



Source: 'Police raid village in hunt for Saddam deputy',
Breaking News, *The Australian* online, 09/12/07.

Tags: [home](#), [sex](#), [violence](#)
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All scenes to follow are taking place within the space of five hours. At the moment, it's sort of that half-light time. The central focus is a two-storey house in a quiet part of town, in a respectable suburb full of tree-lined streets and nice cars. It all begins with an image as misplaced as a dog barking on an empty lawn.

Outside, someone (let's call him the leather fetishist) is being paid to watch a teenage boy through a window of this two-storey family home. This boy, in a downstairs bedroom, has left the curtains open. The leather fiend is having fantasies of fucking the boy through broken window glass. In this fantasy he would ask the boy in the intensity of a floodlight at a school graduation to remove his hired suit beginning with the neck-tie. The leather fiend and the boy would become secret lovers. A flame of a cigarette lighter would burn a hole in the boy's left cheek. That's the plan.

Meanwhile, from inside his bedroom, the teenage boy can hear a man, probably his brother, in a room upstairs. Footsteps vibrate the wooden floor. Sounds like he's about to fall through the ceiling.

The leather fiend imagines inflicting vicious fingernail scratches to the boy's face. He is drinking warm beer out of a bottle. He waits. He watches. *This boy looks ready for action*, he thinks. Soon he will break the window and surely make his entry.

The following scene is a camera moving through a door left ajar, into a house, it will travel from room to room. There are noises of footsteps, and the scene continues up the staircase. There are lights on everywhere, a bath running perhaps, each detail is briefly surveyed by the lens, seedy atmosphere, a belt slapping a boy's skin, streaks on the carpet. And the teenage boy is seen being dragged down a hallway by one arm. An older guy (the brother) is gripping the boy's wrist. The boy says (in character): *come on bro, I didn't mean that. You know I won't do it again*. This cuts to an image of a house before a fire. This could be taking place right now on the very same street. You never know.

Another guy (an arsonist) hides in the bushes outside. The arsonist can hear the muffled cries of a young guy in struggle. He can see the leather fetishist standing by the window looking in. There is a light on in an upstairs room. The arsonist repeatedly flicks a cheap lighter. It's a habit. Back inside, the older brother hurls his younger brother through a doorway, against a bedroom wall and then speaks slowly in a crazy voice: *you little shit, you deserve this, you'll take what's coming to you*. The boy has carpet burns on his knees. The brother towers above with a belt. The boy is half-laughing, mostly crying.

The arsonist has climbed some outer railings of the house to get closer to the upstairs bedroom window to listen. There is a gap between the curtain and the base of the window. The arsonist can see the back of what appears to be a guy in his early twenties. Kind of tall. There is a kid cowering in a corner. The guy in his early twenties is saying: *that's right, you'd like to give your bro' a little kiss. Wouldn't you? while moving on top of the cowering teenager. That's right. You can put your hand there. That makes me feel good. You'd like to make your bro' feel good*. The kid in the corner is barely visible now. You get the picture. It's a game they play. The arsonist's vision is abstracted, sounds muffled. There are just the repeated sounds of a low masculine whine. The arsonist has his ear to the glass, gets bored, climbs down and thinks of burning down this whole suburb.

The leather fiend, still at the downstairs window, now viewing an empty scene, wants to leave gashes. Wants to tattoo his call-sign (Rusty Nail) on the teenager's foreskin. Time for action.

Inside the upstairs room, the teenage boy's teeth ache. The brother digs the tip of a blade and pulls down. The boy's knuckles are locked and hinged. Clenched in a fist. The leather fiend has broken in and enters this scene and takes over. The brother will just watch. The leather fiend gets stuck in and stamps his boot upon the boy's back. The scene gets blurry. The house gets dark. And later: the boy is pushed against the wall. The boy sings in his head: *oh in this night I have travelled*. The leather guy takes a photo of the boy's frozen smile and says: *I'll eat you like vermin*. Or something to that effect. The boy screams: *I am bleeding from my ears*. The leather fiend is shaving his head in a mirror. And the brother laughs. The pulse in the boy's wrists is visible. Blood beats against thin skin. A memory of paper cuts: of squeezing out the blood between two fingers, of driving a fingernail into wound, of touching freshest nerve, of shooting pains through the entire body. He wants to open the cut wide enough to see bone layers exposed, feel an intense heat in the brain. He wants to enter extreme states.

Out of focus, outside, it's night. A street scene lit by lamp-light. All the street walkers move about in whispers and shadows. Film extras, I guess, wondering how they ended up in this movie in the first place. And where has the time gone? A camera zooms in to a white filmy substance like snow on a roof. The boy crawls out of the front door of the two-storey house, tears in his eyes. He crouches in the grass, looks at his body. And it's just like Christmas. The boy thinking about the way his father once showed affection by shaking his hand.

Adapted for performance by Barbara Campbell from a story by Jason Sweeney.