

SQUARE

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FADE IN

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

A police car vintage early 1950's cruises slowly down the small-town street. On the side of the car is the image of a nineteenth-century brick bandstand with the words "STANTON GROVE POLICE".

INT. A BEDROOM - NIGHT

Two boys sleep in twin beds, DANNY HOLTER age 10 and TIM HOLTER age 13. Tim's eyes open as headlights move across the ceiling.

TIM (V.O.)

Sometimes in the night I hear a car go
by real slow. I think: There goes Officer
Burkholtz. He's keeping the town safe,
and I can go back to sleep.

EXT. THE TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

SUPER: "JANUARY, 1953"

In the center is the brick bandstand surrounded by a small park. A two-lane east-west highway divides to flow around the park. A second street intersects north and south. Bordering the square are commercial buildings with angled parking in front. There are only two cars, both parked in front of the tavern.

The patrol car enters and parks near the tavern.

OFFICER CHUCK BURKHOLTZ, a man in his mid-thirties, gets out of the car. He's carrying a thermos bottle.

JOHN, CAROL and ANOTHER COUPLE emerge from the tavern. They are approximately the same age as Chuck. They are laughing and stumbling slightly.

CAROL

It's Officer Burkholtz. Happy New
Year, Officer.

CHUCK

Happy New Year, folks.

CAROL

(tipsy)

Why don't you stop by the house,
Chuck? We'll treat you to a hot toddy.

Standing behind her, John grins but shakes his head
no.

CHUCK

I'm on duty, Carol.

(to John)

You safe to drive, John?

JOHN

I'm fine, Chuck.

CAROL

(flirtatiously)

A real hot toddy, Chuck. It'd do
yah good.

John takes Carol's arm. He leads her to one of the cars and
helps her in while the other couple gets into the back.

Chuck watches them drive away and then enters the tavern.

INT. THE TAVERN - NIGHT

TOM HANRETTY, the same age as Chuck, stands behind the bar.
SAL, a woman in her fifties, sits on a bar stool.

SAL

Fifty-seven dinners. Steaks mostly
for the gents, catfish for the gals.

Chuck takes a stool and sets the thermos on the bar.

Tom brings him a cup of coffee. He takes the thermos
and begins to fill it with more coffee.

SAL

Tubs of potato salad. Gallons of booze.

TOM

(returning the thermos)

And one hell of a mess.

The tables and dance floor are littered with the remains of a party.

SAL

Champagne for the gals, whiskey for the gents. Last year it was rum, I remember. This year whiskey.

Chuck glances around and grins at Tom.

CHUCK

And one hell of a mess.

SAL

Well, nobody killed nobody. And don't you worry about the mess, Tom. It'll still be here in the morning.

TOM

It'll be here all right.

CHUCK

Want to go shoot some pheasant in the afternoon? I get off at six. I could be up by noon, dressed and ready by one.

TOM

(evasive)

Can't say.... I'll call.

CHUCK

Yeah, or come over. Roust me up and I'll scramble you some of my famous eggs.

TOM

I'll see.

CHUCK

Well, time to get back out there. Need a ride home, Sal?

SAL

I'll hoof it, Chuck. It's just a couple of blocks. Do me good.

CHUCK
You safe to drive, Tom?

TOM
Yeah.

CHUCK
I can drop you off. We'll pick up the
car tomorrow.

TOM
No. I'm okay.

CHUCK
Well, Happy New Year.

SAL
Yeah, Happy New Year, Chuck.

EXT. THE SQUARE - NIGHT

The patrol car leaves the square driving west.

Sal and Tom emerge from the tavern. Sal locks the door. Tom
watches as she walks away.

Tom gets in his car. He circles the square and drives
eastward on the highway.

Seen from the square, the car stops at the far edge of
town. It turns around and starts back. It is coming toward
the square faster and faster.

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

The patrol car drives slowly down the dark, empty street.

INT. THE PATROL CAR - NIGHT

The dashboard clock shows two o'clock.

INT. TOM'S CAR - NIGHT

Tom's determined face in profile. His hands grip the wheel
of the ever-accelerating car.

EXT. ANOTHER RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

A car moving down the street stops, then starts to back up.

A second car comes around the corner and rear-ends the first.

Breaking glass strikes the pavement.

Two MALE DRIVERS jump out of the cars and meet at the point of impact.

They wave their arms and point at the damaged vehicles as the patrol car rounds the corner and stops behind them.

EXT. THE SQUARE - NIGHT

Tom's car approaches the square at incredible speed.

EXT. THE FENDER-BENDER SCENE - NIGHT

Chuck throws his spotlight on the two men.
He gets out of the patrol car and approaches them.

EXT. THE SQUARE - NIGHT

Tom's car smashes through the low cement wall surrounding the park. It flies through the air and crashes into the bandstand.

EXT. THE FENDER-BENDER SCENE - NIGHT

The men stop arguing and look at Chuck.

CHUCK

Gentlemen.

FIRST WOMAN sticks her head out of the rear car.

FIRST WOMAN

Can we just go?

FIRST MAN

Officer.

FIRST WOMAN

And deal with this in the morning?

SECOND MAN

He rear-ended me, Officer.

FIRST MAN

You stopped in the middle ...

SECOND MAN

...and smashed my taillight.

FIRST MAN

...and was backing up. In the middle...

FIRST WOMAN

I want to go home.

SECOND MAN

I can back up. There's no law
against backing up.

SECOND WOMAN sticks her head out of the front car.

SECOND WOMAN

I'm freezing.

FIRST MAN

Not when I'm coming at you.

CHUCK

Okay, folks. I don't see where either
of you earned a ticket here. The
vehicles look drivable. Let's write it
up and you can be on your way.

EXT. THE SQUARE - NIGHT

Tom's crumpled car is lodged against the bandstand. A
spinning rear wheel is the only thing moving in the empty
square.

EXT. A ROAD NEAR THE EDGE OF TOWN - NIGHT

The patrol car slowly approaches a small bridge and stops.

INT. THE PATROL CAR

Chuck opens the thermos and pours some coffee into the lid.
The dashboard clock shows two-forty.

EXT. AT THE BRIDGE

A red fox appears at the edge of the road.

INT. THE PATROL CAR

Chuck watches the fox as he sips his coffee.

The police phone comes to life. The fox trots across the road and into the trees.

CHUCK

Yeah, Ralph.

RALPH (V.O.)

You ain't gonna believe this. I just got a call saying some car's crashed into the bandstand.

CHUCK

What?

Chuck opens the window and pours out the coffee remaining in the lid.

He jams the transmission into gear and begins to turn around as the conversation continues.

RALPH (V.O.)

A trucker called it in. Said there's a car sitting in the middle of the park big as life. Looked to him like it was smashed against the bandstand.

CHUCK

Anybody in it?

RALPH (V.O.)

Trucker didn't take a look or even stop. Said if went over there and the cops showed up he'd get blamed for the whole thing.

CHUCK

What'd he mean by that, you figure?

RALPH (V.O.)

That he was a colored fellow. I heard it in his voice.

CHUCK

Oh, a colored.... Well, I wouldn't a...

RALPH (V.O.)

You'd think he'd a had the decency to stop and take a look, if you ask me.

CHUCK

I got along with 'em fine in the service. The few I met.

RALPH (V.O.)

Anyway, it could be a prank. Just like those clowns over in Lawton to pull something like that.

CHUCK

I'm on my way.

EXT. AT THE BRIDGE

As the patrol car races away from the bridge the emergency lights come on.

RALPH (V.O.)

A bunch of them pick up an old car and set it down in the park. New Year's Eve. I wouldn't put it past 'em. Years ago there was a gang a rowdies used to sneak in and paint the cannon balls. Paint 'em red, green, yellow. Bunch a damn drunks. They got 'em over there, believe you me.

EXT. THE WEST SIDE OF THE SQUARE - NIGHT

Lights flashing, the patrol car speeds into the empty square from the west. The view of the park from that side looks normal.

Chuck circles around to the east side.

EXT. THE EAST SIDE OF THE SQUARE- NIGHT

Just north of the eastern entrance to the park, the outer wall has a hole smashed through it.

The patrol car stops in front of the opening. Chuck directs his spotlight at the rubble and then toward the bandstand.

The light shows the rear end of Tom's car.

Chuck exits the car, a flashlight in hand. For a moment he appears frozen as he stands in the rubble of the smashed wall.

Then he runs toward the car.

EXT. AT THE BANDSTAND - NIGHT

Chuck approaches the wrecked car.

The flashlight shows that the front end has been destroyed, the windshield blown out. The interior is a disaster with the engine pushed up against the front seat.

The waving beam shows that no one is inside the vehicle.

Chuck passes the light around the surrounding area.

He makes his way past the wreck and up the damaged steps to the floor of the bandstand.

The flashlight reveals Tom's body sprawled on the cement floor.

Chuck kneels beside it. He places his hand on Tom's head. Then he removes his heavy coat and places it over the body.

He seems to almost collapse as he kneels over the body, his chin falling to his chest.

EXT. A RAILROAD TRACK BESIDE A STREAM - DAY

A summer afternoon.

Two small 13-year-old boys, the naïve and cautious TIM HOLTER and his friend the erratic GENE SOMNER, approach along the track. They wear their "uniforms" of blue jeans and white t-shirts and carry rolled up towels.

Gene is performing tricks with his yo-yo.

TIM (V.O.)

You know how summer sorta wears out in the middle a August? All those big plans you made last spring been forgotten. School's going to start day after Labor Day no matter what. It's like you been found guilty of some crime and now you gotta turn yourself over to the warden.

The boys scramble down the bank and cross the creek on a line of rocks.

TIM (V.O.)

So one Tuesday me and Gene Somner decided to go swimmin'. Our trouble didn't start with the swimmin'. It's what happened after. When we got back to the bikes.

EXT. A GRASSY FLAT ABOVE THE CREEK - DAY

The boys scramble up the bank and onto the flat where four or five bikes lay in the grass.

Set on its kickstand is a beautiful new red Schwinn all decked out with chrome fenders, mud flaps, mirror, streamers, whitewalls, etc.

The boys look at it with admiration.

TIM

The one they was talkin' about.

GENE

That kid won?

TIM

Yeah, Stone's little brother. At that store over'n Lawton. They drew his name or somethin'.

Tim walks to his bike and picks it up out of the grass.

Gene sits on the Schwinn.

He honks the horn. He makes revving motorcycle-like sounds.

TIM
Let's go, I'm starvin'.

Gene starts to peddle the bike around on the flat.

GENE
Weighs a ton.

TIM
Come on, Somner. Let's go.

Gene honks the horn and makes more revving sounds.

He gets more reckless, wobbling around among the other bikes.

TIM
(starting to leave)
I'm goin'.

Gene goes over the edge. He and the bike crash into the creek.

Gene yells.

TIM
Oh, gosh.

Tim throws his bike and towel down and runs to the edge.

TIM
You?

Gene picks himself up and gives the bike a kick.

GENE
Stupid tank.

Tim climbs down to the creek.

TIM
You all right?

GENE

It's like drivin' a stupid tank.

He kicks the bike again.

GENE

Piece a shit!

Gene has scratches on his arms. He pulls up one leg of his jeans and examines a cut.

Tim lifts the bike out the water. The horn casing has a large dent; the fenders are bent out of shape, the handle bars askew. It has mud all over it.

TIM

You crazy? That bike belongs to Stone's little brother.

Tim tries to straighten the bike up. He splashes creek water on it to wash off the mud.

Gene grabs hold of the bike.

GENE

Let's git it out a here.

They struggle with the bike and finally get it back up on the flat.

Gene sets the bike up where they found it. He tries to straighten the fenders.

GENE

Stupid tank.
(looking around)
Who's gonna know, huh?

Tim goes back to his bike and sits on it.
He starts to laugh.

TIM

You shoulda seen yourself.

He flails his arms around. He mimics the yell Gene gave as he went off the edge.

Gene gets his towel and his bike.

GENE
Let's git outa here.

Tim looks around and starts laughing again. He flails his arms and does Gene's yell.

The boys are both laughing.
They get on their bikes and begin to ride away.

EXT. A CEMETERY - DAY

The boys with their towels ride down a gravel road past rows of tombstones.

INSERT: A DARK HEADSTONE with the words: "Thomas James Hanretty October 5, 1920-January 1, 1953 Veteran: U.S. Marines 1943-1945".

Tim sees the headstone and stops.

TIM
Hey Gene. Look, that's the guy.

GENE
(stopping)
What guy?

TIM
Last winter. The guy crashed into the bandstand.

GENE
The guy goin' 120 or somethin'?

TIM
Yeah.

GENE
Vrooom! Crash!

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

The patrol car pulls up to a house and stops.

INSERT: The dashboard clock shows four o'clock.

Chuck exits the car and approaches the darkened house. He knocks on the door.

After some delay a light comes on and the door opens. MARY, a woman about Chuck's age, stands in the doorway wrapped in a housecoat.

MARY
Chuck? Are you okay?

CHUCK
I'm sorry, Mary. Can I come in?

MARY
(as she lets him in)
Where's your coat? It's bitter out there.

INT. THE HOLTER FAMILY KITCHEN - DAY

Tim and Gene sit at the table. They devour ham sandwiches and gulp Kool-Aid from tall glasses.

GENE
Nothin' makes me hungry like swimmin'.

TIM
That kid's probably back to the bike by now.

GENE
He probably won't even notice. Besides, who knows?

TIM
Yeah.

GENE
Nobody.

INT. MARY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Chuck sits at the table with a cup of coffee. Mary heats a can of soup at the stove.

MARY

Could it have been an accident?

CHUCK

There were no skid marks. And
apparently no witnesses.

Mary pours the soup into a bowl and places it in front of
him.

MARY

Maybe he fell asleep.

CHUCK

Going a hundred plus? And there was no
reason for him to come back to town.

MARY

I just can't believe it. Tom Hanretty?
The boy who tried to kiss me in first
grade?

CHUCK

It's the war. It never ended for him.

Chuck looks at the soup and then slowly pushes it away.

CHUCK

I couldn't keep him safe, Mary.

MARY

No.

CHUCK

When it starts to get light, I have
to call his parents.

MARY

Yes.

CHUCK

I thought I'd wait till it got light.

TIM'S DREAM: EXT. THE FLAT BESIDE THE CREEK - DAY

ED STONEBARGER, a ten-year-old boy, walks around his bike
pointing at the damage. CHRIS STONEBARGER (STONE), an
eighteen-year-old "tough guy" squats unseen behind the

bike. He stands up suddenly and stares angrily at the camera.

END OF DREAM

INT. TIM'S AND DANNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tim and Danny sleeping in twin beds. Tim wakes from the dream and looks terrified.

INT. THE HOLTER LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tim rocks slowly in a rocking chair. His parents FRANK HOLTER and EDITH HOLTER talk in the adjoining kitchen.

FRANK (V.O.)

Egg salad?

EDITH (V.O.)

The boys got into the ham.

FRANK (V.O.)

Ernie says the new model's gonna be a beauty.

EDITH (V.O.)

What about the house fund?

FRANK (V.O.)

Ours is the oldest in the pool, now that Ken's got his.

EDITH (V.O.)

Ken's got family money. We'll be renting forever if we don't start putting money away.

FRANK (V.O.)

It's beginning to nickel and dime us, Edith. You know that. Besides, I want a new one. I'm forty-five and I've never had a new one.

EDITH (V.O.)

Mother used to say there's a difference between needin' and wantin'.

FRANK (V.O.)
I'd like whitewalls. Course, that's
extra.

EDITH (V.O.)
We need to have at least five thousand
put away.

FRANK (V.O.)
Skirts too. I like the look of skirts.

EDITH (V.O.)
Now you tell me.

They both laugh.
A car horn honks.

Frank, wearing work clothes and carrying a lunch box,
enters. He passes behind Tim and slaps the back of the
rocker.

FRANK
See yah, Timmy.

TIM
(continuing to rock)
Yeah, Dad. See yah.

The sound of the front door opening and closing.
From outside, a car door slams and the car drives away.

EDITH (V.O.)
Tim?

TIM
Yeah?

EDITH (V.O.)
Come here when I call.

Tim gets out of the rocker.

INT. THE HOLTER KITCHEN - DAY

Tim enters and Edith hands him a dollar bill.

EDITH

Take this down to Fritz. See if
my shoe is ready.

TIM

Now?

EDITH

Yes, now. I need it for work. And
change your shirt.

EXT. A COBBLER'S SHOP - DAY

Tim arrives at the shop. He leans his bike against the wall
and enters.

INT. THE COBBLER'S SHOP - DAY

FRITZ, a gnarly older man, sits on a stool at a work bench,
his mouth full of tacks with the heads sticking out. He's
pounding one into the heel of a shoe.

Tim enters. He places the dollar on the tall counter.

FRITZ

(talking through
the tacks)

Heh, heh, heh, Hanretty's plaque.
Heh, heh, heh.

TIM

Is my mom's shoe ready?

FRITZ

Heh, heh, heh. Hanretty's plaque.
Tell your dad now, heh, heh, heh.

Fritz finds the shoe and puts it on the counter.

FLASHBACK: INT. THE HOLTER KITCHEN - DAY

Frank, Edith, Tim and Danny are having dinner.

DANNY

They fixed that wall on the square,
Dad. Did you see that?

TIM

The bandstand too. All new bricks they
put in.

EXT. THE SQUARE - DAY

Repairmen restore the wall that Hanretty crashed through.

Other men replace the damaged bricks in the bandstand with
bright new red ones.

A BRASS PLAQUE beside the new bricks shows an image of
Isaiah Stanton, the town's founder.

INT. THE HOLTER KITCHEN - DAY

FRANK

(laughing)

That's Hanretty's plaque, them new
bricks.

The boys laugh.

EDITH

Frank! How can you say that? That
poor man. And a veteran too.

Chagrined, Frank looks down at his food.
The boys glance surreptitiously at each other grinning.

BACK TO SCENE

FRITZ

Heh, heh, heh. Your dad said
'That's Hanretty's plaque.' Heh, heh, heh.

The sound of a motorcycle approaching. It stops and Stone
enters.

STONE

Fritz, man, got my jacket patched?

Tim edges toward the door with his mother's shoe but hesitates, enthralled by the older kid.

Fritz hands Stone a leather jacket.

FRITZ

Here yah go.

Stone examines a patch on the arm of the jacket.

THE BACK OF STONE'S RIGHT HAND: Each finger has a tattooed 'X' between its knuckles.

STONE

Looks great. What do I owe...wait...
Hey you, kid.

TIM

(half out the door)

What?

STONE

You know my kid brother?

TIM

Me?

STONE

Yeah, you. You think I'm talking to
Fritz?

TIM

What?

STONE

You know Ed, my kid brother?

TIM

Ah. Not really.

STONE

You see his new bike? Brand new Schwinn
Phantom. Chrome fenders, everything.
Some creep trashed it yesterday.

TIM

No, I...

STONE

You find out who did it, you come to me,
okay?

TIM

Ah...

STONE

I'll make it worth your while.

TIM

Okay.

STONE

So, Fritz, what do I owe you?

INT. THE TAVERN - NIGHT

Chuck and Mary eat at a table. Sal approaches and pulls up
a chair.

SAL

That was a lovely service.

MARY

Yes, and the flowers. I've
never seen so many flowers.

SAL

And the color guard. That whole
thing with the flag.

MARY

That was so moving.

SAL

Chuck, would you like a little
somethin'? How about a Drambuie?

MARY

Yes, Chuck. That might be fun.

CHUCK

I'm on duty tonight, remember?

MARY
(looking at Sal)
Yes, of course.

SAL
Of course,

CHUCK
Sometimes I wonder why I go out there
anymore.

Sal and Mary look at each other concerned.

EXT. THE REAR OF TIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Tim brings his bike to the rear door. Edith appears,
dressed for her job as a bank teller.

She opens the screen door and hands him a pail of soup.

EDITH
You should walk this over.

TIM
I can ride it, Mom. I'll be okay.

He slides the handle of the pail over the handlebar.

EDITH
Is that the same shirt you had on
yesterday?

Tim begins to ride away.

EDITH
Be careful. And change that shirt.

TIM
Yeah, Mom.

Tim rides away from the house with the pail of soup hanging
precariously from the handlebar.

EXT. AN INTERSECTION - MOMENTS LATER

Tim arrives at the highway from a residential street. He stops and looks both ways. The park and bandstand are visible a couple of blocks to the left.

FLASHBACK: EXT. THE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Hanretty's car roars past from right to left.

INT. HANRETTY'S CAR - NIGHT

Hanretty's profile. His hands gripping the wheel.

END OF FLASHBACK

TIM (V.O.)

They say Officer Burkholtz was all alone when he found him. They say he took off his coat and covered Hanretty with it. When I heard that, Officer Burkholtz became a kind of hero in my mind.

EXT. A SMALL HOUSE ON A RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Tim arrives at the house. He carefully removes the pail, takes it up on the porch and knocks. AUNT IDA, a very old woman, opens the door holding a crystal bowl.

The bowl is full of stale, sticky Christmas candy.

AUNT IDA

Have some candy, Timmy.

She takes the pail of soup and shoves the bowl of candy into his chest.

Tim pries out a piece of candy. He stuffs the candy into his mouth and wipes his hand on his jeans.

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

An area of large Civil-War-era houses. Tim rides down the street.

MISS CRANSTON, a young pretty teacher, comes out of a house and steps onto the sidewalk.

MISS CRANSTON

Well, hi, Tim. Having a good summer?

TIM

(riding past)

Yes, Miss Cranston.

FLASHBACK: EXT. THE SAME STREET AND HOUSE - NIGHT

Tim, Gene and GARY ELLIS, a classmate, are walking down the middle of the snowy street.

Gary is larger and more sophisticated than the two other boys. He has a slight English accent.

GARY

She's really beautiful.

TIM

Yeah, she is.

GENE

She's all right.

GARY

All right? Miss Cranston?

TIM

No, Gene. She's more than all right.
I'd take music classes all
day if I could.

GENE

You would.

TIM

Darn right I would. To sit and look
at her, I'd do it.

GARY

And guess what? She lives in that house.

GENE

(stopping)

Really? Miss Cranston?

GARY

Yes. My mother knows her. They play duets sometimes. She's a boarder in that house.

GENE

I'm gonna take a look.

GARY

Not me.

Gary begins walking quickly up the street while Gene starts up the alley beside the house.

Tim hesitates and then follows Gene.

TIM

What's duets?

GENE

Some kind a card game.

EXT. THE BACK OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

One window has light coming out. The window is steamy but the shade is not completely down. Gene and Tim sneak up. They stand on their tiptoes, gloves on the window sill.

Through the window: a glimpse of Miss Cranston stepping from a bathtub.

Gene makes a loud squealing sound. The boys run.

AN OLDER WOMAN (O.S.)

Hey you!

EXT. THE ALLEY - NIGHT

Tim runs alone up the dark alley.

TIM

Please, God, please. I'll never go back to that window. Never, ever. Please don't let me be caught. Please, God, please. Never, ever again.

EXT. A DESERTED STREET- NIGHT

Tim stands alone catching his breath. He starts to trudge toward home.

INT. TIM'S AND DANNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

As Danny sleeps, Tim lies on his back, eyes open.

TIM (V.O.)

I'm sorry I blamed him, Father. He just got excited, that's all. I hope he's safe at home like me. Amen.

END OF FLASHBACK

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

The patrol car pulls up to a darkened house. The spotlight switches on and points to the front door. The light shows the address to be 262.

INT. THE PATROL CAR - NIGHT

Chuck picks up the phone.

CHUCK

262 is dark, Ralph. Is that the address you gave me?

RALPH

That's what the caller said. A break-in at 262 Thrailkill. You know Emil Vogel?

CHUCK

Can't say I do.

RALPH

Be careful.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Tim rides down the street. The houses here are newer. Lots of kids are playing in the yards.

INT. A LIVING ROOM - DAY

SANDY, a cute classmate of Tim's, looks out the picture window. She watches Tim ride past.

EXT. A HOUSE ON A NEIGHBORING STREET - DAY

Tim rounds the corner, arrives at the house and stops. He walks toward the rear between the house and a car.

The car is a 1948 Morris Minor "Saloon" with the steering wheel on the right side.

EXT. THE BACK YARD - DAY

There is a tent, and a telescope set on a tripod. As Gary watches, Gene rolls up his sleeping gear.

Tim appears from the side of the house.

GARY

We set up my telescope last night.
We studied the moon.

TIM

Neat. See any cheese?

GARY

Very funny. It's just a big rock.

TIM

You sure?

GENE

It's got holes. Well, craters.

TIM

Maybe it's Swiss cheese.

GARY

That's stupid. It's a rock.

INT. THE KITCHEN OF GARY'S HOME - DAY

MRS. ELLIS, a sour woman with a heavy English accent, sits at the table looking at recipes.

The boys enter hesitantly.

MRS. ELLIS
Wipe your feet, boys.

The boys wipe their feet. They cross the kitchen on tiptoes and pass through a door.

INT. THE DINING ROOM - DAY

In the center of the table is a large model aircraft carrier. A sign says: "*USS Intrepid*". The boys study it.

GARY
Everything is done to scale.

TIM
You built that by yourself?

GENE
It's humongous.

GARY
Of course. Well, my dad helped with the platform.

TIM
How many pieces?

GARY
Hundreds. She was launched in April, 1943. She fought first in the campaign that cleaned the Japs out of the Marshall Islands.

GENE
Was it hit?

GARY
Not 'it,' 'she.' A ship is a 'she.'

TIM
Well, was 'she' hit?

GARY

Four times all together. First a torpedo. Then three Kamikazes. Nothing could sink her.

GENE

Kamikazes. Vroom.

Gene runs around the room with his arms spread and mimics the sound of an explosion.

TIM

How long did it take you?

GARY

Well, I got the kit for Christmas.

TIM

(astonished)

You been workin' on this boat since Christmas?

GARY

This is not a boat. This is a ship. You can put a boat into a ship but you can't put a ship into a boat. That's the difference.

EXT. THE VOGEL FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Chuck approaches the front door, flashlight in hand. He knocks on the door.

The door opens and the flashlight shines on MARTHA VOGEL, an older woman in a housecoat.

CHUCK

Good evening, ma'am. We've received a call about a break in.

EMIL VOGEL (V.O.)

Let the man in, Martha.

Martha steps aside.

INT. THE VOGEL HOME - NIGHT

Chuck steps in and signs the light around.

EMIL VOGEL, an old man in pajamas, crouches behind a table that has been turned on its side.

He holds a shotgun that is pointed at a closed interior door. A stuffed chair has been pushed in front of the interior door.

CHUCK

Are you folks out of power?

EMIL

I cut the main switch. I know this place like the back of my hand. But the man in the basement is stumbling around like a fool.

CHUCK

The burglar?

EMIL

If he's fool enough to come through that door, he'll be a dead fool.

The sound of banging and crashing comes from downstairs.

Chuck, Emil and Martha look at one another.

CHUCK

Are you sure it's a burglar?

EMIL

You bet I'm sure. He woke us out of a sound sleep. Martha left the back door unlocked and he got in.

MARTHA

That's a lie, Emil Vogel, and you know it. You closed in the chickens last night and forgot to lock the door. You kept the chickens safe but not us.

EMIL

I did no such thing. Any man who spent a year in the trenches of France would not make a mistake like that.

MARTHA

You never got near the trenches, Emil Vogel, and you know it. You spent the war mucking out stables and polishing the boots of men better than you.

EMIL

Shut your mouth, woman. He's after my tools, Officer. I buy good quality tools.

MARTHA

And my canned goods. I put up two hundred quarts a year.

CHUCK

You'll have to lower the gun, Mr. Vogel if you expect me to go through that door.

Emil lowers the shotgun.

EMIL

Help the man move the chair, Martha.

Chuck and Martha slide the heavy chair away from the door.

CHUCK

Keep that gun down, Mr. Vogel.

EMIL

You better get yours out, Officer.

Chuck touches his pistol but does not remove it. Flashlight in hand he opens the squeaky door and flashes the light on the stairs. He steps through the doorway.

Emil waves the shotgun at Martha and after some hesitation she closes the door behind Chuck.

Emil rushes over and pushes the chair back in place and runs back behind the table. He grabs the shotgun and points it at the door.

EXT. A SMALL BRIDGE ACROSS A CREEK - DAY

The boys arrive at the bridge on their bikes. They stop and look over the side.

Gene throws down his bedroll and climbs up on the cement block that supports the guardrail.

GENE
(shouting and waving
his arms)
Ladies and gentleman, I have important
news.

TIM
(also shouting)
What is that, sir?

GENE
I have just learned that you can put
a boat into a ship but you cannot, no
you cannot, put a ship into a boat.

TIM
Oh, no. You can't put a ship...

GENE
No, sir. You cannot...

TIM
...into a breadbasket?

As Tim laughs at his own joke Gene spreads his arms out wide and steps onto the narrow guardrail.

GENE
Your breadbasket is...

TIM
Gene, don't.

Gene proceeds slowly, wavering on the guardrail.

TIM (V.O.)

I couldn't take my eyes off him. I felt responsible for Gene Somner's life and soul. If I looked away for a second I knew he'd fall into the creek.

EXT. THE ROCK-STREWN CREEK

Gene's broken body lies in the shallow water. His neck is twisted. His arms and legs jut out at bizarre angles.

TIM (V.O.)

Like what Officer Burkholtz must have seen that night when he climbed the steps of the bandstand all alone. And it'd be all my fault somehow.

BACK TO SCENE

GENE

True, your average breadbasket is smaller than your average ship...

TIM

Gene.

EXT. THE ROCK-STREWN CREEK

The view again of Gene's broken body in the creek.

BACK TO SCENE

Gene jumps off the railing and lands safely near his bedroll.

GENE

(laughing)

Your turn.

INT. THE VOGEL BASEMENT - NIGHT

Chuck descends halfway down the stairs. The flashlight reveals a cluttered basement with a work bench and quarts of canned goods set on shelves.

Suddenly three furry animals burst out of the darkness. They jump onto the work bench, squeeze through a hole in a broken half-window and are gone.

Chuck continues down the stairs. He locates a piece of plywood, a hammer and nails.

He nails the wood over the broken glass.

INT. THE VOGEL HOME - NIGHT

The sounds can be heard of Chuck hammering below. Emil is behind the table with the shotgun. Martha peaks around a corner

CHUCK (V.O.)

I'm coming up.

The basement door opens a crack and bumps against the stuffed chair.

INT. THE BASEMENT AT THE HEAD OF THE STAIRS - NIGHT

Chuck stands at the door. He shines his light through the slightly opened doorway.

The business end of the shotgun is pointed directly at him.

He drops down onto the stairs. The shotgun explodes and buckshot rips through the door leaving a jagged hole.

Martha screams.

CHUCK

Damnit, Emil. It's me. Put that gun down.

EMIL (V.O.)

Did you get him?

CHUCK

Put the gun down. Lay the damn thing on the floor.

EMIL (V.O.)

Did you get him?

MARTHA (V.O.)
It's on the floor, Officer.

INT. THE VOGEL HOME - NIGHT

The light from the flash comes through the crack in the door. It shows the shotgun on the floor.

The door pushes the chair back and Chuck enters brushing cobwebs off his uniform.

Emil peaks at him over the table and Martha from around a doorway.

EXT. THE ROAD INTERSECTING THE SQUARE - DAY

The boys approach the square on their bikes. They stop.

Visible in the park ahead are Stone and some of his buddies.

STONE
Gene.

TIM
Yeah.

Gene turns his bike around.

GENE
Come on.

They go back and turn into an alley that parallels the square.

EXT. THE ALLEY - DAY

The boys enter the alley and stop.

GENE
Stone.

TIM
Yeah. Maybe we should just go up there. Act like nothin' happened.

GENE

Nothin' did happen. If I was alone
I would go up there. I'd go straight
in the park and get myself a drink at
the fountain.

TIM

So, what's stoppin' yah?

GENE

You.

TIM

Me?

GENE

You can't lie for shit.

TIM

I can too lie.

GENE

You're pathetic. Remember that time
on the playground when Frog caught
us with them cigarette's we found?

TIM

That was fourth grade.

GENE

You were pathetic.

TIM

That was fourth grade.

GENE

(shaking his head)

It's all right. Let's go around.

EXT. AN INTERSECTION OF THE HIGHWAY - DAY

Tim and Gene stop, look both ways and sneak across.

EXT. AN ALLEY AT THE BASE OF A HUGE WATER TOWER - DAY

The boys approach. They drop their bikes in the tall grass.

GENE

I'll run this home. Go to the bakery
and I'll meet you there.

TIM

But...

GENE

Just be careful. He won't see yah.

The boys run.

EXT. THE CEMETERY - NIGHT

The patrol car moves slowly through the cemetery.
The tires make noise on the gravel. The car stops.

INT. THE PATROL CAR - NIGHT

Chuck trains the spotlight on the Hanretty tombstone.
After a moment, he turns off the light.

He opens the thermos and pours himself some coffee. Then he
picks up the phone.

CHUCK

Racoons, Ralph.

RALPH (V.O.)

No burglar?

CHUCK

Racoons. By the way, I been meaning
to ask you. That trucker guy, the one
who called in the...

RALPH (V.O.)

The Hanretty thing?

CHUCK

Yeah. Did he leave a name? Some way
to get hold of him?

RALPH (V.O.)

The colored guy? Do you think?

CHUCK

No. I just want to talk to him.

RALPH (V.O.)

No. I'll check the log, but I don't think so.

Chuck sits alone in the darkened car sipping coffee.

INT. THE BAKERY - DAY

On one side is a soda fountain with a few stools. Opposite are display cases with baked goods. Connecting the two at the rear is a counter with a cash register.

Tim sits on one of the stools, sipping a chocolate phosphate through a straw.

JERRY, the baker, stands behind the counter boxing a cake for MRS. PLUMMER.

JERRY

A solo. That is very special, Mrs. Plummer. Special indeed.

MRS. PLUMMER

It looks perfect to me, Jerry.

INSERT: The cake with a golden trumpet and musical notes on white frosting.

JERRY

I was pretty sure it had three valves, but I checked in the encyclopedia just to make sure.

MRS. PLUMMER

He'll love it.

JERRY

Your husband's solo will be the highlight of tonight's concert.

The screen door at the front opens ringing a bell. PAULA SCHWARTZENTRAUB (TRAUBER), a thin, red-headed 'tomboy' classmate of Tim's, sticks her head in.

TRAUBER

Hey, Holter, want a job?

JERRY

Close the door, kid. You're letting
in the flies.

Trauber enters. She takes a stool beside Tim and sets a
squirt gun on the counter.

TRAUBER

Somner said you'd be here. I called him
about the job. Called you too, but you'd
left already.

TIM

What job?

Trauber grabs Tim's dime and nickel on the counter.

TIM

Come on, Trauber, give me the money.

TRAUBER

(feigned innocence)

What money?

TIM

You know what money.

They begin to wrestle and soon fall against one of the
display cases.

JERRY

Kids.

TIM

Come on, Trauber.

TRAUBER

Okay, here you go.

Trauber drops the coins into Tim's phosphate.

TIM

Creep.

Giggling, Trauber returns to the door but forgets her squirt gun.

TRAUBER

I got to get Somner away from his mom.
You want the job, be here when we get
back.

TIM

What job?

INT. THE SOMNER DINING ROOM - DAY

A BABY screams off camera. Gene's bedroll has been tossed in one corner.

Gene hangs up the telephone. He grabs his yo-yo off the table and starts for the front door.

A frazzled-looking MRS. SOMNER enters and sets down a heavy laundry basket full of diapers.

MRS. SOMNER

Don't forget the lawn, Gene.

GENE

Paula's dad's got a job for us.

Mrs. Somner begins to fold diapers and stack them on the table as the baby continues to scream.

MRS. SOMNER

You promised your father.

GENE

He's payin' a buck an hour.

MRS. SOMNER

He's expecting it done. You know him.

GENE

I'll do it, okay?

MRS. SOMNER

You better. Before he gets home.

EXT. THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE BAKERY - DAY

Tim exits the bakery. He puts the squirt gun into a front pocket of his jeans and looks across to the park.

EXT. A VIEW OF THE PARK

A few old men sit on benches smoking cigars. Stone and the other older boys are not in sight.

BACK TO SCENE

Gene and Trauber walk toward the bakery where Tim awaits them. Gene is doing tricks with the yo-yo.

TRAUBER

(to Tim)

Gene's gonna work. You comin'?

TIM

What's the job?

TRAUBER

We gotta scrape some stuff off the store windows. Dad'll tell us.

Gene spins the yo-yo in the direction of Tim's face and then pulls it back before it hits.

GENE

Buck an hour.

TIM

Buck an hour?

TRAUBER

That's what he said. You comin'?

TIM

I'm comin'.

Gene squeals loudly and points at Tim's crotch.

GENE

Holter can't work. Holter's pissed his pants.

A dark blue patch has appeared at Tim's crotch.

He pulls the squirt gun from his pocket.

TIM

It's your stupid squirt gun, Trauber.
It leaks.

TRAUBER

What you doin' with my gun?

GENE

It's piss. It's piss.

TIM

It's your fault. You left the stupid
squirt gun in the stupid bakery.

GENE

(singing and pointing
at Tim's crotch)

Timmy peed his pa-ants. Timmy peed
his pa-ants.

TIM

(squirting Gene)

Piss on you, Somner.

Trauber grabs the squirt gun away from Tim and begins to
squirt Gene.

TRAUBER

Yeah, piss on you, Somner.

Gene turns to run away but crashes into MRS. GLOVER who is
walking down the sidewalk with her daughter Sandy.

Mrs. Glover drops a package and items scatter around on the
sidewalk.

Gene stumbles, trying not to fall.

MRS. GLOVER

Boys!

Mrs. Glover bends down to pick up her purchases.

The kids ignore her as Trauber and Sandy eye each other warily.

Sandy looks beautiful. She's tan and wearing a white sleeveless blouse, blue shorts and bobby socks with white tennis shoes.

SANDY

Hi, Tim.

Tim covers his crotch with both hands.

TIM

Hi, Sandy.

Mrs. Glover gathers her things and straightens up.

MRS. GLOVER

You boys need to be more careful.
Come on, Sandy, let's go.

SANDY

Did I see you ride by my house this morning?

TIM

Ah, don't know. Yeah, maybe. I went for a little ride.

SANDY

I thought I saw you. You don't live near me do you?

TIM

Ah, no, not really. I just went for a little ride, you know.

MRS. GLOVER

(emphatically)

Sandra.

SANDY

See, yah.

TIM

Yeah, see yah.

The boys watch Sandy and her mother walk away.
Gene and Trauber look at each other and begin to laugh hysterically.

TIM

What?

TRAUBER

(in a mincing "girly"
voice)

Hi, Tim.

GENE

(clasping both hands
over his crotch)

Hi, Sandy.

Gene and Trauber bend over laughing and holding their sides.

EXT. THE SQUARE - NIGHT

The patrol car is parked in the empty square next to the highway. Chuck is visible inside. He's dressed for warmer weather now.

Headlights appear as a vehicle approaches the square. A delivery truck enters, makes its way around the park and continues along the highway.

The patrol car turns around and follows.

EXT. THE SQUARE - DAY

Trauber, Gene and Tim walk down the sidewalk past a row of buildings.

Gene is playing tricks with his yo-yo as Trauber squirts things with her squirt gun.

A STORE SIGN: "SCHWARTZENTRAUB'S HARDWARE, FURNITURE AND APPIANCES"

They enter the store.

INT. THE HARDWARE DISPLAY ROOM - DAY

With Trauber leading they pass the hardware section and exit through a doorway behind the cash register.

INT. A TINY OFFICE - DAY

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB is very busily working at a desk. The three of them squeeze in around him.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB
(looking up, disgusted)
Kids.

TRAUBER
We're here, Dad.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB
Step outside. I'll be with you
in a minute.

INSERT: An "I LIKE IKE" button on a bulletin board.

TIM
Well, Mr. Schwartztraub, I see
you like Ike.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB
What's that?

TIM
That button on the wall.
(pointing)
You like Ike.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB
So?

TIM
My dad liked Adlai. He's a Democrat
but Ike won.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB
Step outside now.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY JUST OUT OF TOWN - NIGHT

The truck approaches followed by the patrol car.

The emergency lights come on and the truck pulls onto the shoulder.

The patrol car pulls in behind.

Chuck directs the spotlight toward the driver-side door of the truck.

He exits the patrol car with his flashlight and shines it on the driver.

The light reveals HOMER an African-American male in his thirties.

The Homer rolls down the window.

HOMER

Something wrong, Officer?

CHUCK

(lowering the beam)

I saw you driving through the square.

HOMER

It's on my route.

CHUCK

Do you come through here often?

HOMER

A couple of nights a week. It's on my route.

CHUCK

Did you come through on New Year's Eve?

HOMER

I didn't see it happen. That crash, whatever.

CHUCK

But you called it in.

HOMER

From the payphone outside the diner back there. I thought it was the right thing to do.

CHUCK

I want to thank you for that.

HOMER

But...

CHUCK

He was a friend of mine. The driver of that car. My best friend.

INT. THE HARDWARE DISPLAY ROOM - DAY

Mr. Schwartztraub enters half-running from the backroom. Trauber runs after him and the boys follow her hurriedly down the aisle.

Mr. Schwartztraub pauses to pick up three putty knives and resuming his pace exits into the adjoining room and the three run after him.

INT. THE FURNITURE DISPLAY ROOM - DAY

Mr. Schwartztraub rushes down an aisle toward the tall front windows and the boys follow Trauber in fast pursuit.

INT. THE FRONT OF THE FURNITURE DISPLAY ROOM - DAY

A faux living room is displayed. Through the tall windows, the sidewalk and street are visible.

Mr. Schwartztraub steps to the window. Gene and Tim drop onto the couch.

Trauber urgently shakes her head no.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Not on the furniture, boys.

Tim and Gene jump to their feet.

Mr. Schwartztraub turns to face the window. With one of the putty knives he begins to scrape on the glass. The window is covered in a yellowish film.

Mr. Schwartztraub's ample butt wiggles as he works. A handkerchief swings from one rear pocket. Sticking from the other is a huge wallet stuffed with cash.

Mr. Schwartztraub scrapes the film from a small area of the window and turns to face them.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

That's the idea.

They look at each other, then at the huge windows and then at Mr. Schwartztraub.

GENE

All of it?

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

That's right.

TIM

On all the windows?

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

It won't take long once you'll get the hang of it. And don't scratch the glass. You do it right you won't scratch the glass. Move this furniture back and lay down some drop cloths. And no horsing around. I'm paying you to do a job. You got that?

They nod their heads.

TIM

What is it, sir?

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

What's that?

TIM

That stuff on the glass.

GENE

Yeah, what is that stuff?

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

It's varnish.

TIM

Varnish?

MR. SCHARTZENTRAUB

That's right. It'll move right along if you don't goof off. You should be done by noon tomorrow at the latest.

INT. THE SAME - A SHORT TIME LATER

The furniture has been moved back and drop cloths spread about.

The three of them scrape on separate areas of glass.

TIM (V.O.)

I knew Mr. Schwartzentraub would see every scratch and when I pushed against the glass I could feel it move. If I scratched it or pushed too hard and broke it, Mr. Schwartzentraub would have to replace the whole pane. That would cost a fortune.

TIM'S DAYDREAM: INT. THE HOLTER FAMILY LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tim, Danny and their parents huddle together on the couch.

Mr. Schwartzentraub paces back and forth waving sheets of paper. His handkerchief swings. His fat wallet bulges from his rear pocket.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Seven hundred for the glass and five hundred for the labor. And I'm giving you a break on the labor.

The Holter family looks devastated.

BACK TO SCENE

Trauber pauses and steps back from her window. She sees that Gene is using the putty knife to carve his initials in the varnish.

TRAUBER

Somner, what you doin'?

GENE

I'm marking my window.

TRAUBER

I'm not paying you to carve your dumb initials. You don't start making money till you start working. So far you made nothin'.

TIM

He's workin'. He's scraping varnish off same as you.

GENE

That's right. I'm scrapin' varnish off same as you.

TRAUBER

You don't get paid till you start workin'.

The three return to scraping.

TIM

Ain't varnish for wood?

GENE

Yeah, Holter's right. Varnish is for wood. What hermaphrodite varnished these stupid windows anyway? Is this some kind a humongous joke?

TRAUBER

Varnish has lots of uses.

GENE

Well, you don't paint windows with it. Everybody knows that.

TRAUBER

Mr. Know-It-All. What you know about varnish, huh? You own a hardware store? You talk to people who sell stuff? You read hardware magazines?

TIM

Trauber's right, Gene. Mr. Schwartzentraub must know a lot about varnish. He sells it all the time.

TRAUBER

That's right. So stop carvin' your dumb initials and get to work.

GENE

If you know so much, why'd he do it?

TRAUBER

Do what?

GENE

Paint these stupid windows with varnish, that's what.

TRAUBER

Cause he's the boss, that's why.

TIM

Yeah, and now he wants it off.

TRAUBER

That's right. Now he wants it off.

The three of them return to scraping.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY OUTSIDE OF TOWN - NIGHT

Homer's delivery truck is being followed again by the patrol car.

Chuck switches on the emergency lights. The truck pulls off onto the shoulder.

The patrol car pulls in behind. The spotlight comes on.

Chuck exits the patrol car and Homer rolls down the window.

HOMER

Officer.

CHUCK

I was wondering what it is you haul?

HOMER

I haul out of the stockyards.

CHUCK

Chicago?

DRIVER

Yes, sir. Got me a load of beef I'm
takin' to Lawton.

CHUCK

Beef, eh. Tell me. Were you in the war?

EXT. A SIREN HIGH UP ON THE WATER TOWER - DAY

The siren sounds.

EXT. LOADING DOCK AT THE REAR OF THE STORE - DAY

Tim and Gene jump off the dock and run down the alley.

INT. A REPAIR SHOP IN THE REAR OF A CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY

TWO MECHANICS roll out from under the cars they are working
on.

They take seats at a work bench, open their lunch boxes and
pull out sandwiches.

Tim and Gene enter through the large open rear doors and
pass through.

FIRST MECHANIC

Hey, kid? Where's that quarter you
owe me?

GENE

I'm workin' on it.

FIRST MECHANIC

He's workin' on it.

SECOND MECHANIC

Yeah, he's workin' on it.

The two men grin at each other and then take large bites
out of their sandwiches.

INT. THE FRONT OF THE CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY

The boys sneak quietly past the new cars.

MR. SOMNER, an imposing man wearing a white shirt and tie and chewing on a cigar, sits at a desk inside his office. An ugly cast sticks out from the sleeve of his shirt and covers part of his left hand.

The boys reach the front door.

MR. SOMNER

Eugene!

The boys stop.

MR. SOMNER

Come over here.

The boys cautiously approach the door of the office.

MR. SOMNER

You got the lawn done?

GENE

I will, I'm workin' for Mr. Schwartzentraub.

The boys retreat toward the front door.

MR. SOMNER

You better. You hear me?

GENE

Okay, I hear you.

MR. SOMNER

Wait a minute. Come back here. I forgot something.

GENE

What?

The boys hesitate at the door.

MR. SOMNER

Come back here. I'm talkin' to you.

The boys return cautiously to the office door.

MR. SOMNER

You come when I'm talking to you
and you stay until I'm done. Is that
clear?

GENE

Yes.

Tim nods his head, frightened.

MR. SOMNER

Some kids came in this morning asking
about you.

GENE

Me? What kids?

MR. SOMNER

How do I know what kids? Two or three
of them. Bigger than you. Something about
a bicycle.

Tim and Gene look at each other.

TIM

(softly to Gene)

Stone.

Gene nods.

MR. SOMNER

Who you say?

TIM

Ah...

GENE

Kid called Stone. It's no big deal,
Dad. I'll take care of it.

MR. SOMNER

Take care of what?

(when the boys hesitate)

I said, 'Take care of what?'

GENE

Stone. If he wants to see me I'll talk to him. It's no big deal. Me and Tim got to get some lunch. We're workin' for Mr. Schwartztraub.

MR. SOMNER

What about the bike?

GENE

Nothin'. I don't know about the bike. I'll talk to Stone.

MR. SOMNER

The kid said he had a new bike and it got smashed.

TIM

(softly to Gene)

That ain't true. It wasn't his bike and it didn't get smashed.

MR. SOMNER

(to Tim)

What do you know about this?

TIM

Ah, nothin' really.

The phone on Mr. Sumner's desk rings. The cast bangs against the desk as Mr. Somner puts down the cigar.

MR. SOMNER

You better not a smashed some kid's new bike. And if that lawn ain't done, you'll answer to me.

(he picks up the phone)

Somner's.

EXT. THE SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF THE DEALERSHP - DAY

The boys come out of the dealership.

GENE

You dummy. What'd you say that for?

TIM

The bike wasn't smashed. That's not true.

GENE

You idiot. Don't say nothin' to my dad. Never.

TIM

But Stone...

GENE

That son of a bitch. What's he doin' comin' around talkin' to my dad?

INT. THE HOLTER KITCHEN - DAY

Edith, dressed for work but wearing an apron and looking tired, sets the table for lunch.

EDITH

Boys.

Tim and Danny enter and take seats at the table.

Edith serves them sandwiches, glasses of milk and bowls of mixed fruit.

She sits down with some cottage cheese and a cup of coffee.

EDITH

Danny.

Danny removes a glob of bubblegum from his mouth and sticks on the side of his plate.

DANNY

Fatherthanktheeforourfoodamen.

The three of them start to eat.

DANNY

Tim got more cherries.

TIM

I did not. You ate yours already.

DANNY

I did not. Mom, he got three and I got one.

EDITH

Boys.

TIM

Besides, you got more pears.

DANNY

So, who likes pears?

EDITH

Boys.

Tim tosses a cherry into Danny's bowl.

TIM

Guess what, Mom? I'm workin for Mr. Schwartzentraub. Gene and Paula too. Buck an hour.

EDITH

In that shirt?

TIM

Buck an hour, Mom.

DANNY

Buck an hour?

TIM

Yep. Peelin' varnish off the front windows. All day today and tomorrow too.

DANNY

Mom, ain't varnish for wood?

TIM

That's what I thought.

EDITH

What did Mr. Schwartztraub think
when he saw you in that shirt?

Edith leaves the room and returns with a clean t-shirt that
she hands to Tim.

DANNY

Mom, ain't varnish for wood?

TIM

Yeah, Mom. Why'd he paint varnish on
all those big windows in front?

EDITH

Mr. Schwartztraub's a businessman.
He knows what he's doing. Wash your arms
and neck first, understand? Mr.
Schwartztraub must think I'm a
terrible mother.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY OUTSIDE OF TOWN - NIGHT

Homer's delivery truck is followed again by the patrol car.

The emergency lights come on. The truck pulls off onto the
shoulder.

The patrol car pulls in behind. The spotlight comes on.

Chuck exits the patrol car and Homer rolls down the window.

HOMER

Officer.

CHUCK

The name's Chuck.

HOMER

Homer.

The men shake hands through the open window.

CHUCK

Homer, you got time for a cup of coffee?

INT. A DINER - NIGHT

Chuck and Homer sit at a table with cups of coffee.

CHUCK
A steward's mate?

HOMER
Yep, Second Class.

CHUCK
Pacific?

HOMER
Atlantic mostly. But in '45 we sailed
through the Canal and went straight to
the Philippines.

CHUCK
Tom was a Marine in the Pacific.

HOMER
We might have given him a lift if he was
wounded.

CHUCK
Not likely. His wounds were inside.
Like mine.

INT. THE FRONT WINDOWS OF THE STORE - DAY

Mr. Schwartzentraub arrives hurriedly carrying a quart can
and a paint brush. Trauber and the boys run behind him.

Mr. Schwartzentraub turns at the window and the three kids
fall onto a drop cloth in front of him.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB
(tapping the lid of the can)
This is a dangerous, powerful compound.
Varnish remover. Do not let this touch
your skin. Not a drop, you hear me?

Trauber and the boys nod their heads.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

I did not want to resort to this. But
I see the other way will take forever.

TIM

What's it do, sir?

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Do not spill it on anything. It will ruin
everything it touches. You hear me?

They look at each other and nod.

Mr. Schwartzentraub

This is not a toy. It is a serious
commercial product and very dangerous.
If I see you horsing around for one
minute, I will fire you. It that
understood?

They nod again.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Paula, get me that stool in the storeroom.

Trauber runs to the back and returns with a stool.

Mr. Schwartzentraub sets the can on the stool and pulls a
screwdriver out of his pocket.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Now, gather around.

The kids gather close. Mr. Schwartzentraub pries off the
lid. The three of them fall back, shocked by the smell.

GENE

Wow, that stuff'll eat your skin.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Stand back.

Mr. Schwartzentraub dips the brush into the compound. He
paints the clear liquid onto a small area of the window.

GENE

Nothin's happening.

TRAUBER

It'll happen, won't it, Dad.

TIM

What's it do?

MR. SCWARTZENTRAUB

Let it soak in a few minutes and then
scrape it off with the putty knives.
Paula, get a pair of work gloves.

Trauber runs off and returns with the gloves.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Put the gloves on, Paula.

Trauber puts on the gloves and Mr. Schwartzentraub hands
her the brush.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

Paula will apply the varnish remover and
you boys will peel it off. I will not
stand for any horseplay. Absolutely none.

INT. SAME - A SHORT TIME LATER

Trauber paints areas of the windows with the brush and Gene
and Tim scrape them off.

Gene and Tim are covered with shavings of peeled varnish
soaked in the toxic substance. Tim's clean t-shirt is a
mess. Their eyes and skin are red. They appear in great
discomfort while Trauber is unaffected.

TIM

My hands are burning.

GENE

Yeah, and my eyes too. Let me paint
awhile.

TIM

Yeah, let's take turns.

TRAUBER

You heard, Dad. I paint. You scrape.

INT. SAME - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Trauber glances at her watch and sets the brush down on the can.

TRAUBER

Break time.

Trauber takes off her gloves and bends over to tie a shoelace.

Gene dips the brush in the can and paints the seat of Trauber's jeans.

Gene and Tim look at each other and grin.

EXT. THE LOADING DOCK - DAY

The three of them sit on the loading dock dangling their feet over. They drink from soda bottles. Trauber begins to squirm as Gene and Tim watch.

Trauber yells in pain.

She jumps off the dock, pulls down her jeans and tries to look between her legs.

Tim chokes with laughter, soda pours out of his nose.

Gene rolls laughing on the dock. His soda bottle crashes to the pavement below.

EXT. THE ELLIS DRIVEWAY - DAY

Gary and MR. ELLIS, a nicely-dressed executive type, wash the Morris Minor.

A motorcycle pulls into the driveway. It's Stone with ANOTHER BOY his age on the back. Stone dismounts and approaches.

MR. ELLIS

May I help you?

STONE

Is that Gary Ellis?

MR. ELLIS

Yes.

GARY

(approaching)

Yes, I'm Gary.

STONE

My informants tell me you know about
my kid brother's bike.

GARY

(confused)

Your brother? Do I know your brother?

STONE

His new bike got smashed up yesterday.
On that flat not far from the swimming
hole.

MR. ELLIS

Were you out there yesterday, Gary?

GARY

I was swimming, yes, but...

STONE

I'm not saying your kid had anything
to do with it. I'm saying he knows who
did.

MR. ELLIS

Do you know something about this, Gary?
It sounds very unfortunate.

INT. THE DINER - NIGHT

Chuck and Homer enter in summer dress and take seats at a
table.

HOMER

There's somethin' I mean to ask
you, Chuck.

CHUCK

All right.

HOMER

I can't get it outta my mind.

CHUCK

All right.

HOMER

Could I a helped that boy, had I stopped?

Chuck shakes his head no.

HOMER

It keeps me awake, thinkin' about it.

CHUCK

Nobody could help him, Homer.

HOMER

I wish I had.

Chuck nods his head as A WAITRESS approaches with two mugs and a pot of coffee.

INT. THE HOLTER KITCHEN - DAY

Alone in the kitchen Edith sets the table as she stirs food on the stove. She takes food from the stove, places it in bowls and sets the bowls on the table.

EDITH

Boys.

Frank, Tim and Danny enter. The four of them take seats at the table.

EDITH

Tim.

TIM

Fatherthanktheeforourfoodamen.

The family begins to eat.

TIM

Guess what, Dad. Mr. Schwartzentraub likes Ike.

FRANK

I could have told you that.

TIM

Why's that?

FRANK

Cause he's a businessman. Businessmen are Republicans.

EDITH

It's a free country. You can be a Republican or a Democrat, either one.

TIM

Are businessmen always Republicans?

EDITH

No.

FRANK

You can count on it.

DANNY

What's a Republican?

TIM

It's got to do with Presidents and stuff. Senators, stuff like that.

EDITH

That's right.

FRANK

(holding in laughter)

Wait now. The boy asked a serious question and he deserves a serious answer. What's a Republican, you ask? Well, I'll tell you, son. Your Republican is either a fool or he's a businessman or he's both.

Frank laughs so hard bits of food fly from his mouth and land on the table.

EDITH
(aghast)

Frank.

FRANK
Well, now Edith it's true. A working man who's a Republican is a fool. So, who else is there? They gotta come from somewhere. You're either an employer or an employee. If you're in management you're an employer and if you're an employer you're a businessman. So, your Republican is one of two things. He's a fool or a businessman or he's both.

Frank nearly chokes again with laughter.

DANNY
That's three things.

Frank, Edith and Tim glance dismissively at Danny.

EDITH
Lots of good people are Republicans.
Lots of church-going people are
Republicans.

FRANK
Whew. I gotta remember that one for
the men.

INT. THE SAME - A SHORT TIME LATER

The family has finished eating and Edith clears the table.

FRANK
What's for dessert?

EDITH
Well, it's concert night. I thought
we'd get something up there.

TIM

Mom, can I have a quarter for
dessert? I'm riding my bike up.

EDITH

What do you think, Frank? Tim's riding
up. Can he have a quarter for a dessert?

FRANK

A quarter? That boy's been pulling down
a wage all day. He should be buyin' us
dessert, not vice versa.

EDITH

No, Frank.

Frank digs into his pocket.

FRANK

All right, all right. Let's see what
I got.

He tosses Tim a quarter.

DANNY

Can I have one?

FRANK

Why's that? You'll be with us. Time comes
for dessert I'll be buyin' it.

DANNY

Timmy got one.

FRANK

You can't pull the wool over your old
dad's eyes that easy, son.

INT. THE SCHWARTZENTRAUB DINING ROOM - DAY

Mr. Schwartzentraub sits at one end of the table reading a
professional magazine.

Trauber enters carrying a plate of sliced tomatoes.

Her TWO OLDER SISTERS enter with bowls of food.

MRS. SCHWARTZENTRAUB follows with a roast on a platter that she places before her husband.

The girls sit on the sides and Mrs. Schwartzentraub takes the seat facing her husband.

Mr. Schwartzentraub closes the magazine and the family prays in silence.

Mr. Schwartzentraub stands and begins to carve the roast.

First Sister takes some potatoes and passes the bowl.

FIRST SISTER

Can I borrow your blue blouse?

SECOND SISTER

(accepting the bowl)

Which blue blouse?

Mr. Schwartzentraub sits down. He puts a slab of roast on his plate and turns his attention back to the magazine.

FIRST SISTER

The one with the pearl buttons.

Trauber helps herself to some lima beans and trades the bowl of beans for the bowl of potatoes.

SECOND SISTER

It's in the laundry.

MRS. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

(angrily)

Would someone please serve the roast?

TRAUBER

I got a blue shirt you can rent.

First Sister sticks her tongue out at Trauber. The two of them laugh.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRUB

(looking up)

Sorry, dear. Come on, pass me your plates.

The family passes their plates to Mr. Schwartztraub who sets a slice of the roast on each. He accepts a bowl, absently places some food on his plate and returns his attention to the magazine.

FIRST SISTER

I so wanted to wear that blouse to the concert.

Mrs. Schwartztraub stares furiously at her husband.

INT. THE TAVERN - DAY

Chuck sits at the bar. He's eating a steak and drinking from a cup of coffee. His thermos is on the bar beside him.

Sal approaches and sits down.

SAL

Band concert night. Always a good one. I keep the doors open so I can hear the tunes. Folks can pass in and out.

CHUCK

It's a twelve-hour shift for me. This will help me get through it.

SAL

Tom used to mix up a special drink on concert nights. What'd he call that?

CHUCK

The Honker, as I recall.

SAL

(laughing)

That's right. For all those folks who can't resist honking their car horns after every tune.

CHUCK

Yeah.

SAL

I sure miss him, Chuck.

CHUCK

We both do, Sal.

EXT. THE SQUARE - NIGHT

It is evening now, a few lights come on and a sense of energy is in the air.

Workmen place barricades across the highway at both ends of the square.

A sign on them reads: "DETOUR. CONCERT NIGHT. CONCERT GOERS ONLY."

Inside the square a couple sets up a popcorn machine on the sidewalk.

Band members in white shirts and black slacks arrive in the park carrying their instrument cases. They remove their shiny instruments and stack the cases against "Hanretty's Plaque" before climbing the stairs.

The sounds of musicians warming up.

Older folks with cushions and canes make their way across the street toward benches in the park.

MR. PLUMMER can be heard with his trumpet practicing a couple of measures from his solo.

The sidewalks fill with couples, children and clusters of people of various ages. Boys and young men stand in front of buildings as teenage girls stroll past arm in arm.

Cars enter and Chuck directs them to parking places. The cars back in so the passengers will be able to watch the bandstand through the windshield.

Stone weaves his motorcycle past a barricade. He parks at the service station where several boys greet him.

INT. THE SOMNER HOME- NIGHT

Mr. Somner laces his belt through the loops of his trousers.

MR. SOMNER
That'll teach you to lie to me.

GENE
(trying not to sob)
I didn't lie.

MR. SOMNER
The lawn's not mowed.

GENE
I said I'd mow it and I'll mow it
tomorrow.

MR. SOMNER
Tomorrow? You want another one?

GENE
No. But I didn't lie.

MR. SOMNER
Then get out there and mow the damn
lawn.

GENE
But, it's band concert.

MR. SOMNER.
I don't care if it's the second coming
of Christ. Mow the lawn.

Mrs. Somner appears in the doorway behind him.

MRS. SOMNER
(quietly)
Dinner's ready.

Somewhere in the house the baby begins to cry.

MR. SOMNER
Not for him it isn't. Mow the lawn.

EXT. THE SQUARE - NIGHT

Tim pushes his bike along a crowded sidewalk.

A hand suddenly reaches down and grabs the handlebar. A large body blocks his passage.

The hand has 'X's tattooed on the fingers.

STONE

Holter.

Stone is surrounded by buddies of a similar age. They look down on Tim with malicious pleasure.

TIM

Hey, Stone. How yah doin'?

STONE

What you know about my kid brother's bike?

TIM

Your brother's bike? I don't know, what?

STONE

You know more than you told me this morning.

TIM

Ah, well, I know somethin'.

Stone's buddies snicker.

STONE

Like what?

TIM

Well, I heard he got a new bike. That he won it or somethin'.

STONE

Go on.

TIM

Yeah. An I heard it got scratched up.

STONE

Did you see it?

TIM

I don't know.

STONE

You don't know?

Stone lifts Tim's bike off the ground and slams it down against the sidewalk.

His buddies gather closer, eyes gleaming.

TIM

I saw a red bike, okay? Yesterday.
I didn't know whose it was, not for sure.

STONE

Where'd you see it?

TIM

In the creek. It was scratched up pretty bad.

STONE

Did you do it?

TIM

No, I didn't do it.

STONE

You know who did?

Stone takes the tattooed hand off the handle bars and wraps it around Tim's wrist.

TIM

Yeah, I know. I can't tell you. But I know. And I know it was an accident. And he didn't know for sure it was your brother's bike.

STONE

So what he didn't know? So what it was an accident? That was my brother's new bike and now it's beat to shit.

TIM

Yeah.

Stone twists Tim's arm in a painful manner.

STONE

I could make you tell me. You know that.

Grimacing with pain, Tim nods his head.

Stone lets go of Tim's arm and shoves the bike at him.

STONE

Anyway, I already know who did it. And I know you was there. You tell Somner he better find me. We need to talk. Tonight.

TIM

Okay.

STONE

If I don't see him, I'll come lookin' for you.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE SQUARE - NIGHT

The band has started playing.

Tim pushes his bike along the crowded sidewalk. He sees Trauber at the edge of the street.

TIM

(anxious)

You seen Gene? I gotta find him.

Trauber stands very still. She surreptitiously watches a GROUP OF BOYS who sit on their bikes a few feet away.

TRAUBER

(motioning with her head)

Watch.

TIM

I gotta find Somner. Stone's after him.

TRAUBER

Watch Graham.

GRAHAM, a rich classmate, sits on his bike. He begins to squirm.

He stands up and twists around. His face reddens. He looks embarrassed. He's trying to look at his butt.

TRAUBER

Okay, let's go. Follow me but don't run.

Trauber begins to walk away.

Against Trauber's right pantleg her gloved hand holds a dripping paint brush.

At the curb Trauber reaches down, casually picks up the can of varnish remover and then resumes walking along the crowded sidewalk as Tim hurries to catch up.

TIM

Are you crazy?

TRAUBER

(very excited)

Did you see that? Did you see the look on Graham's face?

Tim turns to look back at Graham.

TRAUBER

Don't look back. Don't ever look back.

They hurry on, Tim still pushing his bike.

TIM (V.O.)

I did want to look back. See, here's the thing. Everybody, I mean everybody, hates Graham. His parents are so rich and whenever he does some little thing his mom gets it written up in the paper. There's Graham on the front page wearing a fancy white sweater or somethin'. Just cause he won some stupid tennis match. And now his butt's on fire and he's thinkin' he's got some terrible butt-burn disease.

EXT. THE HARDWARE STORE LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

To the west, the last glow of the setting sun is visible.

Tim and Trauber approach down the alley.

Trauber sets the can on the dock along with the gloves and the paint brush.

TRAUBER

This is headquarters. Put your
bike up here.

They lift Tim's bike up on the dock and set it next to Trauber's.

TIM

Are you crazy, Trauber? You can't do
that.

TRAUBER

(gloating)

I just did it. You paint the bike
seat and the guy sits on it and pretty
soon his butt burns like crazy.

TIM

But...

TRAUBER

We just gotta be smart. Careful an
smart.

TIM

I gotta find Somner. That's what
I gotta do.

TRAUBER

Somner'll get here. He's probably
in trouble about somethin'.

(jumping off the dock)

What we need now is a scouting mission.
Let's synchronize our watches.

They adjust their watches.

TRAUBER

Be back here in ten minutes.
That's twenty-five after.

Trauber starts down the alley.

TIM

Wait. What're we lookin' for?

TRAUBER

Targets, of course. And a forward
operating base. You take the north
side, I'll take the south.

TIM

What you mean, targets?

TRAUBER

Jerks. Guys like Graham. Guys that
really deserve it.

Trauber rushes for the square and Tim runs after her.

INT. A DRUG STORE - NIGHT

At the soda fountain a group of teenagers are lined up to
buy ice cream cones.

Tim enters and gets in the line.

DOC GRANGER, the pharmacist, is behind the counter making
cones and collecting money.
Seated on stools next to the line are Stone and A BUDDY.

A cute TEENAGE GIRL wearing a low-cut blouse approaches Doc
Granger.

Stone shows her a half dollar and dangles it in front of
her face.

STONE

See this?

Embarrassed, the girl nods.

Stone moves the coin under her chin and suspends it just
above her blouse.

STONE

If I drop this in and you let me fish
it out, you can have it.

Doc Granger chortles.

The girl blushes and shakes her head.

THE GIRL

Vanilla, please.

STONE

Aww, too bad. Maybe next time.

The Buddy sees Tim and nudges Stone.

STONE

Holter.

TIM

(trying to be nonchalant)

Hey, Stone. How yah doin'?

STONE

You ain't brought me Gene Somner.

TIM

I ain't seen him. I heard he's got
some trouble at home.

STONE

He's got trouble here. And so
do you.

TIM

Not me. I got nothin' to do with it.

STONE

Yeah you do. You're what the law
calls an accomplice. You know what
that is?

Frightened, Tim shakes his head as the Buddy snickers.

STONE

Get Somner here or you'll find out
what it means. Now, order your cone.
Doc here is waitin'.

EXT. THE LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

Trauber is sitting on the dock when Tim returns.

TRAUBER

You're useless. Here we are on a
mission and you're buyin' ice cream
cones.

TIM

You shoulda seen what Stone did.
There was this girl...

TRAUBER

Stone's a creep. My sisters told me
all about him.

TIM

You won't believe what he...

TRAUBER.

Besides, we got work to do. I found
a place to stash this stuff in the
park. That'll be our forward
operating base.

TIM

I gotta find Somner. Stone's gonna
beat the crap outta him. He says I'm
an accompanist.

TRAUBER

A what?

TIM

An accompanist.

TRAUBER

I think you mean, accomplice.

Trauber pulls two red and white popcorn bags from her
pocket.

She puts on the gloves, places the lid on the can and pushes it down with her gloved hands.

TIM

Where'd you get the bags. You steal 'em?

TRAUBER

Never mind. Open one.

Tim finds he can't open the bags with one hand. His ice cream cone is melting and he starts licking it around the edges.

TRAUBER

You're useless.

Trauber takes off the gloves. She opens the first bag and puts the brush and the gloves inside it.

Then she slides the can down into the second bag and the two of them look at it.

The bag is stretched to capacity by the can.

TIM

That's stupid, Trauber. That don't look like a bag a popcorn. That looks like a popcorn bag's got a can of varnish remover in it.

TRAUBER

We'll keep it hidden. I'll go first carryin' the brush n' stuff, and you follow behind with the can. Stay real close so people can't see it. But don't bump me, understand?

TIM

I'm not carrying the can.

TRAUBER

You gotta carry the can cause the can goes second, and you don't know where we're goin'.

TIM

I don't wanna carry the can. Besides,
you need two hands to carry the can,
and I only got one.

TRAUBER

You're useless.

The two of them set off down the alley, Tim in front carrying the bag with the brush and gloves in one hand, and his rapidly melting ice cream cone in the other.

Trauber follows immediately behind with the poorly disguised can of varnish remover.

TRAUBER

To the park. Not too fast and don't stop.

EXT. THE SOMNER BACK YARD - NIGHT

Grunting in the late evening light Gene finishes the lawn with a push mower.

He pushes the heavy mower to a small shed and places it inside.

He looks around, then gets on his bike and leaves.

EXT. A SIDEWALK NEAR THE SQUARE - NIGHT

Gene walks his bike along the crowded walk. With his free hand he performs tricks with his yo-yo.

A tattooed hand grabs the handle bar.

The yo-yo crashes to the sidewalk. A heavy motorcycle boot stomps down crushing it.

STONE

Somner.

EXT. SERVICE STATION AT THE SQUARE - NIGHT

As a crowd of admirers watch, a couple dances gracefully beside the pumps to the concert music.

Tim passes the dancers with Trauber following immediately behind.

Suddenly, Tim stops and Trauber crashes into him.

TRAUBER
I told you to not stop.

TIM
It's Danny.

Danny is at the Coke machine buying a soda. He sees Tim and Trauber and comes over.

DANNY
You got popcorn an ice cream?

TIM
So?

TRAUBER
Keep goin'.

DANNY
Give me some popcorn.

Trauber shoves Tim with the can.

TRAUBER
Keep movin', darn it.

Danny reaches for the bag in Tim's hand.

TIM
No.

Tim puts it behind him knocking Trauber.

DANNY
You guys got ice cream and two bags
a popcorn?

TRAUBER
Leave us alone, kid.

Tim and Trauber start moving again.

DANNY

You're selfish. Two bags a popcorn and an ice cream cone.

As Tim and Trauber approach the sidewalk, Tim stops again suddenly and Trauber bashes into him.

TRAUBER

(exasperated)

Holter.

FOUR GIRLS approach along the walk. They dance along to the music, their arms locked at the elbows.

Chocolate ice cream is melting down Tim's cone and onto his hand. He's embarrassed, licking at the cone and his hand.

ONE OF THE GIRLS

Your ice cream is melting.

The four girls all laugh as they dance past.

TRAUBER

(shoving Tim with the can)

Holter.

Tim kicks back at Trauber's shins and starts moving again.

EXT. INSIDE THE PARK - NIGHT

The park is full of people attending the concert.

A cement platform supports a pyramid of cannonballs. Before it is a bush and in front of the bush are several rows of benches with older adults.

Beyond the benches is the bandstand where the band is playing. Near it is a drinking fountain.

Tim and Trauber squeeze between the cannonballs and the bush.

Trauber disappears beneath the bush with the two bags as Tim desperately licks his rapidly disintegrating ice cream cone.

Trauber stands up. She has the gloves on and holds the dripping paint brush.

TRAUBER

Stay here and guard the stash. I saw
Steve Leach.

TIM

Wait.

Tim runs around the benches.

He throws what's left of the cone into a garbage can and washes his hands at the drinking fountain, wiping them on his jeans.

Then he runs back to the bush.

TIM

Okay.

TRAUBER

Useless.

Trauber leaves and Tim watches as Mr. Palmer performs "Night and Day" on the trumpet.

The shiny trumpet and Mr. Palmer's sweating face glisten in the overhead lights.

MONTAGE - PEOPLE LISTENING TO THE SOLO

Mrs. Palmer watches her husband from a front-row bench.

Frank and Edith sit in their car.

Danny with his soda sits on the front bumper.

Sal listens from a stool in the bar.

Doc Granger smiles from behind the drugstore counter.

Jerry, the baker, listens from a swing on his porch.

Mary sways to the music as she and Chuck stand beside a barricade. She tugs on his hand and they begin to dance.

BACK TO SCENE

The solo ends to thunderous applause and honking horns.
Trauber returns from her mission and crawls under the bush.

TRAUBER (V.O.)

Got Leach. The stuff evaporates,
though. That's one of the problems.
If they don't sit down quick it's too
late. I had to do Leach twice.

TIM

And it stinks like crazy.

TRAUBER (V.O.)

Yeah. Everyone keeps sayin', 'What's
that smell?' But it works.
Leach was almost cryin'.

TIM

He's a jerk.

TRAUBER (V.O.)

Yeah, he is. He's tormented me since
third grade, the creep.

TIM

Yeah. Like slappin' at yah with wet
towels in the shower.

TRAUBER (V.O.)

I wouldn't know about that.

TIM

(embarrassed)

Oh, right. I forgot.

Trauber emerges with the dripping brush.

TRAUBER

I'm gonna paint Martin's bike. Paint's
like varnish. Put this stuff on
and pretty soon the paint's bubbling
up. It ruins paint.

TIM

We're gonna get caught. You can't

just do this and not get caught.
Besides, Martin's okay.

TRAUBER

Martin's not okay. Martin's like your
undercover Commie. You think he's all
right but then you learn the truth.

TIM

I gotta find Somner.

TRAUBER

Stay where you are. Besides' I'm
takin' all the risks. You're just
standing here.

TIM

I'm an accompanist.

TRAUBER

Accomplice. Yeah, maybe, but
they'll never prove it. I gotta go,
the stuff's evaporatin'.

EXT. THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

The band takes an intermission. The audience stands and TWO
MEN near Tim light cigars.

FLASHBACK: INT. MR. SOMNER'S OFFICE - DAY

Gene and Tim sneak into the empty office. Gene grabs a
cigar out of the desk and the boys rush out.

EXT. THE REAR OF AN OLD COACH HOUSE - DAY

Tim and Gene run up. They climb a rope hanging from an open
window to the second floor and climb inside.

INT. EMPTY HAYLOFT IN THE OLD COACH HOUSE - DAY

Tim pulls up the rope.
Gene lights the cigar and they pass it back and forth. They
laugh and imitate Groucho Marx.

INT. THE SAME - MOMENTS LATER

Tim lies on the floor looking green. He vomits all over the coiled rope.

GENE

Jesus.

TIM

(very sick)

Don't say that name. Not in vain
like that. That's a sin and you'll go
straight to hell.

Gene looks frightened as Tim lies on the floor with his head hanging out the window.

BACK TO SCENE

The band concert intermission ends. The band members climb up to the bandstand and people return to their benches.

EXT. AT THE PARK WATER FOUNTAIN - NIGHT

Gene washes his face in the fountain. His eyes are red. He winces when he moves his right arm. Tim approaches.

TIM

You all right?

GENE

Stone.

TIM

Yeah.

GENE

He said that bike's worth eighty-five
bucks.

TIM

Wow. Eighty...?

GENE

The repair's gonna cost twenty.
An I pay.

TIM

But how'd he know?

GENE

Ellis.

TIM

Ellis wasn't there.

GENE

The limey bastard.

TIM

But he wasn't there.

GENE

In the tent last night. I told him.

TIM

Come on.

They start back toward the cannonballs as the band begins to play.

EXT. AT THE CANNONBALLS

Tim and Gene arrive.

EXT. UNDER THE BUSH

Tim and Gene crouch down.

Tim shows Gene the can of varnish remover.

EXT. AT THE CANNONBALLS

As Tim and Gene straighten up, Trauber returns with the paint brush.

GENE

Are you?

TIM

She's paintin' bicycle seats. Guys sit on 'em...

TRAUBER

Yeah.

TIM

Butt burn.

Gene squeals loudly and begins to dance around behind the benches.

FIRST OLDER WOMAN

(turning on the bench)

Be quiet, son. The music has started.

TRAUBER

The paint on Martin's bike's gonna look like bubble bath. But I'm done. I almost got caught.

Gene continues to dance wildly.

GENE

Ellis.

SECOND OLDER WOMAN

Kids.

GENE

(harsh, semi-whisper)

We gotta get Ellis.

He starts to dance again.

TRAUBER

Not me. I'm done. Besides, I got to get this stuff back to the store.

TIM

No, Gene.

THIRD OLDER WOMAN

You children are being very uncouth. And what is that awful smell?

GENE

I'm gonna turn Ellis's stupid boat into bubble bath.

Gene disappears under the bush. When he reappears, he has the bag with the can. Clutching it, he starts to run away.

GENE
(shouting)

Ellis.

FIRST OLDER WOMAN

Boys.

TIM

Gene.

Trauber hurriedly stuffs the brush and gloves into the other bag.

TRAUBER

Come on.

Tim and Trauber rush after Gene.

EXT. A LARGE BRICK HOUSE ON A CORNER - NIGHT

Tim and Gene stand on the sidewalk with their bikes.

Gene holds the bag with the can of varnish remover against his chest like a cherished object. Tim has the bag with the gloves and brush.

Gene is agitated. He keeps looking up at a lighted window on the second floor of the dark house.

GENE

Come on, come on.

TIM

If Trauber says she's got one, she's got one.

GENE

She better.

INT. TRAUBER'S SECOND FLOOR BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is densely packed with detective magazines, super hero comics, knives, cameras, binoculars, etc.: the room of a would-be detective.

Trauber digs through the drawers of a large and cluttered roll-top desk.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Trauber runs out the front door and approaches the boys.

TRAUBER

I got it.

TIM

I told you.

GENE

Let's see it.

Trauber opens her hand to show a firecracker.

Gene squeals with delight.
They get on their bikes and leave.

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The sound of car horns in the distance as they ride together.

TIM

That wasn't the last song, was it?

GENE

Naw.

TRAUBER

It wasn't long enough. The last honk's always the longest and the loudest.

TIM

I gotta get home right after.

EXT. A RAILROAD TRACK CROSSING A RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Gene, Tim and Trauber approach on their bikes. At the railroad track they stop and hide their bikes in the weeds.

Gene runs down the track carrying the bag with the can clutched against his chest, Trauber and Tim follow.

Crickets and other nature night noises are audible in this and the following outdoor scenes.

EXT. THE RAILROAD TRACK WITH A CREEK BESIDE IT - NIGHT

Beyond the creek is a row of houses. In the street past the houses is a streetlight and the sound of children playing.

Gene approaches along the track at a run and turns down a path toward the creek. Trauber follows with Tim lagging behind.

Gene reaches a board placed across the creek.

Tim stops running and drops down on a rail.

TIM

Wait a minute.

Gene and Trauber stop and look back.

TIM

There's kids out there. I hear 'em.

GENE

So? Come on Trauber. Holter's chickenin' out.

Gene starts to cross the creek and Trauber follows.

TIM

This ain't gonna work, Trauber.
We need a plan.

Gene and Trauber pause again.

GENE

We got a plan.

TRAUBER

Yeah, you and me throw the firecracker at the front door and run like crazy. When Ellis and his parents run to the front, Gene sneaks in the back. He paints the stupid model and makes his escape while they're tryin' to figure out what happened.

GENE
I'm the one takin' the risk.

TIM
But the kids. We don't want them
seein' us.

GENE
It's a bunch a little kids.
I ain't waitin'.

Gene crosses the creek as Trauber looks back at Tim.

TRAUBER
Ellis betrayed him.

TIM
Yeah.

Trauber follows Gene and Tim stands up and follows Trauber.

EXT. A FENCE BETWEEN THE CREEK AND A BACK YARD - NIGHT

Gene and Trauber arrive at a gate. Gene takes off his white t-shirt and stuffs into his jeans.

He looks at Trauber.
Trauber hesitates and then shakes her head no as Tim comes up.

GENE
Take yours off. And give me the brush.

Tim hands Gene the bag with the brush and gloves. He takes off his shirt and puts it in his pants.

He and Gene look at Trauber.

TRAUBER
I could get mud from the creek and cover myself.

GENE
Naw. We'll stick to the bushes.

Gene starts through the squeaky gate.

Trauber and Tim look at each other and then follow him.

EXT. THE BACK YARD - NIGHT

They sneak toward a garage in single file.

A large bush grows behind the garage. The sound of movement comes from the bush.

They freeze and then start to run.

SANDY (V.O.)

Tim?

They freeze again. Gene and Trauber turn to look at Tim.

TIM

(hesitantly)

Yeah? I'm Tim.

Sandy emerges from beneath the bush.

SANDY

Oh, my gosh. I thought you had to be
killers or railroad bums, or something.

Tim crosses his arms to cover his skinny chest.

TIM

Ah, Hi, Sandy.

SANDY

But you aren't in the game are you?
What are you doin' here?

TIM

Well, ah...

TRAUBER

They can't tell you. They're on a Boy
Scout mission. It's a secret.

GENE

Yeah. We gotta go.

TRAUBER

Some merit badge thing. They won't even tell me.

SANDY

Wow. That is so neat. All we get to do is sew stuff.

TRAUBER

Yeah, I know.

The three of them start to leave.

TIM

See yah.

SANDY

Yeah, see yah.

EXT. A YARD IN THE SHADOW OF A HOUSE - NIGHT

The three of them sit in the grass beside each other.

Across the street is the Ellis house.

There are lights downstairs and coming from a second-floor room. The Morris Minor is parked beside the house.

GENE

The limey bastard. He's up there makin' another model.

TIM

Listen, Gene. I been thinkin'. I'll give you half the money I made today if you don't do it.

TRAUBER

Yeah, me too. With the money you made you could almost pay Stone off.

Gene stands up and pulls on the gloves. He takes the can in one hand and the paint brush in the other.

GENE

You know what Fred Nielsen told me?
He said Stone didn't touch Ellis. He
didn't have to. All he had to do was ask.
He sang about you, too, Tim. Told him you
was with me.

TIM

Yeah, I'm a...

TRAUBER

Accomplice.

TIM

Yeah.

GENE

Payin' Stone's not gonna get Ellis. He
squealed on me. I'm gonna get the limey
bastard, that's all. If you two ain't
helpin' I'll do it myself.

TRAUBER

Okay.

TIM

Okay.

GENE

I'm gonna go between them two houses and
behind the garage to the back door.
You cross the street. Wait five minutes
and throw the firecracker at the front
door.

TRAUBER

Let's synchronize our watches.

They adjust their watches.

Gene runs beneath the streetlight and disappears between
the houses.

Tim and Trauber remain seated as Trauber concentrates on
the illuminated dial of her watch.

Finally, she pokes Tim. They jump up and run across the street.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE ELLIS HOUSE - NIGHT

Trauber and Tim arrive and crouch behind a bush. Trauber looks again at her watch.

She pulls out the firecracker and Tim pulls out the matches.

TRAUBER

Now.

Tim strikes a match and lights the fuse.

At that moment, a door slams and Gene appears, racing toward them from the back of the house.

As he passes the Morris Minor he empties the contents of the can on the car.

He throws the empty can into the yard and runs down the street.

The empty can bounces across the lawn. The flame nears the firecracker.

TIM

Throw it!

Trauber throws the firecracker and the two of them flee in different directions.

The front door flies open and Mrs. Ellis storms onto the landing.

MRS. ELLIS

Gene Somner you come back here. Stop those boys. Arsonists. Arsonists. They poured gasoline all over my kitchen.

The firecracker explodes at her feet.

MRS. ELLIS

My Dear God. Now, they're shooting
at me. Police. Help.

EXT. A BACK YARD - NIGHT

Running in a panic and panting, Tim trips on a chaise
lounge and falls.

A dog starts barking.

Tim gets up holding his shin and continues to run.

EXT. ANOTHER BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Tim knocks over a pole supporting a clothes line and nearly
crashes into a swing set.

He keeps running.

EXT. THE STREET WHERE THE CHILDREN WERE PLAYING - NIGHT

The street is illuminated by the street light.

Tim stops at the corner of a house, holding his side and
gasping for air.

After a moment, he walks across the street and then begins
to run again.

EXT. THE BACK OF A HOUSE - NIGHT

Tim runs toward the back of the house.

SANDY (V.O.)

Boo!

Terrified, Tim nearly falls over.

Sandy emerges from the shadows, giggling hysterically.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Sandy.

SANDY

Just a minute. I'm comin'.

Embarrassed, Tim pulls his t-shirt out of his jeans and starts to put it on.

Sandy rushes him and with both hands pushes against his chest.

Tim catches his balance but drops the t-shirt.

Sandy rushes him again. She grabs him around the waist and tries to lift him off the ground.

Tim squirms free and for a moment the two of them stare at one another.

Sandy rushes him again. Tim raises his hands but is afraid to put them in the wrong place.

She grabs him around the middle and his face gets buried in her hair at the back of her neck.

Tim half swoons, smelling her hair and skin. He loses his balance and the two of them tumble to the ground.

SANDY

(in triumph)

Yes!

Locked together they roll down a small hill.

When they stop, Tim is on his back and Sandy straddles his bare chest.

She pushes against his shoulders.

SANDY

One.

Tim struggles and lifts his shoulder off the ground. Sandy presses her hands harder against his shoulders.

SANDY

One.

Tim cannot find a place to put his flailing hands. He lifts his belly to push against her, but she leans forward and pushes even harder against his shoulders.

SANDY

Two. Three. You lose.

Tim stops struggling and the two of them are motionless.

Sandy's hands are on his shoulders. His arms crossed, Tim's hands clasp her forearms.

They stare at one another, panting.

THE MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Sandy, where are you?

Sandy pushes away and Tim releases his grip on her arms. She gets to her feet.

SANDY

See yah.

TIM

Yeah, see yah.

The sound of crickets as Sandy leaves.

INT. SANDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sandy enters the unlighted room, closing the door behind her. She hurries to the window and looks out.

Tim is visible, lying on his back in the grass.

He gets up, finds his shirt, pulls it on and stumbles toward the gate at the bottom of the yard.

EXT. THE RAILROAD TRACK CROSSING - NIGHT

The patrol car approaches and stops at the crossing.

Chuck uses the spotlight to scan the area. It reveals the three bicycles lying in the weeds.

Chuck exits the patrol car, and with his unlit flashlight in hand, he begins to walk down the tracks.

GENE (O.S.)

I heard the firecracker.

TIM (O.S.)
You couldn't a heard it. We hadn't
thrown it yet.

GENE (O.S.)
A car musta backfired.

TRAUBER (O.S.)
No car backfired. You just couldn't wait.

GENE (O.S.)
She walked in just as...

Chuck turns on his flashlight, showing the three of them
sitting dejectedly on the rails.

CHUCK
Gentlemen.

Tim jumps to his feet.

TIM
Officer Burkholtz. I... We...
She's a girl.

TRAUBER
Just shut up, Tim.

GENE
Yeah.

Chuck motions and the three of them start walking with him
back up the track.

INT. THE POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Standing at a desk in the background, Trauber takes up the
phone. Tim waits beside her.

In the foreground, Gene stands with Chuck.

Mrs. Ellis paces angrily back and forth in between.
The floorboards creak as she walks.

MRS. ELLIS

I step into the kitchen, Officer, to make a cup of tea. I switch on the light...

TRAUBER

Dad, I'm at the station.... No, the police station...

MRS. ELLIS

...and that boy is standing there big as life...

Trauber hands the phone to Tim who begins to dial.

GENE

(frightened, his teeth chattering)

Will you call for me?

MRS. ELLIS

...holding a can and a paint brush like an arsonist...

CHUCK

No, son, this is one call you will have to make yourself.

MRS. ELLIS

...and he throws the brush and sloshes that awful poison...

TIM

Hello, Dad...?

INT. THE SAME - A SHORT TIME LATER

At a large table, Tim, Gene and Trauber, looking small, sit in a row.

Frank Holter, Mr. Somner and Mr. Schwartztraub stand behind them.

Chuck sits at the desk while Mrs. Ellis continues to pace back and forth across the creaking floor.

MRS. ELLIS

...and when my brave husband went
outside...

CHUCK

I understand, Mrs. Ellis...

MRS. ELLIS

...our car, that we brought all the...

CHUCK

Yes, a crime has ...

MRS. ELLIS

...the paint ruined.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

I'll have someone out first thing in the
morning, Mrs. Ellis...

MRS. ELLIS

...absolutely ruined.

MR. SCHWARTZENTRAUB

...to schedule the kitchen repair...

MRS. ELLIS

Boys I had welcomed into our house
and now this girl shooting...

MR. SOMNER

Have your husband bring the car...

CHUCK

I understand it was a firecracker,
Mrs. Ellis.

FRANK

...and the families will pay...

CHUCK

Sit down, Mrs. Ellis. I want you to
sit down.

Mrs. Ellis reluctantly takes a seat the end of the table.

FRANK

...and these kids will get theirs at home. You can count on that.

The other fathers nod.

CHUCK

You three stand now and apologize.

MRS. ELLIS

It was like the Blitz...

CHUCK

Stand up...

With their fathers angrily poking them the three get sheepishly to their feet.

MRS. ELLIS

Sirens, bombing raids...

THE THREE FATHERS

(in unison)

Apologize!

Trauber, Tim and Gene approach Mrs. Ellis and one by one mumble their apologies.

CHUCK

Together we can resolve this outside of the courtroom.

EXT. A RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

An autumn day

A pickup truck pulls up to a house and stops
Chuck gets out of the truck. This is our first sight of him in daylight and out of uniform. He's wearing hunting garb.

Chuck walks to the front door and knocks.

Gene and Mrs. Somner come to the door. She carries The Baby. Visible at the back of the room is Mr. Somner. He glowers, a cigar in his mouth.

CHUCK

I'll have him home safe for supper, Ma'am.

MRS. SOMNER

Yes, and thank you.

Gene and Chuck leave.

INT. THE SOMNER FRONT ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Somner turns toward her husband.

MRS. SOMNER

(with steely resolve)

Not a word, you hear me? Not if he
can help that boy.

EXT. A GRAVEL COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The pickup truck comes down the road and arrives at a lane
that leads to a farmyard with a house and outbuildings.

At the intersection of the road and lane is a mailbox.
On the side of the mailbox: "HANRETTY".

The truck pulls into the farmyard and stops in front of the
house.

Gene and Chuck get out and approach the house. They carry
shotguns.

The front door opens and MR. and MRS. HANRETTY, an older
couple, appear in the doorway.

We see Chuck make introductions and Gene shaking hands with
the couple.

CHUCK

Thought we might see if we could scare
up a rabbit or two, if you don't mind.

MRS. HANRETTY

You are welcome anytime, Chuck.

MR. HANRETTY

Yes, Chuck, you know that.

Chuck and Gene descend the porch stairs. They walk across
the farmyard and into a field of corn stubble.

Mr. and Mrs. Hanretty watch from the doorway.
On the wall behind them are two framed photographs.

One shows Tom and Chuck in high-school baseball uniforms,
each with an arm slung casually over the other's shoulder.

The second shows Tom in his Marine dress uniform.

THE END