

ELAINE. I understand.

ALAN. So then I go out to that vacant lot, y'know? Where we used to hide the bottle of Jack Daniels and drink until the stars came out. Remember? And we'd drink and laugh and drink and laugh, and drink some more, until the neighbors called the cops.

ELAINE. The cops.

ALAN. We'd have to jump over the rickety old chain link fence and down between the trash cans so we wouldn't get busted. And worse, so our parents wouldn't find out! Then we'd find some place to catch our breath and we'd laugh and drink some more.

ELAINE. That was an eternity ago.

ALAN. It seems like an eternity ago...

*(He runs a trembling hand across his chin.)*

ALAN. I remember -- after we got good and drunk, we'd just lie back in the tall grass of that vacant lot. Your hair shining in the yellow-white of the streetlight. Just like the dandelions and daisies that grew there.

ELAINE. Wild and alive. Just like we were.

ALAN. But today...this time, the lot looked cold. It hurt my lungs to see it.

ELAINE. So you ran away again.

ALAN. It wasn't the same! The flowers were too wild now. And everything was twisted and...and pale, the colors bleeding into the grass. I hated it. I hated it and I hated you!

ELAINE. *(Softly.)* I understand.

ALAN. I'll always hate you! *(Fighting the tears.)* And I will always... see you. That terrible freeze frame image. *(He turns from her, lost in a trance.)* I can see it again and again... Ice cold strobe lights ripping at shards of metal. That one long screeching crashing crunching and screaming sound. Then silence. Thick black silence. The radio blaring away like some oblivious idiot, but even that can't break the silence. You know what I mean?

ELAINE. *(Lowers her head.)* The silence.