

### PART III

#### **Fight Scene Beginning**

Bick Benedict, that is, Rock Hudson in the  
Time-clock of the movie, stands up and moves,  
Deliberate, toward encounter. He has come out  
Of the anxious blur of the backdrop, like

Coming out of the unreal into the world of  
What's true, down to earth and distinct; has  
Stepped up to Sarge, the younger of the two,

And would sure appreciate it if he: "Were a  
Little more polite to these people." Sarge,  
Who has something to defend, balks; asks  
(*In a long-shot*) if: "that there papoose down

There, his name Benedict too?" by which he  
Means one-year old Jordy in the background  
Booth hidden in the bosom of mother love of

Juana, who listens, trying not to listen. Rock  
Hudson, his hair already the color of slate,  
Who could not foresee this challenge, arms  
Akimbo (*turning around*), contemplates the stable

And straight line of years gone by, says: "Yeah,  
Come to think of it, it *is*." And so acknowledges,  
In his heart, his grandson, half-Anglo, half-  
Brown. Sarge repents from words, but no  
Part of his real self succumbs: "All right—  
Forget I asked you. Now you just go back  
Over there and sit down and we ain't gonna

Have no trouble. But this bunch here is  
Gonna eat somewhere's else." Never shall I  
Forget, never how quickly his hand threw my

Breathing off—how quickly he plopped the  
Hat heavily askew once more on the old  
Man's head, seized two fistsful of shirt and  
Coat and lifted his slight body like nothing,

A no-thing, who could have been any of us,  
Weightless nobodies bronzed by real-time far  
Off somewhere, not here, but in another

Country, yet here, where Rock Hudson's face  
Deepens; where in one motion, swift as a  
Miracle, he catches Sarge off guard, grabs  
His arm somehow, tumbles him back against

The counter and draws fire from Sarge to  
Begin the fight up and down the wide screen  
Of memory, ablaze in Warner-color light.

## **Fight Scene, Part II**

Mad-eyed Sarge recovers with a vengeance, tears  
Away his white apron, lays bare his words: "You're  
Outta line, mister..." And there are no more words

To say when he crouches forward at the same time  
That one punch crashes him rearward among the table  
And chairs by the jukebox that breaks into the

Drumming of "The Yellow Rose of Texas," who was  
It is said, dark-eyed herself. In the dynasty of  
Towering men—: all height, all live weight has  
Evolved into Sarge, who stays etched in my eye as when

He parts the air with a right cross...and Rock Hudson  
Begins to fall, is falling, falls in the slackening  
Way of a slow weep of a body collapsing, hitting

The floor like falling to the rocky earth, territory  
To justice being what Sarge refuses to give up.  
Rock Hudson, in the name of Bick Benedict, draws  
Himself up, though clearly, the holding muscles of  
His legs are giving out—one moment he is in a

Clinch with Sarge, the next he is rammed back  
Against the red booths. The two of them have  
Mobilized their arms that breed fire, and so it

Goes: a right upper-cut to Sarge and a jab to

Rock Hudson, engaged in a struggle fought in the  
Air and time of long ago and was fought again this  
Morning at dawn when light fell upon darkness and  
Things were made right again. ( I shut, now slowly,

My eyes, and see myself seeing, as in a frame within  
A frame, two fighters set upon each other. To this  
Day I contend that I saw, for a second, the whole

Screen fill up with the arm-fist of Sarge blurring  
Across it.) Now the fighters are one with the loud  
Music bruising the eardrums. To be injured, there  
Must be blood to see, for they have become two minds

Settling a border dispute. Two men have organized  
Their violence to include me, as I am on the side  
Of Rock Hudson, but carry nothing to the fight but

Expectations that, when it is over, I can repeat the  
Name of goodness in Sarge's Place, as the singers sing  
That raging song that seems to keep the fight alive.

### **Fight Scene: Final Frames**

...And now it must end. Sarge with too much muscle,  
Too much brawn against Bick Benedict with his half-idea  
To stay alive in the fight, but his shoulders, all down  
To his arms, can no longer contend to come back, cannot  
Intercept the wallop that up-vaults him over the counter.

As over a line in a house divided at heart. He steadies  
Himself upward, all sense of being there gone, to meet  
Sarge (*upwards shooting angle*), standing with fists  
Cocked to strike and he does, once more and again. You  
Can see and can hear Rock Hudson's daughter give out a

Long-suffering cry, "Daaadddyyy!" and for Sarge to "leave  
Him alooonne!" But in a wrath like this there can be no  
Pity upon the earth, as the blows come harder from Sarge  
Like a fever in him. Then it happens. Sarge's one last,  
Vital, round-arm punch, one just measure of power, turning

The concept of struggle around. The earth, finally is  
Cleaned of goodness when Rock Hudson is driven to the  
Rugged floor and does not rise, his wife, Elizabeth

Taylor (Leslie), kneeling to be with his half-life,  
Illuminated body and heartbeat. Whose heartbeat? Whose

Strength must be summoned to make his graceful body  
Arise! Who shall come forth and be followed? What  
Name do I give thoughts that collapse through each  
Other? When may I learn strongly to act, who am caught  
In this light like a still photography? Can two fighters

Bring out a third? To live, must I learn how to die?  
Sarge stands alone now, with all the atoms of his power  
Still wanting to beat the air, stands in glory like a  
Law that stands for other laws. It remains with me:  
That a victory is not over until you turn it into words;

That a victor of his kind must legitimize his fists  
Always, so he rips from the wall a sign, like a writ  
Revealed tossed down to the strained chest of Rock Hudson  
And what he said unto him, he said like a pulpit preacher  
Who knows only the unfriendly parts of the Bible,

After all, Sarge is not a Christian name. The camera  
Zooms in:

WE RESERVE  
THE RIGHT  
TO REFUSE SERVICE  
TO ANYONE

In the dream-work of the scene, as it is in memory, or  
In a pattern with a beginning and an end only to begin  
Again, timing is everything. Dissolve and the music ends.