

Out

EXT. PARK - DAY

The sun is shining down through a low-hanging banner tied between two trees. "CONGRATULATIONS TOM & LOUIS". A couple, TOM and LOUIS, stands below it, arms around each other and smiling. They stand in front of a group APPLAUDING them.

The group is family, of all ages. The young ones ignore the congratulated couple, running around. The eldest hold their significant others, gleaming.

TOM (mid-20s) breaks away from LOUIS (mid-20s) and addresses the group.

TOM

Alright, alright. Thanks everyone.

The crowd goes silent, except for the children, still yelling and playing.

TOM (CONT'D)

Thank you everyone for putting this together. I guess my father will be taking care of the food.

Tom's father, BILL (late-50s), stands in front of a portable coal pit on a picnic table with an apron that has military camouflage on it. He salutes his son with a spatula.

TOM (CONT'D)

Thanks, Dad. Everyone else, We'll make our rounds.

Smattering APPLAUD.

TOM (CONT'D)

I still can't believe she said yes!

Louder APPLAUSE. He turns to Louis and gives her a quick kiss. They step forward, toward the picnic table of food. They move through the crowd, chatting to everyone they can as quickly as they can. They exchange hugs, kisses, handshakes.

LOUIS

Aunt Harriet, thank you.

AUNT HARRIET

Congratulations.

TOM

Thanks, Uncle Jim. I'll look out for her.

UNCLE JIM
I just can't believe you finally
found the balls!

TOM
Yea, OK. Thanks.

TERRI
Congrats, Louis.
(whispers to Louis)
I told you he'd ask.

LOUIS
Thanks Terri. Say Hi to your mom.

They make their way to Bill and his wife, MARGARET. Bill
flips a burger and Margaret readies some plates.

TOM
Looking good, sir.

They shake hands.

BILL
I'm proud of you, Thomas. Took some
guts to ask your mother to marry
me. Can't imagine what it would've
been like for you!

He billows out a laugh and continues to cook. Tom shoots
Louis a "Told you so" look.

PAUL and GINA (early-50s) grab Tom and Louis before he could
notice them. Group hug.

PAUL
Oooh, congratulations, kids!

TOM
Thanks, Mr. Oakdale.

PAUL
Hush, call me Paul. Heck, call me
Dad!

Paul's hug becomes more severe, Tom tries to shimmy away.
Bill looks over his shoulder briefly, he heard that.

TOM
Thanks, Paul.

GINA
Congratulations, you two! Now, tell
me all about it!

Gina grabs Louis and starts to pull her away. Louis looks at Tom for help. He just LAUGHS.

PAUL
Yea! Everything.

Paul follows.

Tom turns back around to his father. There's an awkward PAUSE, with Bill's back to him. Margaret notices and walks away, pretending to be interested in someone else.

Tom walks up to next to Bill. He notices, but continues to mind the food.

TOM
You surprised, too?

BILL
What? No. I expected it would've happened eventually.

TOM
You mean with Louis.

BILL
Of course.

Tom looks around, overlooks the park.

TOM
Beautiful day.

BILL
It's hot.

Tom struggles to come up with more conversation.

TOM
How's mom?

BILL
Your mother's just fine. I keep an eye on her, don't you worry.

He smiles. He flops a hamburger onto a bun.

BILL (CONT'D)
BURGER'S READY!

A kid snatches it before he could finish.

BILL (CONT'D)
Damn kids. You gonna have one, now?

TOM
(caught off guard)
What?

BILL
Next step, right? After you get
married. Have a kid.

TOM
Oh, yea I guess so.

BILL
Good.

TOM
What?

Bill slams the spatula onto the picnic table.

BILL
Are you having a kid?

TOM
Not yet, but I'm sure.

BILL
(cutting him off)
Well, are ya or aren't ya?

TOM
Why are you pushing this, sir?

BILL
Your mother wants grandchildren.

TOM
Oh Christ, why is she so worried?

BILL
I think you know why.

TOM
(quieter)
Dad, I was a kid.

BILL
You will address me as sir.

Tom is angered.

TOM
SIR. That's not me.

BILL
 Well, it WAS you, so better make
 good on some proof.
 (PAUSE)
 For your mother.

Bill continues to mind the food. Tom is furious, but trying
 to hide it. He looks around to see if anyone is listening.

BILL (CONT'D)
 Now skip off to your party.

Tom has had enough.

TOM
 (yells)
 I'm GAY!

The picnic screeches to a halt. Bill stops cooking, turns to
 Tom slowly. Margaret, Paul, Gina, everyone, look at Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)
 Is that what you wanted, DAD? You
 want me to say that, DAD? You want
 me to admit you're right, you're
 always right, DAD?

Louis breaks through the crowd, walking slowly toward Tom.
 People watch her with worried faces.

TOM (CONT'D)
 I've had it with you running my
 life. You were a sergeant LONG ago,
 and NOT of this family.

Bill keeps his cool. He looks at Louis.

Her eyes are watering, she's trying to hold back tears. Tom
 finally notices her. His heart breaks.

LOUIS
 Tom?

He tries to speak, but can't come up with anything to say.

TOM
 Louis, I.

BILL
 Way to go, boy. Ruined another
 life.

Tom gets more upset at Louis's face. That crossed the line.

Tom swings and lands a loud PUNCH across his father's face. He falls backward, twisting onto his stomach. The crowd GASPS.

Tom can't believe it. He's looking at his fist in shock. He slowly looks up to the people around him. Some have leapt to his father's aid, including his mother. The rest look at Tom or Bill in such shock and disappointment.

Tom looks to Louis, who is now walking away.

TOM

Louis!

He darts after her, stops her.

TOM (CONT'D)

Louis, I'm sorry.

Tom waits for a reaction.

LOUIS

That's it?

He's confused.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

(angrier)

You say these things in front of my family, and that's all you have to say?

TOM

I can't live my lie anymore.

LOUIS

I'm your lie. What we had was a lie. How could you do this?

TOM

I couldn't bring myself to know the truth, I was afraid.

LOUIS

Afraid of what, breaking my heart?
Punching your father out cold?
Being a decent human being?

TOM

I didn't want to lose you.

LOUIS

YOU'RE GAY! You shouldn't have had me to being with.

(MORE)

LOUIS (CONT'D)

(quieter)

And I thought you were saving
yourself.

TOM

You're a wonderful person, I
couldn't hurt.

LOUIS

(interrupting)

Well, you did, ass hole. Enjoy your
fucking picnic.

Louis storms off, under the "CONGRATULATIONS" banner. She
rips it as she walks off, separating it at the "&" so all
that's left is "CONGRATULATIONS TOM". "LOUIS" floats to the
ground.

Tom SIGHS and notices he's being watched. He turns to the
crowd, all eyes are on him, all disappointed and upset. His
father is being helped up. He looks around and finds Tom.

BILL

A word, boy.

Tom ignores him and runs off after Louis.

FADE TO: BLACK