

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.