

TREASURE

A true comedy about four families

Story by

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TREASURE

A true comedy about four families of suburbia

This is a true story.

Every character is real.

Every event is real.

The plot?

WELL ... ALMOST.

In One Life-Changing Summer,

Four Teens & Six Kids learn to grow-up,

And

Eight Adults — once again — find the child within.

THE FOUR FAMILIES OF TREASURE

THE McHALES [Main House]

JASON Architect & Sailor

SHARON Photographer & Real Estate Agent

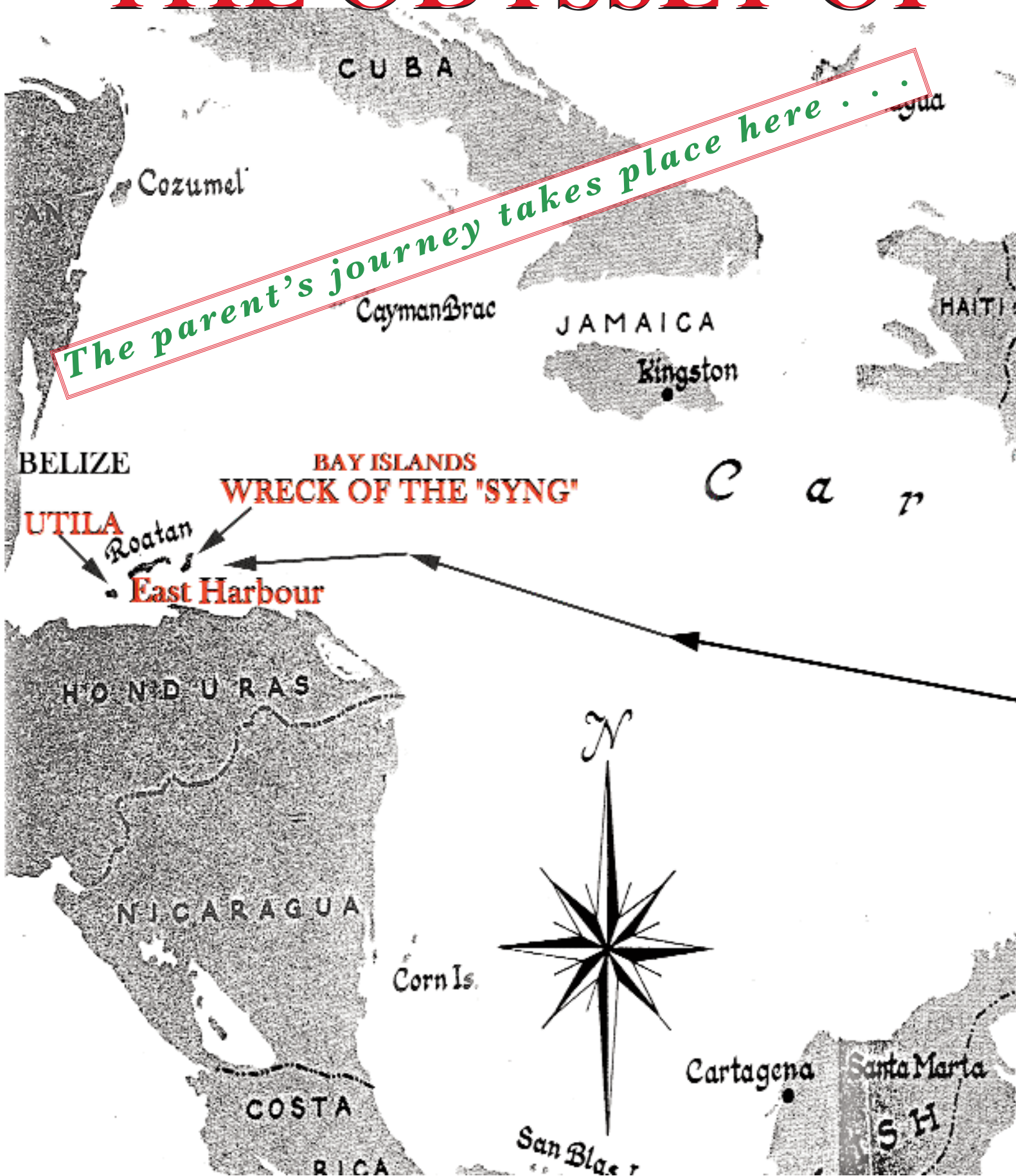
JULIE 17, Junior in High School

QUINTIN 10, A Gruesome Threesome

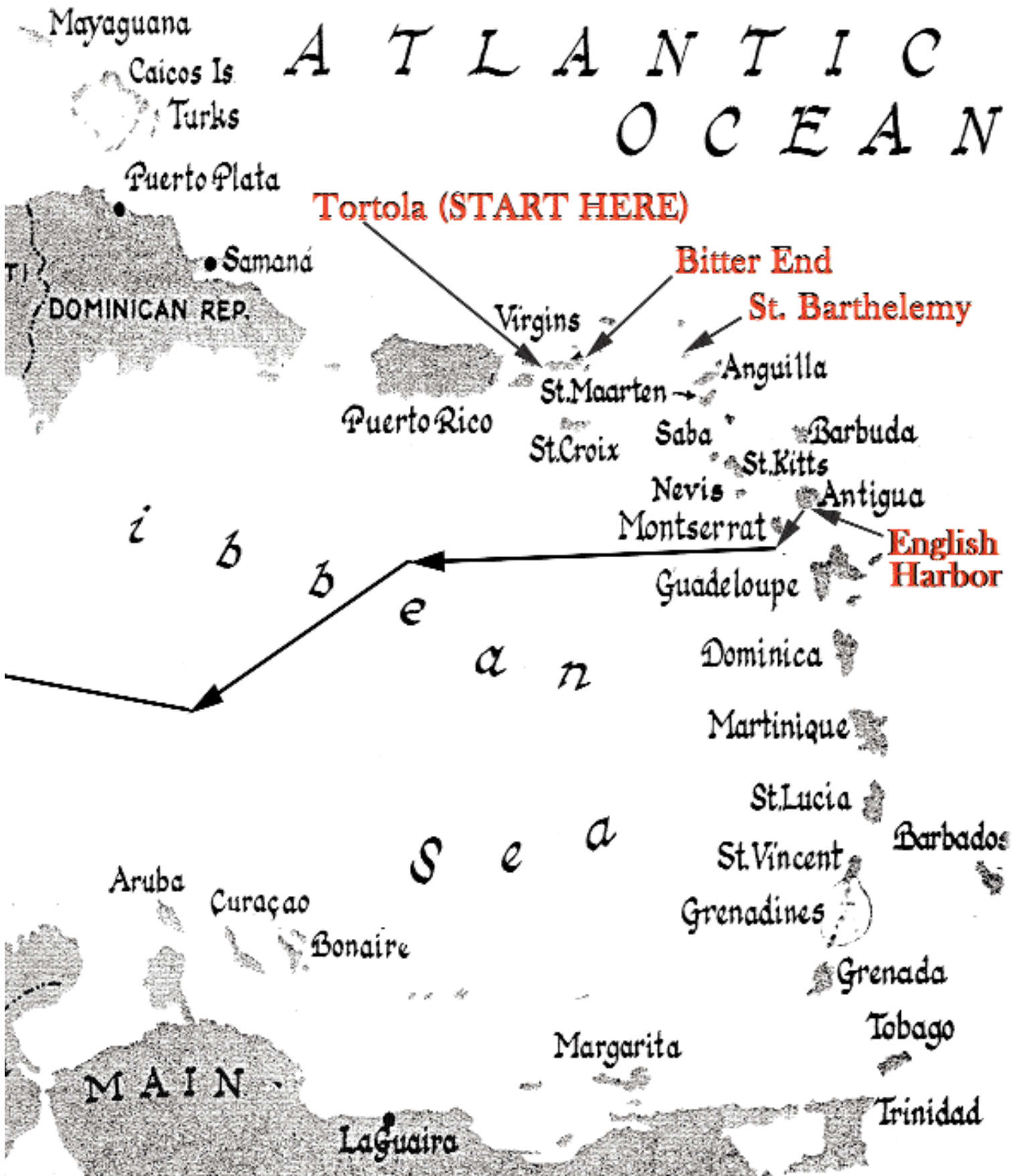


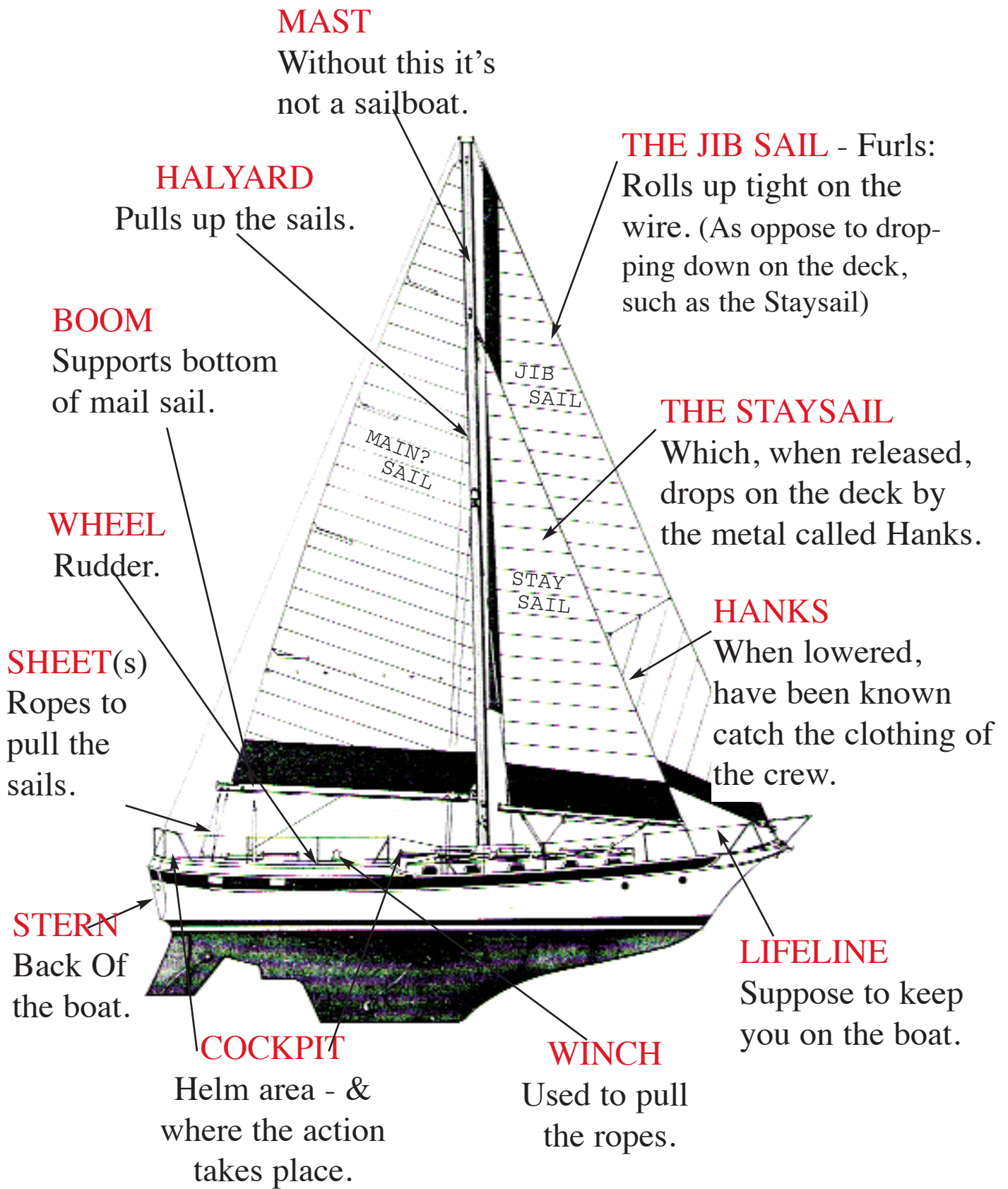
The teen's & kid's journey takes place here.

THE ODYSSEY OF



THE "WE DO"





Sailing Vessel: "WE DO"

TREASURE

FADE IN

OPENING CREDIT ROLL

AERIAL VIEW - EARLY MORNING - SUN IS JUST RISING.

HELICOPTER FLIES OVER THE COAST AND INTO A cul de sac in the Southern California mountains.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

An attractive suburb on the outskirts of Los Angeles is where four families call home. Over the years, good neighbors became close friends, having successfully survived diaper rash, broken arms, scholastic amnesia, career crises and marital mishaps. Now, these families find themselves facing a stagnant economy struggling to make ends meet.

EXT. CHERRY HILL GROVE - EARLY MORNING

An amiable sheepdog strolls up to meet, MIKE DURAN, at the door of their home. After giving the dog an affectionate pat on the head, Mike heads to his car on the driveway.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

That ball of fur is Ralph, taking another unauthorized morning jaunt through the community. And the friendly fellow who just left is Ralph's human, Mike Duran. This ever enthusiastic native-born Australian is a great idea man who loves to wheel and deal. However, as a recent casualty of the economic downturn, Mike is temporarily on "hiatus" from the work world.

INT: DURAN'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

CAMERA FOLLOWS RALPH INSIDE THE HOUSE AS FAMILY AWAKES:

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

Now we get to meet the rest of Ralph's charges;

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)((CONT'D))

Mike's wife, JOAN - a realist, and a perfect balance for Mike - and their three teenagers ... who, to their parents' amazement, all manage to coexist under one roof.

Joan is coming through the kitchen door as Ralph decides to go in. Ralph wins - and Joan spills her coffee on her blouse.

JOAN
(wiping her blouse)
Thank you Ralph, and good morning to you too.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

With almost a quarter of a century of marital bliss behind them, Joan returned to college to finish her degree. She has recently entered the investment world.

JOAN CLIMBS THE STAIRS, RALPH RUSHES PASS HER as she holds her coffee cup over her head.

We follow Ralph into NEAL's room. Neal's looking under a pile of clothes for his schoolbooks, as Ralph - not be denied his morning petting - rushes Neal.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

Fun loving by nature, the eldest, Neal, is "trying" to become a responsible adult.

NEAL
Okay boy, I always have time for you.
(scratching Ralph, as hair flies everywhere)
But I'd like to go to school just one day without looking like I rolled on the floor of a hair salon.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

Neal is anxiously awaiting acceptance to the college of his choice or, for that matter, any college that would take his folks' IOU.

As Ralph trots out of the room, Neal grabs his car keys, books, and jacket, heads out, crashing into his brother, JOEY. They grumble at each other as each goes on his way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

Second in line is JOEY, a sixteen year old who never ceases to amaze everybody with all the trouble his good intentions get him into.

JOEY

Hi Ralph!

RALPH

Woof!

STACY is coming out of her room as Ralph knocks her down.

STACY

Oh good grief Ralph! If you were a human, this would constitute child abuse.

Ralph sits down next to her, cocks his head in concern. Stacy laughs, pats his head, and proceeds to get up.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

And ... Mike and Joan's youngest child, Stacy, is charging headlong into her teens. Having elevated precociousness to a fine art, she never hesitates to offer her opinion ... to anyone.

END OF CREDIT ROLL

EXT. COUNTY LIBRARY PARKING LOT - MORNING

Mike pulls in, parks and gets out.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

As a whim on his last birthday, close friends had given Mike the book, "A TREASURE PLACE." After several nights of burning the midnight oil researching online, Mike is convinced that he's really on to something.

INT: LIBRARY

Mike is standing in front of the librarian's desk with "A TREASURE PLACE" in hand. A reference book and atlas are open.

LIBRARIAN

You mean that this book of yours gives clues to find a buried treasure?

MIKE

That's right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIBRARIAN

A real buried treasure? I mean, no fooling around? This is a serious, non-fiction book giving real clues for a real buried treasure?

MIKE

Yep.

LIBRARIAN

Seems like a strange method to give away money. How do you know it's legitimate?

MIKE

I called the publishing house to be sure that this author, Dr. Michael Sage, and his book are on the level. They said it's guaranteed by Price-Waterhouse.

LIBRARIAN

Can't do any better than that! I'm surprised we don't have it available here.

MIKE

I wondered about that too, but apparently the publisher requires a record of anyone who purchases the book.

LIBRARIAN

Curious...

MIKE

Isn't it ... probably you can't claim the treasure without showing a sales receipt.

LIBRARIAN

Well, that would explain why we don't have it. All right now, here it says that Antigua is a derivative of the word ancient.

MIKE

Hmm, may I see that?

LIBRARIAN

Sure, here you are. I'll be back shortly.

MIKE

Thanks for your help.

A passage in the reference book catches his attention.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (cont'd)

"King William the fourth of England, the 'Sailor King,' built a house in English Harbour."

Then, he reads from "A TREASURE PLACE."

MIKE (cont'd)

"When the earth touches your feet, the King's English will give you a lift. If you choose, look carefully with guidance from VEB."

This is it - I knew it! I'm sure I can figure out "VEB" once we get to that part of the world.

(a grin overtakes his face)

Well mate, you've got a 10 million dollar selling job ahead of you.

INT. DURAN'S HOME, KITCHEN - THE SAME MORNING

Joan is reaching for the frozen waffles popping out of the toaster. Ralph catches the first one and runs as Joan gives him an annoyed look. Joan tosses another one in Stacy's direction.

STACY

Yummmmm...another nutritious meal!

NEAL

Quiet midget or we'll put you back on the gluten-free stuff.

Neal beats Joey out of the next waffle and turns his attention back to his Mom.

NEAL (cont'd)

Mom, I got the job at NERDS ...

STACY

How appropriate.

NEAL

(ignoring his sister)
... delivering pizza.

JOAN

Great...think it will pay for college?

NEAL

Not likely, since first I have to fix my car.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEY

You could borrow mine if I had one... but noooo...I'm the only sixteen year old in town without wheels.

STACY

You're also the only sixteen year with a collection of tickets only hours after starting driver's training.

OLDER WOMAN

(V.O.)

Ah yes ... well, leaving the Durans' domestic domain, we cross the street to the ANDERSON'S. With a mere fourteen years of marriage under their belts, Abby and Nick are the proud parents of Chip, Andrew and Melissa.

EST. SHOT - ANDERSON'S DRIVEWAY IN CUL DE SAC - MOMENTS LATER

OLDER WOMAN

(V.O.)

That's ABBY ANDERSON - though not a morning person, she takes her car-pooling responsibility seriously while her husband, NICK, heads out for his morning run.

ABBY

(as Nick kisses her and starts to jog away)

You actually believe that the answer to whatever ails the human race can be found in physical activity.

OLDER WOMAN

(V.O.)

It's that wit that keeps a cap of reality on friends and family. Nick loves to kid, especially Abby. He's a bit of a dare-devil, and definitely a morning person.

NICK

(Turning back with a smile)

Darling, it's the true nectar of the gods. Besides, how else could I get to you so early in the morning! By the way, you left your keys on the counter, again.

He heads off, waving to his kids who are piling into the car.

ABBY

(under her breath)

Damn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Abby heads back into the house, passing her one of her 8 year old redheaded twins, MELISSA.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

A down to earth couple, they hold to a more traditional family lifestyle: Nick works; Abby mothers. At this point in their lives, they have little time for much else.

Melissa clamors after her twin brother ANDREW, who is already in the car. Their brother, CHIP, 10, charges across the cul de sac with his skate board, anxious to join his friends.

Andrew stares after him, tired of being excluded by Chip and his friends, QUENTIN MCHALE and MAX SCHOFFIELD.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)(CON'T)

Chip, Quentin, and Max are known to the neighborhood as the "Gruesome Threesome." Quite a befitting title based on their antics. All three are ten - and not one of them should be underestimated. Chip is the leveler between Max, the natural leader, and Quentin, the undisputed follower whose penchant for saying "I told you so" drives everyone nuts.

EXT. MCHALE'S DRIVEWAY

JULIE MCHALE is behind the wheel of the family's old Volvo with her father, JASON MCHALE, in the passenger seat. Julie is desperately trying to start the car.

Jason's wife, SHARON MCHALE, comes out of the house holding a jacket for her son, Quentin, who races by on his skateboard, grabbing his jacket.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

Quentin, the second "Gruesome Threesome," lives with his 16 year old sister, Julie. A junior in high school, she is a leader in all things social. Their home represents one of their father, Jason's finest work as an architect - a perfect career for this exacting personality. Recently, his wife, Sharon, persuaded him to open his own architectural firm. Even though Sharon's friends call her Tinkerbelle, she still hedges her bets.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER WOMAN

She has set aside her expensive hobby, photography, to return to the ranks of the employed in real estate. For the sake of both of their careers, she hopes that the return of the housing market is here to stay.

The car sputters, then stops. Sharon and the Gruesome Threesome join Jason to PUSH the car down the driveway, while Julie tries to jump-start the car.

OLDER WOMAN

(V.O.)(CON'T)

Biting the bullet, Jason has put aside his lifelong love affair with sailing by selling his 29' sloop and, in what leisure time he had left, concentrated on crabgrass and pool algae.

The car rolls to a stop at the bottom of the driveway.

JULIE

What did I do wrong Dad?

JASON

It's okay sweetheart. The car is just terminal.

QUENTIN

I told you it was a bomb, Dad!

JULIE

My brother ... master of the obvious. What I wouldn't give for my own car.

JASON

Me too.

SHARON

Julie, you can catch a ride with Abby ... Jason, I'm almost ready so I'll give you a ride to work. We'll worry about the car later.

Picking up her school books, Julie gets out of the car, slams the door, and stomps towards Abby's car, followed by the Gruesome Threesome.

JASON

(raising his arms)

What a way to start the day. I surrender!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY

What took you so long? I declared defeat after my first cup of coffee. It might be time to surrender that chariot of yours.

JASON

Are you trying to tell me something?

ABBY

There's a message there somewhere Jason.
(to the kids)
Okay, everybody in, the bus is leaving.

Ralph romps towards the car.

ABBY (cont'd)

Sorry Ralph, not today.

Abby pulls up in front of VALERIE and PAUL SCOFFIELD's home, where. Paul is just coming out to get in his carpool.

ABBY (cont'd)

(to Paul)
Max is with us.

PAUL

You sure? Who could tell ... all I see are bodies in there.

ABBY

(quickly taking a head count)
Yep ... all accounted for, plus Julie.

PAUL

Yea, I watched the sad demise of Jason's car.

Valerie appears at the doorway with wet suit in hand.

VALERIE

(to Paul)
I thought you might need this.

PAUL

(running back)
Right ... my day in the tank.

He plants a kiss on her cheek and races off to his carpool.

VALERIE

(under her breath)
If I'm dressing him at almost fifty, what will I be doing for him at sixty?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

This is the last family of our story ... Valerie and Paul Scoffield, the proud parents of BRIGITTE and Max, who rounds out our "Gruesome Threesome" trio. Whoops, you haven't seen Brigitte yet ... but, you'll get that honor in just a minute. Paul is a marine biologist working for a major corporation, that is in a downsizing mode. Valerie, though not pretentious, is a classy woman who enjoys spending the time and money to put her best foot forward. So far, with the help of a small inheritance, she has been able to hold out against the inevitable, becoming another breadwinner.

Valerie sees Sharon and Jason get into their car and waits for them to pass by. As the cars start out, another day in suburbia has begun.

SHARON
(to Valerie)
Don't forget ... lunch at twelve.

JASON
Like Val ever forgets?

SHARON
(whispering back)
You're right ... but I'd hate to see what happens if she ever lost her calender.

VALERIE
I'll be there as soon as I finish helping "Princess" shop for a few necessities.

BRIGITTE SCOFFIELD, Val and Paul's seventeen year old daughter, appears in the doorway.

OLDER WOMAN
(V.O.)

Brigitte doesn't fall far from her mother's tree. She's an image conscious sixteen year old, and though somewhat self-involved, when the chips are down she tends to come through. The real bane of her existence is her brother, Max, with his creative mind for mischief.

SHARON
(to Brigitte)
Don't you ever go to school?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIGITTE
 (acting" pretentious)
 But - of - c-o-u-r-s-e, Sharon. Whenever
 there is a socially important event.

VAL
 It also helps to have your first two
 classes cancelled.

Sharon laughs and waves as she drives off.

OLDER WOMAN
 (V.O.)
 There you have it, you've met our four
 families. Now ... who am I? Let's just
 say that you'll meet me soon enough.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER THE SAME MORNING

BRIGITTE
 (holding up a dress)
 Oh, Mother, I would die for this dress!

VAL
 (reaching for the price tag)
 You'd have to.

BRIGITTE
 I can't believe you're going to allow
 fashion trends to give way to financial
 considerations!

VAL
 (searching the racks)
 Believe it! Besides it's not in your
 color chart, dear. Here's a nice one.

BRIGITTE
 Oh Mother...ugh!

EXT. RESTAURANT - NOON SAME DAY

INT. RESTAURANT

VAL
 You "must" have our reservation. See,
 here it is on my calendar.

HOSTESS
 I'm sorry, I can't find it. But, come
 with me, I do have one table left.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EXT. RESTAURANT

Val's seated at a window table. Abby crosses the street as Joan and Sharon approach from the other direction.

INT. RESTAURANT - AT THE END OF THE MEAL.

SHARON

...and just tell me where I'm going to find houses around here to rent to foreign dignitaries?

JOAN

(counting out the money)
Why out here and not in town?

SHARON

They want to experience *suburbia*.

ABBY

If I know you, you'll rent our houses out from under us for the sake of international relations.

SHARON

Hmm, there's a thought.

ABBY

Perhaps we can finance a driver for the early-morning carpools. Nick's auto shop isn't keeping up with the family's growing expenses. When he opened for business, all we had to worry about was ourselves.

JOAN

Amazing how that happens.

VALERIE

Well, for the right price, I might be convinced to rent. After all, there's not much left of my inheritance, and that was supposed to cover the kids' education.

JOAN

I've got to run. Wall Street may close, but brokers never rest. This career business isn't all it's cracked up to be.

ABBY

(getting up)
I'll trade you places. I've got three carpools in the next two hours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

...but then, carpooling isn't the cat's meow either. Give my kids a kiss.

ABBY

I can't. I sold them this morning to pay for lunch.

INT. NICK'S SERVICE GARAGE - AFTERNOON, SAME DAY

Nick is on the telephone, surrounded by tools and auto parts.

NICK

Sure, we can fix that for you ... right. Bring your car in tomorrow morning. Bye - see you then.

NICK(cont'd)

(shuffling through boxes)

I'm sure I have the part, somewhere. Damn, I wish I could afford more space!

EXT. TRAFFIC JAM - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Sharon, stuck in traffic, sees her neighbor Paul dressed in his wet suit with goggles perched on his head, in the passenger seat of the car next to her.

SHARON

(calls out the window)

New corporate dress code?

PAUL

Only when there's a carpool to catch.

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT - DURAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

INT. THE DURAN'S KITCHEN

Mike's at kitchen table with travel brochures of the Caribbean.

JOAN

I continually marvel at your love for adventure. What is all this?

MIKE

(testing the emotional climate)

I was thinking about us taking a little vacation. You worked so hard to finish your degree.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

Why Mike, you've found a money tree ...
or maybe a new line of credit! You won't
mind if I don't pack tonight, will you?

She plants a kiss on his cheek.

MIKE

Well, it was just a thought. You'll be
pleased to know that we're painting the
patio cover tomorrow.

JOAN

Who be "we" kimosabbe?

MIKE

The guys are coming over in the morning.
We'll need is plenty of beer.

JOAN

I think that I can manage that. By the
way, I had lunch with the girls today.

MIKE

Have fun?

JOAN

Sure. But I think Val might actually be
considering going to work.

MIKE

So they're looking for their money tree
too, eh?

JOAN

In fact, she almost sounded eager to
lease her house to visiting dignitaries
for the money.

MIKE

(curiosity aroused)
People are interested in renting houses
like these?

JOAN

So Sharon says.

Their oldest son, Neal, bursts into the kitchen holding an
open letter.

NEAL

Hot damn, USC wants me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN
 (grabbing the letter)
 My God Neal, you've been accepted!

She hugs him. Mike gets up and gives his son a high five and puts his arm around his neck.

MIKE
 Welllllll done!

NEAL
 Am I great or what?!?
 (Knowing to strike while the
 iron is hot.)
 Do you think I can borrow the car, Dad?
 Mine's not doing well and I'm grabbing a
 pizza with the guys.

MIKE
 Why not! How often do you get accepted to
 college...

He tosses Neal the keys and, with a wave, Neal is gone.

JOAN
 Especially when you were convinced he
 didn't have a prayer of graduating from
 preschool. "The brain of an ice
 cube"...isn't that how you described him?

MIKE
 But a private university?

JOAN
 Um hmm.

MIKE
 Why couldn't it have been Annapolis - so
 the government could foot the bill?

JOAN
 Perhaps because he didn't apply?

MIKE
 (putting his arms around her)
 Don't worry honey, we'll find a way.

EST. SHOT - MIKE'S HOME - MORNING

EXT. MIKE'S BACKYARD

Paul, Nick, Jason and Mike are painting. Paul, standing on a ladder, is carefully painting the trim.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL

That's it guys. My brush is tired and my arm needs a break.

MIKE

It's not in your contract - but I've got to admit a break sounds good right now.

JASON

What happened to the theory of hiring professionals to do this work?

MIKE

Professionals cost money.

JASON

What are we ... chopped liver?

NICK

(passing out the beer)

No ... just upwardly mobile professionals.

PAUL

With downwardly spiraling incomes.

JASON

Well that certainly clarifies it.

MIKE

Come on in the kitchen. Perhaps I have a solution.

INT. THE DURAN'S KITCHEN - LATER THE SAME SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Sitting at the counter pouring over "A TREASURE PLACE."

MIKE

...if "small sphere" means small world.

PAUL

(with mocked understanding)

Ah, then we find ourselves in Disneyland!
Of course...I get it!

MIKE

Right.

(reading from the book)

"It's a small sphere where a tree can be your home. It has its place, but don't pass it by." It seems to me that this refers to the Swiss Family Robinson Tree. Now if you don't pass the tree, that leaves you in front of the Pirates of the Caribbean.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL
(disbelief)
So you believe treasure is buried in
Disneyland ... Mike, you are an idiot!

MIKE
(unperturbed)
No, it means that our treasure hunt
starts in the Caribbean.

NICK
Now ... let me get this straight, Mike.
You're suggesting that we all go to the
Caribbean to search for a treasure based
on this little book?

Mike nods.

JASON
You've finally gone off the edge, Mike.
If this book giving clues to a buried
treasure is available to everyone, what
makes you think that we can find the
treasure before anyone else? As clever as
your analysis is, others could certainly
come to the same conclusion.

PAUL
... or perhaps a different conclusion.

MIKE
Sure they could. But I'm convinced that
this book doesn't give all the clues ...
and I quote from the prologue: "Remember,
every journey starts with the first
step." We have to start on the journey
before all the clues become apparent.

PAUL
Profound.

NICK
So, you we need to go to the Caribbean to
search out the rest of the clues?

MIKE
Sure. And very few other people would be
willing to do that.

PAUL
Got that right.

JASON
I have to admit that does put the odds on
our side.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASON (cont'd)

How often do we have a chance at 10 million bucks - might be worth a shot. A bareboat charter could be an economical way to get around the Caribbean.

NICK

A lottery ticket is cheaper.

MIKE

Not nearly as much fun.

PAUL

How do you suggest we finance this little sojourn?

MIKE

(takes a swig of beer, smiling)
I'm working on - I'm working on it.

ONE WEEK LATER

EXT. CHERRY HILL CUL DE SAC - FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Abby has just dropped off the Gruesome Threesome from soccer practice, as Mike pulls into his driveway. Joan and Ralph wander out to greet them. The sound of a BACKFIRING CAR draws their attention as Jason's car sputters in and jerks to a stop. Jason gets out, slams the door in disgust, and joins the group. Paul's carpool drives up.

JASON

This is getting old. Maybe Nick's right - I should just blow up this crate.

The Gruesome Threesome have taken up positions behind bushes, and are now aiming their water guns at Paul.

MIKE

Uh oh. Looks like our Gruesome Threesome found another victim.

The Special Warfare squad OPENS FIRE. In one fell swoop, Paul drops his briefcase, picks up the hose, and turns on the water - drenching the surprised threesome. An APPLAUSE is heard from his friends. Paul bows and joins the group.

TOP OF SHARON'S FLAG DRIVEWAY

SHARON

(shouting above the noise)
Wine time. It's TGIF! Let the party begin!

REVERSE- IN CUL DE SAC

PAUL

Great! You'll get no argument from me.
 (eyeing books under Mike's arm)
 Good thing your unemployed; researching
 that treasure has become a full time
 occupation.

MIKE

(laughing)
 Well, something good's got to come it.

EXT. SHARON AND JASON'S PATIO - SAME EVENING AFTER DINNER

The four couples seated around the table, laughing. The
 voices of the younger children can be heard.

NICK

Well girls, once again you have pulled
 together another fabulous meal.

JOAN

Hot dogs, the recession's gourmet meal.
 And don't tell me it's over.

VALERIE

Ah yes... another night out ... I'll have
 to note it on my calendar.

PAUL

(failing to hold down a belch)
 Indigestion at a fair price.

SHARON

I think what this group needs now is a
 jacuzzi ... after all, sipping wine in a
 hot tub isn't the worst way to live
 through a "soft economy."

Jason gets up to help clear the table.

JASON

I agree ... now if we could just pay for
 the jacuzzi.

EXT. JACUZZI - LATER THE SAME EVENING

The adults have been relaxing in the spa.

PAUL

Aah...great. Jason, you've got a million
 dollar view here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASON

Yeah ... it was well worth the extra bucks. Little did I know I was ever going to be "underwater" ... on dry land.

NICK

Mike, you're sure quiet ... hello, earth to Mike.

JOAN

The lights are on - but nobody's home.

Mike, shaking his head, gives Joan a kiss.

MIKE

Of course! Emerson said it so well..."To be simple is to be great." Sharon's got the solution to our problem.

VAL

(turning to Sharon)
Ah Good. All I need is another inheritance ...a million or so this time.

SHARON

(mystified)
It's nice to know I have a solution to something.

JASON

Alright Mike, lay it on us.

MIKE

We can solve our problems by using Sharon's dignitaries.

SHARON

Are you suggesting we hold them for ransom?

MIKE

By using the income we earn from renting our houses to them, to finance our treasure hunt.

ABBY

Whoa...what treasure hunt?

VALERIE

Did I miss something?

MIKE

Okay ... let me start from the beginning.

Joan rolls her eyes and sinks under the water.

EXT. SHARON AND JASON'S JACUZZI - LATER THE SAME EVENING

Mike is sitting on the side of the jacuzzi with his book, "A TREASURE PLACE", in his lap as the others listen to him.

MIKE

Based on these clues, I'm convinced our search starts on the island of Antigua in the Caribbean. Of course, we'd have to be willing to go there - without knowing where it might lead.

JOAN

"Of course" ... why not! I'll go pack. But first, I need some coffee.

SHARON

Okay Mike, I'm with you up to ...

INT. SHARON'S KITCHEN - LATE THE SAME NIGHT

Joan has several mugs of freshly poured coffee lined up on the counter. Val and Abby walk in, wrapped in towels.

VALERIE

I hate to admit it, but he is certainly convincing.

JOAN

Of course he is. He's in marketing. He's a master in salesmanship! I married him, didn't I.

ABBY

Now, if we're talking vacation, I might be convinced ... but a treasure hunt?

Sharon bursts into the kitchen ...eyes shining.

SHARON

I don't think you appreciate the importance of Mike's research ... he really knows where to start looking.

ABBY

Right! Reality abounds in this group.

Abby looks at Val and Joan as she points to Sharon.

ABBY (cont'd)

And this from a woman who booked eight adults and ten kids in an one bedroom, *one bath* condo for skiing last winter!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON

What a minute ... you didn't hear me complain when you stuffed the same four families into your parent's two bedroom, *one bath* trailer at the river.

ABBY

That was summer Sharon. It was w-a-r-m! The kids slept outdoors!! We were water skiing ... not risking our lives coming down a mountain on two sticks in sub-zero weather!

JOAN

(whispering to Val)

Is Abby still wearing her nicotine patch?

VALERIE

(whispering)

Yeah ... but I think she's been wearing the same one for six months.

SHARON

Okay Abby ... let's go with your thinking and look at it this way: We're at the river ... in warm water ... *without* the kids. Only ... the river's an ocean, and the trailer is a luxurious yacht!

Sharon is quite pleased with herself; something's registering with Abby. Nick enters and puts his arms around Abby.

NICK

I've got to admit it would be a fun vacation ... and we haven't gone anywhere since the kids were born.

ABBY

I don't believe it. You almost sound serious.

NICK

I am.

ABBY

Do you actually believe we can afford this adventure into Fantasyland?

NICK

Well... "Mikey" believes it!

Mike and Jason join the others in the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON

What have we got to lose ... we'll never get a chance like this again.

ABBY

There's that "we" word again.

MIKE

Girls, this could be your chance to get away. Picture yourself sunbathing on the bow of a beautiful yacht with men willing to respond to your every whim.

SHARON

No wonder you're in sales. You could convince fish to fly.

JASON

They do fly Sharon.

SHARON

Why Mike, you're amazing!

JOAN

Treasure hunting, eh. Sounds more like a career change than a vacation. Val, does this qualify as something new for your calendar?

VALERIE

Cruising the Caribbean is certainly an improvement over giving the cat a flea bath.

JASON

I could call this week and make arrangements to charter a boat. Sailing shouldn't be too tough for this group since we all have been on the water.

PAUL

(to Val)

I guess he's counting bathtub time for you.

VALERIE

Don't those sailboats lean over? People can fall out. That's not a pretty picture. I'd rather take a power boat.

NICK

No one powers in the Caribbean unless you're aboard the QE 2.

Val gives him a quizzical look.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICK (cont'd)

You know...a luxury liner like the Princess Lines?

VALERIE

That's more what I had in mind.

Neal enters the kitchen unnoticed.

PAUL

I might be able to write this fiasco off as research.

VALERIE

Does this mean you'll give up looking for a red hot sports car and plaid jacket?

PAUL

Yes, this is actually a mid-life crisis we can share in.

NEAL

Write what off? Research what.

JOAN

Your Dad has convinced everyone that a treasure hunt would make a great vacation. Frankly, I think you can chalk this trip up to a collective mid-life crisis.

NEAL

Dad ... the treasure book! Go for it!

ABBY

Whoa ... have any of you dreamers thought about what we're going to do about our little bundles of responsibilities?

Stacy bounces into the room from outside.

NEAL

I'll take care of Stacy. It's summer... no homework.

STACY

Wait a minute, I don't need an emotionally un-centered person taking care of me.

JOAN

Thanks Neal, but somehow that glint in your eye makes me suspicious.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Julie and Brigitte enter the kitchen with Joey right behind.
Julie tosses the keys on the counter.

JOEY
(to Julie)
Thanks for the ride up the hill.

NEAL
(To Brigitte and Julie)
Hey, I've just volunteered to take care of Stacy and Joey for the summer. Why don't you guys offer to take care of the rest of the kids so our folks can go on a treasure hunt - and leave us *all* alone.

BRIGITTE
Treasure hunt?

JULIE
You got the better deal Neal ... how 'bout I trade you Quentin for Stacy?

NEAL
You're on!

MIKE
(seizing the opportunity)
Great, that's solved!

ABBY
Wait a minute ... my precious terrors are too much to handle.
(aside to the teenagers)
Nothing personal kids. Believe me, you'll thank me for this someday.
(turning to back to the adults)
I'm not going anywhere unless we can bring in help.

The other women agree.

MIKE
Well ladies, if that's all that's stopping us ... no problem.

ABBY
No problem? Shows what you know!

MIKE
Let me take care of finding a babysitter.

STACY
(sarcastically)
Perfect! Just what every 12 year old needs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEY

(aside to Julie and Brigitte)
I'm not sure my Dad even knows what a
babysitter is.

JOAN

Hold it ... even if Mike can find a
sitter ... since Sharon has rented our
houses out from under us to finance this
pipe dream - where is everyone going to
stay... to say nothing of good ol' Ralph?

JASON

This is why we architects overbuild. We
have this huge bonus room here and plenty
of yard space for Ralph. He even has his
own doggie door ... well ...not really a
doggie door ... more like a cat door ...
but he can squeeze through.

PAUL

With the money from the rental of the
other houses, we should still have enough
for the trip and the sitter.

Silence. The CAMERA PANS the faces of the adults who realize
that they have just unwittingly eliminated the last obstacle
to Mike's treasure hunt.

SMILES FORM on the faces of the teenagers as they consider
the possibilities of a summer without parents at home.

MONTAGE: GROUP MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR THEIR ADVENTURE.

INT. REAL ESTATE OFFICE - DAY

SHARON

(on the phone)
That's right; all three homes could be
available for you by the 13th of next
month... Yes, I think you'll be quite
satisfied with them... very convenient,
on the same block in fact.

INT. MIKE'S HOME OFFICE - DAY

Mike on the phone with an agency.

MIKE

Let me see. I guess she should know how
to clean, cook...oh yes, wash clothes...
Oh...sure, I guess a "he" is okay too ...
if "he" really can do things like this.
No, of course I'm not a chauvinistic. I
don't sound like one, do I? Oh...

INT. JASON'S OFFICE - DAY

Jason on the phone at his drafting table.

JASON

Well, yes, I've done lots of sailing and so has Mike. Like I said on my resume, I've sailed, raced sabots and lasers, crewed on a 38-footer for a number of years and owned my own sloop. A test? Sure ... that should be no problem. Right ... thanks ... bye.

(Jason hangs up)

No problem at all ... I hope.

He reaches for a manual on sailing the Caribbean.

INT. TRAVEL AGENT'S OFFICE - DAY

Abby is sitting across from a travel agent.

ABBY

(looking disgruntled)

How many connections? Whatever happened to non-stops?

INT. PAUL AND VAL'S KITCHEN - EVENING

They're at the kitchen table.

VALERIE

(somewhat panic stricken)

I didn't even think about how we were going to get there ... I look forward to flying about as much as a root canal. Paul, do you really think you can hypnotize me out of my phobia?

PAUL

(patting Val's hand)

Don't worry honey, I've been studying hypnotism long enough ... it's about time to put it to work.

VALERIE

Why don't I feel comforted by that?

INT. LIBRARY - EVENING

Mike pouring over several reference books.

MIKE

(shaking his head)

VEB. VEB?

INT. DRUGSTORE - DAY

Abby, Sharon and Joan are sharing a basket with the bare necessities required for a sailing trip. They look over at Val who has her own basket full of extraneous items (nail polishes, hair coloring, make-up, a butane curling iron).

INT. JASON'S HOUSE - DAY

Neal and Julie are discussing who gets which room.

NEAL
... then if you move into the master
bedroom...

A pleased look crosses Julie's face.

NEAL (cont'd)
...with Brigitte.

JULIE
(suspicious)
And, where will you sleep?

NEAL
I'll take Quentin's room, since he'll be
with the rest of the Gruesome Threesome
in the bonus room.

JULIE
Now explain this to me ... just why you
get a room to yourself ... and I get
Brigitte, in my own house?

NEAL
It's elementary my dear Julie; you've got
your boys...and you've got your girls...
Didn't your Mom have this talk with you?

Julie sneers.

NEAL (cont'd)
Besides, the sitter is going to need a
place to sleep.

EXT. PAUL & VAL'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Sharon is showing dignitaries from the Far East about. The Gruesome Threesome are watching the animated conversation from the hillside with their binoculars.

INT. PASSPORT OFFICE - MORNING

All eight are standing in line as Mike pulls up a chair, settling in for what looks like a long wait.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. MIKE'S EX-OFFICE - RECEPTION AREA DAY

Mike's ex-SECRETARY scans the assortment of applicants in the waiting room, then heads into the office.

INT. OFFICE

SECRETARY

Well Mike, your work is cut out for you. There are at least twenty applicants for this babysitting - and by the way the proper term is "nanny" - job of yours ... and more coming in all the time.

MIKE

Great! By the way, thanks for helping me on this ... it's strange to be back in this office.

SECRETARY

For you, anything. Nobody's using these offices anyway. In fact, nobody's using most of this floor. Spooky.

MIKE

Ah, and they say that recession is over!

SECRETARY

Just remember when your ship comes in who your real friends are. Now get to it.

MIKE

Right.

He strides to the door, swings it open, then suddenly closes it again. He's unable to even feign an air of confidence.

MIKE (cont'd)

Got any ideas what should I ask them?

SECRETARY

I can't believe Joan would ever leave this to you. You might narrow the crowd down by finding out who speaks English.

MIKE

And then?

SECRETARY

Ask for references?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

(reopens the door & leaves)
Right ... of course.

SECRETARY

My God, what has he gotten himself into!?

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Sharon, her father and brother, Steve, are having lunch.

SHARON

I know it sounds a little crazy.

STEVE

It's more than crazy! You're all certifiable! So, does this mean that Dad and I inherit ten kids when you're lost in the Bermuda Triangle?

GRAMPS

(smiling)

I have complete confidence in Jason's sailing skills. I'm really a little more concerned about ten kids under one roof, no matter who you find to oversee the this bunch.

Brigitte, Julie and Stacy have been shopping and now join the group. Julie leans over to kiss her Mother, Gramps and Uncle. Both Stacy and Brigitte say "hi."

SHARON

(back to her father)

You and Mom raised eight of us under one roof, and we survived.

GRAMPS

Your Mom was a master at handling mobs ... now there was a woman!

JULIE

(Hugging her Gramps)

Gramps, it's time for you to get back into the love market.

GRAMPS

(Smiling)

Well ... maybe. Now, if you kids need anything while your folks are gone - day or night - I expect you to call.

STEVE

No need to call me ... I'll be watching your every move.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIGITTE
(aside to Julie)
Is he for real?

JULIE
(in a whisper)
Unfortunately, yes.

SHARON
(to her father and brother)
Thanks! I knew I could count on you two.

EXT. JASON'S HOUSE - SATURDAY MORNING

Mike and Nick are carrying in a second refrigerator.

MIKE
What kind of plane?

NICK
Abby said it was a DC-3 that we take from
Puerto Rico to Beef Island.

MIKE
That plane was old when I was born ...
and now I'm old.

INT. JASON'S HOUSE - LATER THE SAME MORNING

Val, Abby, Sharon and Joan are stocking the freezer and refrigerator with groceries. There is an ongoing struggle to fit in everything.

EXT. JASON'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON OF THE SAME DAY

Paul, Jason, Mike and Nick are carrying in beds to Jason's house; the kids are following behind with linens, pets, toys, various computer gadgets and DVD's. The Gruesome Threesome pull up the rear with their Special Warfare supplies.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - SAME AFTERNOON

The McHale's next door neighbor, MR. LEWIS, is watching the bustle of activity.

MR. LEWIS
(appalled, grumbles to himself)
They're moving in together...all those
kids ... all those animals ... all that
damn noise!

INT. SHARON AND JASON'S FAMILY ROOM - EVENING

The overwhelmed teenagers sit around a table as the parents hand them notes and lists on what to do while they're gone.

EXT. JASON AND SHARON'S DRIVEWAY - EARLY MORNING

The adults LOAD their duffle bags into Abby's station wagon - along with few extras:

Sharon - precious video camera.

Jason - books, and navigational aids..

Paul - a first aid kit, reference books on marine life, and cookbook for boaters.

Mike- treasure book, charts, a reference book, laptop, and cell phone.

Nick - every type of tool imaginable.

Joan approaches with a duffle in one hand and a large carry-on bag in the other, from which a supply of snacks tumbles out. The group turns to look at her.

JOAN

I hear their markets don't know from snacks ... American snacks.

ABBY

I thought we were trying to limit what we're taking ... looks like I'm the only one that fell for that line. Where's Val?

CLUMP, CLUMP, CLUMP. Val's pulling her trunk up the driveway.

JOAN

What is that!?

VALERIE

Only life's essentials ... really.

PAUL

Ladies and gentleman, you see before you only one-third of what my wife originally planned to take.

SHARON

Sorry Val, but this will never do.

All three ladies open Val's trunk and begin to stuff the "real" necessities into the others' bags.

Clothes and beauty aids are FLYING as the children and the new sitter, MARGARITA, gather to say goodbye.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Abby pulls out a hot pink nightgown - only to be topped by Joan holding up a black teddy.

JOAN

Welllll....

VALERIE

Ah, come on....

Joan packs the teddy.

SHARON

(pulls out a hair dryer)

What do we do with this?

VALERIE

(reaching for it)

No! I will not go without my hair dryer.
I refuse!

MIKE EYES Paul's mini-library, Nick's machine shop and Joan's supermarket.

MIKE

She's not the only one who believes that life's necessities go beyond bathing suits and sun-tan oil.

VAL

Thank you Mike.

JASON

Okay Mike ... why are you taking your laptop and cell phone?

MIKE

To keep in touch with the kids. I can charge everything on the boat's motor.

JASON

Well, yeah ... you can charge up the wazoo. But the Caribbean's not known for it's massive amounts of cell sites.

MIKE

Hmm ... not quite in the 21st century yet.

JASON

Yep - it barely made it into the 20th.

MIKE

(handing Neal his laptop and cell phone)

Okay Son - take care of these for me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEAL

(sarcasm abounds)

Ah shucks ... we're really going to miss those texts, tweets and emails.

(back to the adults)

OK, all aboard. This wagon's heading out!

As everyone says good-bye, Margarita looks on.

MIKE

(to Joey & Stacy)

Don't give your brother too much trouble.

NEAL

They'll be fine - trust me.

Joan gives Neal "that look" again.

MIKE

Don't worry Joan. After all, Margarita is here.

The new sitter steps forward.

MARGARITA

Si Missus Joan. No problema. Everyone fine.

JOAN

Thank you Margarita. Sharon's brother and father will be checking.

Val and Paul saying goodbye to Brigitte and Max.

BRIGITTE

Have fun. We'll be fine here.

VALERIE

Thanks sweetheart.

PAUL

Now, don't open your present before your birthday, Max.

MAX

Where is it?

BRIGITTE

Don't even try to find it ... I've got it safely tucked away.

Sharon and Jason embracing Julie and Quentin.

All adults PILING INTO THE STATION WAGON with Neal in the driver's seat. The kids are waving goodbye as they pull away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The LIMO, bringing the Asian diplomats who are moving into their homes, PASSES them.

ABBY (V.O.)
I guess it's too late to back out?

A LONG SHOT OF THE CAR LEAVING THE CUL DE SAC.

OTHERS-IN UNISON
(V.O.)
That's right!

INT. SHARON AND JASON'S KITCHEN - LATER THE SAME DAY

A CLOSE-UP SHOT shows a list of instructions. The CAMERA PULLS BACK to expose the kitchen where all existing wall space is covered with instructions written on a variety of COLORED PAPER using an array of BRIGHTLY COLORED INK.

Brigitte, Neal, Julie, Stacy and Joey are reading with stunned expressions. Margarita comes in with a laundry in her arms. Brigitte glances at Margarita and GRABS for the laundry to retrieve her cashmere sweater.

BRIGITTE
No ... not my cashmere!

MARGARITA
(looking surprised)
You wash yourself?

BRIGITTE
Yes Margarita, I wash.

JULIE
(still looking at the lists)
I don't believe this.

BRIGITTE
(clutching her sweater)
I don't either.

JULIE
No, I mean this schedule. We're S.O.L.

BRIGITTE
That too.

JULIE
I guess we'd better get organized.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Neal pulls down the large calendar and a pad of paper. Brigitte, Joey, Stacy, and Julie each take an area of the kitchen and begin reading off the schedules for Neal to make a master list.

JULIE (cont'd)

Let's see, I have summer school in the morning; then Quentin has a dentist appointment at 2:00.

Julie moves over to another set of lists.

STACY

I have a dance lesson at the same time.

NEAL

No problem. Three of us drive.

BRIGITTE

It's a good thing ... Ralph's grooming appointment is also at 2:00.

NEAL

Oh ... and I've got to be at work by one.

JOEY

I can drive in a pinch.

OTHERS

(simultaneously)

No way.

NEAL

You already have two tickets.

JOEY

Who's taking care of Melissa and Andrew with all this driving around?

MARGARITA

I take good care of the twins.

JOEY

And the Gruesome Threesome?

The others look knowingly at Joey.

JOEY (cont'd)

Do I have a choice?

Neal shakes his head no.

JULIE

Now, there's trouble.

ESTABLISHING SHOT - AIRPLANE LANDING, MIAMI - LATE EVENING

EXT. MIAMI AIRPORT - SAME EVENING

The group is changing planes. Enthusiasm is still apparent.

INT. AIRPLANE IN FLIGHT - LATE THAT NIGHT

Sharon and Mike are talking across the aisle to each other with reference books on their laps. The rest are sleeping.

SHARON

Have you figured out the VEB clue yet?

MIKE

Not yet, but don't worry. I'm sure it'll be obvious when we get there.

EST SHOT: BARBADOS, DAY

INT. AIRPORT

The group is waiting to board their next flight. Sharon is busy taking pictures to the annoyance of some. Mike is shedding his clothes in the hot humid weather. Val is writing in her journal.

NICK

Plane's ready

ABBY

Finally.

EXT. - BARBADOS AIRPORT RUNWAY - DAY

All eight boarding a brightly colored DC-3.

VALERIE

(Looking concerned)

Is this a time machine or what?

PAUL

Don't worry, the hypnotic suggestion I gave you doesn't depend on airplane specifications.

EST. SHOT: REMOTE AIRPORT - BEEF ISLAND - NIGHT

INT. - INSIDE THATCH-ROOF TERMINAL -NIGHT

The rain is falling as the travelers are standing in line for customs. Suddenly, the SOUND of the generator STOPS and the LIGHTS GO OUT.

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR

Can I look in your bags?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL
Be my guest.

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR
I can't see them.

PAUL
Neither can I.

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR
Where are they?

PAUL
I don't know.

CUSTOMS INSPECTOR
Oh well, you re cleared. Move on.

PAUL
But ... I can't find my bags.

EST. SHOT - TORTOLA ISLAND MARINA - DAWN

EXT. MARINA CHARTER OFFICE - DAWN

All eight looking miserable as they sit on the ground, in front of the charter office, waiting for it to open.

VALERIE
After travelling 24 hours, this wasn't exactly the reception I was expecting.

JOAN
You obviously haven't traveled with Mike much.

EST. SHOT - CUL DE SAC -MORNING

INT. SHARON AND JASON'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The morning breakfast is in chaos.

Margarita's EGGS ARE BURNING.

Melissa is standing on scooter, RIDING through the kitchen. Stacy is DODGING "shrapnel" from the Gruesome Threesome. Andrew is trying to get something to eat, but is never quite fast enough.

MARGARITA
(in Spanish)
Melissa, please take that scooter outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

Melissa, get that scooter out of here!

MARGARITA

Dat what I say.

BRIGITTE

(filling the plates)

If you three don't stop playing
war, your food rations will be
cut off for the duration. And
Andrew, stop feeding Ralph.

Ralph is under the table, BARKING at the chaos.

Joey is changing the bird cage which hangs in the kitchen.
The MACAW BITES him and FLIES OUT of the cage landing on
Margarita's head.

JOEY

You bloodsucker!

MARGARITA

Oh hi bloodsucker.

JULIE

No, no Margarita. His name is Peachtree.

NEAL (V.O.)

We've got 15 minutes to meet our
schedule!

BRIGITTE

Nooo..problem!

JOEY

(Rubbing ice on his finger.)
I'm not having fun yet.

EXT. SHARON AND JASON'S HOME - SAME MORNING

Julie is running to her car with an armful of books as Neal
is pulling out of the driveway with the Gruesome Threesome.
Brigitte starts her car with Stacy and Andrew next to her.

BRIGITTE

(leaning out the window)
Where am I going?

JULIE

Check the schedule!

Exasperated, Brigitte gets out of the car heading for the
house.

EXT. SHARON AND JASON'S DRIVEWAY - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

After picking up the boys from soccer practice, Julie arrives home with the Gruesome Threesome to the awesome sight of laundry SPREAD ON BUSHES all over the yard. The boys pile out of the car and continue their soccer game through the yard full of laundry.

JULIE

So this is how you get sunshine fresh clothes.

Julie points to the laundry as Brigitte brushes by her.

BRIGITTE

I know...glad this isn't my house. I'd have to move out of town. How are you going to live it down?

JULIE

I'll worry about that if we just get through this month.

Brigitte gets in the car.

JULIE (cont'd)

Where are you going??? It's almost time for dinner.

BRIGITTE

Not until I restock the wieners.

JULIE

What's going on?

BRIGITTE

Melissa fed Ralph our dinner.

JULIE

All of it?
(Brigitte nods.)
But we had four packages.

BRIGITTE

The operative word here is "had."

Brigitte guns the car and leaves. Julie takes a deep breath and enters the laundry room. Here she's met with laundry everywhere, and Joey's standing where the washing machine once stood.

JULIE

Where's the washing machine?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOEY

There.

JULIE

Where?

JOEY

(pointing to the large pile of
clothes)

There.

Her eyes move across the room to what appears to be MOUND OF CLOTHES in the middle of the room.

JULIE

Where!?

JOEY

There.

JULIE

How did it get there?

JOEY

I don't know.

JULIE

Why did it stop?

JOEY

I don't know.

(picks up the plug to the
machine)

Maybe this explains it. But that doesn't explain what made it burp and fart it's way across the room.

JULIE

(looking into the machine)

It was probably too full and out of balance. What's clean and what's dirty?

JOEY

I don't know. I was on suds-control in the kitchen.

JULIE

In the kitchen, what happened there?

Joey leads Julie cautiously into the kitchen, that is COVERED WITH SOAPSUDS. Margarita's trying to mop the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGARITA

I put da dishes in da dishwasher. I put in soap – dis soap dat de TV say keeps da suds longer. Dey sure right. Now we've got too much.

Julie picks up the soap container. Margarita has used liquid hand-washing soap instead of the proper soap for the dishwasher. Stacy and Melissa join them in the kitchen.

JULIE

That's the wrong soap!

STACY

What an ad! How do we get this mess cleaned up?

JULIE

Add grease? Joey, why don't you bring in Dad's wet vac from the garage and ask the Gruesome Threesome to get in here to help ... why should they miss all the fun.

JOEY

(exiting)

Ah, now the fun begins!

Brigitte enters with groceries totally ignoring the disaster.

BRIGITTE

(throwing the wieners on the counter)

Just so we're all clear on the subject Melissa, this is *our* dinner ... not Ralph's.

MELISSA

(unperturbed)

Of course Brigitte. Ralph's eaten already. Besides, he's not here anyway.

JULIE

(shouting over the sound of the wet vac that Joey has brought in)

Where is he?

MELISSA

With Neal.

JULIE

But Neal's delivering pizzas!?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIGITTE

Well, somebody had to get Ralph to his grooming appointment. Neal said he could drop him off and pick him up between deliveries.

The Gruesome Threesome enters the kitchen. Each is walking like a robot wearing a STIFF SHIRT fresh from drying on the bushes outside.

JULIE

(eyeing the boys)
Oh ... by the way Margarita, remind me to talk to you about using the dryer.

EXT. OLD VW "BUG" CAR - SAME AFTERNOON

Neal and Ralph are in a VW Bug. Ralph's fuzzy head, with a large red bow, is protruding through the sun roof. Ralph's sheared body can be seen through the windshield.

Neal is holding his last pizza for delivery out his side window and is sounding very desperate.

NEAL

Okay Ralph, please ...I can't afford to replace another pizza.
(Ralph whimpers a bit)
How come diamonds are a girl's best friend ...and all I get is you?

EXT. MARINA ON BEEF ISLAND, TORTOLA, VIRGIN ISLANDS - MID-MORNING

AERIAL SHOT shows a row of yachts docked. CAMERA CLOSES IN on a 44 foot yacht, the "WE DO."

Each of the four couples is sporting a BRIGHT RED SHIRT with a job description appropriate to that person (i.e., Captain Bligh, Cookie, Windlass Wench, Dinghy Tender, Yeoman, etc.)

As they board food and supplies, Jason is sitting in the cockpit, reading boat manuals.

Abby, carrying a case of coke, passes Sharon who is in the passageway. Joan is below in the galley with Val.

ABBY

(with an annoyed voice)
People are staring at us. I haven't dressed in "look-a-likes" since I was seven years old.

Sharon steps onto the dock to pick up the last box of supplies, then back into the cockpit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CAMERA FOLLOWS Sharon and Abby DOWN towards the galley.

SHARON

Come on Abby, we're about to embark on a great adventure.

ABBY

Traveling 24 hours so I can wait in a remote jungle for an office to open to pick up a boat named, of all things, the "We Do" - we should rename the "We Can't," since most of us haven't a clue how to sail. Then, to spend the next two hours loading supplies in the heat and humidity, dressed in these *ridiculous* shirts, is not my idea of the romantic interlude that was described.

JOAN

You've been conned ... learn to love it.

SHARON

Be grateful the only test we have to pass is to sail out of this harbor as though we know what we're doing.

ABBY

Grateful?

Nick emerges from the engine room

NICK

The engine's a little archaic ... but with a can of Quick Start for priming, it'll be functional.

Val is checking each item with the inventory list as Joan finishes putting the groceries away.

VAL

Just like Paul!

Paul is boarding with the last of the supplies.

PAUL

Oh, I see...so those nighties were to prime my archaic pump?

VAL

(batting her eyes)
If that's what it takes, dear!

NICK

Where's Mike? How did he get out of all this manual labor?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

He's off with the natives no doubt.
Heaven only knows where that will lead.

She crawls under the table in the salon to release the lock that converts the table to a bed. She climbs on top of the table; it COLLAPSES into a bed with Joan on it.

JOAN (cont'd)

Ah ... it works.

Mike boards.

MIKE

From what the folks around here say ...
(he notes Joan positioned on the table)
Sweetheart ... what are you doing?

SHARON

She's found the third bed.

MIKE

Oh ... good. Well, as I was saying,
sounds like we're going to visit some
great anchorages on our sail to Antigua.

JASON

Well, it's time to set sail.

Everyone quickly gathers on deck.

VALERIE

Where's my seatbelt?

JASON

Val, you help Paul on the mainsail
halyard.

VALERIE

Where's the halyard?

PAUL

Val, I think it's this rope here.

JASON

Abby, you and Joan need to unfurl the
jib, when I give you the command.

ABBY

Unfurl the who?

JASON

Abby, you keep this rope taut, while Joan
pulls the jib sheet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY
As in Burlington?

Laughing at her own sense of humor.

JASON
(pointing)
No Abby, as in that rope right there.
Mike, will you handle the mainsheet?

Mike reaches back to wrap the rope around the winch.

MIKE
You're on.

JASON
(turns to Nick)
Will you cast off?

NICK
Right-o!

ABBY
Do remember to jump back on. I'm not
about to face all this fun without you.

JASON
Sharon, you tend the dinghy.

JOAN
How appropriate.

SHARON
Thank you Joan.

JOAN
Jason, if I were a dinghy how would you
tend me?

JASON
I love it when you talk "nautical" ...
but for right now, we've got to get this
boat out of here - so just make sure the
rope doesn't get hung up on the prop,
will you?

VALERIE
And what are you doing?

JASON
I'm steering the boat, Val.

VALERIE
Oh ... I knew that.

INT. HARBOR MASTER'S OFFICE

The Harbor Master is talking on the two-way radio - while looking out over the harbor.

HARBOR MASTER

Yes, they're just pulling away from the dock, aboard the "We Do" as you requested.

THE "WE DO" - DRIFTING AWAY FROM THE DOCK

Nick leaps -crashing onto the deck.

ABBY

You O.K.?

NICK

(high voice)

Sure, we didn't want any more kids anyway.

INT. COCKPIT - THE "WE DO" - MORNING

Jason in the cockpit trying to restart the motor - which has died.

JASON

Shit!

NICK

I'll get the Quick Start ...

JASON

(shouting orders)

No time ... get the sails up before we blow onto the rocks!

Joan and Abby let the jib out.

JASON (cont'd)

No, girls, don't unfurl the jib yet. I won't have control over the boat until the mainsail's up.

NICK

Too late.

SUDDENLY a typical Caribbean SQUALL has started to UNLEASH itself, and the rain is falling.

JASON

Sharon, pull in the port sheet ... the jib's already sailing and we're about to tact. Paul, why isn't the main up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL

Because Val is wearing the halyard like a necklace ...

Mike, ready to handle the main sheet, is taking in all this confusion with usual jovial humor.

MIKE

(slapping Jason on the back)
Castrate one crew member and hang another
... not bad for a day's work.

Paul finally frees Val from the halyard.

PAUL

Now we're O.K.

The mainsail goes up.

JASON

(barks)
Set the main Mike!

Jason tries to start the motor again to no avail as Mike PULLS THE MAINSAIL in and cleats it off.

Suddenly a GUST of wind HEALS the boat over putting its rail in the water. Abby's now DRENCHED from the water coming over the rail as she GRABS the life lines. Paul is HOLDING onto the mast as Val HOLDS on to Paul for dear life.

JASON (cont'd)

Let out that main, Mike! Quick!

MIKE

Got it.

The boat RIGHTS itself. They begin to make their way out of the harbor. The thunderstorm moves on as fast as it appeared and the sun is already drying the decks.

JASON

Well, that wasn't so bad was it?

PAUL

(heading below)
I could use a drink.

VAL

(looking shaken)
With a Dramamine chaser.

EXT: "WE DO" UNDER SAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

Everyone is in the cockpit, except Sharon, who is on the bow - which is BOUNCING vigorously as it hits each wave.

SHARON (V.O.)
This is an "E" ride!

EST. SHOT - BITTER END HARBOR, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

The "We Do" enters the harbor with Jason at the helm.

JASON
(voice ringing out)
Lower the sails.

Paul and Joan are trying to PULL DOWN the mainsail, which is not being cooperative in the afternoon BREEZE.

Abby and Val are trying to PULL IN the jib-furling line.

Jason realizes that no one released the jib sheet and LEANS OVER to do it.

The release of the sheet SENDS Abby and Val to the deck.

Nick and Mike are on the bow, looking at the ocean bottom to find a spot to anchor.

MIKE
(points to the right)
Looks good over-there.

JASON
(turning the boat to starboard)
Drop the hook whenever you're ready

Sharon emerges from below with her video camera.

ABBY
(still sprawled on the deck)
Terrific ... film at 11:00.

EXT. SHARON & JASON MCHALE'S BACKYARD -AFTERNOON

Most of the troops are swimming and chatting.

EXT. STREET LEADING UP TO CUL DE SAC

Joey, finishing his paper route, is throwing papers from his skateboard that has a sail attached. A neighbor. MR. APPLETON, is outside to pick up the paper Joey threw.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEIGHBOR

Joey, dare I ask why you have a sail on your skateboard?

JOEY

Oh, hi Mr. Appleton. Practicing for the upcoming windsurfing contest!

NEIGHBOR

Of course, how obvious ... I should have known.

EXT MCHALE'S DRIVEWAY -AFTERNOON

Joey is making his way up the McHale's flag driveway. He hears the RACKET coming from the front of the house. At the top, he sees Ralph barking at a second story window. A large object resembling the "Blob" is coming through the window.

Realizing that someone's left the hose attached to Quentin's WATERBED, Joey runs to the front door that's locked. He rings FRANTICALLY. No one answers. He races around to the back.

EXT. MCHALE'S BACKYARD -AFTERNOON

Joey comes dashing around - SPUTTERING INCOHERENTLY with Ralph barking behind him. Everyone looks up.

JOEY

Quentin's waterbed.

MARGARITA

(Rising instantly)
Oh shiiiiittt!

BRIGITTE

I see we've influenced her for the better.

Margarita, followed by the teenagers, reaches a LOCKED back door and stops abruptly. Melissa STARTS TO CRAWL THROUGH the cat's door with Ralph right behind her.

INT. MCHALE'S KITCHEN -AFTERNOON

Melissa is almost through the door when Ralph PUSHES through behind her and sends her face down into Ralph's water bowl.

Undaunted, she picks herself up and opens the back door for everyone. They hurry through the house, which is in such disarray it looks like "the big one" has just hit.

At Ralph's PERSISTENT BARKING, Melissa lets Ralph out the front door, then goes upstairs behind the troops.

INT. THE MCHALE'S UPSTAIR'S HALLWAY

Everyone's standing in the doorway of the Gruesome Threesome's bedroom - SILENCED by the vision in front of them. The waterbed is about to explode. The hose attached to the bed is coming from the sink in the bathroom.

JULIE

Brigitte, go turn the hose off!

BRIGITTE

I'm on it.

JULIE

Neal, get the hose from outside. We've got to drain this bed before it bursts.

NEAL

Gotchya.

DOORBELL RINGS in rapid succession. Joey runs to answer it - passing Neal on the stairwell.

JOEY

I'll get it.

As they pound down the stairs, the startled CAT LEAPS OFF the banister, landing across the room on the shelf over the aquarium and KNOCKING the uncapped fish food into the tank.

MCHALE'S FRONT DOOR -AFTERNOON

Joey THROWS OPEN the front door, surprised to see their neighbor, Mr. Lewis, standing there holding Ralph by the collar.

Ralph's "summer cut" consists of a very short coat of hair everywhere, until you get to his head ... which is still covered with the abundant long hair of a sheepdog.

JOEY

Hi, Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS

Hello, Joey. Do you know this dog?

JOEY

Sure, Mr. Lewis. That's Ralph.

MR. LEWIS

What happened to him?

JOEY

It's his summer cut.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. LEWIS

Oh. Are your folks home?

JOEY

No, they won't be back 'til next month.

MR. LEWIS

Hmm... well, we have a bit of a problem. Ralph here has been barking up a storm each evening ... and when I get home from a hard day at the office, I'm uptight and need it quiet.

JOEY

Quiet? In this neighborhood? Have you considered moving?

MR. LEWIS

Look kid. I moved from the city to get away from the rat race. I wanted solitude and space of my own - and now this!

Mr. Lewis looks down at Ralph.

MR. LEWIS(cont'd)

Maybe Ralph can be debarked or something?

JOEY

Are you serious?!? Do people really do that to dogs?

MR. LEWIS

Frankly Joey, I don't know. Just be sure he doesn't bark after 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Lewis thrusts the collar forward. It slips off Ralph's neck while Ralph remains seated, leaving Joey & Mr. Lewis looking blankly at the collar in Joey's hand. Mr. Lewis turns on his heel and leaves. Joey speaks to the empty collar.

JOEY

Ralph, new rule. No barking after 5:00!
 (Ralph barks - Joey now looks
 at Ralph)
 I know Ralph, life's the pits and then
 you die.

Joey brings Ralph inside, and points to the aquarium in the family room.

JOEY (cont'd)

Cheer up Ralph, it could be worse. How'd you like to be trapped in a fish bowl like they are.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Looking over at the aquarium Joey lets out a LOW GROAN realizing that the top of the tank's water is coated with a thick layer of fish food.

JOEY (cont'd)

We can kiss those suckers goodbye if I don't do something about all that spilled food - and fast. Like you Ralph, they don't know when to stop eating.

(hesitates)

Yes! Looks like a job for "wet vac!"

EXT. MCHALE'S BACKYARD PATIO - SHORT TIME LATER

The group has reconvened outside while the waterbed is draining.

MARGARITA

(almost in tears)

You right. I don't know how I do so wrong, but da house no look like dis when I get here.

Julie puts her arm around her comfortingly.

JULIE

It's OK. Margarita. It just can't look like this when our folks get home

BRIGITTE

Maybe I should quit work ... what with the house, work, and ...

JULIE

... dating and all! Reality check guys: we can barely handle the schleping, much less help Margarita with the house.

NEAL

Schleping?

JULIE

You know ... driving everyone around.

NEAL

Wait a minute. What's wrong with the house?

BRIGITTE

Nothing, if you like living in a war zone.

(Margarita whimpers)

No offense Margarita.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEAL

OK., We need some help. But how do we do that on our budget?

MARGARITA

I guess when I'm fired, you have OK money for help.

BRIGITTE

No, no Margarita. Let's face it. Usually there are eight adults handling 10 kids. You need help Margarita. We all do!

JULIE

What about the college placement center? There must be somebody who'll take room and board for a summer job.

BRIGITTE

And where would this wonderful person sleep?

NEAL

(looking lustful)

A college coed ... I think I could handle that!

JULIE

(flashing Neal an annoyed look)

Neil, it's like this. You've got your boys and ...

NEAL

(heading inside)

Okay, okay. I'll give up Quentin's room and move in with Andrew and Joey. I'll go call the placement center now. I just hope she appreciates Quentin's waterbed - I mean, who has a waterbed in today's world!

INT. MCHALE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Passing by the family room, Neal notices the wet vac sitting next to the half empty aquarium. Joey has moved the fish to a clean bowl of water and is encouraging them to swim.

NEAL

Hey, what are you doing?

(heading towards the den)

Never mind numb-nuts, I don't want to know.

INT. MCHALE'S DEN

Neal's on the phone to the placement center.

NEAL

Yes, someone to help our housekeeper with a little light cleaning. Oh, and help with the meals and dishes, of course. For how many? Well, we only eat three meals a day normally. Oh, how many in the family ... just a bit over the national average. How many over? ... just 7.7 over the norm. That's right, ten plus the housekeeper. What? You have someone who's perfect for us?

(incredulous)

You really do!? ... She sounds *wonderful!* Does she have good references? Ummm ... sounds good. Can you send her right over? Tomorrow? Sure, that's great.

NEAL (cont'd)

(smiling as he hangs up)

This could work out just fine!

Neal heads back toward the patio, rubbing his hands together.

EXT. DECK OF THE ANCHORED "WE DO," BVI, DAWN

SFX: CLATTER of pots and pans along with the SOUND of bacon sizzling coming from DOWN below in the GALLEY - all under Paul's dedicated supervision.

A ROOSTER CROWS. Abby sits up in her "bed" in the cockpit. Nick is awakening on the second bench which surrounds the cockpit.

ABBY

That does it! I want a room at the Sheraton.

PAUL (V.O.)

Take heart; coffee's on.

ABBY

(falling back down)

Thank heaven.

Jason POPS OUT of his aft cabin hatch (a skylight window - on the deck) with hand bearing compass. Nick looks over his shoulder from the cockpit.

NICK

Relax, all is well. The anchor's holding - we haven't moved an inch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASON

Is everyone up already?

ABBY

How could anyone sleep with you and Nick
mimicking a jack-in-the-box all night
taking bearings!

Val comes up from the GALLEY looking picture perfect.

Sharon comes up from the AFT CABIN with the video camera.

SHARON

This really is God's country. Don't you
just love it.

VALERIE

It is a beautiful morning ... but love is
a rather strong word.

ABBY

(putting her pillow over her
head in disgust)
I can't believe it. A saccharin epidemic.

From below, Joan's voice is heard.

JOAN (V.O.)

Ooh-ah-groan. I can't see you, but I can
feel you - so watch out! Mike! Oooh.
Hurry ... do it again.

Nick, Abby, Sharon, Jason and Val all look at each other.

NICK

This is getting a little kinky ...

MIKE (V.O.)

Sorry ... empty!

JOAN (V.O.)

Oh no ... You're really empty!

NICK

Definitely kinky!

CUT BELOW

Mike emerging from the FORWARD CABIN with an empty can of
insect repellent and reaching for a new can on galley table,
where Paul is preparing breakfast. Joan follows him.

Mike sprays the insect repellent on Joan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Poor Joan the "no see'ems" are after her.

Val leans down into the companionway (the opening to stairs that lead below deck).

VALERIE

The "who"?

MIKE

You know, little biting things ... bugs?

PAUL

(at the stove)

Keep that spray off the eggs.

ABBY (V.O.)

Sounds yummy.

CUT BACK TO COCKPIT

Val is sitting on top of the companionway, painting her toenails. We hear SOUNDS of breakfast cooking below.

VALERIE

Well, I've got to admit, this is relaxing.

ABBY

This is relaxing?? Can you tell me why we rented a boat for four couples that only sleeps three? And Sharon - get that camera out of my face.

SHARON

That's right - not a morning person.

ABBY

Can you blame me ... with all those tropical sprinkles every other minute. To say nothing of the three ring circus starring the four stooges. Paul opening and shutting hatches all night while Jason and Nick argue over the status of the anchor. Only to be topped by Mike's incessant trips to the fridge for his hourly fortification. We'll be lucky if we don't run out of food and starve to death. Some romantic vacation this is.

SHARON

How about Jason and I trade sleeping quarters with you and Nick? I'm sure Jason would prefer it anyway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASON

I would?

SHARON

As the captain, surely you want to be near the helm, don't you dear?

JASON

Well ... I guess so.

VALERIE

I'd offer you our bed in the Galley, but I don't think I can tear Paul that far away from the cooking station.

JASON

Sharon's right; I should be on deck. Take our cabin Abby.

ABBY

(leaps up cheerfully)

Great ... that's settled! This might turn out to be an okay day after all.

(gathers her bedding)

Now, Paul, when's breakfast?

EXT. MCHALE'S HOUSE - MORNING

The ROAR of a Harley Davidson is heard as everyone scrambles out the front door. The motorcycle heads up the driveway. The rider, an elderly lady, GRAMMA, dismounts, and pulls her scarf and helmet off.

BRIGITTE

(to Julie as an aside)

Do you believe this?!

CHIP

Now that's a mean machine.

With an unmistakable voice, we know the minute Gramma speaks that she is the VOICE-OVER NARRATIVE of the opening scenes.

GRAMMA

It is really something, isn't it? But it isn't mine. It was the only loaner they had when I took ol' Betsy into the shop. My name is Muriel Obadian - but everyone calls me Gramma.

MAX

I can see why. And I thought the name Maxmillian was bad!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRAMMA

So, I bet they call you Max for short.

MAX

Yep!

GRAMMA

Good Max ... now can you tell me which one of these stunned people is Neal Duran.

Max smiles and points to Neal.

She reaches out and takes hold of Neal's hand, vigorously shaking it. Not exactly Neal's idea of a college coed, he barely musters a solid handshake.

MELISSA

Hi Gramma, I'm Melissa. Can you do something about my favorite nightgown, it blew away when it was drying.

Margarita GROANS.

JULIE

Melissa! That's not necessary to announce.

GRAMMA

Oh honey, that's okay, it's what I'm here for. Blew away eh.

JOEY

Good luck Gramma!

GRAMMA

(laughing, turns to Neal)
Why don't you take me to meet your folks.

NEAL

Uh ... maybe we'd better go inside.

EXT. A REEF LOCATED AT BITTER END - MID-MORNING

All eight are aboard the dinghy, peering into the water with goggles and snorkels on, fannies in the air.

PAUL

Now practice blowing water out through your snorkel.

Eight shoots of water come spraying into the boat.

UNDERWATER CAMERA shot: Their faces leaning in from the dinghy, looking around. Sharon is pointing at a nearby shark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABOVE WATER.

PAUL (cont'd)

That's just a nurse shark; it won't hurt you.

VALERIE

Since it's his home, perhaps we shouldn't intrude.

PAUL

Okay now, remember what I've told you.

Paul SLIDES over the side of the dinghy, into the water. Mike and Jason are close behind.

NICK

Come on girls, better hurry before it's the sharks' feeding time.

JOAN

(lowering herself carefully)
And, what time might that be??

PAUL

(reemerging)
Joan, take off your jewelry. Sharks are attracted to the glitter.

Joan immediately grabs for the dinghy trying to get back in - rocking Val and Abby, who are still in the boat.

JASON

(adjusting his mask)
Watch out for the fire coral and urchins. There are a lot of them here.

JOAN

How many rules are there?!

ABBY

Well, since we don't know what fire coral or urchins look like, I guess we just don't touch anything.

VALERIE

I never had any intentions to the contrary.
(looking warily over the side)
In fact, I think this is a perfect time to do some sun-bathing.

Without a word, Abby & Joan each grab one of Val's arms at the elbow and THROW her overboard.

INT. HALLWAY IN MCHALE'S HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Julie is STROLLING down the steps with books in her arms. With a satisfied smile, she peruses the living room, which has been RETURNED TO NORMAL under Gramma's skilled hand.

Julie passes the laundry room where the washing machine is HUMMING QUIETLY and the clean clothes, neatly folded, are PILED HIGH AROUND THE ROOM.

Entering the kitchen, she finds Max, Quentin, Chip, Stacy, Andrew and Melissa eating breakfast and laughing with Gramma and Margarita.

JULIE

How did you get the boys to put down their weapons long enough to eat breakfast?

MARGARITA

(speaking with admiration)
Gramma told them ... "No guns in a demilitarized zone."

JULIE

Wished I'd thought of that.

MARGARITA

Me too.

JULIE

Well, I'm off - summer school calls
(to the Gruesome Threesome)
I'll be back to pick you guys up for soccer practice.

As she leaves, Brigitte comes in.

BRIGITTE

The house looks great. How long have you been up?

GRAMMA

Oh honey, when you're my age, you just don't waste your time sleeping.

BRIGITTE

Sleeping ... a waste of time??? Somehow never struck me that way. Come on Andrew, I'll drop you off for your swimming lesson on my way to work.

ANDREW

I don't want to leave. Gramma and the kids are going to play a new game!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MELISSA

We're going on a treasure hunt.

BRIGITTE

What?

GRAMMA

Oh, just a little encouragement to put their clean clothes away. Now don't you worry Andrew - Margarita and I will be sure that nobody touches your laundry.

ANDREW

(joining Brigitte at the door)

Thanks!

Ralph is outside BARKING. The house is jarred by the voice of Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS (V.O.)

Ralph, don't you know what time it is?!

In pajamas, Joey races through the kitchen and out the door followed by Neal, hair still wet from the shower.

GRAMMA

What is going on?

Joey and Neal return with Ralph.

NEAL

Mr. Lewis warned us to keep Ralph quiet.

JOEY

I thought it was just at night. I guess he meant in the morning, too.

GRAMMA

That sure doesn't leave Ralph much time for being a dog.

NEAL

I'm afraid Mr. Lewis doesn't see Ralph's little transgressions as perfectly natural and endearing as you do.

MELISSA

Come on Gramma. Let's start our treasure hunt.

Each child heads for the laundry room, then files out with the stack of folded laundry that Margarita's handed out.

NEAL

Treasure hunt?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Joey shrugs his shoulders.

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT OF THE "WE DO" UNDER SAIL - MORNING

MIKE (V.O.)
I still haven't got "VEB".

PAUL (V.O.)
Is it contagious?

EXT. THE "WE DO" ANCHORED ON ST. BARTHELEMY - LATE AFTERNOON

Val and Abby are in the dinghy. Val's pulling the cord in an attempt to start the motor; Abby is bailing.

ABBY
Tell me why we need dinghy training?

Jason is watching from the stern of the "We Do."

JASON
Unless you plan to swim ashore, you need to know how to handle a dinghy.

The dinghy is pointed at the side of the "We Do." Val has finally started the engine and is looking over her shoulder in preparation for moving the dinghy in reverse.

VALERIE
I've got it now.

She puts it in gear, still looking back over her shoulder. The boat LUNGES FORWARD into the side of the "We Do."

DISSOLVE TO:

JOAN AND SHARON NOW IN THE DINGHY MOTORING - DAY.

They're about 20 yards away from the "We Do," which can be seen in the background.

JOAN
This is a piece of cake. Let's have some fun.

As she increases the speed, she begins doing tighter and tighter figure eights.

SHARON
Joan, I don't think you should ...

Before she finishes her statement, Joan makes one more sharp turn. The dinghy motor FLIES OFF.

EST SHOT: "WE DO" SAILING OUT OF THE ANCHORAGE.

MIKE (V.O.)

Maybe VEB is a book, but then it could be
a person, but then ...

EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - MORNING

The Gruesome Threesome are dressed in fatigues, marching behind Gramma - who is wearing a fatigue hat with Ralph on his leash by her side.

QUENTIN

Don't search and rescue teams normally go
by helicopter? Or, at least by car?

GRAMMA

No. Any soldier worth his salt marches on
the supermarket. Women have been doing it
for years.

MAX

But we're not women!

GRAMMA

Then, it's about time you men got tough.
When you commandeered supplies, you must be
well organized and follow your orders.

QUENTIN

What orders?

In sight of the market.

GRAMMA

These orders: Proceed directly to your
assigned aisle without drawing undue
attention to our unit. Procure the
supplies. Meet me at the check-out stand
at 0900, so we can pay up.

At the door to the market, each boy salutes and enters.
Gramma TIES Ralph to the post outside.

INT. SUPERMARKET

Chip waits for his aisle to clear of people before proceeding
to pick up his cereal.

ANOTHER AISLE

Quentin is carefully putting each item under his camouflage
cape following his instructions to the letter.

DIFFERENT AISLE

Max is tiptoeing through the aisles, collecting his assigned groceries.

Chip comes around the aisle to where Max is.

CHIP

Max, guess who's here.

MAX

I'm on a mission, not a quiz show.

CHIP

Mr. Lewis. He's here ... two aisles over. Ralph's tied up outside. Suppose he barks as Mr. Lewis goes by. Don't want to make him "nervous" you know.

MAX

We could take him hostage.

CHIP

What are we going to do? Tie him up with the Charmin? Let's tell the Sarge.

Both head towards the front of the store.

Mr. Lewis approaches Quentin and GRABS HIM by the shoulder - forcing him to drop all of the items under his cape. A YELP from Quentin is heard by Gramma and the boys who hurry towards the sound.

MR. LEWIS

You little roughneck. I knew you were up to no good the minute I saw you. You and your little buddies have been trouble waiting for a place to happen ... and now I've got you dead to rights!

GRAMMA

(rounding the corner)

Excuse me young man ... what seems to be the problem?

MR. LEWIS

I don't mean to be rude Madam, but what possible concern could this be of yours?

GRAMMA

These are my friends and I take complete responsibility for them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. LEWIS

(looking her over)

That's like taking coals to Newcastle.
Well, your friend here is a delinquent
trainee. I caught him stealing these
items.

GRAMMA

Oh.

(turning to a very shaken
Quentin)

Quentin ... tell Mr. ...

(turning to Mr. Lewis)

I'm sorry, we haven't been introduced.

MR. LEWIS

My name is Lewis ... Irwin Lewis.

GRAMMA

(a look of understanding)

Ah, yes ... Quentin ... your orders.

QUENTIN

My orders were to "cure" ...

GRAMMA

That's procure, dear ...

QUENTIN

Right, procure my assigned items and meet
you at 0900 at the check stand to pay up.

GRAMMA

Surely that makes his honorable
intentions clear, Mr. Lewis.

MR. LEWIS

Lady, I don't know which spaceship
dropped you off, but just make sure these
friends of yours stay out of my sight.

He turns to leave.

GRAMMA

And a good day to you too, Mr. Lewis.

He exits the market - but is still visible. Outside, Ralph
recognizes Mr. Lewis and begins to bark.

MR. LEWIS

(pointing at Ralph)

And I'll settle with you later!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRAMMA

Now there goes a great donor for a heart transplant. He hasn't used his in years.

EST. SHOT - ENGLISH HARBOUR, ANTIGUA - SUNSET

The "We Do" sailing into the harbor.

EXT. ENGLISH HARBOUR DOCK, ANTIGUA - EARLY MORNING

The crew in their dinghy has pulled up to the main dock. Joan is the last one to get out of the dinghy.

JOAN

Okay Mike - read the clue - one more time.

MIKE

"When the earth touches your feet, the King's English will give you a lift. If you choose, look carefully with guidance ... from VEB."

ABBY

Well, the earth is touching my feet and I still don't get it.

All look around.

VALERIE

It doesn't look like we have very far to walk to take in all available shopping.

PAUL

Be still my heart ... that we might survive this port without Val altering the trade balance.

They start walking.

EST. SHOT - A BIG WOODEN BUILDING WITH A LARGE SIGN.

Sign Reads: VEB NICHOLSON & SONS Charter Office.

In corner of the front window it states: *Mail can be picked up inside.* Mike points to the sign.

ABBY

Well, we didn't have to look very far.

JASON

Seems to be the local post office.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN
(kiddingly)
Suppose the kids have written?

NICK
What do we do - just go in and ask if
they happen to have a spare treasure
hanging around?

JASON
Not likely, but we're not going to find
out standing here.

They enter the post office.

INT. CHARTER OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

MIKE
(under his breath)
Fools rush in ... wonder; what guidance I
can get from here?

CLERK
(looking up)
May I help you?

Mike hesitates for a moment wondering how to phrase his
question. The clerk prompts him.

CLERK(cont'd)
What boat are you from ... the "We Do?"

MIKE
Why ... yes.

Clerk turns, reaches for an envelope and hands it to Mike.

MIKE (cont'd)
(stunned)
Thank you.

Mike takes the letter. They all turn and hurry out.

EXT. CHARTER OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

They are standing around Mike, looking in amazement at the
handwritten letter on parchment paper.

PAUL
... but how did anybody know to address
this to the crew of the "We Do?"

VAL
This is beyond weird.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICK
Mike, read the letter.

INSERT: LETTER IN MIKE'S HAND

MIKE (V.O.)
"If the King's waistline is turned
around, another land applies with clues
of yore. But wait, I go too far. All this
will be in vain until you walk on water
where the spirits sing."

EXT. "WE DO" COCKPIT - ENGLISH HARBOUR, ANTIGUA - AFTERNOON

Everyone's sitting around the table with books and maps.

SHARON
(with a map)
Well, it looks like the Bay Islands to
me. See, if we reverse the original clue
about the King's waistline and follow the
latitude to the west instead of the east -

JASON
... which is where we are now ...

SHARON
... we arrive at the Swan Islands, which
is above the Bay Islands.

ABBY
Yep ... and both Antigua and the Bay
Islands are south of islands named for
birds, and both are on the same latitude.

VAL
(reading over Abby's shoulder)
And since the Smithsonian Institute found
Mayan artifacts there, they believe the
Bay Islands to be part of the ancient
world.

PAUL
So the "ancient clue" could apply to both
Antigua and the Bay Islands - only
hundreds of miles apart on the same
latitude. What about "spirits that sing?"

NICK
(searching a book)
Here's something about a wreck, spelled
"S-Y-N-G." It ran aground about 20 years
ago in the Bay Islands.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICK (cont'd)

Looks like it's an interesting place, and apparently, you can practically walk to it. The reef is only inches below the water.

MIKE

Well, that sounds like walking on water to me.

JASON

(checking the chart)

It would take about ten days sailing, day and night, to get there.

Silence.

NICK

We could take turns. Abby and I will take the first watch.

ABBY

Why not. These beds aren't all they're cracked up to be anyway.

JASON

Mike, I'm glad you brought your sextant along. We're going to need it.

MIKE

Looks like this odyssey is going to demand a little work.

VALERIE

Don't you think we should be a little concerned about how this clue got to us?

Silence.

JASON

Well, Mike's right about one thing... there's a lot we need to do. Let's get some rest and start early to check our provisioning before we leave. Everybody agree?

Slowly, everyone nods in agreement. A seriousness not seen before is evident.

CAMERA PULLS BACK ... Paul's voice can be heard as he imitates Stan Laurel of the comedy team, Laurel and Hardy.

PAUL (V.O.)

Well Ollie ... another fine mess you've gotten us into!

EXT. MCHALE'S BACKYARD - EARLY MORNING

The Gruesome Threesome, Andrew, Stacy and Melissa are in the yard with an assortment of pets. Cages are being cleaned; pets bathed and brushed.

GRAMMA

What would life be without all this.

JOEY

A little quieter?

Gramma smiles as she CATCHES A GLIMPSE of Mr. Lewis grimacing from his upstairs window, which has a peek-a-boo view of their yard.

INT. MR. LEWIS' UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - LATE THE SAME MORNING

On the phone with the Department of Animal Regulations.

MR. LEWIS

There's this dog who's always barking. No ... probably not for five minutes ... just every day. What do you mean doesn't constitute a disturbance? *It is a disturbance to me!* I suppose you don't think kids constitute a disturbance either ... hello? hello!?!

He slams down the phone.

SFX: The sound of laughter floats through the bedroom window. He CLOSES the window and picks up his laptop.

DISSOLVE TO:

On his cell phone, peeking out his window.

MR. LEWIS

(cont'd)

... I need to discuss a tall, sound proof wall. No, I need it built as soon as possible. It's of the utmost priority. You can come over this afternoon? Fine.

EST. SHOT- ENGLISH HARBOUR, ANTIGUA - MORNING

EXT.- AN INN ON ENGLISH HARBOUR - MORNING

The crew of the "We Do" is sitting at breakfast on the outside patio of a quaint inn.

Mike is discussing the assignments for their forthcoming voyage. He's checking off his notes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Okay Jason, you said you'll take care of locating a more detailed map of the western Caribbean

JASON

Right.

MIKE

And, Nick is in charge of engine maintenance.

NICK

I'm not sure there's enough Quick Start in the whole Caribbean to keep that engine running, but I'll give it my best

MIKE

Great. Now Paul ...

EXT. A LOCAL MARKET - MORNING

The crew is LOADED DOWN with supplies heading back to the boat. Their growing excitement is evident.

ABOARD THE "WE DO" - MORNING

Joan, Sharon, Abby and Val have just finished stowing the supplies while Paul, Jason are huddled with Nick figuring out the fuel and water requirements for the journey.

JASON

Where's Mike?

The others look around. Sharon points to a figure on a windsurfer in the harbor.

JOAN

Yep ... that's Mike!

JASON

Oh well, we might as well do something fun for awhile since we're going to be sailing for ten days.

ABBY

You mean, like a last wish before we die?

A GUST COMES UP. Mike is being blown sideways into the docks.

MIKE

I think I'm getting the hang of it. Joey'd be proud of me.

THE WINDSURFER CRASHES into the dock. Mike comes up laughing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN
 (jumping off the boat)
 Why should he have all the fun.

SHARON
 (jumping in after her)
 I like your style.

Having taken the windsurfer from Mike, Joan struggles to get on it. Sharon leans on one side, trying to help Joan balance. Joan finally gets on.

Sharon holds the back of the windsurfer. Joan teeters precariously as she struggles to pull up the sail.

SHARON (cont'd)
 Quit wobbling...

JOAN
 I would if I could.

SHARON
 Get the sail up.

JOAN
 I'm not taking a nap up here.

Joan gives an extra hard pull bringing the sail almost upright just as a GUST backwinds the sail. Joan topples off the board on top of Sharon with the LARGE MULTICOLOR SAIL falling on them. Both come up laughing.

JOAN (cont'd)
 Funny ... it's not as easy as Joey makes it look.

DISSOLVE TO:

Joan is now carefully balanced with the sail up. As the wind moves her over the water, Sharon lets out an approving yelp.

SHARON
 You've got it ... whatever you're doing, you're doing it right!

JOAN
 But ... what am I doing???

Aboard the "We Do," the whole gang is APPLAUDING, as Joan is quickly becoming a small figure on the horizon.

ENGLISH HARBOUR - ABOARD THE "WE DO" - LATE MORNING

The "We Do" is leaving English Harbour with Jason at the helm. The guys stow the windsurfer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jason waves to Val to take over. She's still unwilling; Paul moves forward taking the helm. Jason points out the heading.

EXT. MCHALE'S DRIVEWAY - LATE MORNING

Neal, Joey, Brigitte, and Julie are PACKING Neal's VW

Joey is tying his windsurfer on the VW's roof.

BRIGITTE

Tell me again why we're taking this BUG instead of a normal car.

JOEY

Because dimwit, since I'm the one who entered the windsurfing contest, I have to pay for the gas. If you'd like to cover the gas bill, we can take any car you'd like.

He ends with a low sweeping bow to Brigitte.

BRIGITTE

How bad can twenty minutes in the a VW be. ...

JULIE

Bad, but I'm as cheap as the rest of you.

NEAL

Enough, enough. Let's go.

They pile in and take off.

EXT. BEACH - EARLY AFTERNOON

The windsurfing contest is in full swing with Joey standing by for his turn. Brigitte and Julie are sitting nearby. Neal is "holding court" with some gorgeous beach bunnies.

EXT. JOEY ON HIS WINDSURFER - AFTERNOON

Joey is taking his turn rounding a buoy handling the churning waters masterfully

EXT. THE HILL AT THE BACK OF THE MCHALE'S YARD - AFTERNOON.

This hill extends down to the back of Mr. Lewis' yard. The Gruesome Threesome are CRAWLING on their bellies. They stop at the wrought iron fence at the back of the property.

QUENTIN

We can't go over the fence. We'll really get it if we get caught.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

You're such a nerd. How can you be a spy and *not* go into enemy territory?

CHIP

Max is right. What kind of soldier are you? Besides, we're not going very far ... right, Max?

MAX

Right ... just to our old treehouse. Besides, it's your backyard Chip. My Mom said those other people are just borrowing it. Over the fence, men.

They go over the fence and continue to crawl on their bellies, past Mr. Lewis' to Chip Anderson's property.

The SOUND of voices abruptly bring them to a halt.

They HIDE UNDER A NEARBY BUSH just as Mr. Lewis and another man walk around the side of house. The two men look up the side hill to Jason and Sharon McHale's lot.

CONTRACTOR

Nope, can't do it. Ten feet high is against city ordinances. Besides, the building code would never allow a block wall on this much slope.

MR. LEWIS

(pointing to the yard above)
Put it at the top of the hill then.

CONTRACTOR

You mean you want me to take down that wrought iron fence and replace it with a 10 foot block wall ... do you have your neighbors' permission?

MR. LEWIS

What, do I need their permission for?

CONTRACTOR

Is that your fence?

MR. LEWIS

Probably - well, it might be. I don't know where the property line is ... but, who cares?! I'm paying to upgrade the damn fence. They'll thank me.

CONTRACTOR

Not everyone would see things the way you do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONTRACTOR

You either need their permission or show me a survey that indicates the fence is on your property.

MR. LEWIS

O.K., O.K. ... so find someone to do a survey. Do whatever you need to ... just get it done! I can't put up with all that garbage next door much longer.

CHIP

(whispering)

Is that us he's calling garbage?

Max hushes him UP.

EXT. CHIP ANDERSON'S BACK HILL - AFTERNOON

Max, Chip and Quentin are sliding out of control down the last hill. They hit bottom, under a large bush.

QUENTIN

(in a whiney voice)

We shouldn't be here. And we're suppose to be home soon.

MAX

Oh stop whining! This is our headquarters.

CHIP

Right! Come on men, stay low to the ground and follow me.

CHIP starts toward the rope that leads up to the Anderson's TREEHOUSE, adroitly climbs the rope ladder and crawls into the hideout. He pokes his head out to SIGNAL THE "ALL CLEAR."

INT. TREE HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Max comes across a stack of "girlie magazines" with Japanese writing on them.

MAX

Wow! *Look what I just found!*

QUENTIN

These aren't the comic books we left here!

CHIP

(delighted, he picks one up)

What luck!

EST. SHOT - NEAL'S VW - LATE AFTERNOON PACIFIC COAST HWY.

INT. NEAL'S VW - LATE AFTERNOON

Neal, Joey, Brigitte, and Julie are squeezed into Neal's cramped VW - sipping on malts. The windsurfer's secured to the roof. They're waiting in jam-packed beach traffic.

JOEY

Thanks for the malts Neal Are you sure you didn't blow our budget?

JULIE

Joey - what a time to grow up! You just placed in your first contest, we'll worry about money later.

A motor-cycle cop has quietly come alongside the VW as Neal CASUALLY THROWS the remains of his malt out the window,

The cop, COVERED in chocolate malt, leans into the VW. Everyone's SILENT until Neal, in a moment of temporary hysterics, pulls his left hand in with his right hand - letting out a loud and thunderous YELL. Neal begins SPANKING his left hand as if scolding a mischievous child.

EXT. MCHALE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

The VW pulls up in front of the house and all pile out. Stacy - having just collected mail from the other houses - saunters up to Joey.

STACY

How'd you do hotshot?

She catches sight of the malt on the side of the car.

STACY (cont'd)

And what's this dark slime climbing up the side of your car, Neal?

JOEY

(untying his windsurfer)

Third place ... and I don't think Neal is ready to answer your second question yet.

As they're carrying the windsurfer to the garage, Brigitte, Joey and Julie burst out in a ROAR OF LAUGHTER.

NEAL

What's the big deal ... a little spilt malt never hurt anybody

JULIE

(tosses over her shoulder)

I don't think the cop saw it quite the same way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEAL

I didn't get a ticket did I?

EXT. MCHALE'S BACKYARD - LATE AFTERNOON

Everyone joins Gramma while Margarita watches Andrew and Melissa swim.

GRAMMA

Congratulations Joey! Anyone who takes a third place deserves a turn in ol' Betsy.

JOEY

You're putting me on ... ol' Betsy?

STACY

You do like to live close to the edge, don't you, Gramma?

JOEY

I can't believe it ... a stick shift!

GRAMMA

Compared to a windsurfer, ol' Betsy's a piece of cake.

JOEY

How cool - thanks Gramma!

GRAMMA

Well deserved Joey. It's almost time for the boys to come home, I wonder where they are? By the way, what do you all have in mind for Max's birthday party?

The only answer is silence and blank faces.

BRIGITTE

Ah, well, we really haven't planned any party ... yet!

MARGARITA

Ah bueno ... how about a s'priz party!

JOEY

A "S'PRIZ" party sounds great to me.

NEAL

What do you s'pose the odds of keeping any party a "s'priz" with Quentin and Chip around?

BRIGITTE

About as good as winning the lottery.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUDDENLY Max, Chip & Quentin come RACING into the backyard.

MAX

Gramma, wait 'til you hear what we found out about the enemy.

QUENTIN

I didn't want to go - they made me!

GRAMMA

(signaling everyone indoors)
Come on boys ...
(pressing her lips together)
"Loose lips sink ships!"

CHIP

(to Max)
"Loose lips sink ships?"

INT. THE MCHALE'S KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

Everyone's around the table as they're finishing dinner.

GRAMMA

You did a commendable job, men.

The Gruesome Threesome beam.

GRAMMA.(CONT'D)

However, you shouldn't think of Mr. Lewis as the enemy. Remember, he's a neighbor and you should treat him in a neighborly way. So, no more reconnaissance missions in his yard.

CHIP

Roger that.

MAX

Yes ma'am, but it's not going to be any fun that way.

QUENTIN

OK. Sarge. I tried to stop them.

JULIE

That's ridiculous... he can't take down our fence, can he? Mom and Dad picked this property for the view! And now, this man is going to ruin it with a 10 foot wall?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRAMMA

He can't take it down unless it turns out to be on his property. But, let's not worry until after the survey.

MAX

(under his breath)

I think it's time for some action of our own.

Chip and Quentin NOD in agreement.

MONTAGE: Passage of the "WE DO" across the Caribbean Ocean.

SFX: REGGAE MUSIC.

Paul at the helm, COAXING Val to take over.

Sharon and Joan at the chart table, LOOKING OVER the maps.

Mike DANCING in galley while PEELING potatoes for breakfast. THE BOAT PITCHES & his eggs on the stove fly against the back wall. Val approaches, reaches over to RELEASE THE LOCK, allowing the stove to gimble. Mike bursts out laughing.

Jason barbecuing. He loses a large piece of meat OFF THE STERN. He stares at the water as the meat sinks.

Sharon is at the helm when Paul, wearing his chef's hat, DANCES UP from the companionway. He has a long barbecue fork in one hand and a platter of food in the other while doing a jig to Reggae music, "JAM IT."

Sharon suddenly YELLS "jybe" as the boom SWINGS across the cockpit. Food, plates, and crew go FLYING.

EARLY EVENING - SUN SETTING. In the cockpit the crew is laughing and drinking at the cockpit table.

EXT. - CUL DE SAC - AFTERNOON

Gramma and Joey are returning home in ol' Betsy.

A LARGE WOODEN SKATEBOARD RAMP, precariously balanced on two skateboards is being carefully guided down the McHale's steep driveway. Attending it are the Gruesome Threesome, Melissa, Andrew and some NEIGHBORHOOD FRIENDS.

Ol' Betsy approaches the entourage. Several of them WAVE only to find that they LOSE CONTROL of the unwieldy ramp.

Careening out of control with the kids tearing after it, the ramp is on a COLLISION COURSE with a TRUCK that is extended out into the cul de sac from Mr. Lewis' driveway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A six foot four, two hundred fifty pound man is lost in thought as he loads his equipment into his truck. His back is to the speeding skate ramp, unaware of the impending danger.

Joey gives a quick glance at Gramma - she gives the "OK." Joey TURNS ol' Betsy and the front bumper has only to NUDGE the ramp to prevent the collision.

The ramp VEERS TO THE RIGHT making a direct hit into Mr. Lewis' ACCUMULATED" TRASH, SENDING debris everywhere.

The kids help Gramma and Joey out of the car.

JOEY

Gramma, are you all right? I'm so sorry.

GRAMMA

(picking her way around the trash)

I'm fine and ol' Betsy can take it. Looks like you just earned hero status Joey ... but it is a bit of a mess, isn't it.

MAX

(speaking in Pig Latin)

Igbay roubletay.

Subtitle: *Big trouble*

QUENTIN

Anday itsay allay youray aultfay...

Subtitle: *And it's all your fault!*

MAX

Atwhay idday Ia oday?

Subtitle: *What did I do?*

QUENTIN

(gesturing towards the trash)

Oh ustjay atthay rashtay usinessbay anday owpay isthay.

Subtitle: *Oh just that trash business and now this.*

Within earshot of Gramma, Chip hushes the two of them.

MAX

Thanks Joey. I hope this doesn't give you another ticket for your wall.

JOEY

They couldn't ... I'd be history!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The large man, MR. JONES, approaches Gramma and Joey and shakes their hands.

MR. JONES

I owe you one. I'm Washington Jones.

GRAMMA

Muriel Obadian here. And our fine hero is Joey Duran.

MR. JONES

If it weren't for you, young man, I'd have been a goner. I wasn't paying any attention to what was going on around me.

(rambling on)

I was concentrating on the survey work I was doing for that Lewis fella. Odd chap ... wants to build a block wall on top of that hill to eliminate all the noise.

JOEY

I guess that's us he's trying to eliminate.

Mr. Jones looks at the motley crew of kids and animals.

MR. JONES

Your neighbor must be a bachelor.

MAX & CHIP

He is.

MR. JONES

(deep chuckle)

Well, as the father of eight, I could tell him that it won't work.

QUENTIN

Gee, could you try that?

GRAMMA

Wishful thinking Quentin. Your only hope is that the fence is not on his property.

She looks at Mr. Jones questioningly.

MR. JONES

Sorry Ma'am ... that fence is on his property, sure enough.

A COLLECTIVE GROAN is heard.

INT. MCHALE'S FAMILY ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Gramma and Joey are relating the story to the whole clan.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

Dad and Mom will die without their view.

QUENTIN

I wouldn't want to be Mr. Lewis when Dad gets home.

MELISSA

I wouldn't want to be Mr. Lewis any time.

JULIE

I'm going to call Grandfather.

Julie gets up to leave and Neal follows her.

NEAL

Good idea ... never hurts to have a lawyer on your side.

GRAMMA

(smiling to herself)

And knowing when to call for help is a sure sign of growing up.

INT. GRANDFATHER'S HOUSE - LATE EVENING

Grandfather is listening on the phone attentively. Julie has just finished telling him about the dilemma.

GRANDFATHER

Don't worry sweetheart. Mr. Lewis cannot build on land that's not his ...

REVERSE

JULIE

(interrupting)

But Grandfather, the survey says ...

REVERSE.

GRANDFATHER

Sweetheart, let me finish. When your folks initially built the fence, they arranged to purchase the property from the original owners. I drew up the contract for the purchase myself, and they both signed it. Your Dad wanted to be sure that nothing more than a wrought iron fence would ever separate the two properties ...

JULIE (V.O.)

... to protect the view! So what do we do now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRANDFATHER

You'd better look through your Dad's papers and locate the contract.

JULIE (V.O.)

Granddad, have you ever seen Daddy's filing system?

GRANDFATHER

(chuckling)

Well, yes I have... so if you can't find it, we'll have to see what we can do about getting a restraining order, 'til your folks get home.

REVERSE

JULIE

I'll organize an all out search.

GRANDFATHER

(V.O.)

You've definitely got the troops for it. Good luck, honey.

MONTAGE CONTINUES: The 10 day passage of the "WE DO."

Sharon is leaning forward on the bow sprint watching dolphins. The boat comes down off a LARGE WAVE and she is nearly THROWN over the rail. Jason grabs her by the waist band of her shorts in mid-air and pulls her back.

Val, at the helm, looking relaxed and pleased.

PAUL

You're a natural at the helm.

VAL

(smiling)

It must be all those years of carpooling.

Nick is standing on the cabin top next to the mast, STRUGGLING with the reefing line as Abby is tying knots & dressing the ropes. She reaches over to UNTANGLE Nick's line. He bows appreciatively.

At the helm and on motor, Mike's DRAMATICALLY spinning the wheel from side to side while SINGING - with unbridled spirit, "BLOW ME KANGAROO DOWN." Joan moves in, hands him a drink, and takes the helm, calming the boat. Mike's laugh is infectious.

Several crew members on the bow WASHING their hair in the LIGHT RAINFALL.

EST. SHOT - CUL DE SAC - MORNING

GRAMMA (V.O.)
Last call for breakfast!

INT. MCHALE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

The children filter in as Margarita SERVES BREAKFAST.

BRIGITTE
It's been three weeks, and I have yet to see a day of rest. What do we have in store on today's schedule?

JOEY
(going to the master schedule)
Hey, there's actually some blank time slots.

STACY
Can't be - must be invisible ink.

JULIE
Maybe the fates are on our side, since we need time to find that contract.

GRAMMA
Julie, have you decided how to organize the search for it? I'm here to help.

JULIE
Thanks. I'll start in the attic; there's all sorts of files up there.

NEAL
I'll help you.

JULIE
Great. Maybe our infantry here can go through the books in the living room. Dad's been known to put all kinds of stuff in books. Stacy, I'd like you and Andrew to start going through each drawer in the house. Just remember that everything has to be put back, *neatly*.

MARGARITA
I help there ... OK.?

JULIE
Good.

MELISSA
What about me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

You're going to help Brigitte search my folks' bedroom. And Gramma, would you help search Dad's office with Joey?

GRAMMA

Of course.

JULIE

Now, from what Granddad said, it's a handwritten letter on a piece of Dad's stationery, dated July, 1997. It has both Dad and Mr. McKenzie's signatures.

Julie moves to the kitchen desk drawer and pulls out a sample of her Dad's stationery.

JULIE(cont'd)

This is what the stationery looks like.

MONTAGE - THEIR SEARCH BEGINS

Neal and Julie climbing into a dingy attic.

NEAL

(picking up an old ugly doll)
And this was yours?

JULIE

(grabbing it away)
Yes, and I love her!

Brigitte's going through the desk in the bedroom, while Melissa's going through the closet, wearing a woman's large sun hat.

Stacy and Andrew are going through drawers in the massive buffet chest in the dining room. As they finish, Margarita is putting the things away.

Gramma and Joey are going through the office in a somewhat orderly fashion.

The Gruesome Threesome have formed an assembly line approach: Max is on a tall ladder, and is TOSSING DOWN BOOKS to Quentin and Chip. They then check each book for anything important. They manage to find an assortment of unusual items, leaving a DISASTER ZONE in their wake.

END Montage.

INT. - MCHALE'S HOME - LATE AFTERNOON

CAMERA pans through the empty, messy house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EXT - BACKYARD

The younger kids are swimming, while the rest, exhausted, look on.

NEAL

That accomplished absolutely nothing.

BRIGITTE

I wouldn't say that. We managed to turn the house into a disaster area again.

JULIE

Guess I'd better call Granddad tonight about that restraining order.

MONTAGE ENDS: Passage of the "WE DO" across the Caribbean.

Nick's at the helm at night, obviously sleepy. Abby joins him, putting a cup of coffee in his hand. She points for him to sit down and she takes over the helm. He nods off; Abby looks forward and smiles when ...

A SHARP THUD comes from below followed by a YELP from Val.

The bed in the galley salon gives way, dropping Paul and Val onto the floor. He lands on top of her.

PAUL

(laughing)

Was that as good for you as it was for me, dear?

VAL

Let me guess ... you didn't lock down the table?

FINAL CUT: The crew as they perform a FLAWLESS tact.

JASON

(English accent)

"By Jove ... we've got it."

PAUL

Well, it's about time Ollie!"

EST. SHOT - CUL DE SAC - LATE AFTERNOON

INT. HALLWAY IN MCHALE'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Julie enters the house after work with mail in hand.

Gramma, Brigitte and Stacy are VACUUMING AND DUSTING, while the Gruesome Threesome are PUTTING BACK the last of the books on the bookshelf.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

(holding the mail)

There must be more to life than bills and junk mail!

BRIGITTE

You're beginning to sound like our folks.

JULIE

I see why they decided to take a shot at finding a treasure.

(looking around the house)

You guys have really done a job here.

BRIGITTE

Yeah... hard to believe that only yesterday this place looked like a cyclone hit it.

Andrew and Melissa pass behind her with their stacks of folded laundry, heading for their rooms.

JULIE

Gramma, don't you ever run out of treasures for those kids? In some circles, it might be considered bribery.

GRAMMA

You bet!

Julie moves toward the kitchen and throwing the mail on the stack that now covers the dining room table.

JULIE

Better face this tonight.

INT. JASON AND SHARON'S DINING ROOM - TWILIGHT

Julie and Neal are sitting with the stack of bills in front of them. Dinner's being prepared in the kitchen.

Brigitte enters the front door with Joey.

JOEY

When will this humiliation of having a girl pick me up in front of my friends end?

BRIGITTE

If I'd known I was going to be received so warmly ...

JULIE

... and what makes you so sure it will ever end with your driving record?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIGITTE

Consider the humiliation over. I'll never pick you up again.

JOEY

(flinging his arms in the air)
Pressures, pressures ... a teenager's life is fraught with pressures!

NEAL

You've got that one right.

JULIE

By the way Joey, the pool heater won't come on. Would you go out and see if the pilot light has gone out?

JOEY

(leaving)
Why not!

NEAL

Julie, looks like the electric bill is two months behind. I thought your folks said everything was current.

JULIE

Well, you've seen my Dad's filing system ... anything's possible.

Neal is adding up the bills on his phone calculator.

NEAL

Like running out of money before our parents get home?

Joey enters - hair & eyebrows SINGED - walking like Frankenstein.

JOEY

I relit it.

JULIE

(looking down at the gas bill)
Well un-light it! I don't know how Mom and Dad can afford to live here.

JOEY

(turns around & leaves)
Un-light it, right ... sure thing ... turn it off. No problem.

Simultaneously, the lights GO OUT, with only the "twilight" from outside to see by.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEAL

Quit kidding, Joey. Turn the lights back on.

JULIE

(grabs the electric bill)
What time is it?

NEAL

7:00 ... Why?

JULIE

Joey didn't do it, Neal. We had until 5:00 today to pay the electric bill. I'm calling Grandfather.

GRAMMA

(enters the dining room)
Do we have a problem?

BRIGITTE

Depends on how close you are to having dinner cooked.

Joey returns from outdoors again.

MELISSA

Joey, how come you look so funny? Didn't you wash today, or did they turn off the water too?

JOEY

Thank you for caring, Melissa. Torched at the tender age of "almost" sixteen and only an eight-year-old cares.

EXT. THE MCHALE'S FRONT YARD - NEXT MORNING

The Gruesome Threesome are HIDING strategically around the yard. Chip is up in a tree with his walkie-talkie.

Mr. Lewis' contractor pulls up in his truck.

CHIP

Xthay nemyeay's gentay ashay rriveday.

Subtitle: *The enemy's agent has arrived.*

Quentin makes a BEELINE for the front door, shouting for Gramma.

QUENTIN

Ewislay's ontractoray isay erehay.

Subtitle: *Mr. Lewis' contractor is here!*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRAMMA
 (coming outside)
 Maybe you'd better let me handle this.

At that moment, Chip radios Quentin again.

CHIP
 Ethay alvaryay ashay rriveday.

Subtitle: *The calvary has arrived.*

Grandfather's car pulls into the driveway with Neal & Julie.
 Everyone gets out. Julie is WAVING the "Restraining Order."

GRANDFATHER
 You must be Gramma. I'm Arthur Colbert;
 it's a pleasure to finally meet you.

Gramma shakes his extended hand and smiles.

GRAMMA
 Why thank you, and I'm Muriel Obadian.

STACY
 (interrupting)
 Perhaps one of you had better talk to the
 contractor before the Gruesome Threesome
 organize an assault on the poor man.

GRANDFATHER
 Quite right.

Taking the restraining order from Julie, he walks briskly
 over to the contractor and introduces himself.

The rest watch on as the contractor looks over the paper. He
 then nods, shakes hands with Grandfather and gets in his
 truck.

As he's driving out, Mr. Lewis is entering. After a brief
 conversation, the contractor leaves and Mr Lewis drives on
 into the cul de sac.

Mr. Lewis leaps out of his car and approaches the group.

MR. LEWIS
 (to Gramma)
 First the dog, then my trash ... now
 this! I don't know what is going on here,
 (glaring at the Gruesome
 Threesome)
 but you and this zoo have sabotaged me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRAMMA

Mr. Lewis, I know how difficult some situations can seem, but I'm sure ...

MR. LEWIS

... I'm only sure of one thing; my workmen will be back in the morning. Nothing's going to stop the inevitable.

GRANDFATHER

Well, that's up for discussion. You must be Mr. Lewis. How do you do? I'm Arthur Colbert, Julie's Grandfather.

MR. LEWIS

How do you do?? Excuse me, I have some things to tend to.

Grandfather HOLDS OUT the restraining order.

GRANDFATHER

Certainly, but before you go, this is for you.

Mr. Lewis reads it, trying to stay in control.

MR. LEWIS

(glaring)
Who do you think you are; you have no right!

He turns quickly and marches to his house.

GRANDFATHER

Good-day Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis slams his front door. Ralph starts barking.

NEAL

Well, too bad that restraining order only bought us a few days.

GRAMMA

Let's worry about that after lunch. Will you join us Arthur?

GRANDFATHER

What a lovely suggestion Mittie Belle!

GRAMMA

(as everyone filters inside)
Oh, it's the least I can do for someone who rescued us from a self-imposed blackout.

EXT. COCKPIT OF THE "WE DO" - LATE EVENING

There's a full moon, with a MILD wind blowing. Jason is at the helm with Sharon sitting nearby.

JASON

Last night on the open sea. I almost hate to see this part of our voyage end.

SHARON

I feel like we've lived a lifetime these past few weeks, or am I being too corny.

JASON

We have and you are, but don't ever change.

One hand on the helm, he reaches over and pulls her to him.

SHARON

Almost midnight, I'd better wake Nick and Abby for the next watch.

JASON

Ah, give them a half-hour more sleep.

DARK CLOUDS in the distance, with the WIND GETTING STRONGER and more THREATENING. The waves begin to BUILD.

JASON (cont'd)

Sharon, batten down the hatches. Looks like we're in for a hell of a storm.

She goes below as Nick's coming on deck. Abby's close behind.

A VERY dark sky.

NICK

You want us to reef the main?

JASON

Yes, but take in the jib first - and hurry. Abby, I think we're going to need everyone on deck.

JOAN

(emerges from below.)
No problem... everybody's up.

Val, Paul, Sharon and Mike are right behind her.

JASON

OK guys, get rid of the jib and staysail.

Mike and Paul hurry forward to bring down the staysail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOAN

I'll help you up there.

Val and Abby are in place to **furl** the jib, while Sharon is keeping the jib sheet taut at the wench in the cockpit.

ABBY

(grimacing)

Pull Val, pull!

VALERIE

Sharon ... give us some slack!

Sharon gives too much slack causing the jib to FLAP VIOLENTLY, making it impossible for Val and Abby to control. Sharon tries to pull back on the jib sheet, but fails.

ABBY

Joan, we need you back here!

Meanwhile: Paul has undone the halyard and, starts to let it go. The hank CATCHES the bottoms of Joan's pajamas between it and the boom. STUCK, she STEPS out of her pajamas pants.

JOAN

(looking at her underpants)

Well, Mom, your advice certainly came in handy after all.

Joan dashes to help Abby and Val, giving the extra pull that's needed to furl the jib.

Paul FIGHTS with the staysail to get it folded.

Mike is holding tight onto the halyard as he takes it to the rail on the foredeck. The boat rolls suddenly and Mike SLIDES ON THE DECK. The halyard becomes taut, stopping Mike's slide. He's finally able to stand up and lock the halyard to the rail.

JASON

Now get that mainsail reefed!

Nick is already in place near the mast. Sharon, Mike and Joan join him.

Paul hurries back to handle the mainsheet; Joan lowers the halyard, while Nick, Mike and Sharon proceed to tie a reef in the lowered sail.

Because of the BUILDING WIND, Joan has a difficult time pulling the mainsail halyard back until Nick reaches over and they both get the mainsail tight again in it's lower position.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jason, who had been heading into the wind, while the sails were being adjusted, turns the boat back on course.

JASON (cont'd)
Looks like this is going to last for
awhile.

Abby goes to the aft cabin for her hat. She opens the cabin door and looks directly out the BACK PORTHOLES. She's WIDE-EYED as she sees the dinghy, ON THE TOP OF A LARGE WAVE, racing toward the back of the boat.

ABBY
(shouting above the weather)
Do we care that the dinghy is coming
through the back of the boat?

There's a CRASHING SOUND as the dinghy hits.

Nick leaps to his feet and struggles to the stern, with Paul's right behind. The dinghy's motor, which was tied carefully inside the dinghy, is DRAGGING in the water.

NICK
(climbing over the stern & down
into the dinghy))
Paul, hold the painters to keep the
dinghy as close as you can. I'm going to
get the motor before we lose it.

As Nick STEPS INTO the dinghy, it DROPS AWAY from below him. Falling, he crashes into several bags of garbage, and an accumulation of shells, stored in the dinghy.

The dinghy rocks BACK AND FORTH and UP AND DOWN, with the swells. Finally standing, he starts to throw the larger conch shells overboard in his attempt to get to the motor. Abby THROWS him a life vest.

ABBY
Put this on now!

The life vest lands on him and he's pushed back down.

NICK
(weakly)
Thanks.

Finally, Mike and Paul reach down and get the motor from Nick, who climbs aboard via the stern. It begins to RAIN - and HARD.

JASON
Looks like we've got ourselves a bit of a
problem with this following sea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Why?

JASON

When the boat is continuously on top of a wave, it's bound to fall off sooner or later.

MIKE

What do you suggest?

JASON

We need to slow down our speed. Take the helm, Mike. I read something on exactly what to do. I just don't remember what that something was

BELOW DECK

Jason is FRANTICALLY TURNING pages of one of his sailing books. He stops to read for a moment.

JASON

This looks as good as anything.

JASON ON THE STERN, opening the lazarette. He clumsily tugs at the auxiliary anchor, thinking out loud.

JASON (cont'd)

How much line do you suppose we have here ... well, I guess we go with what we've got.

He throws the CLEATED anchor overboard. Nothing happens.

ABBY

Does that serve a purpose?

JASON

It's supposed to slow us down ...

A few seconds pass as everyone's EYES ARE FOCUSED on the stern of the boat, waiting ... expectantly.

The "We Do" RISES on a LARGE wave. But ... the anchor, having stretched its line to the maximum, rises SIMULTANEOUSLY on its OWN wave The ANCHOR is suddenly PROPELLED FORWARD, when the bow of the boat drops off the crest of the wave.

The STRETCHED rope, functioning like a rubber band, JETTISONS the anchor over the heads of the awe struck-crew THROUGH the mainsail.

A CLOSE-UP OF THE HOLE IN THE RAIN SOAKED MAINSAIL

JASON (V.O.)

Oh shit . . .

CUT TO: The "We Do" sitting in the middle of the storm, BOBBING up and down, but, apparently, going nowhere.

MIKE (V.O.)

That's great, Jason ... it worked!

INT. SHARON AND JASON'S HOUSE - MID-MORNING

Neal swings open the front door with donuts.

In the living room Stacy is engrossed in her "tween" fashion magazine. In the family room, The Gruesome Threesome, Andrew and Joey are SPRAWLED OUT, absorbed in a DVD.

NEAL

Here Stacy ... since you came up with the coupons, you get first choice.

He catches sight of the article she is reading: "*Talking Him Out of Talking You into Sex*"

NEAL (cont'd)

Are you supposed to be reading that stuff?

STACY

I'm trying to learn a more tactful way of saying no than a swift kick in the ...

NEAL

(lifting his hand)

Enough ... that's more than I need to know.

STACY

By the way, do you need any tips on safe sex. Here's an article on ...

NEAL

(makes his way out of the room)

Ah, thanks, but I think I've got it covered.

(to himself)

Hot damn ... and Mom once worried about me reading "Rolling Stones."

Neal wanders into the family room to pass around the donuts. Amazed they're watching the "*Transformers*" again, Neal can't resist asking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NEAL (cont'd)

(to Joey)

Why don't you try watching something you guys haven't seen a hundred times?

JOEY

I would, but they've got those channels blocked.

NEAL

(shaking his head)

Must be something in the air - or I'm getting old.

Entering the kitchen with the donuts, he joins Gramma, Julie and Brigitte.

THE GRUESOME THREESOME'S BEDROOM

Margarita is putting fresh sheets on the waterbed.

SFX: A very low RUMBLING SOUND, like a car starting up. The water in the bed is beginning to move BACK AND FORTH. Margarita steps back studying it. Her eyes widen as the water begins to move more violently. She flies out of the room.

THE MCHALE'S DINING ROOM

The crystal chandelier is RATTLING & the china cabinet is now IN MOTION.

THE MCHALE'S KITCHEN

NEAL

Aah... perfect. I think we're having an earthquake.

JULIE

(shouting to the others)

Find a safe place ...

Everyone in the house makes a BEELINE for the dining room table and dives under it. Brigitte CRASHES heads with Max.

BRIGITTE

Is there no other safe place in this house?

GRAMMA

Apparently, this is the only one anyone remembers.

Everyone is nose to nose with their bottoms PROTRUDING from under the large table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

Where's Margarita?

She has barely asked the question when Joey feels a foot being PLANTED firmly on his behind followed by a large THUD on the TABLE OVERHEAD. Melissa points up.

TOP OF TABLE: Margarita is laying spread eagle and clutching the sides of the SHAKING table as the chandelier continues to SWING precariously above her.

MARGARITA

I'm here! But, why does no one go outside?

MAX

You mean where nothing can fall on us?

MARGARITA

Si, des ees de Mexican way.

As the trembling subsides, a HISSING SOUND is heard from the McHale's WINE RACK in the corner of the dining room.

Suddenly champagne CORKS are FLYING out of their bottles and pelting the posteriors of our heroes. Rising up instinctively to grab the injured portion of their bodies, each RAMS various body parts on the underside of the table. A *flood of champagne* SPRAYS the room and all its inhabitants.

STACY

Only this group would survive an earthquake so they can be brutalized by renegade champagne corks.

EXTERIOR SHOT OF THE HOUSE & BACKYARD

The pool has sloshed water everywhere with patio furniture scattered around.

NEAL (V.O.)

What I would give to be on a beach in the Caribbean. Damn ... do our folks have it easy!

EXT. - AERIAL SHOT OF THE "WE DO" - EARLY MORNING

The music "Hallelujah" BUILDS TO A CLIMAX as the camera closes in for a CLOSEUP of the large hole in the mainsail.

COCKPIT OF THE "WE DO" - EARLY MORNING

The crew of the "We Do" is sitting in a state of shock with coffee cups in hand, looking like they have been through a small war. On the bow of the boat Mike is leaning forward with the binoculars.

JOAN

Well, what do we do in paradise today?

ABBY

At least we're still alive. That's got to count for something.

SHARON

I think we've used most of our "E" coupons.

MIKE

(from the bow)

Land ho!

VALERIE

And to think that just a few hours ago, I was afraid I'd never hear those words.

ABBY

Or any other words, for that matter.

JOAN

I sure wish we could call the kids.

Mike is now looking in another direction.

INSERT CAMERA SHOT through Mike's binoculars.

There's a small canoe with two sails; one is ORANGE, the other is YELLOW. The sole occupant is also paddling.

MIKE (V.O.)

There is a strange looking little boat on the horizon.

REVERSE TO COCKPIT.

NICK

You don't suppose he has an extra mainsail he might loan us.

JASON

We can handle repairing a little thing like our mainsail ... after last night, this crew can hold its own.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON
 (looking up at the hole in the
 mainsail)
 Right.

PAUL
 (heading down to the galley)
 What this crew needs is a good breakfast!

Val PASSES Paul on her way to the head. Paul's now holding a carton of broken eggs and he yells up.

PAUL (cont'd)
 Your choice for this morning is scrambled
 eggs, or scrambled eggs.

INT. HEAD

Val, hair dryer in one hand and scissors in the other, turns to look at the porthole.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE PORTHOLE

A hair dryer is seen FLYING out the porthole.

VALERIE (V.O.)
 Make mine scrambled.

EST. SHOT - CUL DE SAC - AFTERNOON

INT. MCHALE'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Once again, Max, Chip and Quentin are REPLACING the last of the books onto the shelves in the family room. Julie is coming down the steps.

JULIE
 Well, the upstairs is finally put back
 together. I hope Mom isn't too crushed
 that her expensive perfume is now a room
 deodorizer.
 (glances in the family room)
 Hey, looking good guys.

MAX
 It ought to - we've done it enough.

Andrew and Melissa pass behind Julie with stacks of FOLDED laundry.

The Gruesome Threesome head for the door.

CHIP
 We're goin' check out the school.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAX

Hopefully it's been levelled.

The door slams shut. Neal emerges from the laundry room with his stack of freshly folded clothes.

BRIGITTE

You get a treasure too?

NEAL

Cute, Brigitte. Did Joey clean the pool?

BRIGITTE

What do I look like ... his secretary?

NEAL

No Brigitte, secretaries work for a living.

BRIGITTE

(throwing down her dust rag)
I retire my dust cloth; I don't need this kind of abuse. Don't I get any credit for spending half the morning on the phone, arranging for Max's surprise party?

NEAL

Just kidding - chill out will you. After all, he's your brother.

BRIGITTE

Don't remind me.

Gramma walks in from the kitchen carrying a trash bag - apparently full of flour and other kitchen items. Stacy comes from the dining room with a trash bag full of champagne bottles.

JULIE

So ... how do we stand on Max's party?

GRAMMA

Quentin, Chip and Andrew have already picked up the decorations. As far as the guest list goes, we have 15 yes', 2 no's and 3 maybes - so far.

STACY

And one refused to admit even knowing Max.

Gramma picks up the other bag and takes both outside to the garbage. Julie, watches to see that Gramma is out of earshot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

Why don't I call and invite Grandfather?
Did you see how he and Gramma looked at
each other at lunch the other day?

STACY

Yeah... fireworks everywhere. But don't
you think your matchmaking is a little
obvious?

BRIGITTE

Stacy's probably right. Make sure your
Uncle Steve and Aunt Bonnie are there as
a cover - not that Steve hasn't called
enough to check up on us.

JULIE

It should finally put Uncle Steve's mind
to rest to see that the house is actually
still standing.

NEAL

Besides, one of them might have a new
idea of where to search next for that
idiotic agreement.

EST. SHOT - BAY ISLANDS, HONDURAS - NOON

EXT. - ABOARD THE "WE DO" - NOON

The crew of the "We Do" has just finished ANCHORING in the
first harbor the crew has seen in ten days.

Nick and Sharon are holding the dinghy motor on the deck,
using the shower hose from the aft head to flush it out.
Joan's controlling the water flow at the shower.

Paul and Jason have begun to patch the mainsail that is
spread out on the deck.

Mike and Abby are in the cockpit, looking at charts.

Val's MOVING AROUND the cockpit, gathering her snorkel, mask
and fins.

VALERIE

I'm going to dive under and check the
anchor. I need to wash my hair anyway.

ABBY

I can't get over the new image ... Val
with bobbed hair, no nail polish and
swimming with the fishes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICK

(to Joan)

Water on ... O.K., water off. This motor would have been ruined if we'd waited any longer to flush it out.

JASON

(pointing)

Isn't that the same canoe that we saw earlier?

SHARON

Looks like it. How many canoes with orange and yellow sails can there be?

Val makes her way through the MAZE in the cockpit - fins, mask and flippers ALREADY ON & a bottle of shampoo in her hand.

VALERIE

Paul, get up.

PAUL

Why?

VALERIE

I need a life jacket.

Paul stands and reaches into the lazarette for a life jacket.

ABBY

Are we sinking?

SHARON

Val, I don't want to hurt your feelings, but it's tough to dive under water with a life jacket on.

VALERIE

(jumping into the water)

True Tinkerbell. But *after* I come up, washing my hair will be a lot easier sitting on a life jacket.

MIKE

(studying a reference book)

The partially submerged wreck is on the other side of this island.

(points to island)

We'll walk over that hill and then snorkel out to the wreck.

CUT: CAMERA PANS THE MOUNTAIN ON THE ISLAND IN FRONT OF THEM.

JOAN (V.O.)

That looks a lot bigger than a hill. Why don't we just sail around and anchor on the other side of the island?

JASON (V.O.)

It's not wise to sail to the other side in these northers.

NICK (V.O.)

Looks like it's time to put on our hiking boots.

EXT. SOUTH SIDE OF THE BAY ISLANDS, HONDURAS - EARLY AFTERNOON

The dinghy is sitting dangerously low in the water overflowing with all members of the crew as the last wave PROPELS the boat through the air to an abrupt stop on the beach.

They spill out as another wave CRASHES over them. They struggle to haul the dinghy, now full of water, higher onto the beach. They secure it safely to a tree, and gather their snorkel equipment to begin their hike.

A LUSH TERRAIN - TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN - AFTERNOON

Each member comes into view, huffing and puffing.

SHARON

Mike ... uh ... we've lost the ocean.

MIKE

(turns and smiles broadly.)

Do you think they'll admire my honesty if I tell them we're lost?

ABBY

(arrives, gasping for breath.)

When do we get back to sea level?

NICK

(beside Abby)

I keep telling you, babe, jogging's the answer. Come-on, it'll be all downhill from here ... piece of cake.

Abby gives a look to kill as Nick disappears down the other side.

CENTER OF FOREST - DOWNHILL SIDE OF MOUNTAIN.

Joan is SWATTING bugs and ducking the branches that Mike manages to move aside and then RELEASES, striking Joan in her face. Stung by a particularly large branch, Joan has had it.

JOAN

Jason, as Captain, can you perform divorces?

ON PRECIPICE- ALMOST AT THE BOTTOM.

All eight standing on the precipice, looking down. A WRECKED SHIP can be seen below. Between them and the flatland is an easy walk through light shrubs.

In the water, far to the left, they see A CANOE with orange and yellow sails. They start the climb down.

THE FLATLAND - AFTERNOON

The crew of the "We Do" arrives onto the flatland.

MIKE

We're there ... it couldn't be more than a couple hundred yards.

SHARON

Uh oh, barbed wire alert.

ABBY

Why would there be barbed wire here?

MIKE

Who knows? But, we can go under it easily - no problem.

As Sharon, Joan and Paul take the hard way under the fence, Mike, Nick and Jason try to hurdle it. Val and Abby stroll several yards away and walk through the gate.

Feeling foolish, the other six stare at them. They shrug their shoulders and fall into step behind them. Joan is pulling up the rear of the line. She glances behind as a LOW RUMBLING is heard.

JOAN

Bull Alert! Bull Alert!!!

Joan comes running by the line that was ahead of her. They all start running.

ABBY

(running pass Nick)
And you thought I couldn't jog!

EXT. BEACH - NORTH SIDE OF BAY ISLANDS, HONDURAS - EARLY
AFTERNOON

The crew is standing on the beach looking at a HALF-SUBMERGED
WRECK. They're DRESSED in full regalia: masks, snorkels, fins
and diving gloves. Behind them is the barbed wire fence,
which now separates them from a couple of disappointed BULLS.

ABBY

You want me to swim where? How 'bout I
guard the bulls?

SHARON

I wonder what "spirit" makes that ship
its home?

PAUL

Perhaps the same one that "possesses"
that canoe.

ABBY

It's not the spirits I worry about - it's
the barracuda.

JASON

(to Val, Joan, Mike and Nick)
I think you four ought to check out the
exposed part of the ship. The rest of us
could dive around the submerged area.

MIKE

(from in the water)
Come on, it's just a grassy bottom - and
it's shallow all the way.

INVESTIGATING THE SURFACE OF THE WRECK: Val, Joan, Mike, Nick

CHECKING UNDERWATER: Paul, Jason, Sharon, and Abby

Joan's inspecting a plaque on the side of an EXPOSED
bulkhead.

JOAN

Look at this plaque. It's in good
condition compared to the boat.

MIKE

It doesn't seem to belong, does it?

JOAN

But it has the name of the wreck on it,
"SYNG."

The others gather around. Mike easily removes the plaque.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NICK

What's that on the back?

MIKE

(reading)

"Closest to its Mother's heart, there you must seek the wisdom." I think we've found our next clue ... anyone have any idea what it means?

SHARON

"Closest to its Mother's heart" ... it must have something to do with *where* the next clue is.

ABBY

Let's hope it's somewhere in the Bay Islands, since we don't have time to get anywhere else.

JASON

So working on that basis, "Closest to the Mother's heart" could be the Motherland?

VAL

Honduras maybe?

MIKE

That would make sense, since the Bay Islands belong to Honduras ... hmm, closest one to Honduras would be Utila.

JASON

You know, that could take us back to "our clues of yore," since there is a harbor in Utila that has many similarities to English Harbour in Antigua.

NICK

You're right. I think it even sounds similar. East Harbour, isn't it?

SHARON

I think so Nick, and that should only take us about a day from here.

PAUL

Great, we can leave in the morning.

MIKE

Do you realize how close we are to the treasure?

INT. UNCLE STEVE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Uncle Steve is on the phone with Julie.

STEVE

Sounds like you've looked everywhere, Julie. ... Of course, I'll look through the emergency papers your folks left, but I doubt that it's in there. ... Sure, we'll be at Max's party. By the way sweetheart, I just want to tell you how proud we are of you and your cohorts. You've really grown up this summer ...

(starts to laugh)

... Well, we all have a few skeletons in the closet, honey. Love you, and I'll see you soon. Bye now.

EXT. THE "WE DO" UNDER SAIL FROM BAY ISLANDS TO UTILLA - AFTERNOON

NICK

(at the helm)

Paul, we're only about an hour away now; why don't you check the weather report for Utilla?

PAUL

Why bother? If we're going there, it must be raining.

ABBY

(to Val - writing in her journal)

Title this month, "The Edge of Wetness."

NICK

Hmm, I'll second that. Uh oh, the wind's beginning to die.

JOAN

Super, and we're out of fuel.

NICK

(looks up, speaking to the sky)

Oooh ... "show me the magic!"

PAUL

Hey Nick, do you know the food god too - cause we're about out of staples.

JASON

You all don't seem to realize that we're going to a pretty civilized settlement. They have fuel, water and food.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ABBY

And how do you plan to pay for that with our remaining \$5.50 - since plastic is non-existent on most of these islands?

NICK

First we need to figure how to get into the harbor through these reefs without any motor and no wind. Any suggestions?

JASON

Without an east wind, we're not going in there - unless the dinghy tows us.

DISSOLVE TO:

The "We Do" is moving ever so slowly, BACKWARDS, with the dinghy tied to its side. We hear the dinghy MOTOR working to keep the large boat from going onto the reef.

JOAN (V.O.)

Are we going uphill or what?

PAUL (V.O.)

That lighthouse has passed this way before.

CLOSE-UP - COCKPIT Jason's at the helm.

JASON

The current seems to be stronger than the dinghy motor.

NICK

Without an east wind, we're going to be out of gas, out of food, and out of ideas.

(waving towards the sky)

"Show-me-the-magic!!!"

SUDDENLY, to everyone's surprise, an east wind starts to MOVE the "We Do."

MIKE

My God ... we're moving towards the harbor. Thanks Nick.

NICK

Ah ... think nothing of it.

AERIAL SHOT:

The "We Do" anchored at Utilla. A few yards away, *the* canoe comes into the harbor.

EXT. THE MCHALE'S BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

Max is opening the last of his presents surrounded by SWARMS of kids. Uncle Steve, Aunt Bonnie and Grandfather look on with the others.

A long sign wishing Max a HAPPY 11th in BRILLIANT colors hangs across the fence. Streamers and balloons abound. A long table holds food, drinks, and a large four layer cake - with very *strange* colored icing.

MAX

(picking up the new skateboard)
Wow, a Caballero! Rad! I can't believe it!!!

BRIGITTE

Happy birthday from Mom and Dad.

MAX

Thanks everybody. Come on guys, let's go out front and try it out.

Max and his friends head out to the cul de sac.

GRAMMA

I guess his day is made.

UNCLE STEVE

And I must say, you have all managed pretty well in your parents' absence. They will be proud. I sure hope they're as successful.

JULIE

Thanks for the compliment, but without Gramma, we would have been in deep water.

GRAMMA

Oh honey, not deep...a little wet, perhaps.

She winks at Grandfather.

AUNT BONNIE

It's just too bad you haven't been able to come up with that piece of paper to prevent the idiot next door from going ahead with his wall.

BRIGITTE

That's putting it kindly.

NEAL

We've turned this house inside out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIE

Neal and I even went downtown to Dad's office. It's got to be somewhere. Dad never throws anything away.

GRANDFATHER

Hmm, maybe if we could find the record of payment - a cancelled check - for the land by tomorrow ... perhaps - just perhaps mind you - the judge would give you a few more days extension.

GRAMMA

You know Arthur, I believe that's worth a try.

JULIE

I never saw any old checks.

GRANDFATHER

Surely Julie, your parents have their income tax records from previous years.

NEAL

Julie! Remember the boxes labeled income taxes in the back of the attic?

JULIE

We never opened those. Okay ... why not ... I'm up for a miracle.

UNCLE STEVE

(getting up to leave)

Well, looks like your work is cut out for you.

(hugging Julie)

Sorry we can't stay to help, but it certainly looks like you all have this circus under control.

EST. SHOT - EAST HARBOUR, UTILLA - THE "WE DO" ANCHORED.

EXT. UTILLA DOCK - EARLY MORNING

The crew - clamoring out of their dinghy at the dock.

MAIN STREET - UTILLA SETTLEMENT - EARLY MORNING

The main street is lined with square framed wooden houses, a number of small stores, one hotel and four churches.

They pass a small grocery store with the "We Accept Visa" sticker in the window. Val snaps a picture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JASON

I don't believe it!

SHARON

I hope we're not overdrawn.

JASON

Sweetheart, I doubt they have telephones, let alone computers; by the time Visa checks our balance, we'll have it paid.

SHARON

With what?

MIKE

Oh come on - have a little faith! You two get the supplies, while the rest of us canvas the town.

EXT CHURCH

All eight are sitting on the front stoop of a church with the treasure book in front of them. They look exhausted.

ABBY

Well, we've searched this town for hours. If there is any wisdom, it's well hidden.

MIKE

We're so close. What are we missing?

JASON

I don't know, but I think that it's time we head back to the boat and get some dinner. Maybe that'll help us rethink our clues.

NICK

Ah, Miller Time! I'll go for that!

JASON

Definitely. The sun's almost over the yardarm!

COCKPIT OF THE "WE DO" with the crew sitting around as the sun is setting.

PAUL

Could we be in the wrong place?

SHARON

It all sure seems to point here.

Val is looking over the PICTURES IN HER DIGITAL CAMERA she took during the day. Joan is looking over Val's shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VAL

What a neat little town. Everyone seems so content.

NICK

They seem to have all that matters.

VAL

They even have a cable company!

JOAN

To say nothing of the four churches.

CHURCH BELLS begin to RING as they do every evening. Joan takes the camera from Val to look closer.

SHARON

We've been spoken to, right on cue.

JOAN

(holding the camera where all can see)

You're right ... right on cue! Look at this.

INSERT: A CLOSE UP of one of the pictures of a church with the church directory in the front reading:

"Next Service 9:00 a.m. - All Welcome - Reverend Sage".

REVERSE:

JOAN.

Anyone want to take a shot at what "sage" means.

MIKE

Oh my God!

INSERT: A CLOSE UP of the book in Mike's hand. It reads "A Treasure Place" by Dr. Michael Sage.

MIKE (V.O.)

Reverend Sage as in Michael Sage. Dr. Michael Sage ... a doctorate in Theology. And "sage" means wisdom!

REVERSE:

JOAN

Bingo.

PAUL

Guess we know what tomorrow's plans are.

INT. SHARON AND JASON'S ATTIC - DAY

Neal, Brigitte and Julie are surrounded by boxes and papers.

NEAL

This is the fifth box and no luck yet.
I still can't figure out your Dad's
filing system. Here's a score sheet from
one of Quentin's Little League games.

BRIGITTE

Here's wallpaper samples attached to a
check.

JULIE

Here's a dilly... instructions to
assemble Quentin's old swing set. Never
know when the IRS might need that info!

NEAL

Look, a cancelled check for \$100 to the
McKenzies.

JULIE

(anticipating)
What's that attached to it?

NEAL

(unfolding a piece of paper)
I don't believe it.
(reading)
"We, the undersigned, agree to sell...."

JULIE

... That's it - O-M-G we've found it!!!
God Bless Grandfather!

EXT. IN FRONT OF REV. SAGE'S CHURCH - EARLY MORNING

The crew of the "We Do" approaches a man dressed simply,
wearing a large sun hat, and cutting some flowers.

REVEREND SAGE

(turning to them)
Welcome, so glad you came.

MIKE

Are you Reverend Sage?

REVEREND SAGE

(reaching to shake Mike's hand)
That I am... and welcome to our island.

MIKE

Thank you ...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Uncomfortably fumbling for what to say next, Mike hesitates.

MIKE(cont'd)

A ... well ...

REVEREND SAGE

May I help you?

NICK

Quite honestly Reverend, all the clues
have led us to you.

The Reverend looks at each of them.

ABBY

(trying to clear up the matter)
Well ... not to you ... exactly. But to
wisdom - and sage means wisdom - so
that's what we're looking for ... wisdom
I mean.

REVEREND SAGE

Did you lose it?

Silence.

Suppressing a smile, Reverend Sage turns back to continue
cutting his flowers.

REVEREND

SAGE(cont'd)

There's a divine order in the universe
and ... there's nothing more that we need
than what we've been given.

PAUL

(in a half-whisper to Val)
Uh oh, I think he's going metaphysical on
us.

Val, concentrating on the interchange, nudges Paul's arm
quickly to hush him.

REVEREND SAGE

(still not looking at them)
Think about it, with the journey you have
experienced, there's very little left
that I could give you.

JASON

You're right ... I think we already have
what we need.

Jason calmly turns to leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VAL
 (stepping forward)
 No we don't ... what about our treasure?

REVEREND SAGE
 (turning back around)
 Excuse me?

MIKE
 What she means is ... the book says ...

VAL
 What I mean is ... my hair dryer has been
 deep-sixed. My skin and nails will never
 be the same ... we won't even mention my
 hair. Then, there's the small matter of
 the life I almost lost in a storm at sea!
 Forgive me ... I don't mean to be
 irreverent ... but, I'm looking for more
 than a few words of wisdom here ...
 AND I don't even give a damn if it's not
 even money ... I just want to know that
 we found ... s-o-m-e-t-h-i-n-g!!!

Silence

VAL (cont'd)
 (sheepishly)
 I ... I'm sorry I said "damn."
 (said very low)
 It ... it must be the menopause.

REVEREND SAGE
 (a broad smile)
 Ohhhh ... so *that's* what you want! God
 definitely does help those who help
 themselves.

The Reverend pulls an envelope from his pocket and hands it
 to Val.

REVEREND SAGE
 (cont'd)
 I think this is all you need ... you've
 earned it.

They all STARE in stunned silence.

Regaining her composure, Val takes the envelope.

VAL
 Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He smiles again, tips his hat slightly, turns and walks toward a young native boy waiting on the dinghy dock next to the church.

As he reaches the dock, he speaks quietly to the boy.

REVEREND SAGE
(almost gleefully)
This is such fun ... humans are such an
amazing species! They never fail to
inspire me.

He and the boy get in a small CANOE, slowly raising the ORANGE and YELLOW sails as they leave.

Reverend Sage WAVES back at our DUMBFOUNDED friends.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF UTILLA - LATER THE SAME MORNING

The crew of the "We Do" stops and surveys the SMALL ABANDONED AIR STRIP in front of them.

MIKE
(reads the open letter
containing the clue)
"And the resting bird will not awake."

ABBY
Well, it's got to be here. The clue fits
nothing else on the island.

VAL
Unless we were supposed to climb every
tree and checkout the resting birds.

PAUL
This isn't the busiest airport in the
world. But there is a DC-3 over there. It
looks like its been resting a long time.

INTERIOR OF THE DC-3.

The group is inside, looking,

INSERT - CLOSE UP of a plaque on the forward bulkhead before
you enter the cockpit:

*"We can only discover new oceans by having the courage to
lose sight of the shore."*

BACK ON GROUP

Mike reaches for the rather large plaque and pulls it off the bulkhead. This exposes an opening where a long metal box sits. Mike pulls it out and, moving tentatively, opens it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

INSERT - CLOSE UP - OPENED METAL BOX

Stacked Inside: **20 Bearer bonds - each bond valued at \$500,000: 10 million dollars worth.**

MIKE (V.O.)

We did it.

EST. SHOT OF THE AIRPLANE IN HONDURAS TAKING OFF.

INTERIOR AIRPLANE

Our eight heros are preoccupied with their own thoughts.

SHARON

(looking out the window)

Goodbye to one world, hello another.

ABBY

Soft beds ...

VAL

Running showers.

PAUL

Kids ...

JOAN

Toilets you don't have to pump!

NICK

Dry sheets!

JASON

Clean clothes!

MIKE

(to no one in particular)

Well, what are we going to do with the treasure money?

Each is lost in thought.

PAUL

Oh, I don't know ... any ideas Val?

VAL

None that come to the top of my list.

Mike looks at Abby, Jason, Joan, Sharon, and Nick; they all shrug their shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHARON

Funny, I know I had some plans for it,
but I can't seem to think of any right
now ... except for the Visa bill.

A collective chuckle.

EXT. MR. LEWIS' HOUSE - DAY

Mr. Lewis is coming out of his front door with something
under his arm. He walks to the center of his front lawn,
where Melissa STROLLS INTO VIEW with Ralph.

MELISSA

Mr. Lewis, you want a piece of candy?

She holds bag of M & M's for him. He smiles, takes a few and
puts them in his mouth.

MR. LEWIS

Thanks.

She smiles back. Then she and Ralph turn away & out of view.

He takes the item out from under his arm and, with a small
hammer he pounds a "FOR SALE" sign into the lawn.

EXT. MCHALE'S BACKYARD - DAY

Nine kids are in the pool. Gramma and Margarita are with
hoses on the deck, showering everyone.

A STRETCH LIMO turns the corner into the cul de sac and stops
in front of the McHale's driveway. The Limo has been HONKING
CONTINUOUSLY since it rounded the corner.

The crew of the "We Do" PILES OUT in excitement.

THE FRONT DOOR FLIES open. All the kids and Ralph come
rushing out. Gramma stops at the door and smiles.

AERIAL SHOT of everyone mingling in the cul de sac with Ralph
barking.

SFX: CREDIT ROLL MUSIC

IN BLACK - SFX: A BULLDOZER IS BEGINNING A DIG.

OPEN ON CREDIT ROLL:

A bulldozer is starting the first dig for what is to be a
pool, with Mike and Joan looking on.

Joey is driving an old jalopy with great pride, Ralph sits
beside him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sharon is paying Visa bill in full.

Neal is driving up to the administration office of U.S.C.

Gramma and Grandad are buying a king size adjustable temper-pedic bed.

Jason and Sharon are at the car dealership, looking at a new car.

Nick is watching men hoist a new sign to the top of his newly expanded garage: "NICK'S ONE STOP SERVICING."

CLOSE UP of Mike in a chaise lounge next to his new pool, reading.

CREDIT MUSIC FADES DOWN

MIKE

(still reading)

Joan, did you know that there's treasure
buried ... right here in the United
States?

FADE OUT