

LIFE IS LIKE LINT

June, 1999

Gerald Saul

1 TITLE CARD
 "Gerald Saul Presents"

 NARRATOR
Someday, all films will be made this way.

2 ANIMATION - BILL, THE PERFECT GUY

 ANIMATION NARRATOR
This is the planet earth. Everybody thinks that Christopher Columbus proved it to be round. Actually, it's not. It bulges in the middle like a short fat guy waiting in line for lottery tickets. This is Bill. Bill was a perfectionist. He did everything the way he wanted to all of the time because, he decided, he always knew the very best way. He wore a necktie every day, even on Saturdays. Bill liked the ballet but he never went. Ballet dancers sometimes make mistakes. The sun always rises in the east, without fail, every day, even on Saturdays. That is why Bill liked the east and always planned to move there. He owned a very unhappy dog which he named Rover, even though it was never allowed to rove anywhere. Rover also wore something around his neck every day. It was a collar which sent radar signals. An alarm would sound if Rover ever tried to leave the yard. Every July first, Bill would take Rover to watch the fireworks. One year Rover saw another dog. This dog's name was spot because it had one big spot on its face. Rover and spot ran off to play. Bill noticed that Rover was nowhere to be seen when the fireworks ended. Bill wanted nothing to do with such an irresponsible dog, so he went home. Now Bill lives alone in his perfect little house. Bill believes he is happy, so he is. The end.

3 TITLE CARD
 "Feature Presentation"

4 INT DAY - NURSING HOME

Aunt Verna is sitting in chair beside her bed. Wilbur enters and crouches beside her.

WILBUR

Hi Verna. Hi Verna. Hi, it's me. How are you doing?
I'm starting a new film. I just got the film stock in. It's all in my fridge. It's going to take me a while to do it but I really want you to see it. Okay? How are you feeling? Here, a chocolate. Would you like a chocolate? No? Here. I just wanted to thank you for helping me out while I make my film. Hang in there. Everything's okay.

5 TITLE CARD

"Life Is Like Lint"

6 EXT DAY - CITY SCAPES OF REGINA

Series of shots of Regina city streets in black and white. Music from titles fades out.

NARRATOR

Once upon a time there was a filmmaker named Wilbur Reykdal who had a girlfriend who hated him. She used to fill his head with stories aimed at driving him insane. On this particular day, Wilbur would discover that his loveless relationship had suddenly ended ... while he napped.

7 INT DAY - WILBUR'S LIVING ROOM

Wilbur wakes up on his couch, leans up into the shot and sleepily calls out.

WILBUR

Stacy! Stacy, is there any more coffee? Stacy?

8 ANIMATION

SCREAMING CARROT

Flapping randy swine! My family jewels! Heaven and earth moved! Butt plug in left ear. And then, the universe exploded!

As the carrot continues to scream, its roots rise up and strangle it, squeezing it into a thin twig. Its scream becomes the sound of a telephone ringing.

9 INT DAY - WILBUR'S LIVING ROOM [80 sec to end of 11]

Wilbur is playing cards as his phone rings. He answers. We hear only

one side of the conversation.

WILBUR

Hello. Oh, not much.

....oh yeah, Stacy left me.

10 EXT DAY - REGINA

Wilbur's phone conversation continues as a voice over black and white images of Regina city streets.

WILBUR

Yeah, I guess I was expecting it but I'm still pretty upset. My apartment feels... I mean I feel really empty. She's gone and I know something is missing. I don't want to be alone. I don't want to hear my heart beating, echoing off these walls. Listen, do you know what that is? (pause) It's the sound of grime drying onto the dishes in my sink. How could she do this to me? Everyone was expecting to see her, if not in this scene, then at least in the next, but now ... (listens) No, she won't be coming back. Actually I never cast anyone to play her in the first place. I figured if someone came along that would fit the role, I would have her come back and cause some sort of tension, but as that didn't happen, I'll just go on with the story.

11 INT DAY - WILBUR'S LIVING ROOM

Wilbur continues to talk on phone and play cards.

WILBUR

Well, as you'll soon see, it is a film about me and Margaret, except I'll call her Helen. ... That's about it. I guess from the start it was just a device for us to make something together. It's taken quite a while but I think in the end we've really built up our emotional as well as our creative relationship. The trick is in what isn't seen. Like this photo of Elvis. If we could see his face, then we would

11 INT DAY - WILBUR'S LIVING ROOM (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

know if it truly is the king or not. Without it, we
can't immediately denounced it as a
fake. The nervous tension inherent in
the disembodied hand makes it
difficult to disbelieve. Oh, I've go
to go, the plot is about to thicken.

12 ANIMATION [14 Seconds still silent at head of this shot]
With all of the "Stacy" narrated animation, the image consists of
variations of Wilbur's face being manipulated via cut out photo
animation.

STACY (V/O)

At a convenience store on the other end of town one
of the guys that worked there used to
fish the paper cups out of the garbage
and re-sell them so the inventory
would look better, but when all of his
regular customers got mono at the same
time and the store started losing
money, they fired him.

13 INT DAY - HELEN'S BEDROOM [total 40 sec to shot 16]
Helen is reading a book.

NARRATOR

Fate, as it only happens in the movies, is about to
trompe on Helen Bauer.

The phone rings, Helen answers it. Some dogs barking can be heard
faintly through the phone.

HELEN

Hello. Oh hi Jeff. You can't make it tonight? I guess
I can go without you. Hello? Jeff,
what's that noise?

14 ANIMATION - JEFF AND DOGS

An animated version of Jeff stands on a chair with phone in hand while
dogs bite at his feet.

JEFF

Sorry, can't talk now. Got to go.

15 INT DAY - HELEN'S BEDROOM
Helen can hear nothing but the dogs.

HELEN
Jeff? Jeff? Hmmm. Weird.

Helen hangs up the phone.

16 INT DAY - BARBER SHOP (26 seconds)
Rapid hand-held pixilated images of Wilbur getting his hair dyed and rinsed.

WILBUR (v/o)
I was one of many who were raised on moralistic cartoons which told us that looks don't matter, that someone who is ugly can have a heart of gold; that beauty is only skin deep. I also grew up on playgrounds where people who looked different were picked on and not treated as well as others. Now, years later, it's apparent that people who are treated differently become different. It's the nurture part of the nature/nurture thing. So while maybe our personalities aren't originally based on what we look like, we do become who we are perceived to be. Image and hair. That's the only way I can explain it.

17 INT NIGHT - FILM THEATRE
Film opening poster then interior theatre. Intercut JAMES watching in terror with ANIMATION of Screaming Banana.

SCREAMING BANANA
Life is like lint. Sometimes, it gets stuck in your belly button, all safe and secure, but other times you have to vacuum it up off the carpet.

18 INT NIGHT - FILM THEATRE LOBBY
Film reception in the lobby. Camera moves around verite style.

GEOFF YATES
I love the hand. This is what kills me.

18 INT NIGHT - FILM THEATRE LOBBY (CONTINUED)

TODD IRVING

Sounds like a coffee grinder.

RICHARD KERR

Oh my god, we were just talking about you, you're drifting farther from the life raft of sanity is what I say.

JAMES WHITTINGHAM

Art is things that are colourful and have a lot of lines, like the veins in my legs when I'm old. I'm slowly becoming art.

ATTENDIE

Art isn't here right now, he's uh...

WILBUR

Hi

HELEN

Hi

WILBUR

Ever been in the movies?

HELEN

Uhhhhh....

19 INT DAY - CLAY STUDIO
Helen and Karen in clay studio.

HELEN

.... me in a film? I could just see it now, I would be "The Starlet".

20 INT DAY - WILBUR'S APARTMENT (2 or 3 seconds)
Wilbur is sitting on his couch thinking.

21 ANIMATION

STACY

Underneath a cemetery in Saskatoon there used to be a water storage area but it was supposed to have been filled in over fifty years ago. I met a guy who had a friend who was really into occult stuff up there and he once went down under the cemetery. It's all been tunnelled

21 ANIMATION (CONTINUED)

STACY

out and there were circles and pentagrams all over
the ground. The place was crawling
with accountants and lawyers and
school teachers, praying to the devil
for more money and better cars.

22 INT NIGHT - WILBUR'S APARTMENT

Wilbur is sitting on the couch when the buzzer sounds. Wilbur gets
up to answer it off-screen.

WILBUR

Hello?

HELEN

Hi. It's me, Helen. Can I come up?

WILBUR

Come on up.

Sound of door opening off-screen and Helen entering.

HELEN

Hi.

WILBUR

Hi, thanks for coming. Come on in.

They enter the shot and sit on couch.

HELEN

I brought you something

WILBUR

Thanks.

HELEN

(Laughs) I knew you'd love it.

WILBUR

It's a toaster.

HELEN

You kind of reminded me of a small appliance kind of
guy.

WILBUR

You know I collect these.

22 INT NIGHT - WILBUR'S APARTMENT (CONTINUED)

HELEN

Do you really? How many do you have?

WILBUR

I was going to collect them. I collect them now. I have one. So; we're going to shoot some tomorrow. The ice castle is set up, they set it up the other day. It's only up for a couple days and so if we go around noon, one, grab a couple shots, maybe go for coffee afterwards... you'll be great. It'll be fine.

HELEN

What's it about?

WILBUR

Well, there's this guy and...

HELEN

Is there a script I can read?

WILBUR

I've got some rushes back we could look at. I haven't even seen them myself yet.

Wilbur exits and returns with a 16mm projector.

HELEN

Good grief, you actually have a projector. Is it yours.

WILBUR

Well, I sort of have possession of it.

HELEN

Sort of have possession of it? It's really cool. It has that projector smell to it.

WILBUR (holding up film)

I have it right here.

HELEN

Cool, that's really neat.

22 INT NIGHT - WILBUR'S APARTMENT (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

I hope that it works.

HELEN

It's not reliable is it.

WILBUR

I'll just hang this up here. Okay. I'll get this light
and we'll have to get this other light.
Find this thing, what the hell....

23 IMAGES ON FILM SCREEN - EYE, MOON ECLIPSE, SHADOWS, DINOSAURS
(90 seconds of "dark", 100 seconds of "babies")

HELEN

It's a bit dark isn't it?

WILBUR

They can lighten it up at the lab.

HELEN

I mean, a bit depressing.

WILBUR

Yeah, I was going for a mood thing. You like it huh?
...

HELEN

So isn't there a script?

WILBUR

I don't really like to be tied down by those sorts
of conventions. I feel it's better for
my work if I just let the project guide
itself, to take on a life of its own.
It's going along just fine without one
so far.

HELEN

Has it really? At the beginning of this scene, you
had me just sitting on the couch and
I didn't know what I was supposed to
be doing or thinking. Now that you've
typed out words for me, I have a
clearer idea of who I am, but I'm still
just a two dimension representation
of the object ... of ... your
.....

23 IMAGES ON FILM SCREEN (CONTINUED)

HELEN

desire? Hey! what's that supposed to mean?

WILBUR

Again with the questions. Why should it matter. It's
my film and I should get to dictate
what everyone says in it. I have only

one viewpoint so what more can you expect? The film is just an extension of who I am and what I think about.

HELEN

Well if you take that standpoint, what will you say if the film bombs? By taking all the responsibility, you've also forfeited all your options to cast off blame. No more believable deniability.

WILBUR

Then I better make this the best film I can.

HELEN

The best film you can make on \$25,000.

WILBUR

Yeah. But back to what we're looking at, the film within the film - what do you really think?

HELEN

I don't know. It's just weird, dark imagery without any soul or... wait, what this (laugh).

WILBUR

Oh shit, I didn't mean that to be there.

HELEN

Who are they?

WILBUR

My nieces and nephews. I just shot a bit...

23 IMAGES ON FILM SCREEN (CONTINUED)

HELEN

You have family?

WILBUR

No, I was just found under a log one day.

HELEN

Sorry, it's just that you don't seem like someone who...

WILBUR

Who what?

HELEN

(long pause) Yes.

WILBUR
(pause) Yes? Yes what?

HELEN
I think I'd like to be in your film.

WILBUR
Cool. (pause) Bring mitts.

24 INT DAY - WILBUR'S KITCHEN
James and Wilbur are sitting at the table.

JAMES
That's what it is, isn't it? You're crazy about her.

WILBUR
No.

JAMES
That's right. You could get anyone for the part. The
eyes don't make the actress. It's you.

WILBUR
Cheesecake?

JAMES
Sure.

WILBUR
It's on the plate.

24 INT DAY - WILBUR'S KITCHEN (CONTINUED)

JAMES
How long has it been sitting there?

WILBUR
Oh, I don't know.

JAMES
Well, if you're not in love with her, you could at
least look for another actress.

WILBUR
I'm shooting in two hours.

JAMES
I'd do it.

STACY

There's a place in Moose Jaw that will buy used brides maids and high school grad dresses for ten bucks or something and they cut them into mini dresses and sell them in a chi chi boutique in Toronto for two hundred bucks. I knew this girl who moved from Regina to Toronto and started acting really stuck up, as if being married and living in Toronto was some big deal. The last time I saw her she was showing off one of these dresses because it matched the brides maid dresses from her wedding and I just laughed and didn't tell her.

26 EXT DAY - ICE CASTLE

Wilbur is setting up the camera, seen from viewpoint of the camera. Behind him is an ice castle and Helen.

WILBUR

(to self) I just don't want to be in love again. I don't want to go through that. (Shout)
Okay, camera's rolling, let's go NOW.

Wilbur and Helen run around ice castle in fast motion. Music plays loud and fast. They kiss and Wilbur rushes back to turn off the camera.

27 INT DAY - WILBUR'S KITCHEN

James and Wilbur are sitting at the table.

JAMES

You know, you don't pay them and...

WILBUR

Good news, I'm in love.

JAMES

You're in love. So you admit it now. But I don't know what I'm going to do. Everything's cut off. I'm probably never going to get a job if nobody can phone me.

WILBUR

Salsa?

JAMES

Sure. Change the subject. Don't listen to my story

because you're in love.

WILBUR

Gets your heart beating.

JAMES

Looks like a ground up gopher. Bad chocolate experience.

WILBUR

Yeah, road kill.

JAMES

If you like it, fine. Have you got any more of that cheesecake?

WILBUR

Yeah.

JAMES

That's my piece from yesterday. The piece to begin with was sitting around for a week.

WILBUR

Saved it for you.

JAMES

You're not much a host.

28 EXT DAY - SNOWY FIELD (28, 29, 30 = total 37 seconds)
Wilbur and Helen walk through the snow towards three bins.

Helen

Tell me about her.

Wilbur

Her?

Helen

You know. I can tell that you still think about her. You get that look in your eye, all glazed over like in the Zombie Boy comics.

Wilbur

She used to make so much sense to me. Now there are only fragments and none of them speak to me anymore. They're only fleeting words. Why is it that some people are so hard to remember? (pause) We used to hang around together, not doing much of anything, watching tv a lot

I guess. We had good times, never fought or anything.

Helen

Then how did you guys break up? Did you just talk about it and decide or what?

Wilbur

Not really. As time went on I suppose we talked less and less, like we had used each other up. In fact the only conversations I remember having with her now were rather one sided. After we'd watched two or three hours of old 70s sit coms, she would invariably turn to me and tell me a story, something outrageous but with an assuredness as if she had just heard it a moment before from the most reliable source. I can still hear those stories, they were all screwed up and full of paranoia, just like her. I'm certain she told them just to torment me.

Helen

Heaven!

29 EXT DAY - SUMMER PORCH

Wilbur and Helen are making the "walking in snow" sounds by squeezing two boxes of baking soda. Above dialogue continues.

30 EXT DAY - SNOWY FIELD

Wilbur and Helen continue walking across snow with above dialogue.

31 ANIMATION

STACY

There was a guy I knew in high school named Johnny. I think his last name started with a 'D' because everyone else in his homeroom's name started with 'D', but I never knew because everyone called him Johnny Thickneck 'cause his neck was so thick. One time he asked me out on a date in front of a bunch of people and I was so embarrassed that I got another guy to key his car. I just heard that Johnny Thickneck finished law school and has a really high paying job and travels all around the world

but I can't call him because I don't know his name.

32 INT DAY - JO'S APARTMENT (20 seconds)
"Mouse" dashes around in its cage.

HELEN

We think of our friends as normal, except when we describe them to others, like my friend who has a gerbil that has its own condo complex, a multi-layered den around which it roams freely. When my friend would bake, she'd feed her gerbil bits of food off her fingertips. One day, "Mouse", that was its name, got so high on coffee that it bit her finger and drew blood.

33 EXT DAY - GOPHER STATUE IN PARK (50 seconds)
Wilbur and Helen sit below a giant gopher.

WILBUR

...then Larry says "The caps lock didn't work! I was so mad, I'm thinking of putting a nail under his

33 EXT DAY - GOPHER STATUE IN PARK (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

back tire" so I ask him, "Did you talk to him?" and Larry says "Oh, I didn't think of that". So I tell him "I'd talk to him" but Larry says "It's been too long. I had it months before I noticed it didn't work".

HELEN

Funny.

WILBUR

Oh, but Larry doesn't hate everybody. You just have to understand what qualities he values most. Larry described his best friend; "He was the best. He lent me his truck when I was drunk, even though I didn't have my licence."

HELEN

But he wasn't your friend. Don't you have any other friends, other than... her?

WILBUR

Oh, there are people I see...

34 INT DAY - UTOPIA CAFE (58 seconds)

Roger Ing shows some painting to Wilbur then plays a note on a saxophone.

WILBUR

...but I've drifted away from them, or them from me,
I don't know. Time drags us slowly away
from the celebration of life. I guess
I don't really socialize much anymore.
There's something to be said about
your friends, the allure of the new.
(pause) There's something about the
short summer nights that compels us
want to make the most of its short
cloak of darkness, to value the
moments when the heat subsides so
that, momentarily, we can rise to our
feet. inhale deeply without panting,
and climb the ladder of straw up to
the cloud of self awareness.

34 INT DAY - UTOPIA CAFE (CONTINUED)

HELEN

Yeah, Gerda and Joan are always good for a bit of that.
Let's go see what they're up to.

35 INT DAY - ENCLOSED PORCH

Nicole, a ten year old girl, dances.

JOAN (v/o)

Oh, Barbie, listen close now, it's near the end, it
has to be. Smooth your stiff hands down
the creamy smooth sides of your body,
your skirt, your beautiful pastel
edible oil self. It's almost done.
Don't think we haven't tried Barbara,
you know we have. We've prayed all
manner of prayers, oh saint Barbie,
mother of no one, sister to none,
goddess of greed alone. Barbie.
Barbara. Giver of only
dissatisfaction with ourselves, of
endless ever unsatisfied lust to buy
and wear and consume. To be like you,
or try to and forever to fail to find
your perfect plastic dimensions
anywhere on our own bodies.

36 EXT NIGHT - BARBECUE

Joan and others burn cake with a Barbie inserted in centre.

JOAN (v/o - continued)
Stop smiling now girl, we've stopped long ago. Our mirror shows us no smiles ever, only despair. In your temple at your service we have suffered and we have not been redeemed by anything. Our failure to be you and to be perfect widens and deepens as we age. Hail Barbie full of grace, only you can change your face. Only you can save us, your faithful servants, your temple girls grown faded. You must. You will redeem us with smoke and fire and signs of suffering. Acrid plastic tears melted down, fallen breasts, pooled in oily caked skirt. Silver dissolved hair, a burning cloud,

36 EXT NIGHT - BARBECUE (CONTINUED)

JOAN
torch. Mother, mother make my bed, make it cold and narrow. I can feel my heart tonight that I shall die tomorrow. For love of Barbara Allen. Not this time Barbie, it's your turn to burn. Barbie, Burn.

37 INT DAY - WILBUR'S KITCHEN
Wilbur and James are at the kitchen table.

JAMES
Pickled beans.

WILBUR
Yeah, maybe I should make a film about the making of these.

JAMES
How did you get into film?

WILBUR
It was a long time ago...

38 EXT DAY - ALLEY
Wilbur is diving into a dumpster. He pulls out a film can, opens it and holds some film up to the sky. Cut away to images of a monster and of two people at a sunset.

NARRATOR
According to HG Wells, vortexes can form within an

automatic clothes dryer, where the
krono-naughts spin and spin, drawing
socks away to the end of history, a
place with no water because it's all
been boiled away and where little crab
things crawl around in the rocks under
the giant red sun.

39 INT DAY - WILBUR'S KITCHEN
Wilbur and James at the kitchen table.

JAMES

That's it? A flashback!?

STACY

When I was a kid I buried a Barbie doll in the back yard. When my parents got me to help put in a new fence, I found it again, except now it has Ken's head on it instead of Barbie's, even though I never had a Ken.

41 EXT DAY - FROG PARK

Wilbur and Helen walk into a park in which a large frog statue is standing. (85 seconds)

WILBUR

It is rather smooth and glossy. Not at all like cheese.

HELEN

Look, this isn't easy for me to say but...

WILBUR

Yes.

HELEN

Yes? Yes what?

WILBUR

Whatever. What was your question?

HELEN

No, I want to know what you are saying "yes" to.

WILBUR

To anything you ask.

HELEN

Do I have to explain how dumb that is?

WILBUR

Only if you want to fight about it.

HELEN

Fine.

(Long pause)

My mom called, she...

41 EXT DAY - FROG PARK (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

Your mom?

HELEN

Yeah, what did you think, I was found under a log?

WILBUR

Or grown in a potato patch and ... it's just that you
never... Um, go on.

HELEN

(sigh) She wants me, needs me, to come home. And I...

WILBUR

You want to go.

HELEN

I have to.

WILBUR

What does this mean?

HELEN

I think you know. They are very traditional and they
wouldn't...

42 EXT NIGHT - FILMPOOL BUILDING ON FIRE (30 seconds)
Large flames come out of the roof of a warehouse building.

TV NEWS VOICE

Fire broke out earlier this evening in this building
which housed *Len's Lunch*. As well, the
second floor was scheduled to be the
new home of the Saskatchewan Filmpool
co-op. The cause of the blaze has not
yet been determined. Firefighters
reached the scene and were....

WILBUR

(v/o the above tv voice)

Just when you think you know what you want, things
suddenly begin to change.

43 INT DAY - WILBUR'S KITCHEN
Wilbur and James at the kitchen table.

WILBUR

I'm getting this feeling that she's thinking about
something but I don't know what it is.
What's it all about?

JAMES

Women are like toast. Sometimes you have to heat them up. Then they pop. Then you can have them. Work with her. I don't know. What do I know? Do you have any more of that cheesecake?

WILBUR

Yeah, it's over on the counter there.

JAMES

Oh God.

44 ANIMATION

STACY

I don't know how to play the violin but I bought one anyway. A friend of mine sold it to me for twenty bucks. He got it in trade for cab fare when he was driving a cab. I asked him if the guy was going to come and ask for it back but he didn't think so because the guy had won the violin at a poker game. When I try to use it, I only make screeching noises but I carry it around anyway, just to look cool.

45 INT DAY - WILBUR'S LIVING ROOM

Distorted reflection of Wilbur lying on couch, seen through the chrome toaster. (57 seconds)

NARRATOR

Observe Wilbur over in the background. He's been laying there all day, trying to figure out what to say to Helen that will allow him to maintain the only happy relationship he's ever had. In one scenario he ceases her shoulders and

45 INT DAY - WILBUR'S LIVING ROOM (CONTINUED)

NARRATOR

exclaims "I am what I am, don't try to change me" but his grasp on reality remains strong enough to anticipate her reply, "I know, that's why I have to leave you". Multiple rejections have given Wilbur a sixth sense about these things. Later today he will approach her and the right words will finally come out,

the true words...

WILBUR (v/o)

I'm not ready to break up. I like you too much to stop.

HELEN (v/o)

I've got to go home, to the farm. Things aren't the same there, you...

WILBUR (v/o)

I'd love to see it.

HELEN (v/o)

My parents are very traditional, but if you'd marry me for a year...?

WILBUR (v/o)

Why just a year?
..... Yes.

HELEN (v/o)

Yes?

WILBUR (v/o)

Yes.

46 INT DAY - WILBUR'S LIVING ROOM (30 seconds)

Black and white shot of Helen on couch. Wilbur enters frame and they kiss. Romantic, wedding-like music.

47 EXT NIGHT - SKY (20 seconds)

Fireworks explode across the sky. Wartime explosions sound.

48 INT DAY - NURSING HOME

Verna is sitting in her chair. Wilbur enters.

WILBUR

Hi Verna. Hi Verna.

48 INT DAY - NURSING HOME (CONTINUED)

VERNA

Am I going to live?

WILBUR

You're going to be okay. I'm going away Verna.

VERNA

Are ya?

WILBUR

I'm getting married.

OFF SCREEN WOMAN

You're kidding!

WILBUR (to other woman)

Thank you ma'am. I'll see you soon Verna, okay. I'll see you soon.

49 INT DAY - WILBUR'S APARTMENT

Shot of answering machine with blinking light. Sound of footsteps approaching. Wilbur's hand reaches into shot and pushes button. Messages begin and play over following shot.

50 INT DAY - WILBUR'S APARTMENT

Wilbur makes coffee in a vacuum pot while listening to messages.

MESSAGE #1

Welcome back. I got the prettiest flowers. I love flowers. It seems so awful to pick them. I have this huge flower garden in our yard. [some Spanish or Latin]

MESSAGE #2

That's so strange that you'd be talking about strange food today because I just called you nonchalant while eating a bowl of Greek salad without no lettuce in it because I just love feta cheese and then I was eating Bretta crackers smothered in spice and herb cream cheese along with a bowl of quaker nuts and crunch covered with salt and brown sugar.

50 INT DAY - WILBUR'S APARTMENT (CONTINUED)

MESSAGE #3

Talk about dreams. I had the weirdest dream today. I was in the nurse's office after slipping - see I go to high school right - and I slipped and I cracked my leg pretty bad on the concrete and I was in the nurses office laying on the bed with one of those neat little clear blue liquid ice packs on my leg and I fell asleep for about three hours - like all the way through the morning you know - and I woke up at lunch and had the strangest dream. I dreamt that

my hair had grown down past my ass and to the floor and would drag when I walked. And then I was walking down the hall and I picked a fight with my wood working teacher, a strange man named Mr. Schneider who has a scull shaped scar on his lip from a motorcycle accident and I had the strangest dream because I picked a fist fight with him. I kicked his ass! which is strange because he's a rather big fellow. Then I went to the hospital for a blood transfusion but they took out all my blood and they injected me with that blue stuff from the ice pack and left me there. I was really worried then I woke up and I went to lunch.

MESSAGE #4

Good art, bad art. What the hell, it's all art.

MESSAGE #5

How can you tell good art and bad art? Art is like a personal preference. If you like it, you like it. If you hate it, you hate it. Personal, not... I don't know. It's not like you think, you know, because somebody else likes it. That's what's great about art, you don't have to like it. You like what you like and you hate what you hate. Personally, I like ... I don't know.

50 INT DAY - WILBUR'S APARTMENT (CONTINUED)

MESSAGE #6

Speaking of wants, I've got a problem. There's this guy and I have another friend and they haven't met but they've talked on the phone and I love him and I think that they like each other but... It really sucks. He doesn't know her and she just sort of knows him and I know that they're going to go out and ... [sigh] ... What should I do? They're going to meet, I mean they go to the same school. I can't keep them apart for four years. He's got a girlfriend but he's going to break up with her because she's fucking with his mind and I'm just his good friend but I want to be more and ... I don't know.

MESSAGE #7

It's about twelve o'clock right now and I just had this dream that I was reincarnated as a cow and I was this farmer's favourite cow and this farmer had grown this cow, no this broccoli, and it looked like Jimi Hendrix and one day I was walking along and he had it out on a table and was showing it to somebody and anyway, I ate it. So I was the farmer's favourite cow, but he pulled out his uh, he slaughters me, with his rifle and that was where my dream ended.

MESSAGE #8

What I really want is to go somewhere and think. I'm depressed and want to cheer up. Got a lot of life decisions to contemplate, make. I go to a playground and I sit on the swings and I just swing. Actually what it is is it takes me back to my childhood when life was carefree but its just a really neat feeling because the higher you swing and the faster you swing - I don't know. They just sort of go away. Kind of neat. Bye.

50 INT DAY - WILBUR'S APARTMENT (CONTINUED)

MESSAGE #9

Hey dude, what's up man? Name's Fred. Not my real name but I don't have to give you my real name 'cause don't know who you are. Well, I understand what you mean, man, you know, how you want to be by yourself one day, maybe every day, and you're thinking about other people than yourself. You want to be by yourself and shit. Thing is, you have to man, you have to be by yourself because the best thing in life man, besides music and money and shit like that, is freedom. You have to have your freedom. It means no girls, no friends, no family, just freedom. You have to hang out by yourself and shit. Go walking, walk around. Be by yourself, what it's all about man. Think your next topic should be 'freedom'. Where we should deal with

our freedom. None of this imperial
shit like other people think "oh wow,
I've got an expensive car, hey, I'm
cool, I got a stereo in it". I don't
give a shit man. What of it. Not here,
never. Fred the best. All right. Later
man, see you tomorrow.

MESSAGE #10

Dyslexics of the world, untie.

MESSAGE #11

I like possibly this is what I'm feeling, hanging
around with younger people. I like to
think of myself as sort of a child-like
adult, keep those qualities of
childhood alive. Watch cartoons. Not
to become a child but I enjoy them.

MESSAGE #12 - DAD

Verna passed away. It's 2:30.

51 EXT DAY - COUNTRY ROADS

Montage of black and white shots of country and farm.

52 EXT DAY - THE WELL [94 seconds]

Wilbur and Helen walk and hold hands near the well.

WILBUR

...then if you were making a film, what would it be
about?

HELEN

Something funny I guess, something that has a
beginning, middle, end, that people
would watch a few times and not get
bored by. I like to laugh and so do
other people.

WILBUR

That's a long road to take just to get some "instant
gratification".

HELEN

All roads are long. You've got to learn to enjoy the
ride. Besides, who's driving? Are you?

WILBUR

If this were a real movie, we'd just be extras.

HELEN

If I did grab the wheel, I might tell a story, like
about someone greedy for the prize in
a cereal box who discovers the she,
herself is the prize in someone else's
cosmic cereal lottery.

WILBUR

Uh, huh. Witnessed only by the ever faithful cat ...
which would represent the concerned
but powerless Canadians in a metaphor
for the democratic struggle against
the American supported dictatorship
in Nicaragua.

HELEN

Hmmm... difficult fit but sure, why not. But I just
think that people have enough
confusion in their lives. Why not let
them laugh and be happy. Let the couple
live happily ever after, even if it
isn't realistic.

52 EXT DAY - THE WELL (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

I strive for realism.

HELEN

You?

WILBUR

Yeah, and in fact this film ends with the couple also
living happily ever after - because
that is what happened.

HELEN

Then love works?

WILBUR

Well, in our case it does. If we weren't still together
while I'm finishing this film, I'd be
looking for ways to write you out of
it. Instead, I've given you large
portions of dialogue.

HELEN

I've not really seen that yet.

WILBUR

It's coming.

HELEN

Then we better get on to it then.

53 INT DAY - FARMHOUSE TABLE

Intercut between a shot of Wilbur, a shot of Helen's father, and a title card which reads "One Week Later". At the end of three cycles, Fred smiles.

HELEN

April twenty-first. It seemed to be extremely important that Wilbur be able to win my father over - perhaps because he was having such a hard time doing it.

54 EXT DAY - FARMYARD

Nicole and Katie fly kites off the back of a standing truck.

55 EXT DAY - FARMYARD

Wilbur runs across a shot pulling a kite. The kite crashes.

HELEN

May twelfth. Success has so far eluded Wilbur. I'm afraid that I've made a mistake in letting him come to the farm. He tries, but he can't let himself be happy unless he can somehow succeed at something.

56 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (26 seconds)

Wide angle image begins with Helen holding wooden duck and croquet mallet then going to fast motion image moving around the farm yard seeing George, Allen and Wilbur smoking.

HELEN

May fourteenth. I've always had a place to call home. There is a security in that. I'm not sure if I liked it or didn't like it, it was just the way it always was. Is. It's not that I didn't go places, but every road trip always began with the understanding that at the end, I would be walking back through that same door, sleeping in that same bed. Oh, I've lived in the city and wiled away many an hour debating the pros and cons of leather versus tupperware, but never did I feel uprooted from where I knew I belonged. That makes me feel very strong, that sense of belonging. I've got a favourite feather pillow and that sort of thing, comfort items, but there's nothing like standing on the piece of land where you were born. In the city they never understand this yearning. Maybe it's the crowds or something, but leaving home is much more important to them than returning.

57 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (28 seconds)

Wilbur attempt to chop wood. He is clumsy and get the axe stuck.

HELEN

May twentieth. Wilbur can be such a sweetie. Today he got up at the crack of dawn, even before dad, and

57 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (CONTINUED)

HELEN

started a fire in the stove. By the time I was up he'd already burned most of the pancakes and brewed up a pot of coffee so strong that only he and I could stomach it.

58 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (50 seconds)

Wilbur's hands enter shot and put a blender down. He pours some juice into it. Cut-away to time laps clouds. Return to image of blender as Wilbur pours more liquid in. When the blender is turned on, the liquid turns a creamy pink.

HELEN

June second. Wilbur bought me a blender chrome, I like it. We feel a need to celebrate by shopping. The larger the event, the greater the extravagance. He got some new grant today and that seems to mean something. Apparently he can develop all the film he's been shooting so far. Canada Council he said - a big deal apparently. He's happy and that's cool with me.

59 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (130 seconds)

In fast motion, Wilbur and George build a scaffold in the middle of the yard. Wilbur stands on top of it then climbs down and walks out of frame towards farm house.

HELEN

June fifth. Wilbur set up this thing in the yard today, said something about Louis Bunuel's *Simon of the Desert*. I don't really get it, but it is important in some way. He needs a place of his own, a spot where he can go without worrying about invading others' spaces, in getting in the way.

Strange thing, I was just down at the slough and I was walking around and the ground makes a really funny squishing noise when you walk on it. So I'm there and I sit down on this rock that's there because it's the only thing dry enough and I just hate to stand up for very long, so I'm sitting there and this bird

59 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (CONTINUED)

HELEN

comes and lands on a an old post just couple feet away.

It was big and black, a crow, and it looks at me with no fear. It occurred to me right away that it was just checking me out, taking a closer look at a creature that it regards as having little or no importance in its life. I got feeling really mad like I wanted to yell that I was much better than it was and I had worries and problems that it could never understand, but before I had a chance it got this glazed over look in its eyes as if it was really quite bored of me, and it flew away.

60 EXT DAY - FARM YARD
Wilbur walks into farm house.

WILBUR
Helen?! Helen? Come out and see this.

61 INT DAY - FARM HOUSE - CU HELEN
Helen is sleeping. Wilbur approaches and wakes her with a kiss.

62 EXT DAY - FARM YARD - OVERHEAD VIEW OF FARMHOUSE (35 seconds)
Helen and Wilbur exit farmhouse. Wilbur points out scaffold. Cut to shot of scaffold as the two of them walk around it.

HELEN
Oh yeah, you've been busy.

WILBUR
What do you think?

HELEN
Hmmm.

WILBUR
What's the matter, isn't it interesting?

HELEN
Oh NO! It's not THAT bad.

63 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (42 seconds)
Wilbur is overly-theatrical as he crawls across an angled shot to the scaffold. Jump-cut between shots of him on different portions of the scaffold.

HELEN
June eighth. Wilbur spends his whole day up there now.

I dug through his stuff and found his journal. It read: "When I was a kid I liked to climb. During one summer in grade school, a bunch of guys liked to climb on top of the maintenance shack on the school grounds. I was a bit uncoordinated and I needed three of them to get up, but I was in my glory when I was finally there. Eventually I learned to climb to the top on my own. In fact, by developing my own routes and using my height, I could get up on the roof faster than most of the others, two or three seconds or so. The world was a better place up there. We were neither walkers nor riders nor players, we were watchers. We were closer to the sky so had more knowledge of it's mysteries. We were given clues to the future through the shapes of the clouds, through the patterns in the dust as it blew through the playground.

64 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (22 seconds)
George and Simon and others play some baseball.

HELEN

June tenth. They say you can't change a person - that is entirely untrue. What you can't do is avoid changing a person, or prevent that person from changing you. If you do things right then change will be growth. If you're really lucky, you will grow together. It's funny, I find it harder to imagine being apart from him than being apart from home. All growing started in the farm but I guess, for me, it finally stopped.

65 EXT DAY - FARM YARD
Helen, seen from scaffold, walks towards the farm house.

HELEN

You be careful up there.

Wilbur is on top of the scaffold, standing and looking around. The wind begins to howl. Wilbur is shaken. Shot of farm house from above.

WILBUR
(shouting from off screen)
HELEN! Helen, can you come out here?!

HELEN
(shouting from inside house)
What?

WILBUR
Come out here.

HELEN
What is it?

Wilbur is hanging off the top of the scaffold, his legs swinging wildly.

WILBUR
Could you just come out here.

HELEN
Now what do you want.

WILBUR
Uhhhhh??

66 EXT NIGHT - FARM YARD (36 seconds)
Wilbur and Helen dance around scaffold during sunset.

HELEN
Wilbur's journal then says, "Louis, how did you come up with those ideas? I sit on top of my tower but I see no devils dancing below, only the grain. Dance it does but it fails to seduce. I watch it for hours, swaying this way and that, the heads full and ripe, the stocks trembling beneath the weight. It too reaches for the heavens, a million fingers caressing the wind and by

66 EXT NIGHT - FARM YARD (CONTINUED)

HELEN
it. The grain, like the golden ore of the Klondike, rolls across the land like a sea dream, as vast as the limitless sky but contrasting it in more ways than its colour. All that is gold is not metal but still the grain is the chain which binds us, ties us to this soil. No, it does not seduce."

67 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (55 seconds)

Series of shots and jump-cuts as Wilbur notices then catches a snake, puts it in a jar and stares at it.

HELEN

June thirteenth. Wilbur caught a snake this morning.

He stuck it in a jar and

[sigh] Gerald has been working on this film for about five years now. I don't even know if he is capable of finishing it anymore. Expectation, that propels him and strangles him. Had he whipped the thing together in a few months as he's originally planned, then it could be dreck and no one would blame him. But after all this time, he's feeling the pressure to do something really cool. He really is making this for you, he cares what you think about it, but at the same time is afraid that you'll not understand the hardship of making a film with so little money. He told me a secret, he told me that he doesn't like to ask people favours, as if he perhaps doesn't deserve the attention, that other people's time is more valuable than his own. When you stop to think about it, how much is our time worth? We work and work so that we can afford to do things which distract us from working. We go to films to be swept away, to be seduced by the moment. If the moment isn't blinding enough, if it doesn't obliterate everything we know under a thick layer of melodrama and

67 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (CONTINUED)

HELEN

explosions, then we complain. Aren't the flickering images enough? He's just one guy trying to show you something in a way you've never seen it before.

68 BLACK

WILBUR

Is that camera rolling?

69 EXT DAY - FARM YARD

Shot of scaffold. Wilbur removes the lens and replaces it during the

shot. He puts the jar containing the snake down in the foreground and walks over to the scaffold. After some deliberation, he pushes it over in a big crash. The sound over the entire scene is a series of audio head markers for slating scenes. After the crash, laughter. Wilbur then picks up the jar. In another shot, he releases the snake.

70 EXT NIGHT - FLAX FIELD

Series of shots of flax straw being burned. *[put Jeff Arnt's song about Boh over fire footage? Shoot shot of him at night on back of truck with his guitar to finish the scene?]*

71 EXT DAY - FARM FIELD

Wilbur pokes his head out from behind a large round hay bail.

HELEN

Sometimes I resent not telling my own story. He uses me as a device to tell his. But at least he is learning something, changing. He's left his old baggage behind ... I think?

72 EXT DAY - FARM YARD

Wilbur, Helen and George fill large balloons with helium. Then Wilbur attempts to use the balloons to lift his camera. Intercut camera's pov with wide shots of Wilbur flinging them into the air. Finally, the camera crashes and the image goes black. Sound is Wilbur making a phone call. Begin with push button sounds.

WILBUR (on phone)

Hi, it's me, got a minute? I'm trying to put together a new film and I need you in it. Here's the set up: it is a post apocalyptic future, ... yeah, just the same as last time

72 EXT DAY - FARM YARD (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

but a few years later. The gods are dying. Sam's journey has taken him to the sea which is as smooth and still as glass because the sea god is dead.

The almanac is stolen which means that the goddess Al, which is connected to Sam through the book, is kidnapped by The Sunflower King who we recognise because he is always spitting shells. There will always be that sound around him, you know; "crack, spit, crack, spit, crack, spit".

So then you must find Al without the book to guide you. Within your mind you'll trace your way through the pages of the book, like a big dream sequence on a stage with enlargements of all the pages behind you, and eventually find her. There'll be other stuff too. The Great Earth Flatteners' embodiment on Earth is like a government worker who is restricted under union regulations as to how many hours per day he can work so you'll come to a spot where you can see mountains but the next day they will be gone until you catch up to this guy. He'll be sitting on his lunch box eating a sandwich with a sign beside him that reads "under construction", no no, I mean "under de-construction".

73 EXT DAY - FARMYARD

Series of shots of flowers, farm landscapes.

WILBUR

Then you'll get to an atomic power plant is the temple for a fire god. As usual, it requires regular sacrifices to calm it. The legend will be that the fire has dug itself deep into the Earth but will someday return.

Then you win at the end and continue on into the sunset to

73 EXT DAY - FARMYARD (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

explore more of the land and to find all the means to heal it. We call the film Wheat Stew and the catch phrase is "This time we lay it on thick".

74 INT NIGHT - FARMHOUSE

Wilbur is at the table on the phone.

WILBUR

What do you mean "repetitive". You don't want to do it! ... I wrote it for you. Maybe this time I'll find a way to pay you. Yeah, well same to you!

Wilbur slams down the phone and looks up to see Helen watching him. She exits.

75 EXT NIGHT - POTATO PATCH

Wilbur's point of view, running through very dark garden, encountering a scarecrow and finding Helen and potatoes.

WILBUR

What, what is it?

HELEN

Come.

WILBUR

It's too dark out here, look, whatever it is I'm sorry.
I was just talking.

HELEN

Where are you from Wilbur, where are you really from?
Feel the ground, isn't it familiar?
Remember back as far as you can, the
soil between your toes, in your
fingers, in your mouth. When we talk
about our roots, do you think that's
figuratively? This is where it all
began, this is where we came from.

WILBUR

The potato patch? And all this time I was watching
the cabbage.

75 EXT NIGHT - POTATO PATCH (CONTINUED)

HELEN

Dig down here, carefully with your fingers. Maybe we'll
find our child here, or a new brother
or mother. The soil is the source of
all. It gives life and strength to all
who stand on top of it. We must serve
the land until we return to it.

WILBUR

Okay, but why?

HELEN

There is an old story about when the world was young
and selfish. The only creatures which
lived here were worms and ants and
bugs, those that served only the soil.
One day a pool of water formed and lay
there very still. The world looked at
itself and saw for the first time the
blue sky reflected in the water. The

world grew fascinated with the sky and called out to it with love and desire. The sky came down to the earth and brought with it the four winds which swept across the land, caressing it into many shapes. It is said that the animals and the people were the earth's response to its affair with the sky. From the soil grew the people and they reached for the sky, gazed upon it and in doing so expressed the affections of the planet. The ground is our home. The sky is our temple.

WILBUR

I've seen a bit much of your sky for one lifetime.
I get the whole parable and everything, but there has to be more.

HELEN

There doesn't have to be more when there is enough.
Look.

76 EXT NIGHT - THE SKY
The sky is a blaze of northern lights.

WILBUR
A cascade of particles, some fun eh.
HELEN
Perhaps it's a sign.

WILBUR
North?

HELEN
North.

77 EXT DAY - GARDEN (18 seconds)
Wilbur and Helen's feet enter shot as the two embrace.

78 ANIMATION
Woman looks at cereal box, sees Cthulhu prize offer, shakes boxes,
reaches in, is pulled in by Cthulhu and into another world where
she is eaten.

79 EXT DAY - FARM YARD
Helen kisses a balloon and lets it go. It flies far away.

80 EXT DAY - HIGHWAY (65 seconds)
Series of shots of country road signs, Wilbur's car, Wilbur leaning
against his car, a Saskatchewan sign, Wilbur and Helen kissing
in their car, the car driving and an Alberta sign.

WILBUR
I never thought the country was of much use. Road trips
were fun but it was the love of the
roadside cafes and cable tv from other
cities that were the main attraction.
I guess I went camping now and then,
like with my school, but even then we
ended up obsessing more with the city
than all the trees and junk around us.
Like for example we would get around
the fire and everyone would have a
flashlight even though the fire was
very bright, and the stories were
about city people, not the other folk.
One I recall was about a lonely stretch of highway
that the Smith family went driving on.
It's getting late but they decide for
some reason

80 EXT DAY - HIGHWAY (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

to keep driving for a while after dark. Along the way a motor home comes up behind them and wants to pass so this Smith guy pulls a bit to the side and it cruises by. A few minutes later another motor home comes up behind them and passes too. As soon as that one was out of sight, the whole thing happens again. The guy thinks it must be some kind of convention because all the motor homes look alike. By this time it was really dark and the Smith family started looking around for a place to stop. After many miles they finally reached a camp ground which was empty but for a single motor home. When they started to talk to the owner of the vehicle, they were told that he has been driving along that road ever year, looking for signs of the Smith family who all disappeared twenty years ago along there and who are rumoured to still haunt that road.

81 EXT DAY - SUNFLOWER FIELD

Helen jumps out from behind sunflowers, happily frolicking.

WILBUR

OOOoooo, scary stuff. It's just like the ghost car thing except that the story is told by the ghost and we all thought that was really something. It always shifted into a big discussion of what you would do if you were a ghost and could go anywhere you wanted.

82 EXT NIGHT - EDMONTON

Fast flashing light, time exposures and superimpositions of lights from a high building at night in Edmonton.

WILBUR

All the guys would try to out imagine the others in coming up with situations including their teachers or friends' big sisters or famous actresses changing clothes. Rather

82 EXT NIGHT - EDMONTON (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

boring I thought, just like the rest of the camping trip. So much for the great outdoors.

83 EXT DAY - NORTHERN BC (24 seconds)

Series of shots of signs in Dawson Creek, including signs for the "Mile 0" of the Alaska Highway.

84 EXT DAY - ON THE HIGHWAY (77 seconds)

Series of black and white shots from car window. Many are pixilated and/or superimposed. Turn to colour at 43 second point.

WILBUR

June sixteenth. Drove nowhere today and I didn't notice. Suddenly, like when the thunder strikes and the rain pours over you in a torrent before you have time to run for cover, we were there. Nowhere. Sat for quite a while, not saying anything, the world faded away. It was kind of a happy thing I suppose, one of those moments that you never would have planned because if you tried then you would expect too much. I guess that's it, you can't expect to be happy because that would be too arrogant, like you deserve it for some perverse reason.

85 EXT DAY - YUKON (73 seconds)

Yukon sign then a series of events with nature including a waterfall, chasing a squirrel, a moose and shallow river full of small fish.

WILBUR

When I was a kid I would catch bugs and put them in jars. One friend of mine was convinced that ants could be trained to perform in a miniature circus and I believed it too. I guess I liked to believe what my friends believed in. That made life a lot simpler, gave me a feeling of belonging. Now, we are strangers but we feel welcome everywhere, like we belong. It's June 20, the summer solstice and we made it to Whitehorse. Everything has the

85 EXT DAY - YUKON (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

clarity of a sun drenched autumn day. Travel cleanses and fills me with memory.

86 EXT DAY - ALASKA (31 seconds)

Series of shots beginning with Alaska 'Gateway' then a tire pile, an auto repair garage and some American flags.

WILBUR

I'd like to always have something clever to say. Sometimes it's not that easy. Irrelevance! Banal comments creep into every sentence, drawing me away from my goal. So if I wanted to discuss overpopulation in India, how it is becoming a pressure cooker of diseases that will inevitably destroy the world, all of a sudden I'd feel the urge to take up a cooking subtext, like the smell of pressure cooked cabbage which will permeate your hair and clothes, even the shingles on your roof. Triviality. It's just too much a part of me.

87 EXT DAY - HIGHWAY

Superimposed images of a ghostly motor home moving behind and past our car.

88 INT DAY - ANCHORAGE (13 seconds)

An industrial musician shows off his sculptures.

WILBUR

I like to use the phrase "when I was a kid" in my films. Those words make the viewers think that I'm really sensitive, like as if I'm reminiscing and romanticising some real past which I must have learned a valuable lesson from.

89 EXT DAY - ANCHORAGE (14 seconds)

At river mouth, people stand in water or sit on rocks and are fishing for salmon.

WILBUR

After I finish a film, if the first audience doesn't like it, my

89 EXT DAY - ANCHORAGE (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

enthusiasm is shot. I just want to bury it and go on to the next one. I guess in a way, that means that my failures are what cause me to be so prolific.

90 EXT DAY - ALASKALAND (13 seconds)
Helen is eating salmon. Wilbur is gnawing on ribs.

91 EXT DAY - GLACIER (5 seconds)
Camera follows Helen along path to view a large glacier in distance.

WILBUR

I never seem to have a real job, not like my sisters have, not like my parents had. I don't make very much money, but I work hard for the small amounts I do get. I'm happy. I feel good about what I do and I think I help others as much and as often as I help myself. I still feel guilty all the time, that I'm not living up to my parents' expectations of what a successful son should be. I don't know why I need this sort of validation, and I don't know if I'm ever going to get it.

92 EXT DAY - UGLY HOTEL (15 seconds)
Hundreds of sea gulls fly around a large hotel shaped like a multi-storied igloo.

93 EXT DAY - MOOSE NEAR HIGHWAY (12 seconds)
Colour image of moose standing by road.

94 EXT DAY - DAWSON CITY (13 seconds)
Fast motion images around the old town of Dawson City, Yukon.

WILBUR

July first, Canada Day. We drove a bit overtime to get back into Canada in time for the celebrations. Missed the parade but superimposed a old one in its place. A hundred years ago, there were a hundred thousand people here in Dawson City. Where are they all now?

95 EXT DAY - CANADA DAY(S) (26 seconds)
Intercut between Canada Day in Dawson City, Yukon with gold panning competitions and Canada Day in Ottawa in 1992.

WILBUR (continued)

The cemetery is full but not nearly big enough. In a couple of minutes, Helen is going to reveal to me that she lost the ring I gave her, the one that I've had for twenty years that I got on a trip to

Mexico. She put it down at the last campsite and we then drove along some very bad roads that we don't want to cross again.

96 INT DAY - NATIONAL GALLERY (7 seconds)
The Voice of Fire.

WILBUR (continued)
I'll get really really mad. I guess I felt betrayed.

97 EXT DAY - DAWSON CITY (16 seconds)
Series of shots beginning with Canadian flag, then fast images in old cemetery, then the bike repair guy.

WILBUR (continued)
I know it was just an accident, but don't symbols mean something. Objects have value beyond their manufactured cost, at least they do to me. That's part of the cult of capitalism creeping in again, blinding me to what really matters.

98 EXT DAY - DAWSON CITY ROAD (36 seconds)
Helen reveals to Wilbur that she has lost his ring. Some very fast jump cuts to where she thinks she left it. Wilbur is upset but in the end they embrace. Music plays.

HELEN
I used to be afraid of the slough. People used to push cars into there to abandon them. I thought that the cars just got stuck there and the people must have just died in the mud and sunk like the cars. I used to be scared of crows because they were always eating some dead animal on the road and when you went near them they would caw at you, as if

98 EXT DAY - DAWSON CITY ROAD (CONTINUED)

HELEN
they knew what you were thinking. I used to be scared of the potato patch because when it was dark out you could hear the beetles eating the leaves from a stone throw away. I used to be scared of the city, of travelling, of meeting someone and having them take me away.

99 EXT DAY - ROCK PILE (35 seconds)

Helen and Wilbur climb around on a pile of rocks from river dredging.
An old rusty boiler stands there. Wilbur finds a sock. Music plays.

HELEN (continued)

I guess that was always it, I didn't want to be taken away. I didn't want to sink in the slough or be eaten by crows or any of that because I wanted to stay home where mom would be baking bread and gapping spark plugs. I wanted to be safe. Now, at seventy miles an hour on a road I've never seen before with wild animals everywhere and wheat and potato crops nowhere, I feel more safe than ever before. It's not because of him, or rather it's not because he's here. It is because I no longer have those fears. Sure, I still have troubles, still make mistakes, but I've learned not to need so much. I finally realize what I want.

100 EXT DAY - GOATS NEAR HIGHWAY (16 seconds)
Some goats. Music plays.

101 INT DAY - CAFE
Helen is sipping coffee as sunlight shines through the window onto her. She appears happy.

HELEN

Hmmm. Coffee. A chair. Feels good. Perhaps this is what life is all about - stopping.

WILBUR

Yeah, but before you can stop, you have to go.

101 INT DAY - CAFE (CONTINUED)

HELEN

Yeah.

102 INT DAY - ART GALLERY

Many people are in an art gallery looking at paintings by Jeff Nachtigall. Camera moves amongst them.

WILBUR

Have we tied up all the loose ends yet?

HELEN

I never did settle anything with Jeff.

WILBUR

Who?

HELEN

Jeff. They animated guy with the dogs. There he is
now...

[sync dialogue continues occasionally below - marked as with italics
for remainder of scene: *WILBUR: You have met, earlier in the film.*
We're rolling again. // HELEN: This is great. Terrific. //
WILBUR: Hey, you've got to meet this guy. This is his stuff here.
// HELEN: Oh yeah.]

WILBUR

Jeff?

JEFF

Hey.

WILBUR

Thanks for inviting me. Real cool.

JEFF

You're welcome.

WILBUR

Like you to meet Helen, this is Helen.

HELEN

I think we've met.

JEFF

Somewhere.

102 INT DAY - ART GALLERY (CONTINUED)

HELEN

How you doing?

JEFF

Good.

WILBUR (v/o)

I doubt anyone even remembers that we had this
character in earlier; your previous
love interest. He's an artist it
seems, and doing pretty well.

HELEN (v/o)

I've never dated him. You just made all that up.

HELEN: This looks great, I love it. // WILBUR: Yeah, it's really interesting. // JEFF: Well, interesting is my life.

Wilbur wanders away from Helen and Jeff to talk to another attendee.

WILBUR (v/o)

So I guess that begs the question, what are we doing here now?

HELEN (v/o)

I think there's something else we have to resolve.
We've begun to figure out who we are
as individuals and as a couple, but
perhaps there is more.

WILBUR (v/o)

Perhaps this is a forum to discuss deeper aspects of
art, you know? This is a gallery.

HELEN (v/o)

I think we'd be the only ones. If you look around for
a moment you'll notice that everyone
is just using the gallery as a meeting
place to stand around with old friends
and gossip about stuff.

102 INT DAY - ART GALLERY (CONTINUED)

WILBUR: *I don't really know what to say about his work. I think it's really cool and I like all the colours and all that but... //*
MAN: *I think it's great. Don't worry about it. Go back in there and talk about the Jays. //* WILBUR: *The Jays.... Hey Jeff, how about those Jays? //* JEFF: *The Jays? //* WILBUR: *The Jays. //* JEFF: *The Blue Jays. //* WILBUR: *But, now who is this. You are in a wheel chair...? //* JEFF: *It's a self portrait. //* WILBUR: *Oh... Jungle city, I, ... it's not interesting, it's something that's not interesting, it's something beyond interesting, it's cool. It's cool.*

In the lobby/reception area.

ANOTHER MAN

There, I said it. It's too late hey.

WILBUR

No, I've already got it.

ANOTHER MAN

I'll only say it once, you should have cued me.

WILBUR

That's okay, I already taped it. I'm recording everything.

ANOTHER MAN

Jeff, he's ready to go. Everything we say will be on tape.

WILBUR

You understand?

JEFF

I understand. ... Remember the old days when you used to drink a beer, it's always a beer, a smoke was a smoke, but a woman was never a woman.

In the gallery.

WILBUR (v/o)

These stories, they're just the bits and pieces of everyday life that make us who we are. Life is just too big to discuss in one large chunk, so we carve it up into little bits to digest one day at a time.

102 INT DAY - ART GALLERY (CONTINUED)

HELEN (v/o)

Most of the stories are so trivial. Are you trying to say that our lives have that little meaning?

WILBUR (v/o)

Perhaps we're afraid to admit it but yes. Is that such a bad thing? We're just people, doing the best we can. If telling each other stories makes us happy, then let's be happy.

HELEN (v/o)

Tell me a story.

WILBUR (v/o)

What about?

HELEN (v/o)

Maybe about a magician or a trip to the moon or something.

WILBUR (v/o)

I'll tell you what, if you help me, I'll try to tell the best stories I can. We'll make our lives better by describing them better.

HELEN (v/o)

I can hardly wait to see that.

WILBUR: Yeah, Jeff and I hadn't seen his work before so I had to come and see what it was all about. But I told him it was interesting... is that bad? Like I think that's bad. // JAN: I don't think so. It is. It sparks a lot of curiosity. // WILBUR: But I think it's great, he put so much work into it. I just feel like my work's all shit compared cause he does such cool stuff. // JAN: He's exceptional. The whole show is great. // WILBUR: Like this one. what is this all about? This spotlight on a cow. but, it's yellow and I get it. It means something to me. It speaks to me. What do you think? // JAN: I like them, they're humorous // WILBUR: ... and this one over here, I like these too. And it's got this whole circle and it's like a moose. // JAN: yeah // WILBUR: and I come here to record stuff and there's the alligator and everything but, it's kind of child like, it's so innocent, but so complex as well. He knows how to use his colours and he really knows what he wants to do. But you know there's this dog and I feel terrorized by it as well. I feel scared. // JAN: yeah. I think that's part of the humour though. I don't know.

102 INT DAY - ART GALLERY (CONTINUED)

WILBUR

The moose. I like the moose. Life is like a moose you know.

MIKE

It is.

WILBUR

it is, because... what's this? What can you say right?
It says everything.

MIKE

That's right, it screams. It say's "I'm a moose".

WILBUR

It says I'M A MOOSE, AND I'M PROUD TO BE A CANADIAN
MOOSE.

MIKE

And you look it.

*WILBUR: I thought everyone just painted stripes, I didn't think I'd
find a moose, I thought I'd just find blue stripes.*

Helen and Wilbur eat snacks at the reception.

HELEN (v/o)

So is this the end of the journey?

WILBUR (v/o)

If there is one thing I've learned, there is no end
to the journey.

HELEN

No, only beginnings.

WILBUR

We could pull off to a side road, more to see, more
to experience.

HELEN

The path of most resistance.

WILBUR

We'll make a movie, together this time. Not an
important story, just one that we want
to tell.

102 INT DAY - ART GALLERY (CONTINUED)

HELEN

I like that idea. You and me?

WILBUR

Yeah, you and me.

HELEN

We.

Helen and Wilbur exit.

103 PUPPET FILM

Hand puppets of characters move about while the voices of Helen and Wilbur tell the story collaboratively, one finishing the sentence of the other. Sometimes they correct each other, other times they laugh at each other's readings.

HELEN AND WILBUR

"The Basset Hound" -- Once upon a time there was a Basset Hound who was a Hobo. All he ever wanted to do was wander around doing not much of nothing, begging and scavenging, sleeping in alley ways and ditches.

One day he was eating with another hobo. The Basset Hound was chewing on old carrots while the other heated beans over a fire. The food smelled and tasted so good and the conversation so lively that the Basset Hound failed to notice that his tail was in the fire until it was all ablaze!

"Ow Ow Ow Ow Ow" he yelped. Quick as anything he ran off to find a place to put the fire out. Miles and miles he ran until he fortuitously came to a glacier (I guess he was in Alaska or something) and sat down on it and put out the flame. Unfortunately it was too late, the Basset Hound's tail had burned right off!

Now the Basset Hound was cold and sore and so far from his friends that he couldn't find his way back to them. He began to walk but an icy rain began to fall. It was a sad day. Then the Basset Hound heard a noise, it was a carnival show. There

103 PUPPET FILM (CONTINUED)

WILBUR AND HELEN

was a huge tent and lots of trailers and people running around. He went in to see if he could get a warm place to sleep. He saw the fat man [eating, does not see dog], ... the strong man [tries to kick dog]... the trapeze artists [laughs at dog] but no one helped him until he found the magician.

"Hey Basset Hound! Do you want a job?" the Magician called. Of course the Basset Hound would usually prefer eating stinky old socks to working at a job, but when he saw the sirloin steak in the Magician's trailer, he agreed. All that night, the Magician fed him his favourite things and entertained him with card tricks. Soon he was asleep in a nice warm bed.

"Wake Up! Wake Up!" the Magician called, "It's 6 am and time for work!"

"Like heck" grumbled the Basset Hound in reply, rolling over to sleep further. But suddenly he was beset with the aroma of frying bacon and was on his feet again.

After seconds and thirds of crispy bacon, the Magician took the Basset Hound to the large tent.

The strong man is guarding the door, but this time he was very courteous. Inside, the two of them were alone.

The Magician wanted to try out his new secret trick.

He gets the Basset Hound to stand in the middle of the large circle and then began throwing magic dust all around him.

[Magician]: "Alacoroonko! Bibilboomba! Psteroctis! Pandactus!".

The magician started scrambling through an old book, looking for the rest of the words.

The Basset Hound was getting
103 PUPPET FILM (CONTINUED)

WILBUR AND HELEN

nervous, having just realized that the Magician had never done this before and didn't know

what he was doing. He sniffed at the magic dust to try to figure it out for himself but got some in his nose and "Achoo!", [dog sneezes] POOF!

Smoke appeared all around and the Basset Hound's feet lift off the floor. Sparkles glittered everywhere the room spins.

PLOOMP!

The Basset Hound lands on light sand. He was no longer in the tent. The sky was dark.

WILBUR AND HELEN

The Basset Hound was no longer in the tent and he got very scared and he began to howl.
OwwwwwwwwwwOooooowwwwwwwwwwwww.

But then he heard someone howling back. It was other basset hounds and they were coming his way.

Dozens of basset hounds of all different colours. Some were black and brown, some were purple and green, some were blue and red and yellow. Some were spotted, others striped, and others checkered.

Our Basset Hound Hobo had seen other basset hounds before, but never with such extraordinarily huge foofy coloured tails!

"Welcome to the moon. We have been expecting you but we were afraid that you would not get here in time."

"In time for what?", the Basset Hound Hobo asked.

"The tail pinning of course. All the puppies are getting their tails and becoming hounds today." With that, all the basset hounds went back to their town for a grand celebration. It was quite a grand time with speeches and raffles and everything.

103 PUPPET FILM (CONTINUED)

Basset dignitaries wearing sash gives speech.

"Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah."

There is a rack of tails.

WILBUR AND HELEN

"Pick which ever one you want." The Basset Hound Hobo was very happy with the one he picked.

It was green and yellow and smelled faintly of lemons and limes. When they put it on him, it hurt for a moment but then it was over. Everybody was very happy and had lots to eat.

After a month of comfort, the Basset Hound Hobo decided he missed sleeping in alley ways and in ditches, so he went back to the spot on the moon where he first arrived. Down on the ground he saw a few flakes of magic dust. He sniffed at them. "Achoo!"

Spinning effects and smoke again. He is back in the tent. The Magician was standing there, surrounded by a variety of dogs.

The Magician was very upset but when he saw the Basset Hound he was very happy. "I haven't been able to do that trick again and everyone makes fun of me now and so they took away my trailer and I had to sell my hat to buy some noodles for supper".

The Basset Hound didn't forget the kindness the magician had paid him, so quickly agreed to do a few magic shows with him. They were quite a success. Eventually, the Magician found another trick to do

Magician beside flower, it opens via time lapse.

... so the Basset Hound was free to be a hobo again and to happily wander around begging for meals, sleeping in alley ways and smelling like a lemon. The end.

104 INT DAY - FILM RECEPTION LOBBY
Jean Oser speaks to the camera.

JEAN OSER

Okay, that was quite some film you showed there, but you took the most beautiful girl in all Regina, and you have her there like crap, all that, all that [some french] crazy, you are crazy, [some german] okay, so you got that, you got the mean professor right now, besides that, I love you, I think you do great things. Okay.

105 END TITLES

106 EXT DAY - A PRAIRIE ROAD

Crew shot features "Wilbur" and James standing in coats.

107 COPYRIGHT TITLE CARD

108 EXT DAY - WOODS

The monster which was seen in the "how did you get into film" flashback crawls into the frame along a wooded path. Two people run out and remove the monster's shell revealing a man beneath it. They all exit.

NARRATOR

...and best of all, it's trendy.