Mr.
Bear's belly. Martin knocks on the door and staggers inside,

(CONTINUED)

his eyes swollen with drunken tears.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, baby... People should
never fight.

Martin takes Andy's hand and pulls her close. They cry as they embrace. At first, Andy takes comfort in her father's arms. However, she feels uncomfortable when he doesn't relinquish his hold. She finally pulls away.

ANDY

It's OK, Dad... Let's just pretend
it never happened, OK?

Martin doesn't move from his position at the edge of the bed. He just hangs his head and weeps. Andy pats his back in an effort to console him.

EXT. - PLAYGROUND - DAY

At recess, Andy competes in a rough game of tether ball with opponent and classmate Todd. The pressure is on; both are determined to win. The court is surrounded by children; the boys cheer for Todd, the girls for Andy. With one powerful hit, Todd finally wins the game. The boys go wild.

TODD

You'll never beat me, Hemingsworth!
You bookworm!

Andy's blood begins to boil. She struggles to control her temper.

ANDY

One more game. Serve the ball.

TRACEY

Go on, Andy! Smear this queer! You
can do it!

Todd serves the ball. The crowd goes crazy with excitement. Andy plays desperately; she wants revenge. Todd hits the ball high out of Andy's reach, moves to the edge of the court and trips her when she tries to return it. Todd wins, again.

(CONTINUED)

TODD

I told you you'd never beat me.

Andy explodes. She picks herself up from the pavement and jumps on Todd, knocking him to the ground. She beats him furiously as the girls cheer her on.

Mr. Byrne races to the scene and pries his fighting students apart.

MR. BYRNE

That's enough you two, break it up!

With one hand on each, Mr. Byrne leads Andy and Todd to the Nurse's office. Andy sports a fat lip and Todd, a bloody nose.

INT. - NURSE'S OFFICE - DAY

NURSE PENNY places an ice pack on Andy's swollen lip. Todd sits with his head tilted back on the other side of the office, holding a bloodied rag to his nose. Enter Mr. Killifer, school principal, carrying Andy and Todd's student files. Nurse Penny quietly dismisses herself.

MR. KILLIFER

So... Would one of you like to explain to me why you were trying to kill each other out there?

TODD

I didn't do anything except beat her in two games of tether ball and she *attacked* me!

ANDY

He cheated!

MR. KILLIFER

Quiet! Alright, ladies first. Miss Hemingsworth?

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

All the students have left for the day, except Andy. She and Mr. Byrne discuss the afternoon's events.

(CONTINUED)

MR. BYRNE

You've had a big afternoon, huh?

ANDY

It wasn't my fault, Mr. 'B'; he cheated... He's such a dweeb. I hate him. *Him and Russell...*

MR. BYRNE

Russell, your brother?

ANDY

I wish he would just go away.

MR. BYRNE

Why, Andy?

ANDY

Just because.

MR. BYRNE

Because why?

ANDY

Because... He scares me.

Andy breaks out in tears. Mr. Byrne pulls a chair next to Andy's and strokes her hair comfortingly.

MR. BYRNE

(concerned, thoughtful)

It's OK...

INT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

Jean is ready for Andy as soon as she enters the house, dirty and weary after cleaning stalls at Morning Star Ranch. The swelling in her lip has gone down considerably. She wears a pack filled with school clothes and books, strapped to her back.

JEAN

Where have you been, young lady?

ANDY

I *always* exercise Herb's horses on Wednesday.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN

You're lucky I don't *sell* your horse after the stunt you pulled today.

ANDY

Mom, I can explain...

JEAN

I don't want to hear it, Andrea. Your principal called me this afternoon. You have no idea what you've put me through. I've got a headache you wouldn't believe!

ANDY

I'm sorry...

JEAN

Apology not accepted! Don't you dare do this again, is that clear? I've got enough to contend with as it is.

ANDY

Yes, ma'am.

JEAN

Jesus H. Christ, Andrea... Go to your room. Between you and your brother, I'm losing my mind.

ANDY

But Russell...

JEAN

I said, go to your room!

ANDY

How come...

JEAN

You've got until the count of *three* to shut your mouth and get to your room! One, two...

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

But...

JEAN

Three!

With one swift movement, Jean strikes Andy hard across the face. Andy looks her defiantly in the eyes and races to her bedroom.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy slams her door and crawls onto the bed, sobbing. She picks up Mr. Bear and holds him with all her might.

ANDY

We're going to have our *own* family,
Mr. Bear; just you, me, Belle and
Whickery. And we're going to be
happy... I *promise!*

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

The date on the chalkboard reads Monday, December fifth. It is just nine weeks since Bellamy left Morning Star Ranch, and one week since the Friedman test.

The students are busy cutting out strips of red and green construction paper and assembling Christmas garlands for the classroom. Andy and Tracey keep one eye on their work and the other on the clock. It is 11:58 a.m.

Finally, the bell rings, and Mr. Byrne dismisses his students for lunch. Andy and Tracey grab their coats and hurry out the door.

EXT. - SCHOOL YARD - PHONE BOOTH - DAY

The air is cold and damp. There are Christmas decorations in many of the classroom windows, and two KINDERGARTNERS singing a Christmas carol in the playground, nearby.

Bundled in their warm coats, Andy and Tracey get ready to place an important call.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

I know she's pregnant, but cross your fingers anyway.

TRACEY

They're crossed. I'll dial, you talk.

With fingers crossed for good luck, Tracey puts a quarter in the telephone and dials.

ANDY

(into the telephone))

Hello! Uh, my name is Andrea Hemingsworth. Dr. Guardino did a Friedman test on my horse last week and I was wondering if you had the results?... Hemingsworth... Yes, I'll hold.

(to Tracey)

They put me on hold.

TRACEY

I wish they'd hurry!

ANDY

(into the telephone))

Yes... Positive? Are you *sure*?... Thank you! Thank you very much!... Good-bye!

Andy hangs up the phone.

ANDY

That's the best Christmas present ever! When Whickery's born I'll have everything I ever wanted!

TRACEY

I *knew* she was going to have a baby! I'm going to be a godmother after all!

The girls jump up and down, sing and shout in celebration of the good news.

EXT. - LINDA'S ARENA - DAY

Tracey and Sox relax in the center of the arena with Linda. They watch Andy and Bellamy fly gracefully through a complicated series of jumps. They hold their breath as they approach, then clear the last jump. Andy brings Bellamy to a halt and bows to her audience. Linda and Tracey applaud.

TRACEY

Awesome, Andy! You cleared it!

LINDA

That was four-ten. Do you think our mother-to-be can do five feet?

ANDY

She's three month's pregnant;
should we?

Linda raises the jump.

LINDA

You won't need to worry about that
for a few months yet.

Andy eases Bellamy into the canter and rides expertly through the series, clearing even the five foot jump at the end. Linda and Tracey applaud and cheer proudly.

LINDA

That's my girl!

Andy leans forward in her saddle and gives Bellamy a hug.

INT. - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Andy has decorated the room with an artificial Christmas tree and handmade decorations. There are a few Christmas cards on the table, where Andy and Tracey read aloud from YOUR FIRST FOAL and prepare lists.

ANDY

Add to the TO DO list: Vet must
examine Whickery within twelve
hours after he's born.

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Got ya.

ANDY

And to the SHOPPING list, add:
Sterile towels, shot glass and ten
percent iodine.

TRACEY

What's that for?

ANDY

We have to douse Whickery's
umbilical cord with it when it
breaks. That way, it won't get
infected and it'll dry up quicker.

TRACEY

(writing))

Oh, OK. One shot glass, one bottle
of iodine.

ANDY

Ten percent iodine.

TRACEY

(writing))

Right. Ten percent iodine... What
next?

INT. - FEED & SUPPLY STORE - DAY

Through the windows, which have been painted in honor of the holiday season, Jean is seen taking a cigarette break, outside. Inside, Andy and Tracey watch as a CASHIER rings up their purchase: Vitamin supplements, iodine, a tiny leather halter for the newborn foal, and more. Andy carefully checks off each item on her list.

TRACEY

Is that everything?

ANDY

Yep.

(CONTINUED)

CASHIER

That comes to seventy-three dollars
and thirty-three cents.

Andy and Tracey carefully pool wads of money from their pockets and hand it to the cashier. Tracey takes note of their diminishing cash supply.

TRACEY

We're running low.

ANDY

It's OK, we've got just one more
place to go. We've got enough.

TRACEY

Hey... Do you realize what that
means?

ANDY

Yeah, tomorrow we can quit our jobs
and get back to normal life!

TRACEY

Yippeeee!

INT. - LUMBERYARD - DAY

Greg helps Andy select from a variety of two by fours, four by fours and sheets of plywood. Tracey approaches, armed with two boxes of nails.

TRACEY

These the ones you wanted, Dad?

GREG

Perfect, angel.

INT. - LUMBERYARD CASH REGISTER - DAY

For Andy and Tracey, it seems the end of the world when they turn up short-handed.

EMPLOYEE

You're shy three dollars and eleven
cents.

Andy turns her pockets inside-out.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Tracey, you got any more money?

TRACEY

Nope. I guess we didn't figure enough for tax or something, huh?

EMPLOYEE

Would you like to put something back?

Greg hands Andy a five dollar bill.

GREG

Consider this an early Christmas present.

ANDY AND TRACEY

Thanks!

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Greg skillfully constructs a creep feeder (A feeder surrounded by low rails under which the foal can easily walk, but which keep the mare out) in a corner of the corral. Andy and Tracey assist him.

Just before sunset, the creep feeder is finished. Greg and the girls step back and admire their work.

GREG

Ta-da!

TRACEY

It's beautiful, Dad!

ANDY

(demonstrating))

It sure is! Whickery can just scoot under here and eat his food without Bellamy stealing it. It's perfect! Thank you, Greg!

GREG

It was my pleasure, Andy. I'm glad I could help.

INT. - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Andy helps Jean prepare the evening meal; Jean tenderizes the roast while Andy scrubs potatoes and wraps them in foil. Andy's spirits are high. She hums and sings to herself. Neither she nor Jean see Russell enter.

RUSSELL

Where is Martin? He said I could use his car tonight.

Jean and Andy turn to see a very disheveled Russell. He smells of marijuana and looks like he is ready to pop.

JEAN

He probably stopped off at the bar.

RUSSELL

Shit!

JEAN

He'll be home shortly; it's almost time for his evening feeding.

Russell stomps away. Andy tries to concentrate on her potatoes.

Moments later, Russell returns.

RUSSELL

Is he back yet?

JEAN

No, Russell. But he'll be here soon.

Russell angrily takes a handful of mail from the counter and pushes it to the floor. He paces back and forth, terrifying Andy. Jean seems unaffected.

RUSSELL

Goddamn him! I *hate* him. Fucking bastard!

Andy tries to ignore Russell, but finds herself tuned in to each and every word that passes his lips. Russell finally goes back to his room and slams the door.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN

Done with those potatoes?

ANDY

Yeah. What should I do next?

Suddenly, loud heavy metal music pours out of Russell's room at an ear-shattering volume. Jean shouts so Andy can hear.

JEAN

Salad!

Andy washes vegetables for the salad. Russell staggers back to the kitchen, even more out of control than before.

RUSSELL

Isn't he back yet?

JEAN

No, Russell. He's not back yet.

Russell cries out for all the world to hear. Tears streaming from his eyes, he grabs everything he can get his hands on and throws it viciously across the room.

RUSSELL

Stupid fucking drunk! I'll fucking
kill him!

Terrified, Andy retreats for the safety of her room, leaving Jean to deal with Russell.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy's room has been decorated with left-over green and red construction paper garlands made at school, and a strand of Christmas lights. Mr. Bear held close, Andy tries desperately to focus and put Russell and his craziness out of her mind. She grabs a marker and checks off her TO-DO list all the things she and Tracey accomplished that day.

ANDY

Let's see... We went to the feed
store... We went to the lumber yard
and built the creep feeder.

(to Mr. Bear)

Not bad for a day's work, eh, Mr.
Bear?

(CONTINUED)

Andy is hopeful when she hears, above the music, the front door slam and her mother's car pull out of the driveway.

RUSSELL (O.S.)
Fucking bitch! Fucking goddamned
bitch from Hell! I'll kill you,
too!

Andy's hope is shattered. It was *Jean* who fled the house, not Russell. She tries again to put it out of her mind. She goes back to her list.

ANDY
Let's see...

RUSSELL (O.S.)
Goddamn mother fuckers! I'll kill
them! I'll *destroy* them!

Andy sets Mr. Bear on the bed and frantically picks up YOUR FIRST FOAL. She reviews a chapter out loud and concentrates on committing passages to memory.

Moments later, Andy hears Martin's car pull into the driveway. Russell's music stops. Andy listens as Russell storms out the front door, slams it behind him and skids away in Martin's car.

MARTIN (O.S.)
Pa's home!

Andy breathes a sigh of relief.

INT. - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Shaking, Andy enters and sees Martin. He is drunk, as usual, and rummages through the kitchen, inspecting the incomplete dinner preparations.

MARTIN
Hey, babe. You cooking dinner
tonight?

ANDY
Uhh... I guess.

MARTIN

Where's your ma?

ANDY

She left... Must have gone back to work.

MARTIN

Let me know when everything's ready. I'm awful hungry; hardly ate a thing all day... Hey, know what I heard?

ANDY

Sheep...

MARTIN

Gosh! What'll I do? I need some new jokes!

ANDY

(whispers to herself))

No kidding.

Andy reluctantly resumes the dinner preparations.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy is awakened by the sound of her parents shouting in another room. She goes to investigate.

INT. - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jean and Martin are arguing about Russell and don't notice Andy when she enters. She stands in the doorway, rubbing the sleep out of her eyes and trying to figure out what is going on.

Finally, Jean notices Andy's presence.

JEAN

(to Andy))

What are you doing out of bed?

ANDY

I thought I heard yelling. I couldn't sleep.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIN

Go back to bed, babe. Your mother and I were just talking.

(to Jean)

I told you to keep it down!

JEAN

Oh, go to Hell.

ANDY

What's wrong?

MARTIN

Nothing's wrong. We were just talking about how lucky we are to have such a beautiful home and such a happy family.

JEAN

Indeed... A happy family who won't get any Christmas presents because *Russell* got drunk and wrecked the car, and now we have to spend money we don't have on a new one!

ANDY

(hopefully))

Russell wrecked the car? Did he get hurt?

JEAN

No, but the *car* sure did; it's *demolished*. He's in jail... Not a *scratch* on him.

MARTIN

Your mother and I are going to go bail him out.

JEAN

I said we are going to let him sit until morning!

MARTIN

We're going to get him *now*!

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Do you have to?

MARTIN

What has gotten into you two? Don't talk about Russell that way, he's part of our family.

ANDY

He sure doesn't act like it.

MARTIN

(to Andy)

That's enough out of you, young lady! Go to your room!

ANDY

But he scares me, and he always says mean things.

(to Jean)

Don't you remember what he said when we were cooking dinner, Mom?

JEAN

Go to bed, Andrea. You've got school in the morning.

ANDY

I don't care if he never comes back.

MARTIN

Go to bed! Now!

JEAN

Jesus H. Christ! Let's go pick him up and get this over with!

Andy turns her back on her parents and stomps back to her room.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

Seated at the table, Andy and Martin eat their morning meal. Jean, dressed in a bathrobe, packs Andy's lunch.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN

Peanut butter or tuna?

ANDY

Peanut butter, please.

JEAN

There's left-overs from last night in the fridge for your dinner. I won't be home until late.

MARTIN

Why don't you just take the day off? I am. This is probably going to take all day.

JEAN

Then what would we use to buy the damned car? *Box tops?*

MARTIN

Don't get smart, Jean.

ANDY

What kind of car are you going to get?

JEAN

Whatever's the cheapest.

MARTIN

(to Andy)

I want to look at one of those fancy sports cars; bright red with a convertible top!

JEAN

Maybe if you didn't spend all our money on booze and ball games, we could *afford* it.

MARTIN

Well, maybe if you were a decent mother and took care of your children, none of this would've happened!

(CONTINUED)

JEAN

You goddamned son of a bitch!

ANDY

Shut up, both of you! Just *shut up!*

With that, Andy gathers her books and lunch and storms out the door.

INT. - SCHOOL BUS - DAY

On the way to school, Andy and Tracey sit together in the front seat. Andy is very depressed. She finally breaks her silence.

ANDY

Tracey, do your mom and dad get along OK? I mean, do they argue and fight and call each other names?

TRACEY

They don't call each other names, but sometimes they argue about money and bills and stuff. They always kiss and make up, though.

ANDY

Do they kiss in front of you?

TRACEY

Yeah.

ANDY

Do they say 'I love you' to each other?

TRACEY

Sure, all the time.

ANDY

Not mine. I don't know why they're even married. They *hate* each other. For all I know, they hate me, too.

TRACEY

They don't hate you. No parents hate their kids.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

How do you know? They never tell me they love me. They don't talk to me or listen to me. They only want me to shut up and go away.

TRACEY

That doesn't mean they hate you.

ANDY

And why don't they do anything about Russell? Can't they see there's something wrong with him? I can't believe they bailed him out of jail; he's just going to do it all over again... He'll probably do something even worse...

TRACEY

I'm sure glad I don't have a big brother...

ANDY

I can't wait until I'm old enough to move out.

TRACEY

Andy, don't talk like that, things will get better. What about Whickery?

Andy looks unconvinced.

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

The room is now fully decorated with the handmade garlands and other decorations. There is a lovely Christmas tree, covered with tinsel, lights and candy canes, in a corner.

Mr. Byrne conducts a science experiment at the front of the class.

MR. BYRNE

We've got time for one more before lunch. I'll need an assistant. Anyone?

(CONTINUED)

None of the students respond. Not even Andy.

MR. BYRNE

Andy? I can always count on you.

ANDY

No thanks, Mr. Byrne.

MR. BYRNE

Really? I'm hurt...

(to Lucinda)

OK, Lucinda. Come on up and give me a hand.

Lucinda shyly joins Mr. Byrne and assists him with the experiment. Andy pays no attention; she traces mindlessly over the words HORSES RULE on her notebook.

The lunch bell rings. Andy comes to and puts her notebook and pencil away, as do the rest of the students.

MR. BYRNE

You're excused. See you after lunch.

(to Andy)

Andy, five minutes?

ANDY

Yes, sir.

(to Tracey)

Save me a place.

Mr. Byrne's waits until the students have cleared the room.

MR. BYRNE

Andy, are you OK?

ANDY

Are you mad because I didn't help with the experiment?

MR. BYRNE

No. I'm concerned, though. You're not yourself today. Is Bellamy OK?

ANDY

Yeah.

MR. BYRNE

Is the foal OK?

ANDY

Yeah... But I need him now.

MR. BYRNE

I understand that you're impatient, but you don't want to be sad from now until August when he's born, do you?

ANDY

No... But the three of us are going to be our own family. I mean, four of us, with Mr. Bear. Then we won't need anybody else.

MR. BYRNE

Then what are you going to do for the next eight months?

ANDY

I don't know... I wish Russell would just go away and my parents would start being nice to each other.

MR. BYRNE

Is that what's making you unhappy?

ANDY

Maybe I just shouldn't care anymore about what Russell does. I'm the only one in the whole family who does, so I'm the only one who doesn't fit in.

Mr. Byrne looks at Andy for a moment silently.

MR. BYRNE

Andy, let me show you something.

Mr. Byrne goes to the chalk board and writes "1 + 2 = X."

(CONTINUED)

MR. BYRNE

What's the answer to this equation?

ANDY

Three.

MR. BYRNE

Why not four or five?

ANDY

Because one plus two is always three.

MR. BYRNE

Exactly. But if you pretend the one was a seven, and the two was a five, you would come up with the wrong answer, wouldn't you?

Andy looks puzzled.

MR. BYRNE

It's the same way with life. If you try to pretend that something is different than it really is, you will never come up with the correct answer, will you?

ANDY

Hmmm... But what if you don't know how something really is?

MR. BYRNE

You'll know. The hard part is deciding what the answer means once you figure it out.

ANDY

Thanks, Mr. 'B'. I guess that means I have some homework to do, huh?

MR. BYRNE

Let me know if you need some help. Go eat your lunch, champ.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Mr. 'B'?

MR. BYRNE

Yes, Andy?

ANDY

I'd really like my old job back, if it's still available.

MR. BYRNE

Lucky for you, Tuesdays and Thursdays are still open.

ANDY

Lucky for you! I'm going to get my job back at Morning Star, and those are the only days I'll be available!

Andy and Mr. Byrne giggle happily.

MR. BYRNE

It'll be nice to have you around again.

EXT. - MORNING STAR RANCH - DAY

Herb checks in with Andy, who is busy cleaning a row of stalls.

HERB

You're a great little worker, Andy. Keep it up and you could own this place someday.

ANDY

I'm happy just working here.

HERB

I'm not going to be here much longer, little one. My oldest is leaving for college in another year. If I don't spend some time with my family now, I may not get another chance.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

But why would you want to get away from here? It's the best place I know; there are horses and mountains and trails... What more could you want?

HERB

Andy, there's more to life than just horses. I've worked so hard I almost missed seeing my kids grow up, and I've got friends I haven't visited for God knows how long.

ANDY

Hmmm...

EXT. - STREET - DAY

Andy walks home in the setting sun, tired after her shift at Morning Star Ranch.

Martin pulls up beside her in his newly purchased CAR; it is a used Ford Escort with orange exterior and brown interior, perhaps the ugliest car Andy has ever seen.

MARTIN

Hey, babe! Hop in.

Andy climbs into the passenger seat and fastens her seat belt. Martin puts the car in gear and heads for home. He has been drinking and is quite buzzed.

MARTIN

Whaddya think? She's a beauty, ain't she?

Andy tries to think of a polite reply.

ANDY

It rides nice.

MARTIN

I'll say. What did ya learn in school today?

Andy considers the question carefully.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Equations... You know, math stuff.

MARTIN

Well, good. Hey, guess what I heard?

ANDY

Sheep. Dad? Maybe if Russell got a job and helped pay for the car, we could get Christmas presents after all. You think?

MARTIN

Don't you worry about Christmas, babe. There will be plenty under the tree this year. Santa will see to that... *Know what I saw?*

Andy sighs.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - DAY

Martin parks in the driveway. He and Andy collect their things and get out. Russell emerges from the house, holding his hand out to Martin for the car keys.

RUSSELL

I need to to go somewhere.

MARTIN

Oh, sure. OK. She rides real nice. Be careful with her.

Russell takes the keys and speeds away. Andy isn't the least bit surprised. She whispers to herself.

ANDY

Figures...

EXT. - RANDALL CORRAL - NIGHT

Andy stands watching Tracey prepare a bucket of feed for Sox.

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Come and get it, Sox... You're lucky you don't have to eat broccoli. Yecchh!

ANDY

What's wrong with broccoli?

TRACEY

I hate it. Do your parents make you eat stuff you don't like?

ANDY

No... I pretty much just eat what I want.

TRACEY

My parents do. They're so strict; they make me go to bed early, they make me clean up my room every day, and last night I had to talk on the phone to my Grandma when my favorite show was on TV.

ANDY

At least they love you.

TRACEY

It sure doesn't seem like it sometimes. I wish I had parents like yours who wouldn't boss me around.

Andy looks around uncomfortably.

ANDY

Where's Sox's blanket? I'll put it on for you.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The calendar on Andy's wall is now turned to the month of February. Saturday the eleventh is circled in yellow, and written in blue are the words "SHOW!"

Andy is dressed in competition attire; beige britches, white

(CONTINUED)

blouse and black boots. She stands in front of the mirror, braiding her hair. When she is finished, she grabs her dark blue riding coat, black helmet and gloves, and heads out the door.

EXT. - COMMUNITY FAIRGROUND - HORSE SHOW - DAY

Andy, on Bellamy's back, is now wearing her coat, gloves and helmet. Bellamy's main and tail have been neatly braided. They make an immaculate pair.

Andy and Linda watch Tracey, also dressed in competition attire, ride Sox over an intricate series of jumps in the arena. They are disappointed when Sox clips two of the last three.

LINDA

Too bad.

ANDY

Well, so far she's got the best score.

The crowd applauds Tracey's effort. She rides Sox out of the arena.

LINDA

Good ride, Tracey. You were all clear except those two clips.

TRACEY

I just couldn't get up enough speed to clear them.

LUCINDA

You hear that, Andy? You'll have to get your speed way up after that last turn to clear those.

ANDY

Got you.

ANNOUNCER

Next up, rider number one hundred-twelve, Andrea Hemingsworth, aboard Bellamy.

(CONTINUED)

LINDA

You're up. Go get 'em.

TRACEY

Good luck, Andy.

Andy enters the arena confidently. She eases Bellamy into the canter and rides her over each of the jumps, clearing them with ease; even the last three. She has trained hard, and it shows. The crowd applauds.

Exiting the arena, Andy gets a high-five from Tracey before jumping off of Bellamy and into Linda's open arms.

TRACEY

Way to go, Hemingsworth!

LINDA

I'm very proud of you, Andy.

ANDY

Thanks! What about Belle?

LINDA

You too, Belle. You and Andy are quite a team.

Linda escorts Andy and Tracey back to their grooming area.

INT. - ANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

With the sound of Russell's heavy metal music blasting in the background, Andy polishes her new trophies and places them neatly on her bookcase with the others. She hangs her ribbons (mostly blue) on her already over-crowded walls.

Suddenly, Russell's music stops. Then, it proceeds to start and stop repeatedly. Sensing something is wrong, Andy goes to investigate.

INT. - RUSSELL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Russell's room is furnished only with a mattress and stereo. The walls and floor are filthy. Drugs, drug paraphernalia, dirty dishes and clothes are piled recklessly about.

Andy finds Russell and Martin arguing face to face. Their eyes are locked on one another hatefully. She watches their

(CONTINUED)

exchange through terrified eyes. Her heart races.

RUSSELL
Get out of my room, old man.

MARTIN
Just turn down the music and I
will.

RUSSELL
No. Now get out.

MARTIN
Not until you turn it down. I can't
hear the ball game.

RUSSELL
I said *get out*.

MARTIN
Turn it down.

RUSSELL
I said, get the fuck out of my
room, you god damned bastard!

MARTIN
Turn it down!

RUSSELL
No, goddamn you!

Russell jumps on Martin and knocks him to the floor. They wrestle furiously, each struggling with all of his might to overpower the other. Andy pleads hysterically with them to stop.

ANDY
Stop it! Stop it, *please!*

RUSSELL
You fucking bastard!

ANDY
I said *stop it!*

Russell goes for Martin's throat. Andy panics and races for the telephone in the living room.

INT. - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Andy picks up the phone and frantically dials 911.

ANDY
 (into the phone)
 Hello? I need the police! This is
 an emergency!

INT. - RUSSELL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Andy rushes back to the scene of the fight.

RUSSELL
 (choking Martin)
 Don't you ever try to tell me what
 to do, understand?!

ANDY
 Leave my daddy alone, Russell!
 Leave *him* alone!

RUSSELL
 (still choking Martin)
 Do you understand me?!

Russell bashes Martin's head against the floor. Andy screams.

RUSSELL
 I said, do you *understand* me?!

MARTIN
 Yes... I understand you.

RUSSELL
 Good. Then I won't have to kill
 you!

Russell releases his stranglehold. Martin grabs a dirty steak knife from a nearby plate and throws Russell against the wall, threatening him with the knife.

MARTIN
 Get out of my house, you drug
 addict! Get out and stay out!

(CONTINUED)

RUSSELL
(spitting in Martin's face))
Fuck you!

MARTIN
I've had about all I can take of
you! Get out now and *stay out!*

RUSSELL
(spitting again))
Fuck you! I'll kill you, you
bastard!

MARTIN
Not if I kill you first, you
delinquent!

RUSSELL
Go ahead and try it!

Having lost his stamina, Martin takes his car keys from his pocket and throws them angrily at Russell.

MARTIN
Here, *take them!* Take the damned
car and get out! I don't want to
ever see your sorry face near this
house again!

Russell grabs his jacket and storms out of the house, slamming the door as usual. Martin and Andy remain frozen until he finally skids away.

Martin is battered and bruised and unusually sober. His clothes are torn, his nose bleeds. He shakes uncontrollably.

MARTIN
Better go to bed now, Andrea.

Andy sobs painfully. She runs to Martin and wraps her arms around his belly. She clings to him tightly.

ANDY
I love you Daddy, I love you so
much and I'm *proud* of what you did.

Martin strokes his daughters hair and weeps. A red light shines through the window. Martin and Andy look out and see

a POLICE CAR parked outside. The doorbell rings.

MARTIN

What in God's name are *they* doing here?

ANDY

I called them, Dad. I wanted to get help.

MARTIN

Oh, Lord...

Martin dries the tears from his eyes, straightens his hair and tucks in his shirt.

INT. - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Andy watches from behind as Martin talks to the POLICEMAN, who stands outside.

MARTIN

It's kind of funny, really. My son got a little upset and my daughter overreacted... She's only ten. She didn't know better.

POLICEMAN

I understand. I've got a nine and a thirteen year old myself. Have a nice evening, Mr. Hemingsworth.

MARTIN

Yeah, you too. Thanks for stopping by.

Martin closes the door and wearily heads for the kitchen. Andy follows close behind.

INT. - HEMINGSWORTH KITCHEN - NIGHT

Andy confronts her father.

ANDY

I'm *eleven*, remember?

(CONTINUED)

MARTIN

Of course you are, babe. Sorry.

ANDY

Why didn't you tell him the truth
about Russell?

Martin grabs a fresh beer from the refrigerator and gulps it
down thirstily. He grabs another.

MARTIN

Doesn't matter anyway. Russell's
gone and he's not coming back. No
sense in stirring up any more
trouble.

ANDY

But what if they find out you lied?

MARTIN

They won't. Everything will be
fine. You better go on to bed,
tomorrow's a school day. Wouldn't
want your ma to come home from work
and find you still up.

ANDY

OK, good night... Are you OK?

MARTIN

Never better.

ANDY

Dad? I'm glad Russell's gone. Now
we can be a *normal* family.

MARTIN

You bet. Sweet dreams, babe.

EXT. - SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Everyone else has loaded onto the bus as Andy runs up and
clamors aboard. She moves to the back of the bus to sit with
Tracey, Lucinda, Barbie, and Kristen.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Herb gave me the day off today.

INT. - SCHOOL BUS - DAY

On the way home from school, Andy sits in the back seat of the bus with her friends. She is very animated and entertains them with stories of her success at Saturday's horse show. She is the center of attention.

ANDY

So I'm in Bareback Equitation, and Bellamy is so-o clean and so-o slippery, I can't post the trot right. I keep sliding out of position and my legs are *aching!* And I'm freaking out because I want to win high-point!

LUCINDA

So what'd you do?

KRISTEN

Yeah, I can hardly post *with* a saddle.

ANDY

I just concentrated on getting it right while I was in the Judge's eyesight. That way I could rest my legs while he wasn't looking, see.

BARBIE

Sneaky! How'd you place?

Tracey turns away from the group mouths the words along with Andy. She's tired of being reminded of Saturday's show.

ANDY

I won!

BARBIE

No way! That's great!

ANDY

Yeah, I won high-point, too - that's best over-all for my age

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANDY (cont'd)

group - which is cool, because that was my last show until Whickery is born.

LUCINDA

Wow. Can we see your trophies?

KRISTEN

Yeah, come on Andy!

ANDY

(proudly)

For sure! Let's go to my house. You guys can see Bellamy, too.

BARBIE

How long until Whickery is born?

ANDY

Six months... Well, five and a half months, really.

The bus slows to a stop and the girls pile off.

EXT. - STREET - DAY

The girls head toward Andy's house. Tracey walks quietly behind them.

ANDY

Coming, Trace?

TRACEY

Nah, I got something else I got to do.

ANDY

Well come by later then, OK?

TRACEY

If I can.

ANDY

OK, bye.

Andy, Barbie, Kristen and Lucinda skip off, arm in arm.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - DAY

Andy slows her pace when she sees her father's car parked in the driveway; the same car Russell drove off in the night before. She fears the worst.

ANDY

Uh, wait here you guys. Let me just make sure it's OK first.

KRISTEN

No prob.

INT. - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Andy opens the front door. The house is dark and hot; all the drapes have been drawn. Marijuana smoke looms in the air.

Andy peeks around the corner into the living room, where Russell is sprawled out in a chair. He watches WOODY WOODPECKER cartoons and smokes a joint. - There are crushed beer cans all around him on the floor. An oversized fire is burning out of control in the fire place.

Russell looks up and sees Andy spying on him.

RUSSELL

Spoiled fucking *brat*, get out of my life!

Fed up, Andy stands there for a moment, bravely testing him. Russell throws a beer can at her.

RUSSELL

Get out!

Andy flees outside for safety.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - DAY

In a state of terror, Andy races out the door. She awkwardly approaches her friends who wait on the front lawn.

BARBIE

So?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Hey, you know what? My brother's really sick right now and doesn't want to expose you to his germs. We'll have to do this some other time.

The girls are disappointed.

BARBIE

What's wrong with him?

ANDY

Oh, he's got a really bad flu. Keeps barfing and everything. He's a real mess.

LUCINDA

Well, can we see Bellamy? She's outside.

KRISTEN

No *duh*, Lucinda. They wouldn't keep her in the house.

LUCINDA

Shut up, Kristen.
(to Andy)
Can we, And?

ANDY

(nervously)

Yeah, I guess it'd be OK. Let's just be real quiet so we don't disturb my brother.

The girls walk down to the horse corral.

BARBIE

Andy, what's your brother's name?

ANDY

Russell.

BARBIE

Is he cute?

KRISTEN

Yeah, how old is he?

ANDY

He's eighteen and no, he's not cute.

BARBIE

You probably just say that because he's your brother. I don't think my brother's cute either, but a lot of girls do.

LUCINDA

Is he nice, Andy?

ANDY

Yeah, he's real nice.
(changing the subject)
There's Belle. Come on.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Andy shuttles her friends into the corral. They dote over beautiful Bellamy. Andy manages to relax a bit.

ANDY

(demonstrating)

When she's six months pregnant,
we'll be able to feel Whickery
right around here.

LUCINDA

Let me feel... Ooh, I think I felt something!

BARBIE

You did not, liar.

LUCINDA

I did too!

ANDY

It was probably just gas or something. She's only five months pregnant.

Barbie steps up and presses an ear to Bellamy's belly.

(CONTINUED)

BARBIE

Oh my gosh, it sounds busy in there!

Suddenly, Russell's music blasts from the house. He shatters a window and cries out for all the world to hear. Andy panics.

RUSSELL (O.S.)

I'll kill them! They are going to die! They will *diieeee!*

BARBIE

Gosh Andy, is that your brother?

ANDY

I don't know... You guys had better go. I'll go check on him.

The girls see sparks from Russell's fire shooting dangerously from the chimney.

LUCINDA

Look at that! Something's going to catch on fire!

ANDY

Why don't you guys go, I'll see you tomorrow.

Russell continues to scream.

KRISTEN

Andy, is your brother OK?

Andy considers her reply carefully.

ANDY

No, he's not okay. I don't know why, but I lied you guys... I'm sorry. My brother's not *sick*, but he's not *okay* either.

KRISTEN

What does *that* mean?

ANDY

I don't know for sure, nobody talks about it. All I know is he takes drugs and acts crazy.

Andy's eyes fill with angry tears.

ANDY

Go on home. I'll see you tomorrow.

LUCINDA

Are you sure? Maybe you should come with us.

ANDY

No, I'll be okay. See you at school.

Andy watches her friends depart. Sparks continue to shoot from the chimney, the distorted music plays on and Russell screams away. Andy is furious.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - DAY

Andy surveys the chaotic situation from a hiding place amongst the overgrown bushes and trees in the front yard. From the chimney comes a steady shower of sparks. Andy grabs the garden hose and turns the water power on full blast, watering down the roof and surrounding foliage to prevent fire.

ANDY

(whispering to herself)

Dumb jerk!

INT. - FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Andy bursts through the front door.

INT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Andy finds Russell in much the same position he was in earlier; sprawled out on a chair, beer in hand and joint in mouth. Andy cuts off the gas to the fireplace and stands, trembling, before him.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Why did you come back?

RUSSELL

Get lost, bitch...

ANDY

No, you get lost! You think you're so big saying mean things and pushing us around. But let me tell you, you're a real scuz-ball and I want you to leave! So get out!

RUSSELL

Take a hike before I hurt you.

ANDY

I mean it, Russell! If you can't be nice then get out!

Russell crushes his beer can and casually tosses it over his shoulder onto the floor.

ANDY

I'm not kidding, Russell. Get the heck out!!!

Russell theatrically jumps at Andy, who would sooner die than run away.

RUSSELL

Aaaaagggghhhhhh!
(mimicking Jean)
Andrea, go to your room!

ANDY

Get out of here now, you... you dummy!!!

Andy kicks Russell explosively in the shin. Russell pushes her to the floor.

RUSSELL

Dummy?

Russell laughs uproariously and giggles obscenely all the way to his room.

Andy springs to her feet, all alone with her fury. She kicks Russell's beer cans viciously and throws his ashtray against the wall.

INT. - HALLWAY - DAY

Andy kicks Russell's bedroom door and shouts over the loud music.

ANDY

You're so *stupid!* If you really hate us so much, you should stay away!

Russell responds by turning the music up even louder and singing along.

ANDY

You listen to me, you *creep!* We hate you, too, so you might as well just leave!!!

Jean grabs Andy's shoulder from behind and spins her around.

JEAN

(shouting)

What in the *hell* is going on here?!

Andy is taken by complete surprise. Russell snickers with satisfaction.

ANDY

Mom! Russell...

JEAN

Come with me this instant, young lady.

Jean drags Andy to the kitchen.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

Jean grabs Andy by the shirt and shakes her hard.

JEAN

What on earth do you think you are doing?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Getting rid of Russell; he came back!

JEAN

Of course he came back. He lives here.

ANDY

But Dad said that Russell was gone forever.

JEAN

Jesus H. Christ, Andrea! When your father gets drunk he's liable to say anything. Why aren't you at work? If you'd been where you were supposed to be, none of this would have happened.

ANDY

How come Russell doesn't have to work?

JEAN

That's no concern of yours, young lady. Russell will get a job when he's ready.

ANDY

But why does he even live here if he hates us so much?

JEAN

He's a member of this family whether you like it or not.

ANDY

Well I don't like it, and I don't want to be a part of this family anymore.

JEAN

Fine. You think you can do better? Do it. I am tired of hearing about it.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

You won't have to; I'm leaving!

JEAN

Whoop de doo. Don't forget to write.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Andy carries a load of her belongings toward the tack room; books, pajamas, a flashlight, and Mr. Bear.

INT. - TACK ROOM - DAY

The tack room has been transformed into a make-shift bedroom; there is a bed made up of blankets and pillows, and a small piece of plywood mounted across two saw-horses serves as a table.

Andy carefully sets her things down. She squeezes Mr. Bear and plops down on the bed to rest. Bellamy peeks in through the open door to investigate.

ANDY

Hi, Belle. We're our own family now. Neat, huh?

Tracey sneaks up unexpectedly.

TRACEY

Russell came back, didn't he?

Andy nearly jumps out of her skin.

ANDY

Oh, it's you... Yeah, he came back, so I moved out.

Tracey inspects Andy's new living quarters.

TRACEY

You're going to live in here? Do your parents know?

ANDY

They don't care.

(CONTINUED)

TRACEY

Won't you miss your bedroom?

ANDY

Nah. This beats being in the house
any day.

TRACEY

Hmm... What if you get cold?

ANDY

I won't, I've got lots of blankets.
Warm jammies, too.

TRACEY

What if you get hungry?

Andy shows Tracey her private stash; a bag filled with
crackers, chips and other munchies.

ANDY

I've got that covered. Want some?

TRACEY

Yeah.

Tracey makes herself at home on Andy's bed. She and Andy dig
in to a box of crackers.

ANDY

The only time I'll have to go into
the house is when I need something.

TRACEY

I guess this isn't so bad... But...

ANDY

But what?

TRACEY

But if you're going to go to all
this trouble, then why not move
out-out... Like to Maryland, with
me?

ANDY

And leave Bellamy behind? No can do! I could never leave Bellamy and Whickery. Never.

TRACEY

I know how you feel; I wish I didn't have to sell Sox; I don't want to leave him.

ANDY

I wish you didn't have to leave Sox or me... Hey, I know! Why don't you camp out with me tonight?

TRACEY

Can't. It's a school night.

ANDY

(crestfallen)

Yeah.

TRACEY

Well, I guess I'll see you in the morning. Bye.

ANDY

Bye.

Andy watches Tracey walk away, then settles herself on her bed, deep in thought.

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

Mr. Byrne leads his class in long division exercises at the blackboard.

MR. BYRNE

(writing on the blackboard)

237,981 divided by 713. Who would like to volunteer?

ANDY

I would!

Andy is the only student to volunteer.

(CONTINUED)

MR. BYRNE
(ala THE PRICE IS RIGHT)
Andy Hemingsworth, come on down!

Andy bounces to the blackboard and quickly solves the problem.

ANDY
237,981 divided by 713 is equal to
333.77, *sir!*

MR. BYRNE
That is absolutely correct, Miss
Hemingsworth! Thank you very much.

Andy trots proudly back to her desk.

MR. BYRNE
Who would like to go next?

None of the reluctant students volunteer.

ANDY
(raising her hand)
I'd like to go again, if it's okay?

INT. - SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Andy takes a catnap on the ride home from school. Tracey sits next to her, bursting with energy.

TRACEY
Andy? You sleeping?

ANDY
Nah, just resting. I'm beat.

TRACEY
Are we going to ride today?

ANDY
As soon as I'm done cleaning Mr.
'B's stalls. Around four-thirty.

TRACEY
Cool. I'll be ready.

INT. - BYRNE BARN - DAY

Andy stands in the empty stall, diligently shoveling manure into a wheelbarrow. Her work pace steadily slows, until finally she must sit down and take a breather.

Andy finds the ground very comfortable, and decides to lie down. Soon, she is fast asleep.

EXT. - BYRNE BARN - DAY

Later, Tracey rides Sox up to the barn. She is in search of Andy, who never came home for her ride.

TRACEY

Andy? Andy, are you here?

INT. - BYRNE BARN - DAY

Andy doesn't hear Tracey; she sleeps soundly.

EXT. - BYRNE HOUSE - DAY

Tracey dismounts and knocks on the front door, but there is no answer. Giving up, she angrily hops aboard Sox and rides away.

TRACEY

(to herself)

Darn you, Hemingsworth. Thanks a lot!

INT. - BYRNE BARN - NIGHT

Mr. Byrne pushes a wheelbarrow full of feed from stall to stall. As he feeds the horses, he stumbles upon Andy, who is still asleep. He takes her hand and gently pats it until she wakes up.

MR. BYRNE

Andy? Wake up, champ.

ANDY

Hmm? Oh, Mr. 'B'... Looks like I fell asleep.

(CONTINUED)

MR. BYRNE

Looks like it. You feeling okay?

Mr. Byrne feels Andy's forehead for signs of fever.

ANDY

Oh, sure. A little tired, that's all.

MR. BYRNE

I guess so. It's getting pretty late, we should call your parents and let them know you're alright.

Mr. Byrne helps Andy to her feet.

MR. BYRNE

As long as you're here, why don't you stay for dinner?

ANDY

Sure, that'd be great!

INT. - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Andy joins Mr. and Mrs. Byrne at the table after having called Tracey and Jean to put them at ease.

ANDY

Tracey's pissed. She said she worried herself sick.

MRS. BYRNE

What about your mom?

ANDY

She wasn't worried. I'm not really living at home anyway.

MRS. BYRNE

Ohh?

Mrs. and Mr. Byrne exchange a glance.

MR. BYRNE

Where are you living, Andy?

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Bellamy and I have our own family
out in the corral.

MRS. BYRNE

What's wrong with your real family?

ANDY

Russell came back after Dad kicked
him out and Mom won't do anything
about it, so I moved into the tack
room.

MR. BYRNE

You can't stay there forever.

ANDY

I know. I'm saving my money so the
four of us can move out after
Whickery is born.

MRS. BYRNE

Four?

ANDY

Mr. Bear.

MR. BYRNE

Have you thought about where you'll
go?

Andy shrugs her shoulders naively.

ANDY

I'll find someplace. No biggy.

MRS. BYRNE

(changing the subject)

Do you like fried chicken, Andy?

ANDY

Do I? I love it!

MR. BYRNE

Good, because I made this myself,
and if I may say so, it is quite
extraordinary.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. BYRNE

I don't know about you two, but I'm starved. Let's eat!

They help themselves to fried chicken, mashed potatoes and green salad and eat hungrily.

MR. BYRNE

Like it?

ANDY

It's *delicious*. You're a lot better cook than my mom, Mr. 'B'.

MR. BYRNE

Thank you. I'm a better cook than my mom, too. But don't tell *her* that.

Andy tries to stifle a yawn.

ANDY

Excuse me.

MRS. BYRNE

You could use a good night's sleep.

ANDY

Yeah, I've been *busy*, Mrs. 'B'. School and homework and Bellamy and lessons and work... Whew!

MR. BYRNE

I'm glad to see it hasn't affected your appetite.

ANDY

Nah, I'm okay.

MR. BYRNE

You know what they say about all work and no play...

ANDY

I *like* being really busy; keeps my mind off things, you know? And I need the money.

(CONTINUED)

MR. BYRNE

That reminds me, I owe you some money for last week.

ANDY

Thanks, Mr. 'B'. By the way, you forgot to take the halters off your horses. I did it for you.

MR. BYRNE

Ooops! Two demerits.

ANDY

Don't worry. Just don't do it again; it's not safe... Can I have more potatoes, please?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. - TACK ROOM - DAY

Six months have passed. Andy's calendar, hanging on the wall, confirms this. It is turned to the month of August. Each day that has passed has been crossed off. The alarm clock on the table reads 4:30 a.m.

Andy sleeps peacefully.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Bellamy is obviously in labor; she paces restlessly about, biting at her sides and swishing her tail. She finds a suitable place in the center of the corral and lies down.

INT. - TACK ROOM - DAY

Andy stirs slightly, but continues to sleep.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Bellamy gives birth to her foal. She rests for a few moments before standing on her feet and encouraging her youngster to do the same.

INT. - TACK ROOM - DAY

At 8:00 a.m., Andy's alarm goes off. Andy jumps out of bed and pulls on her shorts, tank top, and tennies. She prepares

(CONTINUED)

a bucket of feed for Bellamy's breakfast.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Andy opens the door, armed with the bucket of feed. It takes her a moment before she notices the long, lanky, fiery red foal nursing at Bellamy's side. Andy sets the bucket down and falls to her knees.

ANDY

Bellamy... Oh my gosh, Bellamy...
You had it! You had the foal!

Bellamy walks over and eats hungrily from the bucket at Andy's side. Andy carefully steps close to Whickery and looks carefully to see whether he is male or female.

ANDY

You're a... boy! I think. It's kind
of hard to tell. Yep, you're
definitely a boy.

Andy walks softly but quickly to the tack room. She returns with a shot glass filled with iodine.

Andy strokes Bellamy lovingly to reassure her, then reaches her trembling hand out to the tiny new born foal. She touches his soft coat, tears of joy welling in her eyes.

ANDY

Hello, Whickery... Welcome to our
family.

Andy swiftly and carefully douses Whickery's umbilical cord with the iodine. He and Bellamy are momentarily spooked and trot away.

ANDY

I had to, guys. Says so in the
book... Be right back!

Bursting with excitement, Andy carefully exits the corral, so as not to frighten the foal. Once out, however, she tears up to the house.

INT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Andy picks up the phone and excitedly dials long distance.

LOIS (O.S.)

Hello?

ANDY

(into the phone)

Hello, Lois? This is Andy. Is Tracey there?

LOIS (O.S.)

Well, hello there! Hold on, I'll get her.

Moments later, Tracey bursts on the line.

TRACEY (O.S.)

Hemingsbutt! Did she have it?

ANDY

Just this morning! As promised, you're the *first* one to know. Whickery's a boy. And he's *beautiful!* He's a red-chestnut with a little white blaze, just like his dad's.

INT. - TRACEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Tracey sits on her bed talking into the phone. She is in her new home in Maryland. Photos of Andy and a very pregnant Bellamy are tacked to a bulletin board which hangs on the wall.

TRACEY

I'll bet he's big, huh?

ANDY (O.S.)

He's a giant. He's going to be a great jumper.

TRACEY

I'm so happy Andy! Are you?

INT. - HEMINGSWORTH LIVING ROOM - DAY

ANDY

Right now, I'm pretty *darn* happy!

TRACEY (O.S.)

I really miss you. I wish I was there.

ANDY

Me too... I better go so I can call the vet and make Belle some hot mash.

TRACEY (O.S.)

Okay. Take some pictures of Whickery and send them to me right away!

ANDY

You got it. I'll talk to you later, Trace. Bye.

TRACEY

Bye, Andy.

Andy hangs up the phone and dials the veterinarian's number.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Andy watches as the veterinarian, DR. GUARDINO, concludes his examination of Bellamy and newborn Whickery.

DR. GUARDINO

Little Whickery is in excellent health, Andy.

ANDY

And Belle?

DR. GUARDINO

Fit as a fiddle.

Andy smiles in delight.

EXT. - BYRNE BARN - DAY

Andy is busy cleaning stalls when Mr. Byrne rides up on his horse.

ANDY

Did you see him?

MR. BYRNE

I sure did! He is a handsome little fellow. You must be one proud grandma!

ANDY

I sure am! This is the best day of my life!

MR. BYRNE

Seems like only yesterday you were taking Bellamy to Morning Star for stud service.

ANDY

To me it seems like *ten years!*

INT. - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Wearry after a big day and very hungry, Andy opens a can of Campbell's Split Pea Soup. She dumps the contents into a pan and puts it on the stove. Just home from work, Jean stands near the sink popping aspirin and chasing them with cold coffee. She is dressed in work attire and still carries her purse.

JEAN

My head...

Martin, drunker than usual, comes in and checks to see what Andy is cooking.

MARTIN

That looks delicious. Is that for me?

ANDY

No, it's for me.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIN

Oh, okay.

(to Jean)

When's *my* dinner gonna be ready?

JEAN

Jesus H. Christ, I just walked in the door!

MARTIN

Well I'm hungry, Jean.

Andy tries to ignore her bickering parents.

JEAN

Well you'll have to wait.

MARTIN

I don't want to wait; a man's dinner should be ready when he comes home at night.

JEAN

Don't start, Martin.

MARTIN

I had to go to work today in dirty socks. Are you gonna get to my laundry tonight?

JEAN

We'll see.

MARTIN

Don't give me that 'We'll see' crap. You're neglecting your responsibilities, Jean.

JEAN

Don't you talk to me about responsibilities, Mister. Who brings home most of the money around here? Who pays the bills, buys the groceries, cooks the food and cleans the house?

(CONTINUED)

MARTIN

If you do it, then why isn't my
dinner ready? How come I don't have
any clean socks?

Having reached wit's end, Jean grabs a container of left-overs from the refrigerator and carelessly dumps them onto a plate.

JEAN

There! Dinner is served. Now get
out of my hair!

MARTIN

Aren't you gonna heat it up?

JEAN

Ooohhhhhhhh!

Jean dumps the plate's contents into a pan and slams it down on the stove. Martin takes a seat at the table.

MARTIN

That's more like it.

Andy is disgusted by her parent's behavior. She pours her soup into a bowl and puts a piece of bread into the toaster. Russell stomps in.

RUSSELL

I need the car.

Martin rummages through his pockets and pulls out his keys and a ten dollar bill.

MARTIN

Oh, okay. It's low on gas, better
put some in.

Russell snatches the money and keys.

RUSSELL

I need *twenty*.

MARTIN

That's all I have.

Russell looks at Jean.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN

Don't look at me. I gave your father everything I had this morning.

MARTIN

You have any money, Andy?

ANDY

No.

RUSSELL

Fuck! Never mind.

Russell stomps out the door, slamming it behind him, as usual. Andy butters her toast.

MARTIN

Why don't you sit and eat with yer pa tonight?

ANDY

No thank you.

Andy gathers her food walks out the door.

INT. - TACK ROOM - NIGHT

Andy turns on the light and sets her food on the table. She takes a seat on the floor.

ANDY

Get your own money, Russell. You're not touching mine.

EXT. - CORRAL - DAY

Andy gently brushes Whickery with a nice, soft brush. She listens to her favorite radio station on a small transistor radio. Unfortunately, it doesn't block out the sound of Russell's heavy metal music blasting from the house. She sees sparks shooting from the chimney.

ANDY

Don't you worry, Whickery. Pretty soon we'll have our own place. I promise.

(CONTINUED)

She finishes brushing Whickery and removes his halter.

ANDY

Well, boy, time to get ready for work. I'll see you later.

(to Bellamy)

Bye, Belle.

INT. - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Heavy metal music still penetrates the afternoon air. The whole house is filled with marijuana smoke. An oversized fire blazes out of control in the fire place. Andy tiptoes in and looks around for Russell. He's not around, so she turns off the gas and watches the fire die down.

EXT. - MORNING STAR RANCH - DAY

Finished with her work, Andy puts her shovel and wheelbarrow away. She waves good-bye to Herb on her way out.

HERB

Thank you, Andy. See you Friday.

ANDY

You bet. Bye.

HERB

Bye, now.

EXT. - STREET - DAY

Andy pays little attention to the sirens screaming in the distance as she continues homeward. She is caught up in the scenery around her.

Closer now to her house, Andy is nervous. The air is thick with smoke. She watches a paramedic speed past, toward the hospital. She quickens her pace.

EXT. - ANDY'S STREET - DAY

As she rounds the corner down the street from her home, she freezes; her house is on fire! Two red fire trucks are parked on the street and a dozen firemen work diligently to put out the fire. Neighbors are busy watering down their houses and yards. Andy runs as fast as her little legs will carry her.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - DAY

Along with the fire trucks, a crowd of concerned neighbors surrounds the burning house. Andy fights her way to the front of the crowd to survey the damage. The entire house is a pile of smoldering rubbish.

ANDY

Oh my God, *Bellamy and Whickery!!!*

Andy races hysterically toward the corral, but is stopped by a FIREMAN.

FIREMAN

Where do you think you're going?

ANDY

That's *my* house! I got to see if my horses are okay!!!

FIREMAN

They're fine. A couple of our boys are keeping a good eye on them.

ANDY

Please, let me go to them!

FIREMAN

I'm sorry, Miss; you're going to have to stay put. You have a brother named Russell?

ANDY

Yeah, why? Is he dead?

FIREMAN

Thank goodness, no. A neighbor saw the flames and called the department just in time. He got away with a bit of smoke inhalation and a few cuts. They're patching him up at the hospital.

ANDY

Oh... Do you know how the fire started?

(CONTINUED)

FIREMAN

Someone was misusing the fireplace;
your brother, I suspect. God only
knows why he'd use the fireplace in
the dead of summer.

ANDY

He always does.

FIREMAN

Well I'll be having a word with
your folks about that, soon as they
get here.

EXT. - HEMINGSWORTH HOUSE - NIGHT

The crowd of people is gone. Only one of the fire trucks
remains. FIREMEN gather their equipment and load it onto the
truck while the Fireman from the previous scene talks to
Jean and Martin. Andy rummages through the remains of her
bedroom and listens in.

FIREMAN

What's *most* unfortunate is that
this could've been avoided
altogether. Does your son always
use the fireplace during the
summer?

MARTIN

No... It's just... Well, he's got
one of those summer colds, you
know? He just can't seem to get
warm.

Martin shrugs.

MARTIN

I feel so sorry for the poor kid.
Me, I've never been sick a day in
my life.

Jean takes no part in the conversation. This is the last
straw.

(CONTINUED)

FIREMAN

Was he seeing a doctor?

MARTIN

Oh, no. He's was getting better. I don't think it's anything to worry about.

FIREMAN

I'll put that in my report. I sure hope your insurance company sees it your way. Now, if you'll excuse me?

MARTIN

Sure thing. Thank you for your time.

Jean looks the other way.

FIREMAN

Good-bye, Andy. Take good care of those horses.

ANDY

Bye.

Andy watches as the fire truck pulls away. She tosses melted fragments of one of her trophies back into the debris and confronts her parents.

ANDY

How come you lied about Russell?

MARTIN

Andrea, settle down. Everything will be okay.

ANDY

No it won't! Russell just burned our house down and we don't have a place to live and you're not going to do anything about it, are you?

JEAN

There's not much we can do, Andrea. What's done is done. We'll just have to deal with it.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIN

Just be thankful your horses are okay.

ANDY

Lucky for Russell they are!

MARTIN

I'm sure he didn't mean it.

ANDY

Russell gets away with everything just because you're both too chicken to do anything about him!

MARTIN

One more word out of you, and you can wait in the car!

Andy crosses her arms over her chest and glares at Martin, quietly.

MARTIN

(to Jean)

I'll pick up Russell and get a couple rooms at the Best Western. You guys pick up some food and meet us there. And bring me a six-pack.

JEAN

Pick up your own six-pack. I have to buy clothes for tomorrow.

MARTIN

Now is not the time to argue, Jean. Just do as your told.

JEAN

Fine! You want to wear smelly clothes to work tomorrow? I'll pick up your god damned beer. I'll see you there.

MARTIN

Don't get smart. There'll be plenty of time to shop after we eat.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN

Whatever you say, *dear*.

MARTIN

Hurry, now. I didn't get lunch today.

JEAN

Just shut up and go get us a room.

Martin climbs into his car and drives away.

JEAN

(to Andy)

Go feed the horses so we can get going.

ANDY

Go ahead. I'm not going with you.

JEAN

What is *that* supposed to mean?

ANDY

I'm staying here with the horses.

JEAN

Don't be ridiculous, Andrea. Don't you start giving me trouble, too.

ANDY

I'm not going.

JEAN

Andrea... Go feed the horses *and make it quick*. We've got a lot to do.

ANDY

I told you, I'm staying here.

JEAN

I want you in the car in *five minutes*.

ANDY

Wait if you want. But I'm not going.

JEAN

Alright! You want to live in the corral? *Live in the corral!* And tomorrow we'll just see if you've changed your tune!

Andy watches as Jean gets in the car and angrily speeds away. She begins to cry and stumbles past the debris toward the corral.

INT. - TACK ROOM - NIGHT

Andy sobs as she prepares buckets of feed for both Bellamy and Whickery.

EXT. - STREET - NIGHT

Mr. Byrne walks past and surveys the damage caused by the fire. He notices the light in the tack room.

EXT. - CORRAL - NIGHT

Mr. Byrne walks through the corral to the tack room. He sees Andy.

MR. BYRNE

Knock, knock...

ANDY

Mr. 'B'!

Andy jumps into his arms and buries her face in his shoulder. He strokes her hair comfortingly.

MR. BYRNE

Andy, I'm so sorry... I came as soon as I heard.

ANDY

Thank you...

MR. BYRNE

I'm glad you and the horses are okay. Are you okay?

Andy pulls away from Mr. Byrne and points to Mr. Bear, who sits on her bed.

ANDY

Yeah... You forgot somebody.

MR. BYRNE

(to Mr. Bear)

And you, too, Mr. Bear. I'm so glad to see you didn't get hurt.

Andy giggles slightly. Mr. Byrne gently wipes the tears from her eyes.

MR. BYRNE

Is there anything I can do?

ANDY

Yeah... If you're not busy tomorrow, I need a ride someplace.

MR. BYRNE

Where to?

ANDY

The bus station...

Andy begins to sob again.

ANDY

...I'm going to Maryland to live with Tracey.

MR. BYRNE

Are you sure that's okay with them?

ANDY

I don't know. I've got to go *some place*.

MR. BYRNE

What about Bellamy and Whickery? Who's going to take care of them?

(CONTINUED)

Andy sobs harder than ever. She shuts her eyes and says the hardest words she's ever had to say.

ANDY

I'm going to have to sell them...

Andy climbs back into Mr. Byrne's arms. He strokes her hair soothingly.

MR. BYRNE

They sure will miss you, Andy... I will, too...

ANDY

I'll miss you, too, Mr. 'B'. You're my second best people friend in the whole world, and you're the best teacher I ever had.

MR. BYRNE

Oh, there will be lots of great teachers in Maryland. Won't be long before you forget all about me.

ANDY

No I won't! I'll never forget you.

Mr. Byrne pats Andy's back. He wipes a tear from his eye.

MR. BYRNE

I almost forgot about *my* horses... I wonder if I'll ever find someone as good as you to help me take care of them...

ANDY

Probably not.

MR. BYRNE

You think I'm a good enough rider to get along without you?

ANDY

No...

MR. BYRNE

Me either...

Mr. Byrne pulls away from Andy and looks her in the eye. He pushes a strand of hair off her face and dries her eyes. He doesn't bother to dry his own.

MR. BYRNE

Do you have money for the bus?

ANDY

I've got a hundred and seventy-three dollars saved up. That's enough, isn't it?

MR. BYRNE

I'm afraid not, champ.

Mr. Byrne pauses for a moment to collect his thoughts.

MR. BYRNE

You've still got a job at our place if you want it, and you can stay in the extra bedroom until you save your money up.

ANDY

Thanks, Mr. 'B'.

MR. BYRNE

We even have two empty stalls, so you could leave Bellamy and Whickery with us. That way, if things don't work out in Maryland you could always come back.

ANDY

Mr. 'B', you can't even take care of your own horses. How are you going to take care of mine, too?

MR. BYRNE

I was hoping you would stay and help.

Andy smiles speechlessly and leaps into Mr. Byrne's open arms. She squeezes tight.

(CONTINUED)

ANDY

Mr. Bear, too?

MR. BYRNE

Mr. Bear, too.

FADE OUT.

THE END