

YELL N' TELL

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INT. JIMMY'S HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

Dinosaur posters. Toys strewn about.

Kids bed with cowboy theme sheets.

Jimmy and cousin BOBBY (6) aka "NOODLES" play a board game.

JIMMY

Your turn, Noodles.

Bobby pinches Jimmy under the arm.

Jimmy jumps.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Hey! Why'd you do that?

BOBBY

Do what?

JIMMY

Pinch me.

BOBBY

Pinch you? I didn't pinch you.

Bobby rolls the dice.

INT. JIMMY'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Anytown USA.

Middle class neighborhood. Manicured lawns. Cozy homes.

JIMMY (5) casts dreamy eyes through a bay window in the comfortable room.

Family pictures adorn the walls. Inviting couch. Big TV.

POV JIMMY - ACROSS THE STREET

CHARLIE (8) pulls the hair of sister SARAH (6).

She swivels. Defiant, Sarah puts hands on hips.

SARAH

Oh! I hate you!

JIMMY

watches the siblings until they move out of sight behind their home.

He wanders to the --

MODERN KITCHEN

Granite counter tops. Latest refrigerator and stove.

MOM (30s) pipes "Happy Birthday Bobby" on a cake she baked.

JIMMY

Hey, Mom. Sarah's brother pulled her hair. Again.

Mom peeks up at Jimmy for a second before she inserts seven candles -- and one for luck -- around the cake's perimeter.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Why does he do that?

MOM

I suppose it makes him feel strong.

Jimmy's face twists, puzzled.

JIMMY

Pulling her hair makes him feel strong?

MOM

Bullies like feeling strong.

JIMMY

There's a kid in gym class who keeps pushing me so I push back to stop him. Am I a bully?

Mom turns full attention to Jimmy.

MOM

Sometimes bullies start small: call you a name; poke you hard with a finger. They like it best when no one is watching.

She makes room for the cake in the refrigerator.

EXT. MUNICIPAL BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

FLASHBACK

Several courts. All is use.

Players with various levels of skill face off in one-on-one.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Do grown-ups bully? Is the man down
the street a bully?

Jimmy cringes as he watches a FATHER (30s) loom over and berate his two SONS, eight and ten, who shoot hoops.

MOM (V.O.)
The one who always yells at his
kids?

END FLASHBACK

Mom notices Jimmy's distress and nods: sympathetic.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

FLASHBACK

Rows of lockers. Blue Cinder block walls. Polished floor.

Jimmy witnesses MEAN GIRL (6) whisper to her MEAN FRIEND (6). They GIGGLE.

JIMMY (V.O.)
There's this girl who whispers mean
things to her friend at school.

Mean Girl points at a Girl near tears who drops her head.

JIMMY (V.O.)
I don't know why.

END FLASHBACK

Mom pours leftover cake batter into cupcake tins.

MOM
She may want no one else to hear
it. I knew a girl who would start
small just to check if we'd tell
the teacher.

JIMMY'S VISIONS

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

The usual desks and chairs in neat lines.

Pictures of founding fathers on the walls.

Corkboard with student drawings posted with thumbtacks.

The only two in the room, Jimmy confides in a Teacher.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Or your mom. Or your nana.

MOM (V.O.)
Or your dad.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Sixties architecture. Timeworn.

An American flag high on a pole whips in a light breeze.

School's out for the day. Students with backpacks mill and blast off for home on bikes and on foot.

Jimmy talks to a tall Policeman. His voice trembles,

JIMMY
Or maybe the police.

END VISIONS

Mom and Jimmy share a LAUGH.

Pensive, Jimmy sits at the table with chin on fists. After a moment's thought, with authority,

JIMMY
Or anyone bigger than you trust.

Mom slides cupcake tins into the oven.

MOM
Chances are if you tell, the person
will stop.

JIMMY
Even if they're mean, I bet they
hate gettin' in trouble.

MOM
Most kids don't tell the first
time.

Mom stops. Looks at Jimmy.

MOM (CONT'D)
The one who likes to bully pokes a
little harder.

She returns ingredients to their place in the cupboard.

MOM (CONT'D)
Or says mean things and tries to
scare you.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

FLASHBACK

Students carry trays of nutritious lunch to scores of tables.

STUDENT CHATTER echoes on the walls.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Or embarrasses you.

Jimmy enjoys lunch with his Friends when an Older Boy passes
and knocks his milk over -- on purpose.

END FLASHBACK

Mom wipes down the counter.

JIMMY
Or hurts you in some other way.

A realization. Her expression flips serious.

MOM
If anyone hurts you, even a little
bit, you have to yell, 'Ouch!' If
they say, 'Oh, that didn't hurt!'
you have to tell them, 'Yes it
did!' Then as soon as you can, tell
me, Dad or a grown-up you trust.

INT. JIMMY'S HOME - GARAGE - DAY

FLASHBACK

Tools on a pegboard. Power lawnmower in the corner.

Car with the hood up.

Jimmy helps Dad work on the engine.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Except if it's by accident.

Dad drops a screwdriver.

Both Jimmy and Dad bend to pick it up at the same time.

They bonk heads, rub them and LAUGH.

END FLASHBACK

Done with clean up, Mom clears space on the table.

MOM
That way, the mean person won't go
to step two and hurt you more.

She hands Jimmy a marker and three blank recipe cards.

JIMMY
Or step three. Or four!

MOM
It's always best to yell before
being hurt badly. It's the only way
to stop bullying.

Mom calls out letters as she writes on a kitchen whiteboard.

MOM (CONT'D)
Y-E-L-L

A-N-D T-E-L-L.
Jimmy uses the three cards to Mom points to the whiteboard,
follow her lead.

MOM
Yell and tell.

Jimmy reads the recipe cards... loud.

JIMMY
Yell and tell!

From the living room,

DAD (O.S.)
Everything all right out there?

Mom with a sheepish grin.

MOM
Just reading.

A look of dismay on his face, Jimmy hesitates.

JIMMY
You know Mom, Noodles...

MOM
Noodles? Your cousin Bobby?

JIMMY
Yes, Noodles. Bobby. My cousin.

MOM
What about him?

JIMMY
He likes to pinch me. I don't like it. Hurts my feelings.

MOM
Really?

JIMMY
When I ask why, he always looks surprised.

EXT. BOBBY'S HOME - BACKYARD - DAY

Festive decorations. Balloons. Table set for a Kid's party.

BOBBY'S MOM (30s) welcomes Jimmy and her Sister.

Jimmy's mom carries Bobby's birthday cake.

Bobby's mom pulls her to the side for a chat in whispers.

BOBBY'S MOM
Sis, I talked with Bobby about the pinching. He says he only does it when Jimmy calls him Noodles.

MOM
Ah. I understand now.

BOBBY'S MOM
I'll ask him to talk with Jimmy
about it later.

BIRTHDAY PARTY - LATER

In full swing. A gaggle of Kids surround Bobby at the cake.
He blows out the candles in one big HUFF.

Cheers then Kids and Adults sing Happy Birthday.

LATER - PARTY'S OVER

The last of Bobby's Friends wave as they leave with Parents.

Jimmy and Bobby and their mothers wave back.

Bobby's mom kneels in front of him.

BOBBY'S MOM
Bobby. I think you have something
to say to Jimmy.

Bobby hangs his head.

JIMMY
He does?

BOBBY'S MOM
About pinching you.

Bobby looks up at his mom then down again.

JIMMY
Really?

BOBBY
I'm sorry I pinch you.

JIMMY
It's okay.

BOBBY
You call me Noodles. I hate it!

JIMMY
Really?

Bobby thinks a bit.

BOBBY
Yes. Could you stop?

JIMMY
Sure, Bobby. I can do that.

BOBBY
I only pinch you when you call me
Noodles.

Jimmy laughs.

JIMMY
I thought you liked it. I'm sorry.
I won't do it anymore... Bobby.

Bobby beams a happy smile.

BOBBY
You're not mad at me?

JIMMY
No. Are you mad at me?

BOBBY
No.

Bobby's Mom winks at her Sister.

BOBBY'S MOM
I was going to say he couldn't
watch T-V tonight if he didn't
agree to stop pinching.

MOM
Looks like there's no need.

BOBBY'S MOM
Glad we settled it.

Jimmy and Bobby lay arms around each other's shoulders.

Best friends, they smile at each other.

BOBBY
Hey, here come Sarah and Charlie.

JIMMY
Maybe we should talk with Charlie.
About us. About being a bully.

BOBBY
You think so?

We see Sarah, Charlie, Jimmy and Bobby talk it out.

Jimmy points at Sarah and mimes pulling his hair.

Sarah shakes yes, points at Charlie. He shrugs.

Bobby indicates himself and pinches air.

They all smile and laugh with new understanding. Hugs all around.

FADE OUT.

THE END