

FIVE MILES TO RICOCHET

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. BRIGHT SUMMER CALIFORNIA BEACH - ONE HOUR BEFORE SUNSET

Two adolescent boys ADAM, 14, and ROBBY, 12, soberly survey the uncharacteristically tiny waves, one-inch crumblers roll-in every few seconds, lapping effete against their tan feet.

ADAM

Who farted?

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LATE MORNING, EARLIER THE SAME DAY

ADAM's mobile phone rings. He languidly retrieves the phone from the floor, the power cord awkwardly draped over his blinking eyes. He presses "Answer" and says nothing.

ROBBY

(over phone)

Did you see the Ricochet swell report?

ADAM

What's it say?

ROBBY

(over phone)

South-facing beaches are getting eight-footers with swells to ten.

ADAM

We missed it. It's too late.

ROBBY

(over phone)

Not if we borrow you Dad's motorcycle. Is he home. Will he let us? We could be there before noon.

(beat)

Are you gonna say anything?

The call abruptly over, Adam flings both legs to the floor as he disentangles the sheets to stand. Though he religiously wears sunblock, he's tan all over and is wearing only his salt-water-faded, black-on-black RVCA board shorts draped down to his knees, the uniform of middle-class beach kids. His frame is

ridiculously straight from hours of rowing practice.

ADAM
(yelling at the ceiling)
Dad?

YOUNGER BROTHER
(O.S. from the upper bunk)
He's not home.

ADAM
Shut up.

INT. KITCHEN - THREE MINUTES LATER

Adam's head is in the refrigerator when the nearby exterior door explodes open with a THWACK. It's ROBBY wearing kaleidoscopic neon shorts, a hard-to-look-at red-and-white striped T-shirt and a pair of beige Vans. He's a windmill strapped to a rocket.

ROBBY
Where's the motorcycle? Is it here? When will it be back?

ADAM
(flatly)
I dunno.

Robby crosses to the refrigerator, reaches over the top of hunched-over Adam, snatches a front-row pickle jar, plucks out a dill spear and chomps it in half. Juices fly and drip onto his fingers, his chin and Adam's bare back.

ROBBY
Let's ride skateboards. We gotta leave now or we'll miss 'em.

ADAM
It's five miles.

ROBBY
Who cares? We can't wait for your Dad...we gotta go.

Standing at a safe distance in a doorway is Adam's younger brother COLIN, 8, who's climbed out of the top bunk because he's intrigued by the big-boy commotion. The interior door frame

towers over Colin like a skyscraper.

COLIN

Go where?

ADAM & ROBBY
(together, calmly)

Shut up.

INT. ADAM'S GARAGE - TWO MINUTES LATER.

Our on-a-mission duo launch off the smooth garage concrete and rumble onto the coarser asphalt. Skateboard wheels argue with the pavement, propelling feet shove with a frantic POOMP, POOMP, POOMP. Tucked into their armpits are scuffed, weathered, lightweight boogie boards, freshly waxed.

EXT. BIKE PATH - HALF MILE LATER

We hear a THUNK, SCREECH. A roadway imperfection rips off Adam's back truck assembly, which pathetically cartwheels to the curb.

ROBBY

(flipping a one-eighty and braking to a stop)

Crap.

Like a well-trained EMT unit, they swiftly triage the skateboard's underbelly and instantly conclude it's dead.

ROBBY (CONT'D)

Crap.

Heads high and undeterred, they walk-jog-walk-jog back with skateboards under one arm, their boogie boards under the other. The disjointed truck assembly precariously dangles from Adam's back pocket.

ADAM

Now I'm awake.

ROBBY

Maybe your Dad can epoxy the truck back on?

ADAM

I promised him I'd go fishing.

ROBBY

We can go fishing anytime. Stupid school starts in three stupid weeks, and then we'll be doing the biological-booglaoo instead of boogie-boarding.

ADAM

It's two weeks.

(beat)

My Dad's prolly buying bait.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE ADAM'S GARAGE - DAY

Colin kneels alongside his inverted bike in the middle of the garage floor; clothespins clamp red-backed playing cards, and he's cranking the back wheel making the expected rapid-fire FLA-PING-FLA-PING racket boys love. As the two boys approach, the motorboat noise abates.

Adam flippantly drops the busted skateboard and hops on his bike.

ROBBY

Gimme a ride to my house.

EXT. BIKE PATH - WHERE THE SKATEBOARD FAILED - DAY

Same P.O.V. as the boys on skateboards but now aboard bicycles. Adam rides a well-maintained, immaculately-clean black cruiser, while Robby pedals a five-speed mountain bike jalopy with a low back tire, several bent spokes and mismatched rubber. They adroitly convey their boards.

A purpose-built, hand-scribbled poster board sign crudely-stapled to a four-foot wooden lathe stanchion says FOUR MILES TO RICOCHET.

EXT. BIKE PATH - NEAR "FOUR MILES TO RICOCHET" SIGN

ROBBY

Watch this.

Adjacent to the bike path is a three-foot pile of dirt recently mounded by construction workers, who are now O.C. on lunch break. Robby carelessly drops his board, pumps the pedals, bunny-hops the curb and bounds up the impromptu incline. Knees

bent, he lands on both wheels but the impact snaps several wheel spokes and pops the back tire off the rim, though he manages to roll the frame upright to a safe but embarrassing stop.

ADAM

Nice jump, Awful Kenoffal.

ROBBY

Hey, I landed it.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

(O.S.)

Gimme ten bucks. I'll fix it.

Adam hurls his boogie board which flies like a Frisbee toward Robby who flattens-out in the weeds like a gaudy gecko. It sails by, missing his hind quarters by inches.

Adam does a figure-eight maneuver back to line-up with the ramp and pedals with maniacal purpose.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER (CONT'D)

(O.S.)

Don't fall, kid.

Robby uprights himself and yanks his crippled bike out Adam's inbound flight path. Adam lands perfectly and skids to a halt, dust flying.

ADAM

We're supposed to be fishin'.

After a beat, Adam's front tire pops and deflates with a depressing HISS.

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

(O.S. applause and hoots)

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE ADAM'S GARAGE - DAY

We track the bike-walking boys reentering the garage.

COLIN

(O.S.)

Dad was looking for you, Aaaaaduum.

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE ADAM'S GARAGE - SAME DAY

A man on a motorcycle, 48, smoothly rounds the corner as Colin exits the garage on his noise-making, junior "motorcycle." Colin cranks away.

MOTORCYCLE MAN
(after Colin)

Where's Adam?

COLIN
(over his shoulder)

With Robby.

The motorcyclist is Adam's father, JEFF, 48, a retired long-haul UPS trucker who, like Andy Griffith of Mayberry, loves to freshwater fish with his oldest son. After a half-dozen attempts, Jeff had finally convinced reluctant Adam that today was their perfect "fishing day."

He pauses and winces. Fatherhood was supposed to be easier than this. Someone told him that, right? The disappointment stings his face like cheap aftershave.

END FLASHBACK

DISSOLVE TO:

Adam's disappointed face.

ADAM
(softly)

Stupid idea.

ROBBY

Huh?

ADAM

STUPID IDEA!

ROBBY

Call your Dad, then. We'll go fishing.

As Adam dials the phone, Colin in the b.g. crosses several times

spouting crude bilabial raspberries amplified by his cupped hand.

VOICEMAIL RECORDING (V.O.)

"This is Jeff..."

ADAM

(ending the call)

He's pissed.

As Colin loops back for the umpteenth time, Robby springs and intercepts the interloping punk. He none-too-carefully pulls the bike away in a one-second tug-of-war. A resigned but vocal Colin bolts into the house; he'll escalate this maltreatment to any adult who'll listen.

Desperate to energize his dispirited pal, Robby mounts Colin's noisemaker and wheels toward Adam and their boards.

ROBBY

Hop on.

ADAM

My dad won't answer.

ROBBY

Just hop on the handlebars.

ADAM

Where we going?

ROBBY

Get on the freakin' handlebars, Dude.

Adam gathers himself, lays both boogie boards onto his lap and cranes his body onto the too-small bike. Robby thrusts the bike and impedimenta toward the afternoon sun.

We see and HEAR them on Colin's makeshift motorcycle.

RAPID SEQUENCE

EXT. VARIOUS STREETS, PATHS AND SIDEWALKS - DAY

- They zoom past the skateboard failure scene, a broken bolt and

two washers on the pavement

- The FOUR MILES TO RICOCHET sign
- The THREE MILES TO RICCOCHET sign (misspelled)
- The TWO MILES TO RICCOCHETTE sign (also misspelled). The soil and flora transition from suburban grass to sandy scrub.
- Though 3/4ths of the cards-in-the-spokes are missing or mangled, their cacophony scatters a flock of beach birds as we approach California beach sand.

END RAPID SEQUENCE

EXT. BRIGHT SUMMER CALIFORNIA BEACH - ONE HOUR BEFORE SUNSET

The eager boys dismount the idiotic bike and run side-by-side, faces out-beaming the sun. A sand berm temporarily blocks their view of the ocean and her waves. Finally, they crest the berm and shuffle toward the water.

CUT TO:

Miniature waves innocently splashing against the boys' tan feet.

ADAM

Who farted?

ROBBY

Everyone.

FADE TO:

Father Jeff deliberately casting a line into a lake.