

MUENDA

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Screenplay
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FADE IN

EXT. LOWER CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD DAY

A car pulls up in front of a dilapidated house.
The paint is faded and the house is in need of repair.

A BLACK MAN in his mid-thirties gets out of the car and
walks to the front door.

He knocks.

Fred Willis, a WHITE MAN in his mid-sixties opens the door.

FRED

Hey, Daniel. How are you?
Come on in.

DANIEL

Hi, dad.

Daniel walks in.

INT. FRED WILLIS' LIVING ROOM DAY

Fred shakes Daniel's hand.

The living room is sparsely furnished.
Daniel sits on a beat-up couch.

There is a TV with rabbit ears in a corner of the room. A
football game is on. Framed photographs hanging on the wall.

FRED

Would you like something to
drink, or eat, or anything?

DANIEL

What do you have to drink?

FRED

Diet soda?

DANIEL

Sure.

Fred leaves the living room.

FRED (OS)

So, how are you doing, son?

DANIEL

I'm doing good.

Fred returns with two glasses and hands one to Daniel.
He sits on a worn out chair.

FRED

And Darlene. How is she doing?

DANIEL

Busy as hell, but the business is going well, so she's happy.

FRED

You've got a great woman there.

DANIEL

(pointing at TV)
That's for sure. Listen, dad. Do you ever miss playing?

FRED

No. I had fun with football. But I moved on.

DANIEL

You don't regret not turning pro?

FRED

Nah! Never.

DANIEL

These guys are making big money.

FRED

Now, they do. But not when I was playing.

DANIEL

It was still pretty good money.

FRED

Yeah. But it's just a game.

Daniel takes a sip.

DANIEL

So, when are you going to come for a visit?

FRED

My car's falling apart. I can't really afford to get it fixed right now. But when I get the car taken care of, I'll come see you guys.

DANIEL

(annoyed)

Well. How much do you need
to get it fixed?

FRED

The mechanic said about
five-hundred dollars.

DANIEL

I can give you the money.
Get it fixed and come on
over.

FRED

I don't want your money,
Daniel.

DANIEL

Why not? It's no big deal.

FRED

That's right. It's no big
deal. I'll take care of it.

The TV screen starts to go all fuzzy.

Fred walks to the Television set, moves the rabbit ears
about and taps the TV on the side.

The football game returns.

FRED

There you go. It just needs
a loving touch.

Fred returns to his chair.

DANIEL

Dad. Why are you living like
this?

FRED

You know I don't have much
money.

DANIEL

I don't understand. It's
bad enough you didn't
want to become a pro foot
ball player, but you took
early retirement from your
job.

FRED

I just couldn't work there
anymore.

FRED

I didn't agree with the new policy.

DANIEL

So what? You could've stuck it out a few more years and retired with full benefits and pension. I just don't see what the problem with that was. Now you have half the pension and you can't even afford to come visit us. That's ridiculous.

FRED

Daniel, if you don't believe in what you're doing, then you shouldn't be doing it. I didn't believe that the new policy was put in place to help people. That's what I was hired to do. To help people.

DANIEL

So, you just couldn't suck it up anyway and retire with full pension? I don't understand the big deal.

FRED

Do you know about integrity? If you don't believe in what you are doing, you've lost a lot more than money. You have to be true to yourself.

DANIEL

Well, dad. Why don't you tell me about integrity.

FRED

I'll tell you this much, son. I don't have trouble sleeping at night.

DANIEL

You frustrate the hell out of me. I gotta go to the bathroom.

Daniel gets up and walks away.

Fred watches the football game.

His gaze is drawn to the photographs hanging above the TV.

PHOTOGRAPH of a YOUNG MAN wearing football uniform #22.

PHOTOGRAPH of the young man with his WIFE.

PHOTOGRAPH of the couple with ONE BLACK BOY and ONE BLACK GIRL.

Daniel returns.

FRED
(pointing)
Hand me that photograph.

DANIEL
The one in your football
uniform?

Fred nods.

EXT. HIGHSCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD DAY 1959

The stands are filled with KIDS and ADULTS cheering the TEAMS on the field.

The OFFENSIVE LINE of the visiting team is on the field.

The CENTRE snaps the ball to the QUARTERBACK.

Linebacker #22 runs past the centre and rushes the quarterback.

The quarterback looks down field to throw the ball, but does not see anyone open.

He sees #22 rushing him and he begins to run. #22 cuts him off and tackles him.

The quarterback fumbles the ball. #22 bounces back up, picks up the ball and runs down the field.

#22 scores a touch down.

The crowd jumps up cheering.

#22 jogs off the field to the team bench.

He is congratulated by his team-mates and the COACH.

COACH
Nice job, Willis.

Willis takes his helmet off and just smiles at the coach.

He takes a sip of water.

Willis looks toward the CHEERLEADERS on the sideline. They are 17-18 years old.

One of them, a REDHEAD looks at him and smiles.

The KICKER scores the conversion point.

Willis puts his helmet back on and runs onto the field.

INT. HIGHSCHOOL BOYS' LOCKER ROOM

Willis is sitting on a bench putting his shoes on.

A TEAM MATE comes over.

JEROME

So, where's the party tonight,
Fred?

FRED

I don't know. I was going to
head down to my parents' cabin
in Point Roberts for the weekend.

JEROME

You want some company? We'll
get a few guys to come down.

FRED

Sure, sounds good.

EXT. POINT ROBERTS NIGHT

FIFTY TEENAGERS are partying on the beach.
V.O. *Kansas City* by Wilbert Harrison playing on portable
radio.

A huge bonfire is burning in front of several cabins on the
beach.

Fred is sitting on a log with Jerome and a few team-mates.

The redhead comes over to where Fred is sitting and puts her
hand out.

Fred takes her hand.

REDHEAD

Come for a walk with me.

Fred stands up and walks off with her.

They walk past the kids to a more secluded area.

REDHEAD

So, what are your plans Fred
Willis?

FRED

Plans for what?

Fred and the redhead are facing each other.

REDHEAD

For the summer, for next year,
for college, you know...

FRED

I don't know. I'll probably go
to UBC. I have no idea what I'm
going to major in, though. How
about you? What are your plans?

REDHEAD

I'm going to UBC as well, but
I have no idea of a major either
to tell you the truth. Are you
going to play football at UBC?

FRED

Oh, yeah. It's fun.

REDHEAD

What about summer? Any big plans?

Fred nods toward the bonfire.

FRED

Jer has an Aunt in Sacramento
he's going down to visit this
summer, and he's invited me to
come along. So, I think I'll do
that. It should be pretty fun.

REDHEAD

That's cool. I think I'm just
sticking around here for the
summer.

They hold hands and walk a little further.

The redhead stops, suddenly.

FRED

You want to go back?

REDHEAD

Do you like me, Fred?

FRED

Of course.

REDHEAD

Do you think I'm pretty?

Fred smiles.

FRED

I think you're beautiful.

REDHEAD

So, how come you never
asked me out?

FRED

I don't know. I guess I
don't really feel like
having a girlfriend right
now. I'm busy with football,
rugby, school, you know. I'm
having too much fun to get
serious about a relationship.

The redhead kisses him.

REDHEAD

I can be a lot of fun, too.

FRED

I'm sure you can be.

Fred kisses her back.

INT. POINT ROBERTS CABIN SUNRISE

A dozen kids are asleep in the cabin.

The redhead is sleeping in a sleeping bag. She is off to one
corner, by herself.

She awakes and looks around.

Fred is not there.

She gets up and walks to the window.

EXT. POINT ROBERTS BEACH SUNRISE

Fred is out on the water in a rowboat.

He is fishing with a simple line.

A fish bites. He yanks the line.

Fred pulls the line in the boat.

The fish is on the surface flapping about.

Fred leans over the side of the rowboat and grabs the fish.

EXT. POINT ROBERTS CABIN DAY

Fred places two salmon on the picnic table in front of the
cabin.

The door of the cabin opens and kids begin to stumble out, half-asleep.

The song "*Sleep Walk*" by Johnny and Santo drifts out from inside the cabin.

Fred grabs a metal pail by the side of the cabin and runs up the hill.

He runs across the field to a chicken coop. The chickens are pecking about outside the coop.

INT. CHICKEN COOP DAY

The coop is empty, except for eggs in nests.

Fred collects some eggs and puts them in the pail.

He runs out the door.

EXT. CHICKEN COOP DAY

Fred is running back toward the beach.

A FARMER is walking toward the coop.

Fred waves at him.

FARMER

Did you leave me any eggs,
Fred?

FRED

I only took a few. Thanks.

The farmer waves back.

Fred runs down the hill back to the cabin.

He puts the pail on the table next to the salmon.

He looks out to the ocean.

EXT. OCEAN CALIFORNIA COAST DAY

Jerome and Fred are sitting in an Austin-Healy convertible.

Jerome is driving.

V.O. radio is playing *Big Hunk O' Love* by Elvis Presley.

A highway sign reads: Sacramento

EXT. SACRAMENTO RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD DAY

Jerome and Fred pull up in front of a house.

Jerome's AUNT Pauline is in the front yard tending to her flowers. Her back is turned.

Jerome and Fred walk toward her.

JEROME
Aunty Pauline.

Pauline turns and smiles.

PAULINE
You boys made it alright?

JEROME
Sure did. It's a great drive.

Jerome hugs Pauline.

JEROME
Meet my friend, Fred.

Pauline shakes Fred's hand.

PAULINE
Nice to meet you, Fred.

FRED
Nice to meet you, too..

PAULINE
Just call me Pauline. Come
on in. You boys hungry?

Jerome and Fred look at each other, smiling.

INT. PAULINE'S HOUSE KITCHEN DAY

Pauline puts a plate of sandwiches on the kitchen table where Jerome and Fred are seated.

The boys grab some sandwiches. They are famished.

PAULINE
I have to go to the office
to pick up some work. Why don't
you boys come with me? It'll
give you a chance to see the
city a little bit more. Then
we'll come back and I'll make
you a nice dinner.

EXT. INSURANCE BUILDING DAY

Pauline, Jerome and Fred enter the building.

PEOPLE come and go using the revolving doors.

INT. INSURANCE BUILDING OFFICE DAY

A RECEPTIONIST is sitting behind a desk inside the office.
V.O. RADIO *Red Nichols playing cornet.*

Pauline walks in, followed by the boys.

INSURANCE CO. RECEPTIONIST
Pauline. What are you doing
here on your day off?

PAULINE
I just came in to grab a
few files to look over,
otherwise work is going to
pile up and I'll never catch up.

INSURANCE CO. RECEPTIONIST
And are these boys with you?

PAULINE
Yes. Meet my nephew, Jerome
and his friend, Fred, from
Canada. They're visiting me
for a while.

Jerome and Fred wave at the receptionist.

INSURANCE CO. RECEPTIONIST
If you're here for a while,
I've got a daughter about
your age. I'm sure she and
her friends wouldn't mind
showing you around town.

JEROME
Sounds great.

PAULINE
You boys have a seat while
I go get the files.

Jerome and Fred sit down in the reception.

A MAN in his forties walks in the office.

INSURANCE CO. RECEPTIONIST
Hello, Mr. Avery.

Pauline returns with files in her hands.

TEX
(Southern accent)
Hey, what are you doing here?

PAULINE
Just picking up some work.

TEX

You girls keep working like this you're gonna take over my business. I oughta give you a raise. HA. HA.

PAULINE

Ready, boys?

TEX

And who have we here?

PAULINE

My nephew and his friend from Canada.

Tex shakes their hands.

TEX

Hello, boys.

JEROME

Hello, Mr. Avery.

TEX

Just call me Tex. You're big, Fred. Play any football up there in Canada?

FRED

I play a little.

TEX

Shoot, son. I tell you what. I coach football for Sacramento and I'm always on the lookout for good players. Why don't you come to scrimmage this Saturday? We'll have a look at you, and besides we're short a few players, so you'll have lots of playing time.

FRED

Yeah! Why not.

TEX

Eagle Ridge field at 11am. You know where it is?

PAULINE

I'll bring him over, Mr. Avery.

TEX

Hope you can make it, son.

PAULINE

Ready for some dinner, boys?

INT. PAULINE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM EVENING

Pauline, Jerome and Fred are sitting in the living room looking at the black and white television.

Dick Clark hosting American Bandstand.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

Pauline gets up and walks over to open the door.

TWO YOUNG WOMEN are standing outside.

PAULINE
Hello, Marjorie. Come in.

MARJORIE
This is my friend, Sharon.

PAULINE.
Hello. Come in. Come in.

Marjorie and Sharon walk into the living room.

Jerome and Fred sit up straight as they see them walk in.

PAULINE
(pointing)
This is Jerome and Fred.

Marjorie and Sharon stand there, bashful.

JEROME
Hi!

PAULINE
I'm glad that you've come.

MARJORIE
Sharon brought her dad's car.

FRED
Sounds good.

SHARON
Ready?

JEROME
Heck, yes.

PAULINE
Now, boys, don't be too late.

JEROME
Yes, Aunty Pauline. Bye!

The four young people walk out the door.

INT. SHARON'S CAR EVENING

Sharon is behind the wheel and Jerome is sitting in front with her. Marjorie is sitting behind Sharon and Fred is seated beside her.

SHARON

So, you have any amusement parks up in Canada?

JEROME

Yeah, we have a small one. Not big like Disney Land, though.

MARJORIE

Disney is fun. It's too far for tonight, but if you guys stick around for a while, maybe we could drive down there one day.

FRED

That would be fun.

Marjorie turns to Fred.

MARJORIE

Well, stick around for a little while, then.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK NIGHT

Sharon and Jerome, Marjorie and Fred are riding around in bumper cars.

The ride ends and they walk off.

They stop at a cotton candy cart and they all get some cotton candy.

They walk, surrounded by PEOPLE and VENDORS yelling.

Fred stops at a booth. The CARNY is spinning a football in his hand.

Tires are hanging on ropes from the ceiling at the back of the booth.

CARNY

Hey, pal. Wanna win a prize for your sweetie?

Fred looks at Marjorie.

FRED

I'll give it a shot.

Fred digs in his pocket and gives the carny some money.

CARNY

Good. Baby needs milk.

The Carny gives the football to Fred.

CARNY

You have to get the football
through the tires five times
in a row to win.

Fred takes the ball and throws it through the tire.

He repeats the feat four more times.

On the last throw, he wins.

Marjorie jumps for joy.

The Carny is not too happy.

Fred looks at Marjorie.

FRED

Take your pick.

Marjorie points to a big stuffed dinosaur.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK PARKING LOT NIGHT

Marjorie is holding Fred's hand, holding her dinosaur in the other.

Sharon is holding a bunch of smaller stuffed toys in her arms, and so is Jerome.

The lights go off in the amusement park.

EXT. PAULINE'S HOUSE NIGHT

Jerome and Sharon are kissing in front of the door.

INT. SHARON'S CAR BACK SEAT NIGHT

V.O. *Kiss-A-Me-Quick* by Jackson Toombs on the car radio.

MARJORIE

I really had a good time.

FRED

Yeah. It was really fun.

Marjorie and Fred look into each other's eyes. They kiss.

MARJORIE

Remember. We have a date for
Disney Land.

EXT. EAGLE RIDGE FIELD DAY

Coach Avery is standing on the side of the field with a clipboard. He has a cowboy hat on his head and a whistle around his neck.

THE TEAM is warming up on the field.

Some are wearing red jerseys and some are wearing green jerseys.

Tex sees Fred approaching.

TEX
Come on over, Fred. I'll
introduce you to the guys.

The coach blows his whistle and motions the players to come to the sideline.

The players come over, removing their helmets.

TEX
Boys. Say hello to Fred.
He's from Canada and plays
a little football up there.

PLAYERS
Hi!

TEX
Take five, boys.

The players go to the bench to drink some water.

There are a few black players and they sit together at one end of the bench.

The white players sit together.

TEX
We'll put you on the red
team, Fred.

Tex motions to an ASSISTANT COACH on the side.

The assistant comes over.

TEX
Larry. Give Fred some gear.
And a red jersey.

Fred leaves with Larry.

TEX
Alright. The rest of you
on the field.

The greens are the offensive line and they face the reds.

The greens move the ball forward and have a fairly easy time against the reds.

Fred returns, wearing a red jersey.

The coach blows the whistle.

TEX

Get in there, Fred.

He joins the huddle and one of the players runs off the field.

Fred is playing his normal position of linebacker.

The greens snap the ball and set the play in motion.

A green runs through the line, past Fred, goes on a slant and turns around ready to catch the ball.

Fred jumps up in the air and bats the ball down.

The coach, standing on the sideline, smiles.

They try a number of plays, but with Fred on defence, the greens are not able to move the ball for a first down and they have to punt.

The coach blows his whistle and motions Fred to come over. Trainers run unto the field carrying water bottles.

TEX

That was pretty impressive, son.

Fred drinks some water and catches his breath.

The coach motions to one of the green players.

TEX

Patrick, take five and give Fred your jersey.

Patrick takes off his jersey.

TEX

How about if I put you on the offensive line, son?

Fred takes the jersey.

FRED

Sounds good.

Fred switches jerseys and runs onto the field.

The coach blows his whistle.

Fred stands out again as an offensive player and scores a touch down.

The coach blows his whistle.

TEX

Alright, boys. Give me five
Laps around the field and
you can hit the showers.

He motions Fred to come over.

TEX

You're a helluva football
player, son. You said you're
just playing high school
football?

FRED

I just graduated.

TEX

You got any good college
teams up in Canada?

FRED

They're okay, I guess.

TEX

Well, we've got some real
good teams down here. And
you've got talent, son. You
need to work that talent.

FRED

I just play for fun, sir.
It's just a game to me.

TEX

Yeah. You should play for fun,
but you got a hell of a lot
of talent to be so casual
about it. You're going to
play college ball up in Canada,
right?

FRED

I guess so. I'm going to try
out for UBC.

TEX

UBC. Why don't you come and
play for me, right here?

The coach blows his whistle and motions to the players.

The coach walks toward the building. Fred walks beside him.

FRED

I'm just here on vacation,
sir.

TEX

Shoot, son. This ain't no
vacation. You want a vacation,
you go to Fiji or Jamaica.
You wanna play college football,
you come to the States.

FRED

But my family, my friends,
there all up in Canada.

The coach pats Fred on the back.

TEX

Sure, sure, family and
friends are important, but
it's a big world out there.
Alls I'm saying is that
you've got to open your
horizons. Besides, Vancouver
is not that far from here.

FRED

I don't think so, sir.

TEX

I tell you what. You come
play for me and I'll pay
your tuition. Think about
that.

FRED

Thank you, sir, but I just
don't want to go to Sacramento
college.

The players run past the coach and Fred toward the building.

TEX

Listen to me, son. Find any
university down here and I'll
take care of your tuition. All
you need to do is pass your
SATs.

FRED

I don't think so, sir.

The coach is exasperated.

He lifts his cowboy hat and scratches his head.

TEX

Now, don't be so quick to give me an answer, son. You need to think on it. Talk it over with your folks, you know. What I'm offering you is big.

FRED

I know it's big, sir, and I appreciate the offer, but like I said, football is just a game to me.

They reach the building.

TEX

Dang, son. You're killing me, here. Think on it and let me know if you change your mind, alright? Do that for me, at least.

FRED

Okay, I will. And thanks for letting me play today.

Fred enters the building, leaving the coach there to rub the nape of his neck.

INT. FOOTBALL TEAM LOCKER ROOM DAY

Some players are showering, some are drying off, some are getting dressed.

The black players are in a corner, away from the whites.

Fred looks in the direction of the black players.

FRED

Good game, eh?

The black players do not respond.

EXT. DISNEY LAND DAY

Fred, Marjorie, Sharon and Jerome are strolling down Main Street.

Jerome looks around and sees the shooting gallery.

JEROME

Look. A shooting gallery. I heard about it. I'm going.

MARJORIE

I'll pass.

FRED
I'll sit this one out, too.

SHARON
I'll go with you.

JEROME
Yeah?

SHARON
Sure. Let's go.

Jerome and Sharon walk toward the shooting gallery.

JEROME
See you wimps later.

FRED
Knock yourselves out.

Fred and Marjorie walk a little further and sit on a bench.

MARJORIE
So, how long are you guys
staying? It's been what,
a month now?

FRED
Yeah, I guess it's been a
month. Man, I don't know.
We weren't supposed to stay
that long, but I'm having a
really good time.

MARJORIE
So am I.

FRED
Summer's coming to an end.
We'll have to go soon.

MARJORIE
Is there any reason why you
can't stay here?

FRED
You mean move to the States?

MARJORIE
Yes. Why not?

FRED
I miss my folks and friends.
Besides it would be a really
big move.

Marjorie looks in Fred's eyes.

MARJORIE

You said my mom's boss offered you a scholarship to go to school down here. It's a great opportunity. Have you thought about it?

FRED

Yeah, I thought about it. He just wants me for his football team. I told him I like football, but not to make a career of it. If my heart is not in it, it wouldn't be fair to him because he pays my tuition.

MARJORIE

Look at it this way. You like Football, so it would be fair. He gets a good football player and you get free education. You don't have to turn pro. And even if you don't want to go to Sacramento State, there are lots of other good schools around.

FRED

Like I said. I don't want to be obligated to play football just to keep the scholarship.

MARJORIE

Talk to the coach, then. Set some terms so that you're not tied to anything you're not comfortable with.

FRED

I don't know.

MARJORIE

What do you have to lose by checking the other schools.

Fred and Marjorie continue to sit.

Their gaze is drawn toward the shooting gallery.

MARJORIE

I've never had so much fun in my whole life as I've had with you. This has been the best summer and I don't want it to end.

Fred takes Marjorie's hand.

EXT. BUS STOP BERKELEY UNIVERSITY DAY

A bus is pulling up to the stop.

Fred is looking out a window of the bus.

The bus comes to a stop and Fred exits the bus.

He is walking on the sidewalk toward a fence.

A sign reads BERKELEY UNIVERSITY.

Fred takes the lane and wanders around the campus grounds.

He comes upon a demonstration.

YOUNG PEOPLE are holding up SLATE placards and banners.

Fred sits on the grass and tries to listen to a student addressing the crowd.

He turns to a STUDENT sitting near him.

FRED

Who's that talking?

STUDENT

Oh. It's Fritjof Thygeson.

FRITJOF

(faint)

We want affordable housing
for the students and fair
wages. For all students...

Fred gets up and walks toward the football stadium.

The TEAM is practicing on the field.

EXT. BUS STOP BERKELEY UNIVERSITY NIGHT

Fred is standing at the bus stop.

INT. INSURANCE BUILDING MR. AVERY'S OFFICE DAY

Mr. Avery is sitting behind his desk, looking at files.

BUZZ

Mr. Avery flicks a button on the intercom on his desk.

TEX

Yes?

INSURANCE CO. RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Fred Willis here to see you,
Mr. Avery.

TEX

Send him in.

There is a knock on the door.

TEX

Come on in.

The door opens and Fred walks in.

TEX

How you doin', son?

FRED

I'm doing alright, sir.

TEX

Well, that's good. What can I do you for?

FRED

I'm thinking about Berkeley.

TEX

What about Berkeley?

FRED

I'm thinking that if your offer still stands, I'd like to go to Berkeley.

TEX

Berkeley?

FRED

That's right.

Mr. Avery looks at him for a moment, sizing him up and down. He smiles. He drops the file on his desk.

TEX

The offer does still stand. But you're gonna have to pass the SATs first. You do good in school?

FRED

I do alright.

Mr. Avery motions to Fred to one of the chairs.

TEX

Sit down. Sit down. I'm gonna make some calls and see when you can write your SATs.

Mr. Avery picks up the telephone receiver and dials.

FRED
Thank you, sir.

Fred sits down.

TEX
Hello, operator? Can I please
have Berkeley State University
Administration?

Mr. Avery looks at Fred and smiles, shaking his head.

TEX
Berkeley...

INT. BERKELEY CAMPUS HALLWAY DAY

Fred is walking along as STUDENTS hurry past him. He is looking at a piece of paper with a classroom number on it.

He stops in front of a door and proceeds through and down the steps inside a large lecture hall.

Fred walks all the way down to the front and receives test papers from an ASSISTANT PROFESSOR.

ASSISTANT
Don't look at the test before
the Professor gives you the
go ahead.

He finds a seat.

A PROFESSOR is standing on the stage behind the desk where his Assistant sits.

PROFESSOR
It's about time. Any more
stragglers and we'll have to
do the exam some other time.
You have eight hours to
complete the test. When you
are finished, return your
answers to the desk and
quietly leave the hall.
Results will be mailed to
you within two weeks. And
don't forget to write your
name on each answer sheet.

CLOCK: 9:05

PROFESSOR
You may begin.

CLOCK: 3:43

There are many empty seats in the lecture hall.

Fred walks to the desk and hands his papers to the Assistant Professor.

INT. DINER DAY

Fred is sitting with Marjorie.

They each have a plate of burgers and fries, and glasses of milkshakes.

MARJORIE

So, what's next after you've been accepted at Berkeley.

FRED

I haven't been accepted yet. I can't stay down here with no job or school or anything. I guess I'll just go home and regroup if they turn me down.

MARJORIE

Why can't you stay, anyways?

FRED

You make it sound so simple

MARJORIE

It is simple.

FRED

We'll know soon enough. It's been two weeks already. I gave the address of the insurance office as my local address. I've asked your mom to call me if something comes in.

Marjorie opens her purse and throws a letter on the table.

It has a Berkeley return address.

MARJORIE

Mom gave it to me this morning. She knew we were meeting.

Fred picks it up and presents it to Marjorie.

FRED

You want to open it?

Marjorie recoils.

MARJORIE

No, it's yours. You open it.

Fred opens the envelope and pulls the paper out.

His head drops.

MARJORIE

Well?

Fred takes a sip from his milkshake.

MARJORIE

Fred...

FRED

(smiling)

I passed. 96%

Fred hands her the test results.

MARJORIE

Ninety-six percent?

Marjorie jumps up, runs around the table and hugs Fred.

MARJORIE

With marks like that, you
can pretty much take anything
you want.

FRED

Yeah. I guess I can.

The WAITRESS comes over.

WAITRESS

You kids want anything else?

FRED

No. Thank you!

The waitress leaves the bill and Marjorie returns to her seat.

MARJORIE

Maybe you could be a doctor
or a lawyer.

FRED

Or I could follow my lifelong
dream of becoming a garbage
collector.

MARJORIE

(frowning)

I don't understand you. Why
don't you take things more
seriously. Everything is a
big joke to you.

FRED

Why do you have to take
everything so seriously.

MARJORIE

Because not everything in life
is hunky dory like you make it
out to be. Nobody's offering me
a free scholarship. I have to
work very hard to pay for my
tuition. My mother can't afford
to put me through nursing
school. Life is not a game.

Fred shrugs and picks at his French fries.

Marjorie takes a sip of milkshake.

MARJORIE

I'm sorry, Fred. I shouldn't
have reacted like that. 96%.
Think about it.

FRED

You're probably right. I
should think about what the
hell I want to do with my life.

INT. BERKELEY FOOTBALL TEAM OFFICE DAY

Mr. Avery is standing in front of the COACH'S desk,
gesticulating. The Coach is a husky man in his forties.

TEX

I'm telling you, coach, this
kid can play some ball. Honestly,
I've never seen anybody with that
kind of intelligence for the game
at such a young age. He plays
like a senior and he just graduated
from high school. This kid has a
real future as a pro.

COACH

I don't need to be sold, Tex.
Let's bring him in.

Tex opens the office door.

Fred is standing on the other side, looking at framed
photographs of past players.

TEX

Come on in, Fred.

Fred enters the coach's office and shakes Tex's hand.

The coach gets up.

COACH

Tex tells me a lot about you.

Fred shakes his hand.

COACH

Listen. I'm having a bunch
of players over at my place
later on. Why don't you drop
by and meet some of the guys.
Even Tex is gonna be there.

The coach and Tex both laugh.

EXT. BACKYARD COACH'S MANSION DAY

TWENTY PLAYERS wearing suits are gathered around the coach
in his backyard.

There are no black players.

The sun glistens on the water of a large pool.

Tex is also there.

The guys are pumped.

COACH

Are you boys ready to party?

The players all CHEER.

COACH

Then, let the games begin.

The double doors at the back of the house open and 20
beautiful bikini-clad YOUNG LADIES file out.

They are followed by FOUR GUYS carrying two beer kegs.

Several girls remove their tops and dive into the pool.

Some of the guys quickly jump in the pool.

Fred is standing there taking in the scene.

The party heats up and the drinking has given way to
frolicking.

As the party rages on, Fred goes to the edge of the yard and
looks out over the San Francisco bay area and the Golden
Gate bridge.

He makes his way back into the house, nodding and smiling,
and quietly leaves the house.

EXT. MARJORIE'S HOUSE DAY

Fred is standing outside the door when Marjorie opens it.

"*Living Doll*" by *Cliff Richards* is playing inside.

MARJORIE

What are you doing here?
I thought you were at a team
party.

FRED

I was, but it's not really
my scene. You wanna get some
ice cream?

EXT. BERKELEY FOOTBALL FIELD DAY

The team is practising.

Fred is a middle linebacker.

The Center snaps the ball.

Fred rushes past the center and a linesman.

Fred gets in the face of the quarterback who misses his
throw.

The linesman, looking at Fred, spits on the ground.

The center turns to the linesman.

CENTER

Nice work. A few more plays
like that and we can kiss
our positions bye, bye.

The linesman GROWLS and gets into the huddle.

Second down and 10 yards to go.

QUARTERBACK

Hut one. Hut two.

The centre snaps the ball into the quarterback's hands.

The quarterback hands the ball to a running back.

The centre and the linesmen move to the right.

Fred manages to squeeze through and cuts off the running
back.

He hits him and the ball goes flying.

The nearby players run for the loose ball.

Fred gets to the ball first and dives on it.

He is tackled and covered by the other players.

The disgruntled linesman arrives and steps on Fred's hand.

The coach blows the whistle.

LINESMAN

(smirking)

Sorry. Does that hurt?

COACH

That's enough. Give me laps.

INT. BERKELEY FOOTBALL TEAM LOCKER ROOM DAY

The players are getting dressed. Fred notices that there are only THREE BLACK players on the team, and they are off to one side talking amongst themselves.

The coach walks in.

One of the black players calls out to him.

TYRONE

Coach.

COACH

What is it?

TYRONE

I have to miss practice,
tomorrow.

COACH

Miss practice. Why?

TYRONE

I have a term paper I need
to finish and I'm really
struggling with it.

COACH

Who's your professor?

TYRONE

Mr. Clarkson.

COACH

I'll get Johnny to whip that
paper up for you, so you
don't have to miss practice.

Fred moves a little closer.

TYRONE

But coach, I don't feel good about having other guys doing my work and tests for me, just so I can stay on the team. I don't feel like I'm actually getting an education.

The coach pokes Tyrone in the chest with his index finger.

COACH

So, you're more concerned about getting an education than about the well-being of this team, is that right?

TYRONE

It's not that, coach. I just want to learn while I'm here so that I actually have something to fall back on after university.

COACH

Listen, boy, you need to be realistic. You're here on a football scholarship. Ain't nobody gonna care about you having an education. This is a white man's world. Trust me, boy, if you don't make the pros, you're gonna be parking cars or doing dishes somewhere. That's the facts of life. Now I suggest you make it to practice tomorrow. Let me worry about your paper. You got that?

TYRONE

Alright, I guess.

COACH

There you go. Be sensible, now.

The coach leaves and Tyrone and Fred make eye contact.

Tyrone returns to his locker.

Fred walks up to him.

FRED

I couldn't help overhearing. What's your paper on?

TYRONE

English literature. Why do you ask?

FRED

Maybe I could help you.

TYRONE

Thanks, but don't worry about it. Coach is probably right anyways.

FRED

It's no trouble at all. What time is your first class?

TYRONE

My first class is at 9am.

FRED

Okay. Meet me at the library at 7. I'll help you finish that paper.

INT. MARJORIE'S LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Fred and Marjorie are sitting on a couch watching Ed Sullivan on TV.

FRED

I think I know what I want to do with my life.

MARJORIE

Oh yeah! What's that?

FRED

Teach underprivileged kids.

MARJORIE

Woah! That's a pretty big commitment. Why do you want to do that?

FRED

I don't know. It's always been there, I guess. But it's not until I got here and saw all the discrimination that it dawned on me.

MARJORIE

Well, I don't know what it's like in Canada, but that's the way things are around here.

Fred walks over to the TV set and turns it off.

He walks back to sit close to Marjorie.

Marjorie props herself up.

FRED

When I was little, my grandparents ran a farm. It was big enough that they needed help to operate it. In the summer time my parents and I would visit, but I was too young to lend a hand.

MARJORIE

So?

FRED

It was during the war and they had a Japanese woman helping them. When they started rounding up the Japanese people to send them to camps, they came to the farm.

MARJORIE

You didn't have anything to do with that.

FRED

No, but it left a big impression on me, which I had forgotten. It came back to me in the locker room when I saw how the black players were treated.

MARJORIE

What big impression?

FRED

My grandmother hid the Japanese woman, much like many people in Europe hid Jews. One day, a policeman came snooping around. I guess some disgruntled neighbor reported her to the security commission.

MARJORIE

What did the cop do?

FRED

It's not so much what the cop did. It's what my grandmother did. I'll never forget.

MARJORIE

What did she do, then?

Fred stretches his legs on the ottoman.

Marjorie rests her head on the back of the couch.

FRED

She told the policeman that he would have to arrest her. There was no way she was going to let him take the Japanese woman.

MARJORIE

What was the policeman's reaction?

FRED

He hesitated. He knew my grandmother, a small place and all. He just said that he would have to make a report to his superiors.

MARJORIE

Then, what happened?

FRED

Nothing. They never came back. I guess they figured she was just a dumb farm hand and she wasn't much of a risk. Besides, they needed the farms to keep going.

MARJORIE

But a teacher?

FRED

Why not? You know, they blamed the Japanese for everything, just like they did the Jews. Now they're blaming the blacks for everything. It's just not right. You did tell me to take life more seriously.

MARJORIE

Yeah, but...

Marjorie nestles her head on Fred's shoulder.

FRED

And I think I'm gonna quit football. I'll finish the season, but next year I'm out. My grades are high enough, I should be able to get an academic scholarship.

MARJORIE

(sigh)

Fred...

FRED

One more thing. I love you,
Marjorie.

Marjorie puts her arms around Fred's neck and kisses him.

INT. BERKELEY UNIVERSITY HALL DAY

A PROFESSOR walks down the hall. He is wearing a sports jacket, chino pants and sneakers. He is carrying a brief case.

He stops in front of the library and looks inside.

Fred is sitting at a table with Tyrone and his black girlfriend, MARY.

The professor continues down the hall.

He enters his classroom.

Some of the STUDENTS are there already. OTHERS file in.

Fred enters with Tyrone and Mary. They take a seat.

CUT TO: END OF CLASS

PROFESSOR

Remember your book report on
Twilight of the Idols, by
Nietzsche. It's due next week.
Have a good weekend everybody.

The students pack up and leave the classroom.

PROFESSOR

Fred. Can I speak with you
for a moment?

FRED

Sure.

The last student has left.

PROFESSOR

I've noticed that you're here
pretty early every morning
tutoring students.

FRED

That's right. Is there a problem?

PROFESSOR

Do you get paid for it?

FRED

No. I'm not asking to get paid.

PROFESSOR

So, why do you do it? You have much time on your hands?

FRED

Not really, but we all need a hand from time to time, right?

PROFESSOR

That's true.

FRED

So, is that a problem?

PROFESSOR

No problem. I just don't see too many kids going out of their way to help the black kids succeed.

FRED

I don't understand why, but I've noticed that too.

PROFESSOR

Maybe you're not looking in the right spot. You want to expand your horizons, Fred?

FRED

It depends.

PROFESSOR

A bunch of us are driving to the San Joaquin valley, tomorrow.

FRED

What's the purpose of the trip?

PROFESSOR

We're going to hear Cesar Chavez talk about the Bracero program.

FRED

What's that?

PROFESSOR

It allows farmers to recruit farm workers from Mexico and other places. I can tell you that it's not working.

FRED

My grandparents had a farm. Sure, I'll go.

PROFESSOR

Meet me in front of the gate.
I'll be driving a white van.
We leave at 6:30.

FRED

I'll be there. Well, I've got
to get back to the library.

PROFESSOR

For more tutoring?

FRED

Yeah!

EXT. BERKELEY UNIVERSITY NIGHT

Fred is walking across the football field with Tyrone and
Mary.

MARY

What's Canada like, Fred?

FRED

Not much different than here,
really.

TYRONE

Are there a lot of black folks?

FRED

More back East, Toronto,
Halifax, but not so much in
Vancouver where I'm from.

MARY

My Aunt lives in Toronto, but
I've never been. She always
comes down here to visit us.

They hear LAUGHTER and COMMOTION nearby.

Five white guys are coming toward them. They are drunk.

They are members of the football team.

LINESMAN

I'm here to play ball.
I ain't got time for books.

CENTER

Don't worry. Coach takes
care of that.

They notice Fred, Tyrone and Mary.

They get closer.

LINESMAN

Well, if it ain't that nigger
lover and his friends.

CENTER

Yeah. He could do your homework.

The linesman gets in Fred's face.

LINESMAN

Never. He quit the team. He's
too good for us.

2nd LINESMAN

But not too good for them niggers.

FRED

Come on guys. We're just headed
home.

The center's attention turns to Mary.

CENTER

Lookie, here. You're real
pretty, for a black girl.

LINESMAN

Come and have a drink with us.

CENTER

What? Cat got your tongue.

Fred steps in between Mary and the center.

The linesman pushes Fred back.

LINESMAN

Not you. You're not invited.

The center puts his arms around Mary's waist.

Tyrone tries to pull him back, but the center pushes him to
the ground.

FRED

We just want to go home.

CENTER

Who's stopping you? But not her,
she's coming with us.

2ND LINESMAN

You all looked scared. You've
got nothing to be scared about.

FRED

Come on. Leave her alone.

LINESMAN

We said she's coming with us.
What are you gonna do about it,
nigger lover?

Tyrone gets back up and jumps on the center.

The 2nd linesman jumps on Tyrone's back.

The linesman turns toward Fred and raises his fists.

LINESMAN

I've been wanting to do this
for a long time. You're gonna
get it, boy.

The linesman throws a punch at Fred and hits him in the eye.

Fred falls to the ground.

The linesman starts kicking him.

The center and the 2nd linesman are beating Tyrone.

Mary runs screaming toward a group of BLACK GUYS coming in
her direction.

The linesman looks toward Mary and sees the black guys
coming toward them.

LINESMAN

Let's go, boys.

The two linesmen and the center take off.

Mary returns and helps Tyrone.

The black guys arrive and want to punch Fred.

TYRONE

No, no. He's with us.

Fred is bleeding.

FRED

What the hell was that about?

TYRONE

Welcome to black America, Fred.

EXT. BERKELEY UNIVERSITY GATE DAY

Fred is standing there with a black eye and bruised cheek.

The white van pulls up.

The side door opens. Fred steps inside the van.

INT. WHITE VAN DAY

V.O. *Give me Bombolo, by Ry-Co Jazz* playing on the radio.

The professor is driving. A WHITE MAN is next to him.

TWO BLACK MEN are sitting in the back of the van and one of the black man, Hand, is huge and rough looking.

ONE HISPANIC MAN is also seated in the back of the van.

PROFESSOR

Good morning, Fred.

Fred is feeling the bump on his face.

PROFESSOR

Let me introduce you.

FRED

I don't know if I should be here. I had a pretty rough night.

HAND

(gentle smile)

I heard, kid. It'll be alright. Call me Hand.

Hand sticks his huge hand out to Fred.

FRED

News travels fast.

Fred shakes the hand.

PROFESSOR

And sitting beside Hand is Colby.

Colby nods.

RAMON

And I'm Ramon.

PROFESSOR

Ramon is modest. He's a personal friend of Senor Chavez. And of course, you know Professor Evans.

EVANS

Call me, Eddie(beat)off campus.

Fred notices a book leaning on its spine next to Hand.

Hand pulls the book out and gives it to Fred.

The Prophet, by Khalil Gibran.

INT. ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH DAY

The church is fairly CROWDED.

Marjorie and Fred are standing in a pew halfway up the center aisle.

The PRIEST is blessing the congregation.

MARJORIE
(whispering)
Thank you!

EXT. ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH DAY

It's a beautiful sunny day. Marjorie and Fred are slowly walking away from the church, holding hands.

FRED
Why did you thank me?

MARJORIE
I know you don't like going
to church.

FRED
In the words Eric Blair, people
are double thinkers.

Fred nods toward the church.

FRED
In there, they say "love thy
neighbour", but out here, they
act completely differently.

MARJORIE
I guess your trip to the San
Joaquin valley wasn't too
inspiring.

FRED
Oh, it was. Some people try
to put into action what they
read in the good book.

Marjorie presses her body against Fred's as they continue to walk.

They walk through a park.

SOUND OF BIRDS AND CHILDREN in the distance.

Marjorie and Fred sit on a bench. Fred turns to Marjorie.

FRED
Marjorie. Will you marry me?

EXT. DEL PASO HEIGHTS PLAYGROUND DAY

Hand and Fred are walking on a street near the playground.

A GROUP of teenage kids are playing in the street.

KID 1
Hey, Hand. What's up?

HAND
Not much. Say "hi" to Fred.

KID 1
Hi.

FRED
Hi, guys.

HAND
Have you all seen Simon,
around?

KID 2
He's at the park, playing
ball.

HAND
(pointing)
Over there?

KID 2
Yeah. That's right.

HAND
Be cool, now.

FRED
See you guys later.

The kids return to playing in the street.

Hand and Fred make their way to the park.

HAND
Life is hard for these kids.

FRED
How so?

HAND
Access to cheap drugs in the
black and latino neighborhoods.
And when they get caught,
they're sent down at a much
greater rate and for far
longer sentences than your
non-colored folks.

Hand and Fred are reaching the play ground.

HAND

And I wouldn't be surprised
if the government of these here
United States was in on it. They
wanna keep California white. So,
you try your best to give those
kids hope, but it's not easy.

Hand and Fred walk up to the baseball field.

TEENAGERS are playing baseball.

Hand and Fred watch behind a fence.

The inning ends. The teams are walking off the field.

HAND

(loud)

Simon...

Simon has almost reached his bench when he looks toward
Hand.

Simon runs over to Hand and Fred.

SIMON

Hi, Hand.

HAND

Can I talk to you for a
second, Simon?

SIMON

Of course. I'm not due at bat
for a while.

HAND

You remember our talk about
a job?

SIMON

Sure, I'd like to work.
You know. Help out my mom.

HAND

I forgot. This is Fred.

SIMON

Hello.

FRED

Hi.

SIMON

So, what about work?

HAND

I was speaking to a friend of mine, Mr. Greenway. He runs a warehouse on Spencer and he needs a junior worker to stock inventory as it comes in. I've put in a good word for you. Are you interested?

SIMON

Are you serious, Hand?

HAND

I told him all about you. That you're a good, hard working kid. He said that if you want it, the job is yours.

SIMON

Don't he want to meet me first?

HAND

No. He trusts me. All you gotta do is be there on Monday. And be there at 7am, sharp.

Simon runs to the gate, around the fence and gives Hand a big hug.

SIMON

Thank you so much, Hand. I'll work real hard.

The inning has started.

Fred is watching a BLACK KID at bat.

The PITCHER throws the ball.

The black kid hits a long single.

He starts running.

He reaches the first base, but does not stop.

He rounds 1st and speeds toward 2nd base.

The OUTFIELDER throws the ball to the SHORT STOP.

But not in time to retire the black kid.

FRED

Who's that?

SIMON

Oh! That's Felix.

HAND

I've never seen him around.

SIMON

No. He's a fruit picker. Him and his family. He's not gonna be around for much longer. which is too bad, 'cause he's so fast.

FRED

You can say that again. Do you mind introducing me, Simon?

SIMON

Sure.

The next BATTER is at the plate.

The pitcher gets ready.

Felix steals third base.

The pitcher repositions himself, and throws the ball.

The batter hits a single and Felix runs home.

CUT TO: The game ends.

Simon comes over with Felix.

Simon

Felix. This is my friend, Hand. And this is Fred. He'd like to meet you.

FRED

Hi, Felix. That was mighty impressive.

FELIX

Yeah, man. I can run.

FRED

Do you play football. You have the built for it. With your speed..

FELIX

I play sometimes. I like it better than baseball.

FRED

Maybe I can help you and your folks. Do you have time to play some more? I've got a football in the car.

INT. INSURANCE BUILDING MR. AVERY'S OFFICE DAY

Mr. Avery is sitting at his desk, working.

His office door is open, and Fred walks in.

FRED

Hello, Mr. Avery.

TEX

Howdy, there, Fred. How the hell are ya?

FRED

I'm good, and you?

TEX

If I was any better I don't know what I would do with myself. Although, I must say I was sorry to hear that you quit the football team after your freshman year. But you did tell me that the game wasn't that important to you. Anyway, what brings you around?

FRED

Well, I'm here to talk about football, actually. You know I've been working in the Del Paso Heights Community.

TEX

Yes. I've been hearing real good things about the work you're doing up there. I'm real proud of you, son.

FRED

I want to talk to you about a kid I met a couple of weeks ago. He's from the Caribbean and his family are all fruit pickers who travel all over, following the crops as they come into season.

TEX

Sit down, son. And?

FRED

Because they move all the time, and he has to work, he hasn't had the chance to get much of an education. But he's very smart.

FRED

And here's the thing, I've been playing football with him and he really has a lot of talent. He's incredibly fast and strong, and picks up the game real well.

TEX

Has he got Fred Willis type talent?

FRED

He's got a lot more going for him that I had. For one, he loves playing.

TEX

So, what do you need from me?

FRED

He has all the talent, Mr. Avery, but he has no education for getting into college. I mean he only has a grade 7 or 8 education. That's why I'm here.

TEX

If he's as good as you say he is, we need to direct that talent. There's a program in my home state for disadvantaged kids. They take into account the fact that they face extreme obstacles. They work with the students and families, if there is a family, and help them receive some post secondary education.

FRED

His family goes to Texas for harvesting.

TEX

Yeah, and I've got contacts. Some of my boys are sons of farmers. We could probably find work all year round for his family.

FRED

Sounds great.

TEX

I think that's the way to go. And he'll still have to pass the SATs to be accepted in that program.

FRED

Like I said, he's a pretty bright kid. I'd be willing to work with him for his SATs.

TEX

If anybody can, it's you. I'm having a practice on Saturday. Why don't you bring him out? If this kid is half as good as you say he is, I'd love to see him play.

FRED

I'll make sure he's there. Thank you, Mr. Avery. You won't regret it.

TEX

Are you hungry, Fred? I'm about ready to go get a bite of lunch. Wanna join me?

Mr. Avery gets up.

FRED

That sounds good.

TEX

How's my girl, Marjorie?

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE DAY

V.O. Piano playing *Nice 'N' Easy* by Frank Sinatra.
Marjorie and Sharon are having drinks.

A MAN walks toward them. He is drunk.

DRUNK

Hey, little ladies.

Sharon shoves him.

SHARON

Buzz off, creep.

MARJORIE

At least I'm getting some attention.

SHARON

You don't mean that. Fred is a great guy.

MARJORIE

He's great, alright. Except I never see him. And he's skipping class more and more.

Marjorie takes a big gulp of her drink.

SHARON
Easy does it, Marj.

EXT. EAGLE RIDGE FIELD DAY

The red and green teams are on the field.

Mr. Avery and Fred are standing on the side line.

Felix is on the offensive side and plays a running back position.

The ball is snapped and the quarterback gives the ball to Felix.

Felix dashes forward, rolls off of one lineman, darts through several players and runs to score a touch down.

FRED
You see what I'm talking about?

TEX
I never seen that kinda speed before.

Mr. Avery blows the whistle and motions Felix to come of the field.

Felix runs to the sideline.

FELIX
Did I do alright?

TEX
Let me put it this way, son.
How do you feel about moving to Texas?

Felix has a big grin on his face. Fred LAUGHS.

INT. PROFESSOR EVANS' CLASSROOM DAY

The classroom is empty.

Fred walks in, not making a sound.

CLOSE SHOT of two clasped male hands.

FRED
Professor Evans?

Professor Evans and the professor who drove the white van quickly unclasp their hands.

Fred moves closer.

EVANS

Hi, Fred.

PROFESSOR

Hello, Fred.

EVANS

We've noticed that you spend less and less time in class. Yet, your grades are still in the top.

FRED

I know.

PROFESSOR

You do a lot of work in the community, and that's good, but you're supposed to attend class.

EVANS

But since you're helping out the disadvantaged and the minorities,

Evans and the professor look at each other, briefly.

EVANS

we're willing to cover for you.

PROFESSOR

But you'll have to maintain your grades. It'll be harder for anybody to question you if your marks are high.

FRED

Thank you.

EXT. SACRAMENTO RESIDENTIAL STREET NIGHT

A beat up 1960 red Ford Falcon stops in front of a house.

Fred, Tyrone and Mary step out of the car.

They walk up to the front door.

Fred knocks on the door.

A BLACK MAN opens the door and lets them in.

INT. SACRAMENTO HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

A group of 40 PEOPLE, mostly black, are cramped in the living room.

The two Berkeley professors are there.

They make eye contact with Fred, Tyrone and Mary, and smile.

Hand is standing in a corner of the living room, holding up a newspaper.

HAND

You've all seen or heard what happened in Birmingham and Anniston. The Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. said "don't stop now. Keep moving. Don't get weary. We will wear them down with our capacity to suffer".

The crowd cheers and claps.

HAND

The fire-bombings and beatings have garnered international attention and scrutiny. Now is the time for us to be stronger than ever and push on. The world watches. The movement is succeeding. But it will take guts and courage to keep the momentum going.

Hand grabs a pile of papers resting on a side table near him. He holds them up.

HAND

I have applications here to join CORE. Anyone who wishes to partake in the freedom rides needs to sign a form.

The black man who had opened the front door takes a stack of forms from Hand.

HAND

It states the following: I understand that I shall be participating in a non-violent protest against racial discrimination and that arrest and personal injury to me might result, and that by signing this application I waive all rights to damages against CORE.

The forms are being passed along to all in the living room.

Fred receives one.

A BLACK MAN in a suit is studying Fred intently.

HAND

I've signed the application without hesitation. I will choose to die if that's what it takes to defend the rights of all men and women as stated in the constitution. And to me that includes the desegregation of all interstate transportation and its facilities and terminals.

People find places to sign the form.

The same man who had distributed the form is standing near the front door.

As they leave the house, they hand the form back to him.

HAND

The next bus ride to Mississippi leaves on the 28th. So, this Sunday I encourage all participants and supporters to join in prayer at our church.

Hand makes his way to Fred. He shakes his hand.

HAND

I'm glad you could make it, Fred. Will I see you in church on Sunday?

FRED

I don't think so. It's a bit too hypocritical for me.

HAND

What churches have you been to?

FRED

Marjorie is catholic. So, mostly her church.

HAND

But you've never been to a black church?

FRED

No.

Hand laughs.

HAND

Then, you've never been to church. Come with me this Sunday, and bring Marjorie. She might enjoy herself.

FRED
I'll see. I'll meet you there
if we come.

HAND
Do you know where it is?

FRED
Yes.

INT. FRED'S CAR DAY

Fred is driving. Marjorie sits in the passenger seat.

V.O. *Roses are Red* by Bobby Vinton playing on car radio.

FRED
Thank you.

MARJORIE
Why?

FRED
I know you don't like coming
to church.

Marjorie smiles and pushes him on the shoulder.

MARJORIE
See what a good wife I am.
I'll certainly not tell my
mother that I'm going to a
black church. She would never
let me live it down.

FRED
She'll come around. How can
she be blind to all the
discrimination around her?

MARJORIE
Don't start, please.

INT. BLACK CHURCH DAY

The church is filled with BLACK PEOPLE.

There are a FEW WHITE PEOPLE. The two professors are there.

CHOIR SINGING.

Everyone is dancing to the rhythm.

The congregation is echoing some of the words.

Fred is swaying back and forth.

CUT TO CHURCH HALL: FELLOWSHIP TIME AFTER THE CHURCH SERVICE

Marjorie and the two professors are off to one side of the refreshment table.

TWO ELDERLY BLACK LADIES, wearing dresses and hats are behind the refreshment table addressing Marjorie and the professors.

1ST CHURCH LADY

And to think that Pastor
William Seymour himself
visited our little church.

2ND CHURCH LADY

That's right. Not too long
before he passed away.

Hand and Fred are standing at the end of the table.

The black man who was studying Fred intently at the house gathering is standing at the other end of the table.

HAND

Like I said at the meeting,
many operators of bus terminals
in the south are still enforcing
segregation. That's why CORE
organizes the bus rides. If
Afro-Americans ride openly in
Buses arriving at their terminals,
they will have no choice but to
desegregate their operations, as
stated by Federal law.

FRED

Yeah! As you pointed out, the
media, not just in the states,
but around the world, is
watching.

The black man in a suit walks toward Hand and Fred.

HAND

Hey, Office Jones. Let me
introduce you to Fred Willis.

OFFICER JONES

Huh, huh!

Officer Jones keeps on walking.

HAND

He ain't too keen on white folks.

FRED

Who can blame him?

HAND

So, are you in?

FRED

The bus ride? It sounds a bit too dangerous for my taste. And convincing Marjorie to let me go is going to be another story all together.

HAND

I won't lie to you, Fred. The supporters of segregation will do whatever to make sure we don't integrate the interstate transit system. The Federal Marshals are there and if we ride the buses all through the south, they will have to protect us and enforce the Federal law.

FRED

A long time ago, I learned from my grandmother that you need to fight for what you feel is right. I believe segregation is wrong, so I will join you on the ride.

HAND

Nobody would hold it against you if choose not to, but if you're sure...

FRED

I'm sure.

EXT. MISSISSIPI TOWN DAY

The bus is travelling through the town, escorted by 4 police cars.

Both sides of the street are lined with WHITE PEOPLE.

They are throwing things at the bus.

Eggs, fruits, vegetables, stones hit the bus.

A number of men walk toward the bus, holding baseball bats, clubs and lead pipes.

They start smashing the bus.

The driver drives on.

Someone throws a brick and it smashes a passenger window.

The pelting intensifies.

The mob grows louder.

Someone throws a Molotov cocktail.

It hits the bus on the roof and engulfs a portion of it in flames.

The bus comes to a stop and the door opens.

A man, holding a bat, rushes toward the door.
He raises the bat.

Hand walks out first.

The man is overwhelmed by Hand's stature and does not swing.

A FEDERAL MARSHAL, holding a bullhorn, is standing nearby.

FEDERAL MARSHAL
Drop the bat.

OTHER OFFICERS arrive.

Some policemen have dogs on leashes.

The man keeps the bat cocked, standing firm.

NATIONAL GUARDSMEN arrive.

Fred and the other passengers walk off the bus as it continues to burn.

The angry mob rush toward the officers and the bus passengers.

The officers holding the dogs let them attack the passengers as much as the mob.

Policemen holding billyclubs start hitting people.

RIOT - SLOW MOTION - V.O. *I Hold No Grudge by Nina Simone*

INT. LOCAL JAIL DAY

Hand, Fred and other passengers are being held in a cell.
Some are bandaged up. Blood is seeping through the gauze.

Hand's arm is broken and in a sling.

The next cell is filled with white people.

Some of them are also hurt, but they have better bandages.

WHITE GUY
Why don't you all coons and
coon lovers go back to fucking
Africa.

HAND

After more than four hundred years of oppression, my black brothers and sisters have suffered too long to be denied equal rights as American citizens.

WHITE MAN

Fucking niggers.

HAND

You push anyone into a corner and they're going to come at you swinging. But we won't use bats and guns like our white oppressors. Our strength is unity, courage and perseverance. We will not be denied.

A PRISON GUARD walks in.

PRISON GUARD

Shut up. All of you.

INT. MARJORIE'S HOUSE DAY

Fred is lying on the couch, still bruised.

Marjorie walks in with a glass of iced tea.

She hands it to him.

MARJORIE

Promise me, Fred, that you'll never go on a bus ride again.

FRED

What? Not even in Sacramento?

MARJORIE

Funny. I should call Uncle Milt. You could be on his show.

FRED

I promise.

Fred takes a sip.

FRED

I want to change schools. Leave Berkeley and transfer to Sacramento to be with you.

MARJORIE

You would do that?

Marjorie gently kisses one of Fred's bruises.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO COLUMBUS AVENUE DAY

V.O. *Tengo/Tango* by Cannonball Adderley playing on car Radio.
Fred is driving by the City Lights bookstore.

THREE MEN walk out of the store; LeRoi Jones, Allen Ginsberg
and Jack Kerouac.

INT. FRED'S CAR DAY

Fred does a double take as the three men walk out.

EXT. DEL PASO HEIGHTS MARYSVILLE BOULEVARD DAY

Fred's car is going along on the boulevard.

The car turns on a side street.

Simon and his friends are playing in the distance.

INT. FRED'S CAR DAY

V.O. *8540 Twelfth Street* by Bill "Yusef Lateef" Huddleston.
Fred looks in his rearview mirror.

He sees a police car pulling up behind him.

The red light on top of the car is flashing and the siren is
sounding.

Fred pulls the car over and puts the gearshift in park.

He looks in his side view mirror.

Officer Jones steps out of the police car and walks up to
Fred's driver side door.

OFFICER JONES

Well, well. You just can't
stay out of trouble, can you
boy?

FRED

Why am I being pulled over,
Officer Jones. I wasn't
speeding.

OFFICER JONES

I'll decide if you were speeding,
or not. Get out of the car.

Fred steps out of the car.

OFFICER JONES

Put your hands on the car.

FRED

Why?

Officer Jones puts his hand on his revolver.

OFFICER JONES

I'm not gonna ask you again.

Fred turns around and puts his hands up against the car.

OFFICER JONES

You seem like a nice kid, but obviously you're not too smart. Folks around here don't want a lot of nigger lovers causing trouble in their neighborhood.

Simon and his friends look toward the flashing red light.

OFFICER JONES

What is it you think you're accomplishing?

FRED

I'm just trying to help the people of this community.

OFFICER JONES

We're doing just fine without you. and who do you think you're helping? Niggers? After you feel you've done your good deed, we'll still be here fighting. We don't need your help.

FRED

I beg to differ. This community needs all the help it can get.

Officer Jones is becoming angrier, oblivious to Simon and the others as they get closer.

OFFICER JONES

Is that a fact?

Officer Jones kicks Fred's leg and he falls to the ground.

Fred is holding his leg in pain.

Officer Jones pulls out the nightstick from his belt.

FRED

You can arrest me as many times as you want. I'm still going to do what is right.

Officer Jones lifts up the stick.

Fred raises his arm to protect himself.

Simon and the others are right behind Officer Jones.

SIMON

Put it down.

Office Jones turns around and looks at the assembled gang.

SIMON

Your day is gonna get real
bad if you don't put that
nightstick where it belongs.

Office Jones lowers his stick.

SIMON

Tell you what, Officer Jones.
You hit Mr. Willis and you
got yourself a whole lot of
angry nigga's to deal with.

OFFICER JONES

How 'bout this" Why don't
I arrest all you little
punks? How about that?

Fred stands up and leans against his car, favoring his leg.

SIMON

Why don't you try? I wish you
would. I can tell you that
Hand, other folk, black folk,
wouldn't be too happy about it.

Simon steps closer, followed by the others.

SIMON

Who you gonna arrest first?

Officer Jones pulls out his gun.

Simon and the rest take a step back.

SIMON

Listen here now, Officer Jones.
You need to let this whole
thing go. Fred is a good man,
so just let him go about his
business.

Officer Jones slowly walks to his car pointing his gun back
and forth between the kids and Fred.

Officer Jones reaches the police car, opens the driver door,
and stands behind it, pointing the gun at Fred.

OFFICER JONES

I'm keeping an eye on you, Whitie.

Officer Jones gets in his car and drives off.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE DAY

The place is mostly deserted.

A MALE PIANIST, dressed in a suit, plays.
COME RAIN OR COME SHINE

Marjorie and Sharon are sitting at a table.

SHARON

How are things?

MARJORIE

I'm struggling. I don't know
if I'm going to graduate.

SHARON

Have you told Fred? He could
help you.

MARJORIE

No, I didn't tell Fred and
I'm not going too. I love him
so much, yet...

Marjorie takes sip from her martini glass.

SHARON

Yet you resent him.

MARJORIE

Yes, but I don't want to
feel that way. I don't resent
him just because school is so
easy for him. I also resent
him because he spends so much
time helping out in the
community.

SHARON

It's not even his own community.
He's helping out spades and
spics.

MARJORIE

Sharon...

SHARON

Okay, okay.

MARJORIE

No. He's so smart. Honor roll
student and he hardly ever
shows up for class. His
professors covered for him at
Berkeley, and his professors
cover for him here.

SHARON

You mean his queer professors.

MARJORIE

Honestly, Sharon. (beat) Anyways,
I will work harder and I will
graduate.

SHARON

Betty Friedan would be proud
of you.

MARJORIE

I don't know if Betty would
be proud of what I'm going
to ask you next.

SHARON

Ask me what?

MARJORIE

How would you like to be
my bridesmaid?

SHARON

I hope he got down on his knee.

Marjorie nods.

Sharon hugs her.

EXT. DEL PASO HEIGHTS DAY

It's a very hot day. KIDS are running around shirtless
pointing water pistols at each other.

They wave to Fred as he walks by.

Fred stops in front of a house. The door is open, but the
screen door is closed.

He walks up to the door and taps on its wooden frame.

FRED

Hello. Anyone home?

Fred gently opens the screen door and walks in.

INT. DEL PASO HEIGHTS HOUSE DAY

Fred walks through the living room.

O.S. WOMAN CRYING

He continues to the kitchen.

A BLACK WOMAN is sitting at the kitchen table crying.

FRED

What's wrong, Mrs. Jackson?

MRS. JACKSON

Oh, Fred. They took them.
They took them, Fred.

FRED

Who, Mrs. Jackson. Who did
they take?

MRS. JACKSON

Mrs. Barrow from the Department
of Social Services. She came
with some officers and they
took Billy and Michael. They
took my kids from me, Fred.

Mrs. Jackson cries heavily.

FRED

But, why?

MRS. JACKSON

They said I wasn't fit to
raise my own kids because
I been drinking. I don't
drink, Fred. You know that.
It's been so hot lately,
so I have one cold beer
a day. That's it. One damned
beer and they say I been
drinking.

Mrs. Jackson continues to cry.

MRS. JACKSON

Where are your other kids?

They went over to Aunty Jenny's
house, last night.

FRED

Do they know what's happened?

MRS. JACKSON

No and I need to go over there
to make sure they're okay.

Mrs. Jackson jumps up, grabs her purse from the kitchen
counter and heads for the living room.

FRED

Wait, Mrs. Jackson. I'll go
over to Jenny's house. You
need to stay here in case
they come back.

Mrs. Jackson stops and returns to the kitchen.

MRS. JACKSON
You're right, Fred. I'll stay
here. And what if Billy and
Michael come back. I'll wait
right here.

Mrs. Jackson cries.

Fred walks up to her and hugs her.

She sits back down at the kitchen table.

Fred looks at the distraught Mrs. Jackson as he leaves.

MRS. JACKSON
God bless you, Fred.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES DAY

Fred walks up to the WHITE RECEPTIONIST.

FRED
I want to see Mrs. Barrow.

RECEPTIONIST
Do you have an appointment,
Mr. Willis?

FRED
No. I don't have an appointment.
Just tell her I'm here, please.
She'll see me.

The receptionist picks up the phone, angrily.

RECEPTIONIST
Fred Willis is here to see you,
Mrs. Barrow.

The receptionist hangs up the phone.

RECEPTIONIST
She'll be out in a moment.

FRED
Thank you.

Fred turns around and looks at the notices on the cork board.

A MIDDLE AGED WHITE WOMAN walks toward Fred from behind the receptionist.

MRS. BARROW
Mr. Willis. How are you?

FRED

Not too good, Mrs. Barrow. Why have you taken Mrs. Jackson's children away from her.

MRS. BARROW

Let's go into my office.

INT. MRS. BARROW'S OFFICE DAY

Mrs. Barrow is sitting behind her desk.

Fred is standing, pacing back and forth in front of her desk.

MRS. BARROW

Have a seat, Fred.

FRED

I don't want to sit down. What's going on with the Jackson kids?

MRS. BARROW

Just following the mandate as set out by the department of Social Services, Fred.

FRED

You know, it's bogus. Mrs. Jackson is a good mother.

MRS. BARROW

Is she, Fred? Mrs. Jackson is drinking beer in front of her kids. I cannot allow her to care for those kids when she is getting drunk in front of them.

FRED

You don't know what you're talking about. It's a hundred degrees out there, so she has one beer to cool down. One beer.

MRS. BARROW

Specific regulations are in place and I'm required to follow them. I have to take action when a parent is drinking openly in front of their kids.

Fred walks up to her desk and slams his hand on it.

Mrs. Barrow jumps back in her seat.

FRED

That's crap. What the hell is the difference between you having a couple of glasses of wine at the dinner table with your family present and her having 1 beer in front of her kids.

MRS. BARROW

I'm not receiving money from the government, that's the difference.

FRED

So, it's not a matter of drinking. It's actually a matter of being poor. And black?

MRS. BARROW

This conversation is over, Mr. Willis.

FRED

We'll see about that. Mrs. Jackson is a good mother. She needs her kids and they need her.

Fred walks up to the door and grabs the doorknob.

FRED

And who the hell do you think gives you money, Mrs. Barrow? It's the government.

MRS. BARROW

Yes. But I work for it. Fred, you can't save every family.

FRED

Maybe not every family, but at least this one.

Fred slams the door behind him.

EXT. TEXAS FOOTBALL FIELD DAY

OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE LINES are practising at center field.

Mr. Avery is on the sideline.

TWO WHITE MEN wearing suits are standing next to him.

They are watching one player in particular, Felix.

The offensive huddle breaks and they take their place.
The CENTER snaps the ball to the QUARTERBACK.

The quarterback hands it to Felix.

Felix dashes past his linesmen and through the defensive line.

The linebackers miss the tackle.

He heads for the secondary and blows past them.

He runs all the way to the end zone without slowing down.

MR. AVERY

What did I tell you, boys?
What did I tell you?

NFL SCOUT 1

He's pretty impressive.

NFL SCOUT 2

When is he graduating?

MR. AVERY

Next year.

NFL SCOUT 1

Do you mind if we have a
talk with him?

MR. AVERY

Be my guest, boys. I say
be my guest.

EXT. SACRAMENTO UNIVERSITY GROUNDS DAY

Fred and Marjorie are holding hands and walking away from the university.

They are wearing graduation gowns and mortarboards.

OTHER GRADUATES mill about.

MARJORIE

Let's hurry, Fred. I have to
go to the shop to pick up my
wedding dress.

They start running.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM DAY

Blame It On The Bossa Nova by Eydie Gorme playing.
A wedding reception is in full swing.

Marjorie and her mother, the receptionist at the insurance company, Pauline and Sharon are seated at one of the tables.

PAULINE

Any plans for a honeymoon,
Marjorie?

MARJORIE

Not really. I'm starting at
Sacramento County Hospital
next week. And Fred has been
offered a job as an assistant
teacher.

SHARON

They're gonna go spend a few
days at the cabin in Point
Roberts.

INSURANCE CO. RECEPTIONIST

It's about all they can
afford for now.

INT. PRIMARY SCHOOL SACRAMENTO DAY

Fred is walking down the corridor of the school with an
ELDERLY WHITE WOMAN.

ELDERLY TEACHER

Our focus here, Mr. Willis, is
to instil the virtues of learning
and to build a foundation around
the three Rs; arithmetic, reading
and writing.

Fred nods as they make their way to a classroom.

ELDERLY TEACHER

Please observe and try not to
be a distraction to the kids.
They have enough trouble
focussing as it is.

They enter the classroom to find 35 KIDS, mostly BLACK, aged
12-14.

ELDERLY TEACHER

Please be seated.

The kids take place at their desk.

Fred notices one student in particular, Aaron. He can barely
stay awake. Needle marks are visible on his arms.

ELDERLEY TEACHER

Now, children. Say hello to
Mr. Willis. He is here to observe.

Fred goes to the back of the class where there is an empty
seat.

The children do not react.

ELDERLY TEACHER
Alright. Get your books out
and turn to page 27.

The kids take their books out.

ELDERLY TEACHER
June. Please read from the top
of the page.

JUNE
(struggling)
Johnny said to Susan, I feel
very... reluctant...

ELDERLY TEACHER
Reluctant.

JUNE
Reluctant to take the jou, jor...

ELDERLY TEACHER
Journey.

JUNE
Journey.

ELDERLY TEACHER
Thank you, June. Now, Aaron.
Please continue where June stopped.

Aaron is scratching the scabs on his arms.

ELDERLY TEACHER
Do you hear me, Aaron?

AARON
What?

CUT TO: BELL RING

ELDERLY TEACHER
We will resume with our math
assignment after lunch, children.

The children file out.

ELDERLY TEACHER
Have you brought your lunch,
Mr. Willis?

Fred is still sitting at the back of the class.

FRED
Yes, I did.

ELDERLY TEACHER

Very well. There is a staff room where most of the faculty go at lunch time.

FRED

Thank you, but I think I'll get a bit of fresh air. It's a beautiful day.

ELDERLY TEACHER

I'll see you after lunch, then.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND DAY

Fred is sitting at a picnic table eating a sandwich.

Some of the boys from the class are shooting basketball.

Some of the girls are playing theatre ball.

Fred walks up to the boys.

FRED

Is there room for me?

BOY 1

You got a funny accent.

The boy throws him the ball.

Fred catches it. He dribbles it and sinks a basket.

FRED

What accent?

BOY 2

He right. You talk funny.

The ball comes back to Fred.

FRED

It just depends where you're from. It's called regionalisms.

BOY 1

What?

Fred sinks another basket.

BOY 2

So, where you from, then?

FRED

I'm from Canada.

A GIRL is standing by the side of the court.

GIRL
My daddy says there ain't
nottin' but Eskimos in Canada.

FRED
Yeah. I keep hearing that.
Funny thing, though, I never
met an Eskimo.

Fred looks at the school building. The elderly teacher is
looking at him through a window.

KID 1
We're gonna start a game.
You wanna play?

BELL RING

FRED
I'd like too, but we have to
go back to class. It's Math,
right?

GIRL
Yeah, but we all be failing
math.

FRED
You want some help?

The girl nods as she and other kids gather around Fred.

FRED
The thing with math is that
it gets a whole lot easier
when you can relate it back
to something that you understand,
like money.

BOY 1
We don't have money, so that
don't help none.

KIDS LAUGHING

FRED
I'll tell you what, though.
You learn math real well and
it'll make it a whole lot
easier for you to have money.

BOY 2
I'm gonna learn me some math,
then.

KIDS LAUGHING

INT. SACRAMENTO COUNTY HOSPITAL DAY
V.O. *I'll be home for Christmas* by Perry Como playing softly
on hospital PA system.

The hospital is decorated for Christmas.

HOSPITAL STAFF are wearing festive clothing.

Marjorie is pushing a cart filled with medical supplies.

She stops at the nurses' station.

A NURSE is sitting behind a counter.

NURSE

Hey, Marj.

MARJORIE

Hi!

NURSE

So, what are you and Fred
doing for the holidays?

MARJORIE

I'm going to visit my mother.
Fred is working.

NURSE

Fred sure works a lot.

MARJORIE

Tell me about it. I never
see him.

NURSE

Are you coming to the staff
party tonight?

MARJORIE

Fred has to work.

NURSE

So what? We don't have to
bring the spouse. And between
you and me, I would much
prefer it if husbands and
wives weren't invited. It
changes the whole scene.

MARJORIE

You're absolutely right.

Marjorie starts pushing the cart.

MARJORIE

I'll see you tonight.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Fred opens the door and throws his keys on a side table,
next to unopened mail.

Fred
Hello.

MARJORIE V.O.
I'm in the bathroom.

He picks up the mail and rifles through it.

He pulls an envelope out and puts the rest of the mail back
on the table.

Fred walks to the bathroom.

Marjorie is looking in the mirror, applying her mascara.

She is wearing a beautiful dress.

FRED
You look nice.

Marjorie turns around and puts her arms around Fred's neck.

MARJORIE
Why don't you come with me?

FRED
You know I've gotta work.
We're feeding the homeless.

Marjorie lets go of Fred.

MARJORIE
Feed the homeless. What
about me?

FRED
I promised I'd be there.
Have you been drinking?

MARJORIE
Just to put me in the spirit.
Don't change the subject.
What about your promise to me
on our wedding day?
(beat)
Never mind.

Marjorie storms out of the bathroom. Fred follows her.

She grabs her coat lying on the back of the couch.

She puts her coat on shrugging off Fred as he tries to help.

FRED

I can come by after and pick you up?

MARJORIE

Don't go out of your way. But it would be nice if you put half as much effort into your marriage as you do in the community. You don't even get paid. If you did, maybe we could afford to live somewhere else than this dump, and we could go on trips.

V.O. CAR HORN

MARJORIE

Sharon is here. That's right. I've invited Sharon.

Marjorie walks out the door.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER NIGHT

STREET PEOPLE are slowly moving along to get food.

The food is served by VOLUNTEERS.

Hand and Fred are standing side by side behind a table.

Hand is serving cranberry sauce.

Fred is handing out rolls.

They smile at the people going by in front of them.

FRED

I got a letter from Felix, today.

Hand dishes a ladle full of cranberry sauce on a plate.

HAND

Oh, yeah! What's he saying?

FRED

He's been offered a contract in the National Football League.

HAND

Wow. That's great.

FRED

Yes. Except that he's thinking of dropping out of college to start his football career.

Next to Fred stands a MAN who hands out glasses of water.

CLOSE SHOT GLASS OF WATER

INT. BAR NIGHT

CLOSE SHOT GLASS OF BEER

Marjorie is sitting at a table with Sharon and the station nurse. MEN are also seated at the same table near the bar.

They are all inebriated and laughing.

Sharon becomes serious and turns to Marjorie.

SHARON

Here comes Captain Bring-Down.

Marjorie turns toward the door.

Fred is standing near the bar looking around.

A BOUNCER walks up to him.

BOUNCER

This is a private function.

Marjorie gets up and stumbles over.

FRED

I'm just here to pick up my wife.

MARJORIE

It's okay. He's with me.

BOUNCER

Go ahead.

The bouncer steps away.

Marjorie embraces Fred and starts kissing him aggressively.

Fred gently pushes her away.

MARJORIE

Come on. I'll introduce you.

Marjorie grabs his hand. Fred follows, reluctantly.

They stand at the table.

NURSE

We wondered if you really existed.

Sharon is not happy.

The BARTENDER lines up several shooters.

MAN 1

Fred, you're just in time
to join us for a drink.

FRED

I'm good. Thanks.

MARJORIE

Jesus, Fred. Lighten up.

The others are getting up to go to the bar.

Sharon rolls up her eyes.

Marjorie pushes past Fred.

FRED

I'll have a seat. Let me
know when you're ready to
go.

Fred walks up to the end of the bar and sits on a stool.

The group is facing the bar. They each take a shooter.

Marjorie is standing between Sharon and the station nurse.

SHARON

Why did you have to bring him?

MARJORIE

I told him not to bother.

The group downs the shooter at the same time.

Marjorie slams the shot glass on the bar and walks up to
Fred.

MARJORIE

What? You're too good to
drink with me and my friends.

FRED

They're not your friends.

MARJORIE

Don't patronize me. And how
would you know? You can't be
bothered getting to know them.
And at least, they like me.

FRED

Look. I'm tired and I don't
feel like drinking. I'll just
wait here for you.

Marjorie turns around and heads for the table.

MARJORIE

I'm leaving. You were right,
Sharon. Captain bring down
over there tanked this joyful
soirée.

COLLECTIVE MOAN

Marjorie walks up to the cloakroom near the door.

The ATTENDANT hands Marjorie her coat.

Fred watches her.

Marjorie stumbles as she exits the bar.

Fred goes after Marjorie.

Sharon cuts him off.

Fred stops. Sharon sticks up a finger in his face.

SHARON

(drunk)

She made a big mistake,
marrying you. A pretty girl
like that. She could have
married anyone. A doctor...

EXT. BAR NIGHT

Marjorie is leaning against Fred's car, throwing up.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S KITCHEN DAY

V.O. *I love to sing by Andy Williams* playing on radio.
Fred is sitting at the kitchen table, reading the paper.

The sun is shining through the window above the sink.

A dishevelled Marjorie enters the kitchen dragging her feet.
She's wearing a robe and slippers.

She plops herself down on a chair, and turns off the radio.

Coffee urn on table, sugar bowl, creamer, spoons, napkins.
Fred pours coffee in a cup and gently slides it in front
of Marjorie.

MARJORIE

Any good news?

FRED

Nah! Stuff on the Warren
commission. Like he's gonna
find who killed Kennedy.

MARJORIE

I've had it, Fred.

FRED

What?

Fred puts the paper down. Photo of Earl Warren on cover.

MARJORIE

Living like this. I want to
move away from here.

FRED

Where do you want to go?

MARJORIE

Seattle.

FRED

Why Seattle?

MARJORIE

Because it's not here. And I've
been accepted to complete my
Master's Degree in Nursing.

FRED

And you didn't bother telling
me any of this.

MARJORIE

That's right, Fred. I didn't
bother. Because you don't
listen. And I'm past the
monologue stage. So, you're
free to come along, or you're
free to stay here.

FRED

Well, I've been thinking about
what you said. And you're right.
I have been neglecting our
marriage.

Marjorie perks up and takes the cup of coffee.

FRED

I'm sure I could teach in
Seattle. And Vancouver is
only 3 hours away.

MARJORIE

You're sounding more like the
Fred I fell in love with. And
we said we wanted a family.
We'd be close to your
parents.

EXT. DEL PASO HEIGHTS PLAYGROUND DAY

KIDS are playing in the distance.

Fred and Hand are sitting on a bench.

HAND

Moving to Seattle. It'll be a big change.

FRED

But that's not all. Marjorie has it in her head to start a family. We talked about it briefly before we got married, but I don't know if I'm ready to be a dad.

HAND

I think you would make a great dad.

FRED

That's what Marjorie says. She's seen the way I am with the kids.

HAND

So, are you considering it?

FRED

I just wonder if it would be the smartest thing to do at this time. She wants to study part time and raise a family. I don't even have a job lined up in Seattle.

HAND

Do you know I have a son?

FRED

No. You never told me.

HAND

I haven't seen him in over twelve years. He'd be fifteen years old by now. I was only eighteen when he was born. His mom and I were together for three years.

(beat)

Those were the best years of my life, being a dad.

FRED

What happened?

Fred turns and looks at Hand.

HAND

Prison. That's what happened.
I got sent down on drug charges.
Cheap shit flooding the neighborhood.
That's what I was telling you about
when you started helping the kids
around here. Nothing has changed
much since. Anyways, she came to
visit a couple of times, but I was
in for six years. She stopped coming.
I tell myself she had to move on,
for the sake of the boy.

FRED

Did you ever look for them?

HAND

When I got out, I didn't have
the heart to look for them.
I figured they had rebuilt
their lives and I didn't want
to spoil that, or worse, be
a burden to them.

FRED

That's rough.

HAND

Sometimes it's best to let
sleeping dogs lie. But my
point is that if anyone should
be a dad, it's you, Fred. You
can make it work.

FRED

You really think so?

HAND

Yes. And as far as work is
concerned, I've got a few
contacts in Seattle. Guys I met
in prison who are also trying
to turn their lives around.

INT. SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE DAY

A MAN sits behind a desk. Diplomas are hanging on the wall
behind him.

Fred sits in front of him across the desk.

The man is looking at Fred's resume, diploma and letters of
recommendation.

The man closes the folder.

MAN

You come highly recommended.
Seattle is not Vancouver.
Discrimination, segregation,
you name it. It's alive and
well, just as it is in the
rest of America.

FRED

Is this a test?

MAN

You have to be sure. Only
black kids are bussed to
white schools. We want to
bus white kids to black
schools. It's not popular.

FRED

I've had first hand experience
in California.

MAN

This ain't California either,
Mr. Willis. Open housing doesn't
even fly in this city.

FRED

I'm sure. Education is the key.

MAN

Well. You've got yourself
a job.

FRED

Bussing white kids, it is.

EXT. SEATTLE WATERFRONT DAY

Fred and Marjorie are walking along the shore.

OTHER PEOPLE are walking by.

MARJORIE

Aren't you going to tell me?

FRED

Tell you what?

MARJORIE

(growling)

About the interview. How did
it go?

FRED

Oh, that. I got it. I got
the job.

Marjorie stops walking, stopping Fred in the process.

MARJORIE
I'm so happy for you.

FRED.
For all of us, you mean.

MARJORIE
All of us?

FRED
Well, you, me and future baby.

Marjorie wraps her arms around Fred's neck.

MARJORIE
I love you. I love you.

Fred hugs her.

Marjorie pulls back wincing and clutches her side.

FRED
What's wrong?

MARJORIE
I don't know. My side's been
sore for days.

FRED
Did you hurt yourself?

MARJORIE
No. It just started.

Marjorie touches her side, gently.

Fred touches it and Marjorie recoils in pain.

FRED
It's that bad.

MARJORIE
Yes.

FRED
You better go see a doctor.

MARJORIE
I'll try to go tomorrow.

FRED
I think you should go now.
Let's go to the emergency.

Fred and Marjorie turn around and leave.

INT. SEATTLE HOSPITAL DAY

Fred is sitting in a waiting room.

DR. FRANKLIN approaches.

DR. FRANKLIN
Mr. Willis?

Fred jumps up.

DR. FRANKLIN
Would you follow me, please?

They walk down a corridor.

FRED
Is there a problem, Doctor?

DR. FRANKLIN
The pain your wife is experiencing
is caused by cirrhosis of the liver.

FRED
Cirrhosis?

DR. FRANKLIN
Yes. It's typically brought
on by years of alcohol abuse.

FRED
I know she's had a few drinks
from time to time, but she's
not an alcoholic.

DR. FRANKLIN
Maybe not, but the fact remains
that you wife has a damaged
liver. On top of that, she has
diabetes, so she will have to
make drastic lifestyle changes.

FRED
I didn't even know she had
diabetes. How drastic are we
talking about?

They stop in front of a patient's room.

DR. FRANKLIN
I'll explain it all to you
both. For now, she would like
to see you.

FRED
We were thinking about
starting a family.

Fred opens the room slightly.

DR. FRANKLIN
I would advise against it.
The risks are too great for
both mother and child. But
like I said, I will explain
it all later. For now, please
go see her.

INT. SEATTLE HOPITAL ROOM DAY

Marjorie is lying in bed. She is alone in the room.

Fred walks up to her and kisses her on the forehead.

MARJORIE
I'm sorry.

FRED
For what?

MARJORIE
For everything.

FRED
Don't talk like that.

MARJORIE
I'm not going to be able to
have kids.

FRED
The doctor said he will
talk to us.

MARJORIE
Talk to us? I already know,
Fred. I'm a nurse.

FRED
Shhht.

Marjorie begins to cry.

FRED
Maybe we could adopt.

Fred caresses Marjorie's face.

INT. SEATTLE BARBER SHOP DAY
V.O. *Smokestack by Howlin Wolf* playing on the radio

Hand is sitting in the barber's chair.

An old BLACK MAN is cutting his hair.

Other BLACK MEN are waiting to have their hair cut.

Fred is the only white man in the barber shop.

HAND

How you doing, Smiley?

SMILEY

You know, surviving.

Smiley is trimming Hand's hair.

SMILEY

Is that white boy with you?

HAND

He's a friend.

SMILEY

You don't say.

HAND

Family trouble, he's got.

SMILEY

You don't say.

HAND

Wife can't have children.

SMILEY

Huh, huh!

HAND

They're thinking of adopting.

FRED

I can hear you. I'm sitting
right here.

SMILEY

Adopting is a good thing.

HAND

Huh, huh!

SMILEY

As long as they don't grow
up to be nasty little white
boys. They is come 'round here
and trash my shop. I don't
know how many times. And cops
do nothin'. They is in on it.

HAND

You never know. They might
adopt black kids.

SMILEY

You don't say.

BLACK CUSTOMER

Why, that ain't right.

EXT. BARBER SHOP EAST UNION STREET DAY

Fred and Hand are walking away from the barber shop.

FRED

Did you have to tell my life story in there?

HAND

It was to break up the tension, Fred. Smiley is a brother, and the other guys don't care none about your sorry white ass.

FRED

You don't say.

HAND

They have much bigger problems than yours. Like living day to day as a nigger in America. Like Martin Luther King Junior being attacked when he votes, or Malcolm X killed by his own brothers.

FRED

If he hadn't been killed by his own brothers, the government would have done it.

HAND

Who's to say they haven't, boss?

FRED

(grinning)
You don't say.

Hand pats him on the back.

FRED

I'm glad you're here, Hand.

HAND

When's your visit at the Children's Home Society?

FRED

Tomorrow. And you're right. I'll stop feeling sorry for myself.

INT. OFFICE CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON DAY

Marjorie and Fred are seated in front of a desk.

A DOCTOR sits behind the desk.

ADOPTION DOCTOR

You know, everyone wants to adopt a little baby. There's actually a waiting list. But there are a lot of kids age two and older who need parents.

Fred looks at Marjorie.

FRED

We don't have a problem adopting an older child.

Marjorie smiles.

The doctor opens a file folder.

ADOPTION DOCTOR

Your file didn't say why you chose to adopt.

FRED

Marjorie has diabetes and there is a history of the disease as well in my family.

MARJORIE

So, we thought it wouldn't be fair to put that on a child.

FRED

And all the other complications that can arise from that.

ADOPTION DOCTOR

That's quite sensible. I wish there were more couples like you. Would you like to see the children, now?

MARJORIE

Yes, we would.

INT. CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON DAY

The doctor walks out of his office, into a corridor.

He is followed by Marjorie and Fred.

STAFF are walking by in both directions.

V.O. CHILDREN PLAYING

The doctor, Fred and Marjorie approach a hall.

Marjorie peeks from behind the doctor.

She sees a LITTLE MULATTO BOY, 3 years of age playing by himself with wooden ABC blocks that are faded and worn.

He turns around and looks at her.

The doctor enters the room, ignoring the little boy.

Fred follows the doctor.

Marjorie stops inside the door and looks at the little boy.

The little boy crawls to a nearby chair.

He helps himself up.

He manages to stand up.

CLOSE SHOT

He is wearing braces on his feet.

He is wearing a well worn pair of corduroy coveralls.

His eyes and nose are running.

The boy scratches his head. His hair is in patches.

CLOSE UP BIG SMILE

Marjorie bends over, slightly placing her hands on her thighs.

Her purse slides along her arm. The straps stop on her wrist preventing the purse from falling to the ground.

The doctor and Fred are looking at OTHER CHILDREN playing in the hall.

The doctor turns to Fred and notices the absence of Marjorie. He looks around and sees her.

The doctor and Fred join Marjorie.

The little boy takes a step towards Marjorie and falls.

He reaches back for the chair, wobbles up, and takes a step.

He falls again.

Marjorie comes over and squats down beside him.

Marjorie extends her hand. The boy touches it.

He is still smiling.

Marjorie smiles back.

ADOPTION DOCTOR

I think he likes you, Mrs. Willis.

MARJORIE

His name is Daniel. I don't think he'll every be adopted.

FRED

Why?

MARJORIE

Daniel has Metatarsis Varus.

ADOPTION DOCTOR

You know about this condition?

MARJORIE

I'm a nurse, doctor.

FRED

Is it curable?

ADOPTION DOCTOR

There are no guarantees, but if he wears braces, it will realign his feet.(beat)It's not the only problem he's got.

Marjorie looks up to the doctor, holding Daniel's hand.

MARJORIE

What other problems?

ADOPTION DOCTOR

He has very bad allergies and skin conditions. See his hair? He scratches his scalp all the time. And the irritation is not just on his head, it's all over his body.

Marjorie picks up the boy and stands up.

MARJORIE

What else?

ADOPTION DOCTOR

His hearing is affected and he's having a hard time learning to speak. That's why I'm saying that adoption is highly unlikely.

MARJORIE

With that attitude, it will be.

FRED

So, what will happen to him?

ADOPTION DOCTOR

If he's lucky, he'll end up in a foster home. But more often than not, children like that go from one foster home to another until they become adults. Then, they're on their own.

MARJORIE

What about us, Fred?

FRED

Well, I don't know. It's a really big commitment.

ADOPTION DOCTOR

Your husband is right, Mrs. Willis.

MARJORIE

Is this child up for adoption, or not?

ADOPTION DOCTOR

There's one more thing. Daniel has a sister.

The doctor points to a group of girls playing with a tea set.

Marjorie and Fred look at the girls.

MARJORIE

Could I please have a moment with my husband, doctor?

ADOPTION DOCTOR

Certainly.

The doctor walks away.

FRED

I don't know, Marjorie. Like I said...

MARJORIE

You do so much work in the community for underprivileged kids. Here's your chance to do something really special for this little boy.

Marjorie playfully shakes Daniel's arm. Daniel laughs.

MARJORIE

This child needs you just as much as any of the kids you work with. And we would be able to nurse him back to health in no time. We could be a family, Fred.

FRED

We need time to think about this, Marj.

MARJORIE

What about his sister?

Fred rolls up his eyes.

FRED

You're nothing if not determined.

Marjorie smiles.

INT. FRED & MARJORIE'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM DAY

Daniel is sitting on a blanket, playing with a whirligig.

MARIA is watching Mighty Mouse Playhouse on a black and white TV.

Marjorie enters the living room carrying two plastic glasses filled with juice.

She hands them to Maria and Daniel.

Fred enters the house.

Daniel smiles and waves his arms.

MARIA

Hi, dad.

Maria keeps watching TV.

Fred walks up to Marjorie and kisses her.

FRED

She's never called me that before.

Fred walks over to Daniel and tickles him.

Daniel rolls around on the blanket LAUGHING.

MARJORIE

Fred, we're out of milk. Would you mind going to the grocery store?

FRED

Sure, and I'll take the kids
along to get some fresh air.

MARIA

Ah! I'm watching my program.
I only get to watch Saturday
morning.

FRED

I guess it's just you and me,
Daniel.

Fred picks up Daniel.

FRED

Do we need anything else, hon?

MARIA

We could use some more cheese.

EXT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

Fred is pushing a child's carriage.

WOMAN AND DAUGHTER in her early teens across the street.

The woman looks at Fred and Daniel, frowning.

She takes her daughter's hand and hurries along.

Fred shakes his head once.

INT. GROCERY STORE DAY

Fred is in front of the cheese display case.

He is holding a package of cheese in his hand.

Daniel is sitting in the carriage, smiling.

He has an arm stretched, trying to grab cheese from the
case.

Fred gives the cheese to Daniel and pushes the carriage
toward an aisle.

An OLD WHITE MAN is coming in their direction.

He looks at Daniel in the carriage. Daniel smiles at him.

The old man then looks at Fred.

As their paths cross, he spits in Fred's face.

OLD WHITE MAN

That's disgusting.

INT. INTERRACIAL FAMILY ASSOCIATION OFFICE MEETING ROOM DAY

There are BLACK, WHITE, HISPANIC and ASIAN people sitting around a rectangular table in the office.

Fred is sitting at the table near the head where the CHAIRMAN is sitting.

IFA CHAIR

Thank you for being here.
As you know, people don't care about what happens in schools where there are no white kids present.

BLACK WOMAN

And it's very difficult to get funding and the schools get neglected.

FRED

Well, I'm working with the school board to get the buses going in both directions. This means that we're pushing ahead to have black kids and others bussed to the white schools, and white kids bussed to the black schools.

HISPANIC MAN

Good luck.

IFA CHAIR

It's not a question of luck.
It's going to happen.

FRED

Yes. In fact, we are moving ahead and will bus white kids to black schools.

The Asian woman smiles.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE BEDROOM NIGHT

CLOCK 2:37AM

Fred and Marjorie are in bed sleeping.

V.O. MUFFLED VOICES

Marjorie wakes up and strains to hear.

She shakes Fred.

Fred wakes.

MARJORIE

Fred. I hear something.
Wake up. Wake up.

FRED

I'm awake. What is it?

MARJORIE

There is something going on
outside.

FRED

Are you sure?

MARJORIE

Yes.

Fred gets up and walks outside of the bedroom to the living room window.

As he approaches, he can see light coming in the living room.

He reaches the window and opens the sheers with his hand.

A large cross is burning on the lawn.

The MOB of people scurries off.

SHAWN, his next door neighbour, is chasing after them with a shotgun.

Fred returns to the bedroom.

MARJORIE

What's going on?

Fred throws on a bathrobe.

FRED

Go get Daniel and Maria
and stay in here. And lock
the bedroom door.

Fred runs out of the bedroom.

EXT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE NIGHT

Fred walks out.

Shawn is standing there, shotgun in hand.

They both look at the burning cross, briefly.

Fred grabs the garden hose and pulls on it.

It unrolls from the spool. He turns the nozzle, but no water comes out.

Shawn runs to the wall and turns the tap on.

The water begins to flow.

Shawn comes closer to Fred.

SHAWN

Are you okay?

FRED

Yeah. But what about you?

SHAWN

Just a bunch of punks.

Fred is having difficulty extinguishing the fire.

FRED

Thank you.

SHAWN

Don't worry about it. It's nothing. We all have to look out for each other, right?

He looks across the street.

The woman and her teenage daughter are peering through the window.

But when they see Fred looking at them, they close the curtain.

FRED

Not everyone feels that way.

SHAWN

They don't want their little world to change.

FRED

That's why they defeated the open-housing ordinance on the ballot.

SHAWN

Folks are not too keen on having jews and blacks in their neighborhood. So, they weren't too happy to realize that your two little ones were here to stay.

V.O. SIRENS

Fred looks toward his house.

Marjorie is standing in front of the door, holding Daniel and Maria in her arms.

She turns around and walks back in the house.

She slams the door behind her.

A fire truck and a police car arrive.

WHITE FIREMEN step out of the truck gingerly.

They pull out their equipment unhurriedly.

TWO WHITE COPS walk up to Fred and Shawn.

WHITE COP 1
Is that thing loaded?

SHAWN
Yes.

WHITE COP 1
You better unload it.

Shawn does as he is told and pops the shells out of the gun.

WHITE COP 2
So, what have we here?
Nigger lovers?

The firemen put out the flames.

SHAWN
You're gonna be alright,
Fred?

WHITE COP 2
He'll be fine. Why don't you
just go back to your house,
mister?

FRED
I'll be okay, Shawn, Thanks.

Shawn leaves.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE NIGHT

Fred walks inside the house.

Marjorie is sitting on the living room couch, drinking.

MARJORIE
Don't worry. Daniel and Marie
are back in bed, sleeping.

FRED

I thought you didn't touch the stuff anymore? You know, what the doctor said.

MARJORIE

Fuck the doctor. I can't take this anymore.

FRED

Take what?

MARJORIE

Take what? Look outside. This is not a dream. It's real. The cross burning, the spitting in the face. The name calling. Maybe you and the kids are getting used to it, but I'm not.

FRED

We're safe.

MARJORIE

There you go, dreaming again. I'm not strong like you.

Marjorie pours herself another drink and gulps it down.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

Marjorie is all dressed up.

She is kneeling down hugging Daniel and Maria.

The children are crying.

Fred enters the living room, wearing his pyjamas.

FRED

Where are you going?

MARJORIE

To my mother's.

Marjorie kisses Daniel and Maria.

V.O. CAR HORN

MARJORIE

I'll be back in a little while.

She stands up and takes her purse from the coffee table.

FRED

When will you be back?

MARJORIE

I will call you, children.

FRED

What am I gonna do?

MARJORIE

What you always do. Get out
of scrapes like only you can.
I'll call when I get there.

EXT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

A throng of WHITE REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS are on the
lawn, milling about.

They run for Marjorie as she walks out the door.

She brushes past them and past the charred remains of the
cross.

A taxi is parked at the curb.

She enters the cab.

The white woman and her daughter are standing on their lawn.

WHITE WOMAN

That's one down.

Photographers are clicking away with their cameras.

The reporters and photographers turn toward the house.

Fred is standing at the threshold.

He closes the door quickly as the cameras click away, and
the reporters SHOUT.

INT. COCKTAIL LOUNGE DAY

V.O. *PIANO Lullaby of Birdland by B.Y. Foster & G. Shearing.*
Sharon and Marjorie are sitting at a table, drinking.

SHARON

Are you back for good?

MARJORIE

No. I don't know. I love that
Fred, and I love the kids.
But living like this...

SHARON

He's a creep.

MARJORIE

His heart is in the right
place.

SHARON

His heart. I bet he's always gone like he used to do here.

MARJORIE

Not as much. He's great with the kids.

Marjorie pulls out a pack of Pall Mall from her purse.

She takes one and lights it.

SHARON

Should you be smoking?

MARJORIE

Not you too?

SHARON

Sorry.

(beat)

I guess your mom wasn't too thrilled.

Marjorie takes a drag and blows smoke up in the air.

MARJORIE

She said: I told you so. And she mostly wasn't too happy that we adopted two black kids.

SHARON

I bet. A nice little catholic girl like you.

They both LAUGH.

Suddenly, Marjorie makes a jerking motion with her arm, knocking her glass over.

SHARON

Marjorie?

Marjorie twitches and falls to the floor.

Sharon leaps up and goes to Marjorie.

SHARON

(yelling)

Help, help.

INT. SACRAMENTO COUNTY HOSPITAL DAY

NURSES are gathered at a nursing station.

They are looking through the glass partition of a waiting room.

Inside it, they see a doctor speaking with Marjorie's mother and Sharon.

STATION NURSE

Here it comes. He's going to tell them that she died because her liver failed.

NURSE 1

Cirrhosis.

NURSE 2

Her liver was clogged.

NURSE 1

The blood found its way to a weaker vein.

NURSE 2

And the vein exploded.

NURSE 1

And she haemorrhaged internally.

NURSE 3

Poor Marjorie.

STATION NURSE

Poor mother.

The doctor walks out of the waiting room.

He stops briefly, looking at the assembled nurses.

They scurry off in different directions.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME LIMOUSINE DAY

The DRIVER is following a hearse and a second limousine.

They come to an intersection and turn right.

Fred, Daniel and Maria are sitting in the back.

They are all dressed in black. Daniel is wearing braces on his legs.

Fred leans forward.

FRED

Shouldn't we be turning right?

LIMO DRIVER

Normally, yes, but there is a big demonstration going on today. So, we have to make a detour.

FRED
What it's about?

LIMO DRIVER
I'm not sure. I think it's
Chavez and the fruit pickers
demonstrating against the
grape growers or something.

FRED
Where are they going?

LIMO DRIVER
Sacramento State Capitol.
Bunch of illegal immigrants...

Fred leans back.

EXT. FRUIT PICKERS' MARCH DAY

Felix is taking part in the march.

The CROWD is LOUD.

Walking beside him are his PARENTS.

FELIX'S FATHER
I can't believe you blew all
that money and you lost the
contract.

FELIX'S MOTHER
Leave the boy alone. He never
had that kind of money and that
kind of friends before.

FELIX'S FATHER
That's right. Friends. Where
are they now? Can you tell me
that? Of course, not.

Felix's father stops walking in the middle of the march.

He turns to Felix.

FELIX'S FATHER
You're no son of mine. Get
out of my sight. I never want
to see you again.

EXT. SACRAMENTO CEMETERY DAY

The hearse, and two limousines are parked.

The occupants are making their way to an open grave.

Marjorie's mother is walking ahead of Fred and the children.

Fred, carrying Daniel, catches up to Marjorie's mother.
She turns toward Fred.

INSURANCE CO. RECEPTIONIST
It's all your fault.

She presses on, leaving Fred and the children behind.

The procession stops beside the open grave.

Daniel, still in the arms of Fred, points at the casket.

DANIEL
Mommy?

INT. PRISON VISIT ROOM DAY

Hand is sitting behind a table, wearing a prison uniform.

Fred is on the other side of the table.

HAND
I'm sorry, man.

FRED
Me too. I should have done
more. I wasn't a very good
husband.

HAND
Don't beat yourself up.

FRED
How long are you in for?

HAND
I don't know.

FRED
What happened?

HAND
Just fell off the damned wagon.
So, I know a bit about what
Marjorie was going through.

A PRISON GUARD walks by their table.

HAND
Where are the children?

FRED
They are with Marjorie's mother.
She didn't want to have anything
to do with them at first, but
the mother instinct kicked in.

HAND

I got the pictures. Thanks.
I told you you would make a
great dad.

FRED

I sure wasn't a great husband.

Fred begins to cry.

Hand stretches out his arm, wanting to pat his back.

The prison guard signals NO with his head.

Hand retracts his arm.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

Fred is in the living room, reading the newspaper.
LAPD QUELL LOS ANGELES DEMONSTRATION. MUHAMMAD ALI PRESENT.

The children are watching TV.
CASPER THE FRIENDLY GHOST.

V.O. KNOCKING

Fred puts the paper down and walks up to the front door.

He opens it.

Felix is standing there.

FRED

Felix. What are you doing here?

FELIX

I've got nowhere else to go.

FRED

Come in.

Felix enters the house.

Fred looks across the street.

The woman and her teenage daughter are watching him.

Fred closes the door.

EXT. WOMAN AND DAUGHTER'S LAWN DAY

WOMAN

Come on. It's time to
move.

They go inside their house.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

FRED

Kids. Say hi to Felix.

The kids stay glued to the TV set.

DANIEL & MARIA

Hi.

FRED

Come on. Let's go in the
kitchen. I'll make some coffee.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE KITCHEN DAY

Fred and Felix are sitting at the kitchen table, drinking
coffee.

FRED

So, what are you going to do?

FELIX

First thing is to find work.

FRED

As it happens, Hand hooked me up
with the guys at the East Madison
YMCA a while ago. You could check
them out first. I think they run
the place on a volunteer basis,
though. But you will make some
contacts.

FELIX

That's great.

FRED

And you're welcome to stay here
until you get back on your feet.

INT. YMCA EAST MADISON BRANCH NIGHT

Felix is sitting at a table at the entrance of the dance
hall. New tickets and used tickets stubs are on the table.

FRIDAY NIGHT DANCE POSTER behind him.

BLACK VOLUNTEERS are busy, setting up for the dance.

An ELDERLY BLACK MAN walks toward him.

POWELL BARNETT

Do you know who I am, son?

FELIX

Uh! No.

POWELL BARNETT
I'm Powell Samuel Barnett.

Felix gets up.

POWELL BARNETT
Don't get up, son.

FELIX
I've heard a lot about you, sir.

Felix shakes Powell's hand.

POWELL BARNETT
I miss those Friday night socials.

FELIX
They're great, aren't they?

POWELL BARNETT
You mind if I sit down?

Powell walks to the other side of the table and sits on the chair next to Felix.

FELIX
Please.

POWELL BARNETT
We were lucky, you know. Guys like Ray Charles and Quincy Jones played here. And my favorite was Ernestine Anderson. Man, what a voice.

FELIX
Wow! Who are they?

Powell LAUGHS.

POWELL BARNETT
I hear there's a new kid making waves.

FELIX
Jimi Hendrix?

POWELL BARNETT
Yeah!

FELIX
He checked out the place a couple of times. I don't know if he would play here, though.

Powell rubs his chin.

FELIX

Is it true that black musicians
can only play in this part of
town?

POWELL BARNETT

This town is highly segregated,
son. The black musicians and
the white musicians belong to
separate unions. And those guys
protect their turf. But I've
been working hard to change
all that.

FELIX

Yeah. Those guys should be
able to go play anywhere.

Powell looks at Felix.

POWELL BARNETT

(smiling)

To be young again.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE NIGHT

Fred and Felix are in the kitchen washing dishes.

Daniel runs in and puts an empty glass on the counter.

He runs out.

FRED

Thanks, Daniel.

DANIEL

Thanks, dad.

FELIX

Those kids sure are growing.

FRED

How was the dance?

FELIX

IT was great. I met an
interesting guy.

FRED

Oh yeah. What's his name?

FELIX

Aaron Dixon. He said he might
be able to help me find work.

FRED

That's sounds good.

V.O. KNOCK AT THE DOOR

Fred leaves the kitchen. Felix remains there.

Fred makes his way through the living room.

Daniel is lying on the floor and has a notebook open, pencil in hand.

Maria is sitting between the couch and the coffee table. Her books are on the coffee table.

Fred pauses near the kids.

FRED

Do you need help with your homework?

MARIA

No. I'm almost done.

DANIEL

I want to watch TV.

Fred looks in Daniel's notebook.

FRED

When you've finished your homework, Daniel.

Fred opens the front door.

Shawn is standing there.

SHAWN

Have you heard? Martin Luther King Jr. has been killed.

FRED

No. Come in.

Shawn walks past Fred.

Fred looks across the street.

There is a FOR SALE sign on the lawn.

The woman is looking at Fred through the curtains. A lamp is on in her living room and the light from it seeps through the curtains.

When she sees Fred looking at her, she moves away from the curtains. The light goes off.

She comes back to the curtains and looks at Fred.

Fred closes the door.

FRED
Have a seat, Shawn. Felix?

Shawn sits on the couch near Maria.

Shawn tickles Maria. She laughs.

Fred turns the TV ON.

Felix enters the living room.

FOOTAGE OF THE BALCONY AND MAN POINTING.

SHAWN
It could get ugly.

EXT. SEATTLE'S 23RD AVENUE NIGHT

BLACK PEOPLE assembled.

They are throwing rocks, bottles and firebombs at the cars.

V.O. SIRENS IN THE DISTANCE

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

Fred is in the living room watching TV.

Felix walks in the living room.

FELIX
I'm going to the march.
Are you coming?

FRED
No. I'll stay here. I'll
keep an eye on the kids,
today. You're marching to
Seattle Center?

FELIX
Yeah! See you later.

FRED
Be careful.

Felix walks toward the door.

FELIX
I will be.

EXT. SEATTLE DAY

A large crowd is marching toward Seattle Center.

Felix is there marching with the others.

EXT. BOB'S CAFÉ DAY

AARON DIXON, tall and lanky is at the corner of 12TH and Madison.

Felix joins him.

AARON DIXON

Hello, my brother.

Felix shakes his hand.

They enter Bob's Café.

INT. BOB'S CAFÉ DAY

It's a man's man's man's world by James Brown on jukebox.
Aaron and Felix are sitting in a booth.

AARON DIXON

We are starting a chapter of the Black Panthers in Seattle. I have to go to Bobby Hutton's funeral in Frisco. When I come back we will officially open.

FELIX

What are the Black Panthers about?

AARON DIXON

It's about an armed revolution. Killing niggers left and right has to stop now.

FELIX

They killed Martin Luther King Jr.

AARON DIXON

That's right. They don't care if you're a peace-loving nigger or not. They'll shoot you down. Mr. Hoover and his "G" men will make sure of that. Fine, upright Americans that they are.

JOANNE ELLIS walks in the Café.

She comes over to Aaron and slides beside him on the seat.

JOANNE ELLIS

I heard you just got out of jail.

AARON DIXON

And we would have stayed there if our attorney hadn't argued against the unfair amount of the bail. The judge released us on our own recognizance.

Aaron smiles

AARON DIXON

The county prosecutor was
foaming at the mouth.

JOANNE ELLIS

Just because of a sit in at a
high School. Negroes can't be
talking about racism and
discrimination. Us neeeegroes
should only be talkin' 'bout
sports, and pledge allegiance
to the flag.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

Hand is sitting on the couch with Fred.

HAND

I really appreciate you putting
me up, Fred. Like I said, I'm
off to Chicago; gotta go back
home for a while. Are you
gonna come visit?

FRED

Only if I have something to do.
I checked into VISTA like you
suggested.

HAND

They want a year's commitment.

FRED

I said that I could only give
them July and August.

HAND

What did they say?

FRED

They said okay. My mother
loves to have the kids over,
so when I asked them if they
wanted to spend the summer
at the cabin in Point Roberts,
they jumped for joy.

HAND

That's great. What about
Felix?

FRED

I think he's been asked to
join the Panthers.

HAND

Yeah?

FRED

They want to start a breakfast program for the kids and he wants to be involved with that. I doubt he'll go to Chicago.

HAND

Chicago can be a nasty place, and I'm not just talking about the rats running around in the homes of poor folks.

FRED

You're gonna be my guardian angel?

HAND

Yeah! I'll show you where to go and where not to go.

(beat)

A black guardian angel. I like that.

EXT. POINT ROBERTS DAY

V.O. *Sittin' on the dock of the bay by Otis Redding.*

Fred's MOTHER is sitting on the beach in a folding chair. A portable transistor radio is by the side of the chair.

She is wearing a hat and sunglasses.

She is watching Daniel and Maria playing in the ocean.

INT. PASSENGER TRAIN DAY

Fred is looking out the window.

He can see Chicago in the distance.

EXT. 1127½ 34th AVENUE SEATTLE DAY

TWO BLACK Children come out of the Black Panther headquarter.

Felix follows them out and looks briefly at the blue sky. He squints.

CHILD #1

Thanks for breakfast, Felix.

FELIX

You're welcome.

TWO WHITE MEN in a dented and dusty Chrysler Imperial slowly drive by. The windows are rolled down.

V.O. *Hush* by Deep Purple playing on the car radio.

They are wearing sunglasses and they sing along.

TWO WHITE MEN

They got it early in the
morning. They got it late
in the evening.

COON'S CHICKEN INN LOGO pasted on hubcaps.

The driver sticks his hand out of the window and makes a
gun. He simulates firing the gun at Felix.

The car moves on.

NATIONAL SOCIALIST WHITE PEOPLE'S PARTY STICKER on trunk.

Felix returns inside, fumbling as he tries to close the
door.

EXT. CHICAGO TRAIN STATION DAY

Fred is greeted by Hand who gives him a bear hug.

INT. CHURCH HALL DAY

An ELDERLY WHITE MAN is standing in front of a GROUP of
people. They are seated.

They are young and old. There are whites, blacks, Hispanics.

Fred is sitting in the middle of the group. There is a WHITE
MAN sitting on his right.

There is a banner on the wall behind the elderly man:
VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA

ELDERLY WHITE MAN

After a two-week orientation
program, you will be despatched
throughout the city of Chicago
on different projects.

The white man turns to Fred.

WHITE MAN

This is the way to serve America.
Not going to war in Vietnam.

The elderly white man looks at the man beside Fred.

ELDERLY WHITE MAN

Your field of expertise, and
area of interests have been
taken into consideration for
your assignments.

WHITE MAN

Are you a draft dodger?

FRED

(whispering)

No, but I object to the war.

WHITE MAN

That's how I'm beating the draft. Damned politicians. You don't see them going to war, do you?

ELDERLY WHITE MAN

Did you want to say something?

INT. CHICAGO COFFEE SHOP DAY

Fred and Hand are sitting in a booth, drinking coffee.

HAND

So, what's the plan?

FRED

We have to complete a two-week orientation, then I'm off teaching remedial mathematics to kids.

HAND

Do you know where?

FRED

No. Not really, except that one of the volunteers told me it was Blackstone Rangers territory.

HAND

I know the guys who started it, so I'll get the word out. But you'll still need to be careful.

FRED

Uh! Thanks?

HAND

Now, I hear that the Black Panthers and the Blackstone Rangers are thinking about joining forces. And I hear that Bobby Seale is in town.

FRED

And?

HAND

Think about it. There's no way
in hell Hoover and his boys are
gonna allow so many blacks
organizing themselves. Let
alone become a political force.
We're talking 50,000 people
between those two Chicago groups.

FRED

That would be something.

HAND

Aren't you happy you came to
America, you crazy Canuck?

INT. GYMNASIUM DAY

BLACK CHILDREN, most with Afros, are sitting behind desks.

Pencil in hand, they are working away.

Fred is walking between the rows of desk, observing, smiling
at the children.

A BOY raises his hand holding the pencil as Fred walks by.

Fred leans over the open notebook on the desk.

JEFF FORT AND TWO BLACK MEN with Afros enter the gymnasium.

They lean against the wall.

They watch Fred.

Fred looks up.

FRED

(nervous)

Can I help you?

JEFF FORT

Go on with your business.

Jeff and the other two men walk toward empty chairs.

They sit down, keeping an eye on Fred.

JEFF FORT

We're just gonna sit here
and look in on your class.

Fred leans toward the child again, and smiles.

FRED

(pointing)

You're on the right track.

Jeff Fort and the other two men are straining to hear Fred.

The gymnasium door opens and Hand sticks his head inside.

Jeff Fort looks toward the door.

Hand sees Jeff Fort and the other two men and nods.

Fred does not see Hand as he continues to work with the child.

Jeff stands up and heads for the door, followed by the other two.

Fred looks up.

Jeff Fort sees him. The three black men have left.

JEFF FORT

You keep doing what you're
Doing, teacher.

Fred looks down.

FRED

Who was that?

BLACK CHILD

Man, you don't know? That's
Jeff Fort.

EXT. POINT ROBERTS DAY

Daniel and Maria are sitting at the picnic table in front of the cabin.

The table is covered with food.

Daniel and Maria are eating crabs, breaking the shells, laughing.

Fred's mother walks out of the cabin and places a bowl filled with corn on the cob.

She laughs with the children.

EXT. GYMNASIUM DAY

The kids run out of the gymnasium.

Fred walks out.

The kids are gone.

As Fred approaches the curb, he sees a police car.

TWO WHITE POLICE OFFICERS are leaning against it.

OFFICER #1
Hey, you. Come here.

Fred walks over.

The two officers straighten up.

They grab Fred and push him against the car.

Officer #2 takes his handcuffs out.

FRED
What's this?

OFFICER #1
Aiding criminals. That's what,
Nigger lover.

FRED
I work for VISTA.

OFFICER #2
No, you don't. You're working
for a bunch of hoods.

Officer #2 opens the back door of the police car.

V.O. PUMPING OF A SHOT GUN

The officers go for their gun.

JEFF FORT
Nah!

The officers look around.

The kids from the gymnasium are there.

Jeff Fort and his two friends are standing there with
handguns pointed at the cops.

Hand is there holding a 12-gauge shotgun.

JEFF FORT
This teacher is cool, and
he's doing exactly what he
says he's doing. You need
to let him go.

Cops hands go to holsters.

One of Jeff Fort's friend cocks his handgun.

FORT'S FRIEND #1
I wish you would, copper.

Jeff raises his hand.

JEFF FORT

There ain't no need. You all
let the teacher go and it's
all good.

Officer #2 removes the handcuffs from Fred.

Fred massages his wrists.

The cops get in their car and speed off.

HAND

You alright?

FRED

There are a few things you
forgot to tell me.

HAND

I didn't want to worry you
too much. But I did say the
place was dangerous.

Fred looks at Hand, smiling.

FRED

That, you did.

JEFF FORT

We appreciate you helping out
the kids, Fred. I spent time
in reform school and I don't
want those kids to go through
what I went through. (beat)
There's a parade tomorrow in
Jackson Park. After everything
we've endured, we're not racists.

FORT'S FRIEND #2

(cutting in)

But in the case of those two cops
we make an exception.

JEFF FORT

(smiling)

You should come.

FRED

Thanks. I will.

HAND

I'll pick you up.

EXT. WOODLAWN DAY

Hand is driving a car. Fred is sitting in the front
passenger seat. The windows are rolled down.

A lot of the buildings are covered with graffiti.

HAND

You've passed the test.

FRED

I'm here to help out the kids,
Hand. You know that.

HAND

I know. But it's the same old
story. They didn't know you.
Even after I told them about
you. They had to check you out.

FRED

Alright.

EXT. JACKSON PARK DAY

Hand and Fred are walking in the park. They can see the
waterfront beyond.

The place is crowded with BLACK PEOPLE OF ALL AGES.

Most of them have Afros and wearing colorful clothes.

They come to a picnic table. Jeff Fort is sitting there with
EUGENE HARISTON.

Eugene gets up and walks toward Hand.

He gives Hand a hug.

EUGENE HARISTON

My brotha.

HAND

Good to see you too, Chief.

They let go of each other.

HAND

Meet my friend, Fred.

EUGENE HARISTON

What up?

Eugene shakes his hand.

FRED

Hi.

HAND

This is Eugene Hariston. But we
call him Chief Bull.

EUGENE HARISTON
Let's sit down. The parade
should start soon.

They walk to the picnic table and sit around it.

EUGENE HARISTON
And I think you know Jeff Fort.

HAND
They call him Chief Malik.

EUGENE HARISTON
Or Angel.

JEFF FORT
Call me Jeff.

Jeff opens a cooler and hands out beers.

JEFF FORT
You may have heard that we're
just a bunch of criminals.
Let me tell you. We care about
this community and if we're
waiting for the man to help
us out, it will never happen.

Fred takes a sip.

EUGENE HARISTON
Sometimes we have to bend the
rules. Because if we don't,
we'll all disappear. We ain't
gonna let that happen.

HAND
The government is coughing up
some money for different programs,
but it's not enough.

JEFF FORT
It's more political bullshit,
if you ask me.
(beat)
We want to put
more money into education
and job creation.

CROWD NOISE GROWING LOUDER

JEFF FORT
Here come some of the brothers
and sisters of the Blackstone
Rangers, Mr. Willis.

CROWD NOISE GROWING LOUDER AND LOUDER

EUGENE HARISTON

They are a good bunch.

A GROUP OF BLACK PEOPLE is walking down the road in the park. They are wearing colorful clothes with lots of green and purple. Some are wearing bandanas and left wrist bands.

MICKEY COGWELL is leading the procession.

Mickey is handing out money.

Some of the others are handing out candies to the kids lining up both sides of their path.

As the procession comes close to the picnic table, Mickey waves at Jeff and the others.

JEFF FORT

Hey, Mickey. Main 21, bro.

Jeff waves back.

INT. CHURCH HALL DAY

V.O. RIOTING OUTSIDE

The elderly white man is there with the VISTA volunteers.

The same white man who was at the first meeting is again sitting next to Fred.

ELDERLY WHITE MAN

We're coming to the end of summer.
And we were hoping to have a few
minutes with President Johnson,
who as you know, followed President
Kennedy's leadership and instituted
VISTA. But as you can see
they fear for his security. So,
he will not be coming to the
Democratic convention in Chicago.

The White man turns to Fred.

WHITE MAN

I'm with Senator Ribicoff. If
McGovern is elected, they'll put
an end to the Gestapo tactics of
the likes of Daley.

V.O. Rioting growing louder outside.

The door bursts open and a MAN enters. He is gasping for air.

Fred stands up and goes outside of the church.

A CROWD of people is coming down the street.

Clouds of tear gas floating in his direction.

HUNTER S. THOMPSON holding a camera.
JEAN GENET holding a notebook and pencil.
WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS holding a tape recorder and microphone.

The three men are walking ahead of the crowd and recording the events as they unfold.

ABBIE HOFFMAN, BOBBY SEALE, TOM HAYDEN, FRED HAMPTON and DAVID DELLINGER are at the front of the crowd.

The police officers are beating the crowd back.

More tear gas drifting through the crowd.

EXT. POINT ROBERTS DAY
V.O. *Someday by the Chicago Transit Authority.*

Daniel and Maria are in front of a big blackberry bush.

They are grabbing and eating the berries.
They are both laughing.

Blackberry juice running down their cheeks and throats.
They throw berries at each other, laughing.

EXT. CHICAGO DAY
V.O. Daniel and Maria laughing.
The riot is in full swing.

Police officer #1 smashes the face of a WHITE MAN with his billyclub.

The man falls to the ground, blood streaming down his cheek.

INT. FRED AND MARJORIE'S HOUSE SEATTLE DAY

Fred is sitting on the couch surrounded by Daniel and Maria.

Felix is sitting in a chair to the side of the couch.

DANIEL
I missed you, dad.

FRED
I missed you both very much.
Did I tell you I love you?

Fred hugs the children.

MARIA
Yes, you did, dad. Now, can we watch TV?

FRED
No, you can't because we are ready to eat. Go wash your hands. You too, Daniel.

MARIA

Aah! No fair.

Maria stomps her feet as she leaves.

Daniel follows her, doing the same thing.

FRED

How was your summer, Felix?

FELIX

It was good, but I miss football.

FRED

I know, and I've been thinking about that. You should try for the Canadian Football League.

Felix grimaces.

FELIX

After my NFL fiasco?

FRED

It's behind you. You kept in shape. I'm sure they could use someone with your talent.

FELIX

I don't know anybody in Canada.

FRED

You know me. Before I left for California, I was being scouted by the CFL. I still have the scouts' cards. I'll give them a call to see what they can do.

FELIX

I don't know what to say.

FRED

Don't say anything. Let's watch TV before the kids come back. There's a game on.

Felix gets up and turns on the TV.

The image is a bit fuzzy and he plays with the rabbit ears.

INT. FRED WILLIS' LIVING ROOM (DISSOLVE TO PRESENT DAY)

Old Fred is moving the rabbit ears around on his TV.

A grizzled and OLDER FELIX knocks and walks in.

FELIX

Hiya, Fred.

FRED

Hey, Felix. You're just in time. The second game is about to start.

Felix looks around and sees Daniel's empty glass.

FELIX

You've got company?

FRED

Yeah! It's Daniel.

FELIX

Daniel here? I haven't seen him in ages.

Daniel walks in the living room and sees Felix beside Fred.

DANIEL

Uncle Felix?

FELIX

Daniel, how are you?

DANIEL

To be honest, I was a bit hard on dad when I came in, but he just told me about you guys in the sixties.

FRED

Now you understand where I'm coming from, son?

DANIEL

I get it.

FELIX

I don't know what your dad has been telling you, Daniel, but he's the most humble man I've ever met. Your sister is a school principal, and you're teaching developmentally challenged kids and kids we used to call delinquents. I know he is very proud of you both. And I can't begin to tell you what he's done for me. I call him Muenda.

DANIEL

What does that mean?

FRED

Please...

FELIX

My great great grandmother
lived near Mount Kenya. She
was caught by an enemy tribe
and sold as a slave in exchange
for trinkets. Anyways, some of
her language has lived on from
generation to generation. And
Muenda means *One Who Cares for
Others*. And that's what your
dad does.

Fred gets up and walks over to the TV.

FRED

Alright. That's enough
about me.

FELIX

See? What did I tell you?

Fred plays with the rabbit ears.

FADE OUT