

The Sunken Living Room - Chip

by David Caudle

ONE-ONE-10

START

WADE

You better leave me alone, or I'm gonna tell mom you're lying about Tammy.

CHIP

What the hell are you talkin about?

WADE

I know she went to Massachusetts.

CHIP

Yeah, she fuckin went to Massachusetts, and now she's fuckin back, you fuckin pudwacker.

WADE

She is not! You're the fucking pudwacker!

CHIP

See, that's what separates the cool dudes from the pudwackers. You gotta say fuckin, not fucking. You don't pronounce the 'g.' That takes all the balls out of it. 'slike sayin gosh-darn.

(mockingly effeminate)

Oh, you gosh-darn pudwacker man, you just make me oh so very very mad!

WADE

I don't talk like that.

CHIP

The hell you don't.

(Wade plugs the head phones in and starts the folk album again. He puts on the headphones with defiance.)

CHIP (Continued)

Whatever, man. I don't care what you do when I'm not around. Just don't break your arm jerkin off.

(Chip heads for the door, but stops. He watches Wade for a few moments, goes back and reaches for the album sleeve. Wade tries to stop him, but Chip takes it calmly and reads some of the lyrics.)

CHIP (Continued)

(loudly, so Wade can hear through the headphones)
It's pretty cool, I guess. The chick knows how to rhyme.

WADE

This was Allison's record. Not that you care.

CHIP

What do you mean? She's my sister too. Look, you're not really mad at me are you? C'mon. Take those things off. You know I was just kiddin ya. Just tryin to get you toughened up for the big bad world.

WADE

So far, you're the worst part of it, so what's the point?

CHIP

Look, I ain't on the debate squad. I can't talk things around in circles like you can. I've just got common sense, which is what you need in life. What you don't have.

(Wade starts to take off the headphones, but won't give Chip that satisfaction.)

WADE

Dad said that *one time*. That you can be book smart without having common sense. I was there. I heard him. He didn't mean everyone who's book smart has no common sense, and everyone who's not book smart *does* have common sense. I have common sense, Chip. And book smarts. You don't have either one.

CHIP

Alright, then. You're so smart, you tell me what to do. I got a big problem, man. Come on.

(Wade slowly takes off the headphones.)

CHIP (Continued)

It's Tammy. I knocked her up.

WADE

She's pregnant?

CHIP

No, she's fuckin European, what do you think? Yes, she's fuckin pregnant.

WADE

Wow.

CHIP

So? What should I do?

WADE

Are you gonna marry her?

CHIP

How can I marry her? What kinda common sense is that? I'm seventeen years old, man. So is she.

WADE

Are you sure she's not staying in Massachusetts?

CHIP

She ain't stayin in no Massachussetts. I don't know where you get this shit. She's here in Miami right now, knocked up. Jesus! What should we do?

WADE

Well, I guess she could put the baby up for adoption.

CHIP

Adoption? She can't have this baby, man.

WADE

An abortion?

CHIP

So, you're sayin she should get an abortion?

WADE

Well, is that what you meant?

CHIP

I don't know, I'm askin you.

WADE

Maybe you better tell mom.

CHIP

She'll tell dad. You want me to get killed?

WADE

Dad wouldn't--

CHIP

Look what happened to Allison, man. We can't even fuckin say her name anymore. You wish it was me instead of her, don't you?

WADE

It would never be you.

CHIP

You'll see. If dad finds out about this, you'll be the only one left standin. 'Sprobly what you want anyway.

WADE

When school lets out this summer, I'm gonna go find her. I'm gonna pay my own way. I don't care what dad says.

CHIP

How much money you got now?

WADE

I don't know, exactly.

CHIP

'Cuz I think you're right. I think an abortion is the only way. Thanks, man.

WADE

I didn't say--

CHIP

But if I ask mom and dad for the money, they'll figure it out. You gotta help me, man.

WADE

Chip, I can't give you any money.

CHIP

You got to. I need it, little bro. You gotta help me.

WADE

Get your own job.

CHIP

I can't work at fuckin Burger King, man. Wearin those dorky polyester uniforms and those pussy paper hats.

WADE

Good. I don't want you working with me anyway. But you could work at a gas station or something. Would that be cool enough for you? Paula Doogan's dad owns a gas station, and she's, like, a cool girl. A lot of people think she's pretty and, like, stacked, and stuff.

CHIP

I got to third base with her once. Maybe I could talk to her. Get her to ask her dad.

WADE

Sounds good.

CHIP

Yeah, but I gotta have the money now. Now that you've brought up the abortion thing, you know, that kind of thing is supposed to happen early, or it could be dangerous for Tammy. By the time I start workin and get paid, it might be too late. Why don't you just front me the money now, and I'll pay you back with my first paycheck. Yeah, that's what we better do.

WADE

You don't even have this job yet. How do I know you're gonna even get one?

CHIP

Alright, man. You don't want to help out your only brother, that's cool. What about Tammy? She's gonna be in huge trouble. It could ruin her life.

WADE

I didn't say I wouldn't help. I just... don't know... Besides, my money's all in the bank, and the banks are closed. So for tonight, you just have to forget it.

CHIP

They can put a man on the moon, but they can't keep a bank open at night? You don't have any cash on you?

WADE

No. Tammy couldn't get ... an abortion tonight anyway.

CHIP

Yeah, but we'd be ready in the morning. Come on, man. I know you must have a stash here somewhere. Are you gonna help me out, or are you gonna be a pudwacker?

WADE

You just want drug money, is what you want. Tammy's in Massachusetts.

CHIP

That's great. That's just great. I love you, too.

(Chip storms out, slamming the front door behind him. Lights fade.)

