

RED SCARE

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. OLD MAN SAM'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

A slim hand knocks on the front door. KNOCK! KNOCK!

Tired and weary, OLD MAN SAM (58) opens the door. A quick glance out is all it takes for his demeanor to sour.

OLD MAN SAM
I like Ike.

He slams the door in front of three disheartened TEENAGERS adorned in Adlai Stevenson presidential campaign gear.

Athletic and handsome, JOHNNY (17) wraps his arm around beautiful MARY JO (16) who looks as if she's ready to cry. To their side, SKIP (17) preppy and skinny, looks depressed.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Mary Jo takes the lead as the teens canvas the sidewalk.

MARY JO
I don't understand it. Aren't
Americans worried about the future?
We live in dangerous times! Korea.
Nuclear weapons! McCarthyism!

Mesmerized by her shapely rear, Johnny follows close behind.

JOHNNY
Maybe we need better buttons?

Nervous, Skip looks down at the red, white and blue "Stevenson for President" campaign button in his hand. The calm cool portrait of Adlai gives him confidence.

SKIP
We just need to work harder. Just
like, Adlai would! Right Mary Jo?

MARY JO
It all just seems so hopeless. How
can we compete against a war hero?

SKIP
We visit every house! Knock on
every door! We know Adlai has the
right message for America. We just
need to help the people hear it!

Mary Jo whirls around towards Skip, her spirits uplifted.

MARY JO
Really? Do you think so Skip?

Quickly to interrupt, Johnny steps in between them.

JOHNNY
Of course we can!

Johnny grabs her hand and leads her forward, but not before a quick glance back to sneer at Skip, left behind.

MARY JO
You mean it, Johnny? Every house?

JOHNNY
All of em! Even the creepy ones.

EXT. WRETCHED HOUSE - NIGHT

The teens look on at the dilapidated two story house. The faint red glow of light in the second story window illuminates a rickety antenna attached on the roof nearby.

SKIP
OK. That's too creepy.

JOHNNY
What's the matter? You scared,
Double Dutch?

MARY JO
I don't think anybody's home.

FRONT PORCH

Half covered in peeled paint, Johnny arrogantly knocks on the front door. It creaks open ever so slightly.

INT. WRETCHED HOUSE - PARLOR - NIGHT

Johnny walks in followed by a nervous Mary Jo and reluctant Skip. Stray rays of moonlight from the windows illuminate dirty furniture pushed against the walls.

SKIP
Johnny, what are you doing?

MARY JO

Hello? Um, is anybody home? We were wondering if you've put any thought into voting for Adlai Stevenson in the upcoming election?

SKIP

Quiet. Do you hear that?

JOHNNY

What? Your annoying voice?

The faint TICK TOCK of a grandfather clock.

JOHNNY

Easy, Double Dutch, It's a clock.

MARY JO

Shhhh! I hear it too.

Even fainter than the clock, the sound of garbled RADIO STATIC can be heard.

MARY JO

It's coming from upstairs. Guys, I think we should leave.

Suddenly the front door SLAMS shut. Skip runs over to open it. He pulls and jerks the knob. Stuck.

SKIP

It, it won't budge!

Johnny shoves Skip out of the way.

JOHNNY

Outta the way, skinny.

Even Johnny's forceful shakes won't open the door.

JOHNNY

Great job. You broke it.

SKIP

I didn't break it. Those squeaky hinges must be rusted or... wait! Where's Mary Jo?

They both turn around. Mary Jo is gone.

SKIP

Mary Jo?

JOHNNY

Great job, now you lost her!

The radio static amplifies slightly. Just loud enough to hear a voice within the sound.

SKIP

Maybe she went upstairs? Do you hear that now?

STAIRCASE

Cautiously, the two boys creep up the stairs as the static incrementally grows louder with each step.

SECOND STORY HALLWAY

The static is loud enough now to hear a string of seemingly random numbers spoken in a monotone but heavily accented voice on loop.

RADIO STATIC (O.S.)

Six, twenty-four, forty-seven,
twenty-one, two, fifteen, nine...

Johnny nudges Skip and motions him to take the left side of the hall and he'll take the right. Skip nods to acknowledge.

MASTER BEDROOM

Skip slowly opens the door and enters.

SECOND STORY HALLWAY

The static is loud as Johnny walks towards a faint red light that shines out from under a door at the end of the hallway.

RED ROOM

Johnny opens the door to find a large radio set on a desk in the corner covered in dust, books and papers. The red light from the radio illuminates everything in a shade of red.

Expressionless, Johnny walks towards the radio. His hand reaches towards the volume dial. He turns it up. Up. Up.

MASTER BEDROOM

Startled by the auditory onslaught, Skip runs out to find...

SECOND STORY HALLWAY

... Johnny, covered in shadow, motionless before him.

SKIP

What's going on? Where's Mary Jo?

For a brief second Johnny's eyes glint red..

Skip tries to push himself past Johnny but gets thrown back.

Menacingly, Johnny comes closer.

Frantic, Skip searches for anything to help fend off Johnny. In his pocket, he pulls out the campaign button.

SKIP

Adlai Stevenson, don't fail me now!

He zings right at Johnny's head with all his might.

TINK! The button harmlessly bounces off Johnny's forehead.

Johnny grabs Skip by the ankle and drags him back towards the red room. Skip flails and fights back pointlessly.

SKIP

You big dumb jock let me go!

JOHNNY

The struggle makes us stronger.

The closed door of the red room eerily opens as Johnny drags Skip towards it. They disappear into the bright red light.

The door slams shut behind them.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

Mary Jo's slim hand knocks on the front door.

A YOUNG HOUSEWIFE (27) answers with her BABY (1)

MARY JO

Hello! I was wondering if you've given any thought about voting for Adlai Stevenson this November.

Behind her back, Mary Jo clutches a handful of fliers and a pocket radio. She slowly pulls the antenna out.

FADE OUT:

THE END