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INT CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

TOM HAGGERTY, early forties and spreading, loads up with his last food choices and walks through the aisles to the counter, dropping it in a heap. HAN, the store owner, rings it all up.

HAN

Looks like you all set for the game tonight.

TOM

This is actually part of an experimental health food diet I'm working on at the college, Han. For mankind.

HAN

Yah. You a regla Jimmy Carter.

They share a chuckle. Tom's eyes wander to the Snickers display. Han follows his gaze, their eyes meet and eyebrows arch. Tom flips one into a bag and Han rings it up.

TOM

How bad could those be?

Tom passes him some cash.

HAN

You the one doing the research, Tom. You tell us.

TOM

That's my plan.

He wraps his arms around two full grocery bags and heads for the door.

TOM

(continuing)
Right after the game!

Tom backs out the door, arms full.

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A steady rain fogs windows and dims streetlights as Tom finds his car in slanting shadows. He juggles grocery bags and drops his keys.

TOM
Ah, hell!

Stooping, he looks up off screen. A MAN saunters around the car, his face in shadows.

MAN
Spare a couple of bucks?

TOM
(rising)
Excuse me, what?

MAN
(comes closer)
Got any money?

TOM
What, what do you need?

MAN
Hell's wrong with you? I just told
you twice!

TOM
Okay, take it easy, let me --

MAN
What, am I stupid? Is that --

Enraged, the man pulls an evil-looking knife thrusting two, three times as Tom backpedals furiously but too late. He falls to the ground, staring into the night sky as the attacker moves above him rifling pockets and checking for signs of life in Tom's face. The attacker runs off, Tom sprawled among groceries, blood spreading underneath him.

A siren grows louder changing into the SOUND of a boy's scream.

INT BOY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

PETE HAGGERTY, 14, wakes up screaming from the nightmare we've just seen. He sits up in bed, the room lit only by a night light. His mother, LAURA, 38 and attractive, rushes in tying her nightgown's sash and sweeps him into her arms, rocking him.

LAURA
It's all right, darling, it's all
right now, hush.

Pete sobs. Laura holds him tighter. She looks to someone O.S.

ED PINKNEY, 37, stands in the doorway, dressed in pajama bottoms, face furrowed with concern. Laura soothes her son.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT PETE'S HOUSE - DAY

Laura is in her house dress mixing up a bowl of pancake batter. She walks quickly to the foot of the stairs.

LAURA

James, Pete -- breakfast! Now, please!

INT PETE'S HOUSE - JAMES'S BEDROOM - DAY

Pete's brother, James, 17 and fit, rolls over in bed. Sports trophies and posters are the basic decor.

JAMES

But, Mom --

INT PETE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ed joins Laura, nuzzling her neck.

LAURA

Please come down. You've slept long enough, even for a Saturday.

ED

I've got a surprise for you in the garage, boys!

Laura turns to Ed and they kiss. She lays her head on his chest and dreamily regards her new wedding ring.

LAURA

When do I get my surprise again?

They look into each other's eyes and grin. She gives him a quick kiss and wriggles away.

LAURA

(continuing)

Breakfast first. You'll need it!

Grinning from ear to ear, he watches her walk away.

ED

(softly)

Ten-hut!

INT PETE'S BEDROOM - DAY

We find Pete awake and lying in bed on his side, knees pulled up.

JAMES (O.S.)

All right, mom. I'm coming.

Deliberately, Pete sits up. He shuffles across the room, running his finger along the dresser past the pictures of himself and his father, Tom, the man in the nightmare. They are in a canoe together, smiling. Entering the bathroom, he shuts the door on us.

EXT GARAGE - DAY

Pete and James enter the open, airy double garage where Ed has installed two full length punching bags. His taut body stripped to the waist, Ed expertly attacks the bags. The boys watch in stunned silence. Ed stops and wipes off with a towel, approaching the boys.

ED

I believe it's a man's job to teach his son how to defend himself.

(beat)

What do you say?

JAMES

Yeah!

ED

Outstanding! What about you, Rabbit?

PETE

Uhh -- okay.

ED

Good. There's lots of bullies in thi world, boys. When I was you're age I was -- I got pushed around, but there's no reason you have to. When you're up against a bigger guy, think shins --

He kicks a bag a hard glancing blow at shin height.

ED

(continuing)

Groin --

His right foot blurs up to crash into the bag.

ED
(continuing)
Throat.

His hand whips into the bag.

ED
(continuing)
And don't be shy. Hit first. Try
it, Rabbit.

Pete approaches the bag.

PETE
Shins, groin, throat. Hit first.

He kicks and punches the bag.

ED
Not bad! A good combination is shin
kick, throat punch, groin kick.

PETE
Could you demonstrate that for me --
like on James?

JAMES
If I can use you for a shield --

They jostle for a few seconds.

ED
All right, men. let's just attack
the bag for now. James, step on up.

They begin to get into it as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT HARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Travis, 14, Pete's best friend, leads Pete into the end of
the day flow.

TRAVIS
Come on, Pete!

They walk outside.

EXT. HARRISON MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Travis excitedly leads Pete to his new bike at the bike rack at the back of the school where only a few stragglers pass by.

TRAVIS

Take a picture, dude. You ain't never gonna get a chance to capture this much beauty in one place again. Just like Anakin Solo on that desert gizmo racer thing!

He strikes a pose on the bike.

PETE

I was thinking more Jabba the Hut on his rock.

VOICE (O.S.)

Ain't that the truth.

The boys turn to see two rough-looking kids, GENE and RAMON, both a little older than Pete and Travis. Gene and Ramon close in on the boys and the bike.

GENE

Nice wheels, douche bag. Hey, Ramon, you think I'm too ugly to ride this bitch?

RAMON

Hell, no, man. But that little dork is right -- Travis ain't got no business being on that thing.

GENE

What do you say, little buddy? How about I take it for a spin?

TRAVIS

(pleading)
My dad just got me this bike --

PETE

(sotto)
You won't get it back!

GENE

Or I could just kick your ass and then ride it!

Ramon laughs. Travis turns to Pete, eyes imploring.

PETE

You guys are from the high school.
You don't belong here!

He turns to get help from inside the school but is spun around to face Ramon.

RAMON

And if you don't shut the fuck up,
I'll kick **your** ass!

Frozen with fear, Pete stares into Ramon's leering face.

TRAVIS

(sotto)

Do your stuff, man!

RAMON

Do what? What you gonna do,
punkass?

PETE

Shut up, Travis!

TRAVIS

Shins, throat, crotch!

RAMON

Okay, killer. You got some moves?
I'll give you the first shot. Come
on. I'm right here. Or else you
tell butthead here to give up the
bike. What's it gonna be?

Pete's gut is in a knot. Sweat glistens on his face. All he can see is Ramon's leering face leaning closer.

RAMON

(continuing)

You gonna take care of business or
what?

Pete shrivels.

PETE

Let go of the bike, Travis.

TRAVIS

But, Pete --

GENE

Let's take it and kick their asses
anyway!

He pushes Travis who falls over the bike. Ramon grabs a handful of

Pete's shirt. Pete scrunches his face.

VOICE (O.S.)
How about I just kick both your
asses?

All four spin to see James cracking his knuckles and looking really pissed. Gene and Ramon back off.

JAMES
Take off, Travis.

Travis jumps on the bike and clumsily starts pedaling.

TRAVIS
Later, Pete.

Travis is out of there.

JAMES
Let's go, Pete. Mom's got the car
around the corner. You know --
where you're supposed to be?

PETE
Sorry. Travis wanted me to see --

JAMES
It's all right.
(to Gene)
Don't fuck with my brother,
asshole.

James and Pete turn and walk away to the muttered threats of the punks.

JAMES
(continuing)
I'm not always gonna be there to
bail you out, little brother.

PETE
Yes you will.

James snorts at this and Pete smiles.

Gene and Ramon watch them leave. Ramon spits.

EXT TOWN POOL - DAY

Laura sets up a blanket and chairs on the grass near the pool. James and his girlfriend, Melissa, 16 and pretty, help.

JAMES

Melissa and I are gonna put our blanket with the guys.

He nods toward a group of kids across the pool.

JAMES

(continuing; to Laura)
Keep Pete with you, okay?

MELISSA

Pete can come with us. It's alright.

He puts an arm around her, leading her off.

JAMES

Not really...

We find Pete and Ed on line for sodas and fries for all at the snack bar.

PETE

-- so now Travis thinks he can beat me because he's got this cool new bike --

Pete takes the now full tray of food. He's a bit shaky under his load and Ed grabs the food before disaster strikes.

ED

I can get these, big guy. Why don't you get us some napkins over there.

PETE

Okay.

He glides to the service table followed by Ed, where they find DETECTIVE MAVITY, mid-thirties and heading toward stout. He is pumping lots of ketchup on three orders of fries.

ED

(warmly)
Detective Mavity?

Mavity looks up and breaks into a shaggy grin.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Sergeant Pinkney -- how are you?

Mavity gives Ed a mock salute.

ED
Not Sergeant anymore. Just Ed.

They shake hands.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
That's right. You're retired now.
Hey, the Marines' loss is our gain.
Hello, Pete. How are you?

PETE
Okay.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
(to Ed)
I heard about the wedding.
Congratulations.

They shake again and begin walking toward the pool.

ED
Thanks. I'm a lucky man.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
I'm sure you deserve it. You put
your time in.

ED
Best twenty years of my life -- so
far.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
I did three years in the Army
myself before joining the force. I
know how you feel.

Ed smiles to himself at the remark. Pete catches up
to them.

PETE
Detective?

DETECTIVE MAVITY
(cautious)
Yes, Pete?

PETE

Have you come up with anything in my dad's case?

The men stop. Mavity looks uncomfortable.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Pete, I want to catch your dad's killer as much as you do. Sometimes things take longer than you want them to, though.

ED

Can the FBI help?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Not their jurisdiction.

ED

What about the state police?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(derisively)
Oh, they're involved.

ED

Look, just say the word and I'll get fifty Marines up here to scour the woods if you think it'll help.

Mavity looks at him as if to say, "Really?".

ED

(continuing)
No shit. Oh, sorry, Pete.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Thank you. I appreciate that. But please believe me -- we're doing all that can be done.

PETE

Then why haven't you caught him yet? Don't you guys know what you're doing?

ED

Pete!

DETECTIVE MAVITY

I know it's hard. You just have to trust us. And your weekly phone calls

(MORE)

DETECTIVE MAVITY (cont'd)
don't help. Just let us do our job,
Pete. Nice to see you again, Sarge.

ED
Good luck, Detective.

Mavity leaves and Ed turns to Pete.

ED
(continuing)
You've been bothering him every
week? And now you insult the man?
Son, where I come from, that's how
you make sure the job doesn't get
done.

PETE
He's not doing it anyway!

Pete looks past Ed through the crowd to see Mavity talking to
another man. Mavity looks over at Pete and the man follows
his gaze. They separate.

ED
(softly)
Listen to me. Leave him alone.
Don't call him, don't go looking
for him. You'll only piss him off.
Understood?

PETE
(reluctant)
Okay. I guess I should wait and see
what they come up with. I mean,
they're the pros, right?

ED
Now you're making sense.

He tousles Pete's hair. Pete breaks into a shy grin.

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

Pete's mouth is set with determination as he staples a
homemade poster to a telephone pole: "REWARD FOR INFORMATION
IN THE KILLING OF TOM HAGGERTY IN THIS PARKING LOT LAST
JANUARY 17. PLEASE CALL..." We see others in the BG -- one on
every pole.

He climbs a small rise overlooking the lot. Using binoculars,

he studies the people coming and going. We SEE the store owner from the opening scene bring out a bag of trash and return to the store.

A vagrant, mid twenties and filthy, appears. He panhandles unsuccessfully then goes through the trash. He drops garbage on the pavement and snarls at a passing shopper.

He suddenly stares straight at Pete, eyes locking. Pete looks away and when he looks back the man is gone. Pete gives chase, following glimpses of what could be the man's raincoat into an alley.

EXT ALLEY - DAY

He is alone in a dead-end alley filled with trash and dumpsters. Pete, off balance, edges cautiously toward a door twisted partly open at the end of the alley. He picks up a stick of wood and holds it like a bat, determined to see what lurks on the other side of that door.

The wind bangs the door and scatters loose trash. Nerves taut, he slides closer to the door. The wind increases, and as a cloud throws the alley into shadow a gust whips a ragged cloth over his head, blinding him until he drops the stick and rips it away.

He finds himself backed into a corner between a dumpster and the wall. Breathing hard, he expects attack from any direction. A noise O.S. turns him to the dumpster, where a huge brown rat appears only inches from his face! Pete inches away, then runs like hell for the street. Catching his breath, he looks back. There is no one. Sheepishly he tightens his backpack and slips into the crowd.

INT JAMES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

James and Pete play chess at a small table. Cluttering the room are trophies and photos from James' football victories. Pete draws hideous monsters while waiting for James to move, then moves quickly on his turn.

PETE

Hey, James, you know when we were staying at Amy's house last month? During Mom's honeymoon?

JAMES

Wham! Just took your queen, Junior.

PETE

Damn!

He moves a piece almost indifferently.

PETE

(continuing)

Well, I heard someone tell her it was, you know, kind of soon or something for Mom to get remarried.

James makes a responding move.

JAMES

Who said that?

PETE

I don't know. Amy's friend, Mrs. Jurgens.

JAMES

Well that old biddy can go screw herself -- mind her own business. Your turn.

Pete moves quickly.

PETE

Yeah but, was it too soon? I mean, some people act like Dad was never here at all.

James looks away.

PETE

(continuing)

Remember what he did with his hands when he was going to tickle us?

Pete tries to mimic his father's hand gestures.

JAMES

(quietly)

Yeah.

PETE

And when we'd play chess he'd say, "What are you're next three moves?", and if we didn't know he'd tickle us?

JAMES

Yeah. You got tickled a lot.

PETE
Why haven't they found the guy who
did it?

JAMES
It takes time, Pete --

PETE
It's been almost seven months! Do
you think this fat Detective Mavity
guy is covering something up?

JAMES
What? Like what?

PETE
Maybe Dad was working on a story
about him at the paper. You know,
police corruption, drug money --

The accusation hangs for a moment.

JAMES
(flatly)
Dad was a teacher, not a reporter,
Pete.
(Beat)

JAMES
(continuing)
Save your imagination for your
drawings, man.

James makes a chess move as Pete deflates. Laura enters,
carrying a half full laundry basket.

LAURA
What are my best boys talking
about?

Pete and James glance at each other.

JAMES
Just stuff.

LAURA
Uh-huh.

She starts picking up dirty clothes around the room.

LAURA
 (continuing)
 Well maybe the stuff you're talking
 about could be the stuff that's
 lying around your rooms. And maybe
 you could start stuffing it into
 the hamper that holds all that kind
 of stuff in the bathroom.

LAURA
 Thank you, boys.

JAMES
 All right, Mom.

PETE
 Sorry, Mom.

Laura exits. James picks up the basket Laura has filled.

JAMES
 I got it.

Leaning close to Pete, he nods to the chess board.

JAMES
 (continuing)
 You fell into my trap. Next move I
 take you out.

He takes the basket out. Pete stands at the chess table and
 moves a piece.

PETE
 (softly)
 Checkmate.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY - DAY

Pete leads Melissa up to the attic landing.

PETE
 See, my Dad taught me how to wire
 all the lights in the town and the
 houses so they go on and off
 separately.
 (to himself)
 Boy, did that take forever.

MELISSA
 Huh?

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - DAY

He opens the door to reveal the spacious musty attic. A large

end window overlooks the driveway. Near it is a beautiful toy train landscape on a large plywood tabletop. Impressive, with multi tracks, towns and mountains.

MELISSA

Wow--

Pete draws her to the controls.

PETE

Look --

He throws switches on a control panel and lights obediently turn on and off all over the town. He points to the underside of the table and they bend down to see a maze of wiring and LED's. They straighten up.

PETE

(continuing)

We built this mountain so the train would have something to go through, otherwise it's just kinda boring.

(beat)

No pun intended.

MELISSA

What?

PETE

You know -- boring?

Pete makes a corkscrew motion with his hand outside the tunnel. Mel nods vaguely, looking toward the window. Pete points to the huge transformer.

PETE

(continuing)

Wasn't too funny when Dad said it, either.

MELISSA

Which dad?

PETE

What?

MELISSA

Your old dad or your new dad?

PETE

My -- dad. You know.

MELISSA

Oh. Yeah.

PETE

(gushing)

Anyway, see the transformer, here?
It's an Oldfield. It's super
powerful. My dad gave it to me.
They don't make 'em anymore.
It could run up to thirteen trains
at full capacity, if I had that
many.

My dad said we'll probably never
know how strong it really is.

The SOUND of squealing tires is heard O.S.

MELISSA

What's that?

She slips quickly to the large window.

MELISSA

(continuing)

James is home, Pete.
(to herself)
Finally.

MELISSA

(continuing)

But who's car is that?

Pete joins her at the window. His eyebrows go up.

PETE

Whoa!

He turns, runs to the door and is gone.

MELISSA

Wait up, train boy!

She follows.

EXT PETE'S DRIVEWAY - DAY

Pete and Mel arrive outside to find Ed, James, and Laura in
the driveway looking over a twelve year old Camaro.

JAMES

Hey, Mel -- dig my new ride!

MELISSA

Awesome!

JAMES

Dad got it for me.

James throws his arms around Ed, who gives him a bear hug.

JAMES

(continuing; to
Melissa)

Hey, get in. See how she feels.

MELISSA

Hell, yes!

They scramble into the car.

LAURA

How does it feel, big boy?

She walks to the driver's window and leans in. Ed wheels something from behind the car toward Pete, who is alone a few feet in front of the car. It's a very cool mountain bike with a distinctive and unusual paint job.

ED

Got some wheels for you, too, Pete.

Pete's eye widens, his jaw drops. He looks from the bike to Ed and back.

PETE

Really? For me?

He goes to the bike.

ED

For you.

Pete looks at Ed.

PETE

Thanks. Thanks a lot!

He takes off up the driveway on the bike. Laura puts her arm around Ed.

LAURA

Good going, Dad.

Ed smiles at her.

ED
Oh, one more thing.

He goes to the trunk of the Camaro and pulls out a boy's size baseball bat and glove. Pete zips back, hitting the brakes hard in a controlled spin.

ED
(continuing)
Here's your other present, Slugger.
And I signed you up for Little
League. First practice in an hour.

Ed looks pleased with himself. Pete's face has dropped.

PETE
I stink at baseball!

ED
Maybe we can change that, Rabbit.

Laura quickly goes to Pete and puts her arm around him, turning him away from the others.

LAURA
(sotto)
Please try it -- your dad wants to
share something with you.

Pete shrugs and gives Laura a short nod.

EXT BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

It's a typical Little League afternoon. Ed and Laura are in the small, weathered stands behind a beaten chain-link fence. Other parents are scattered through the stands and on the grass in folding chairs. Laura looks nervous.

ED
He'll do just fine, you'll see.

LAURA
Sure. He just needs a little
practice, that's all.

On the field, Pete is fielding grounders, missing about half. Ed rises, bounces down the bleachers to the fence in front of the stands.

ED
Keep your knees bent, Rabbit! Get
that glove down! Hustle!

LAURA

Honey, why don't you sit here with me --

ED

He needs encouragement --

(back to Pete)

Get that one, Pete! Dig, dig, dig!

Go, Rabbit!

Pete is less than happy out there. A BOY next him on the field gets a grounder that Pete missed. Flips the ball to him.

BOY

(sarcastically)

Rabbit?

Pete turns away from him and throws the ball O.S. We HEAR Ed O.S. continue to AD LIB "encouragement". Another one comes toward Pete. In the b.g., the other boy watches.

BOY

(continuing)

Dig, Rabbit, dig!

Pete makes the catch and throws the ball O.S. without looking at the boy.

CUT TO:

ED

See -- he's getting it.

(shouting)

Go, Rabbit!

Pete grits his teeth.

CUT TO:

Feet running down the baseline and sliding safely home in a cloud of dust. In the stands several parents clap and cheer. Ed sucks moodily on a can of beer. Laura furtively watches the others.

The COACH, a florid man in a baseball cap, steps through the dust cloud.

COACH

Way to go, Colin. Way to hustle.

He cups his hands and shouts to the team in the field.

COACH
 (continuing)
 Listen up, guys. That was a perfect
 job of stealing home when the
 pitcher's not looking.
 (points to pitcher)
 All right, Jeff?

The pitcher nods.

COACH
 (continuing)
 There's one out, man on first, and
 these are the last hitters for this
 practice. Let's get 'em out and go
 home! Okay, Jeff.

Pete is in right field between first and second bases, not
 too far back.

PETE
 Not to me, please God, not to me.

The pitcher winds up, the players tense, the ball is thrown
 and the batter swings -- and misses. Ed is on the edge of his
 bleacher.

ED
 Be ready, now, Pete!

BOY
 Get ready, Rabbit!

Pete swears under his breath. The pitcher winds up, the boys
 tense, the ball is thrown, and the batter connects! It's a
 high pop up that hangs right over Pete's position. Time and
 sound have stopped and the world's eyes are on him as Pete
 adjusts his position under the falling ball.

And in SLOW MOTION: the batter runs for first base; the coach
 yells to the field; Ed rises, shouting, rushing to the fence;
 the pitcher looks blankly toward Pete, and the boy behind
 Pete mouthing, "Oh, shit."

Pete grimaces under all that weight and -- makes the catch!
 Suddenly the SOUNDS of the world flood back as he stands
 there half amazed with himself. A smile begins to break
 across his face and he holds up the ball for all to see.

ED
 He's tagged up! He's tagged up!
 Throw to second!

BOY
Throw it, Rabbit, throw it!

COACH
--double play! Go for the double --

The runner is now rounding second, taking advantage of Pete's utter confusion while OTHERS shout instructions. Pete turns left and right, trying to get it right, accomplishing nothing.

ED
Throw it home! Throw the goddam ball, boy!

LAURA
Ed!

The coach is rubbing his face in frustration. Pete finally throws to first base as the runner comes home. The coach looks at his watch.

COACH
That's it. Let's all go home. Same time next week, kids.

As he walks off the field, Pete is passed by the other boy.

BOY
Jesus!

EXT BASEBALL FIELD - PARKING LOT - DAY

Ed, Laura, and Pete get into their car, Pete in the back. Both he and Ed are fuming.

LAURA
That really was a great catch, darling. That's what counts.

PETE
And you'll explain that to the team when they show up tonight with stakes and torches?

ED
Pete, I went through basic with a kid who could barely do anything -- a real screw up. He almost drowned in the showers. Well, he pulled himself together and now -- he runs the whole damn Corps!

PETE
 (lost)
 What?

LAURA
 (to Ed, softly)
 Honey, maybe you should try practicing alone with Pete. You know, just the two of you.

Ed considers this.

ED
 Maybe your mother's right.
 (beat)
 What do you say?

PETE
 I never want to come back here again. Those kids think I'm a jerk because of you.
 (to Laura)
 My real father would never do that to me!

They stare at each other for a moment, the hurt plain to all on Ed's face.

EXT GABE'S RESTAURANT - EVENING

They pull into a crowded parking lot full of activity. Gabe's is a popular family restaurant and it's jumping tonight. Cars come and go, kids visit on tailgates, young families lug toddlers and strollers. They spot James and Melissa on line for a table, and weave through the crowd to the teenagers.

ED
 (tense, preoccupied)
 How was the drive?

JAMES
 Great, dad. That car is the bomb!

ED
 It's a bomb? What's wrong with it?

MELISSA
 (laughing)
 No, Mr Pinckney. That means it's good!

ED
 Ohh! That's better. Bomb is good.
 And bad is good. So, what means
 "bad" these days?

Beat.

JAMES
 Bad.

More titters from the kids. In the b.g., a loud pickup truck
 with THREE ROWDY MEN pull up.

JAMES
 (continuing)
 Speaking of bad, how did Pete do at
 practice today?

ED
 Don't ask.

LAURA
 He did great. Caught the last fly
 ball of the game.

MELISSA
 Way to go, Pete!

PETE
 Yeah.

MELISSA
 Ohhhkayy.

There is a moment's uncomfortable silence.

ED
 (to James)
 How long's the wait?

JAMES
 No problem. They told us we'd have
 a table in five minutes -- about a
 half an hour ago.

ED
 What? We're starving! We're
 regulars here. Let me see what I
 can do.

Ed slips inside. The three rowdies arrive on line behind the
 family. Two drink from bottles wrapped in paper bags.

They show immediate interest in both women. They are loud and big.

LAURA

I know you needed to try out your new car, James, but have you finished your homework for Monday?

JAMES

Pretty much. I just gotta study my lines for that play Mr. Cogswell put me in. Yuck!

PETE

What play?

JAMES

Hamlet. He says it'll "broaden my horizons".

(beat)

I can't figure out what the hell they're saying.

The rowdies check Ed out as he returns.

ED

The manager won't cut us any slack. There are too many people ahead of us.

The family moans.

ROWDY #1

(to his buddy)

Hey, Rick, speaking of getting ahead, how'd you like to get a little head from one of these two sweeties?

RICK

It'd sure pass the time waiting for a table.

They guffaw loudly. Ed turns to face them. Laura grabs his arm.

LAURA

Ed, please.

ED

(to the men)

What did you say?

LAURA
Honey, please let it go.

RICK
You better listen to your mama, Ed.

Ed shakes off her hand, focused only on the men who tower over him.

ED
James -- get the family out of the way.

JAMES
Yes, sir.

James pulls the women away from Ed. Pete follows.

ROWDY #3
Oh, he's a family man. Just one big happy family with those two cuties, eh, old man?

More laughter and drinking.

ROWDY #1
Looks like a long wait. Want me to get you a chair, Pops?

ED
Beat it.

The men are amazed. They laugh even louder. Rick leans in.

RICK
Come on, dad, don't you want to share?

They encircle Ed -- one in front, one on each side.

LAURA
I'm calling the police!

She moves toward the door.

ED
No!

The next moments are an amazing blur of motion as Ed beats the hell out of these three men. Ed is left standing over them, chest heaving.

Everyone is staring at him -- it was incredible! Only Pete has a different look on his face: shock and fear.

JAMES
Wow! You just --

ED
Come on, let's get out of here.

He sweeps them up before him heading toward the cars. He realizes he doesn't have Pete, and looks around to see Pete frozen in place.

ED
(continuing)
Come on, son.

He reaches for Pete's arm. Pete backs away, gives Ed a wide berth and follows the others. Ed, barely containing his anger, follows.

CUT TO:

INT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Amid empty Chinese food containers in the kitchen, Ed and James finish the last of the food. James sits while Ed stands and paces with his plate. Pete lies on the den floor, drawing and watching a nature show on TV. He can see Ed through the open door.

ED
--you're outnumbered like that
you've got to make the first move.
You decide where and when to fight -
- not the enemy. I was in Force
Recon for six years. Always
outnumbered. Ever heard of them?

JAMES
No.

ED
Not many people have. We're like
the Navy Seals, only better of
course, 'cause we're Marines.

JAMES
What'd you do?

Pete's getting real interested in the conversation.

ED

We'd get infiltrated into situations nobody else was dumb enough to take. Getting in and out without being seen. That's our specialty. Along with kicking butt.
(laughs)

JAMES

Like what you did tonight.

ED

Yeah.

JAMES

I just couldn't believe it! Will you teach me how to do that?

ED

It's not really here --
(points to his biceps)
it's up here.
(points to his head)
You've got to have the mindset, the will, to go all the way, put it all on the line.

Pete is listening to Ed when the show on TV begins a scene showing male lions fighting.

TV NARRATOR

These males want to take over the pride. And the only way to do it is to run off or kill the males already there.

Pete's interest perks up.

ED

-- and sometimes you have to strike first. When it's the right thing to do.

ON the TV: The male lions are killing the pride's cubs.

NARRATOR

The new leaders of the pride have no use for the offspring of the previous males. One by one, the cubs are killed.

Pete is horrified. The lions begin to mate.

NARRATOR

(continuing)

Within days of the loss of their cubs, the lionesses come into estrus, and are eager to mate with their new masters.

ED

Figure out your enemy's weakness and what he expects you to do. Then use that against him.

Pete finally tears his eyes off the screen and notices his sketch. Among his doodles is a startling image of a lion with a man's head -- and it looks like Ed. He has no idea that he drew it! A shadow falls across the page. Instinctively Pete covers the drawing with his hand. Ed squats next to Pete.

ED

(continuing)

Listen, guy, I'm sorry we got off on the wrong foot back at the field. I'm really trying to be friends, though I guess it's kind of hard to tell sometimes. Let's start over, okay?

Pete can only nod. He's in shock. Smiling, Ed extends his hand to shake. Pete only wants Ed to leave, and takes his hand in return, uncovering the drawing.

ED

(continuing)

Good. Hey, what's that you're drawing?

Ed takes the drawing and looks at it. Pete is frozen.

ED

(continuing)

Hmm. A winner. Good work, Marine.

Ed gives him the paper, pats him on the shoulder, and leaves. Pete is shaken and open mouthed. On the TV in the background, more lions fight.

EXT BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Dream Sequence. Pete is in the outfield. Balls are flying past him but he's too late to catch them. It's as if he's in slow motion but the balls aren't.

He reaches up to catch a pop-up and steps backward. We see a body face down in the grass behind him. He trips over it and discovers a baseball in his glove.

Ed, Laura, the Coach, James, and others scream at him to throw the ball. Pete gestures toward the body but they ignore it. The SOUND of their shouting becomes deafening.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Pete's shouts awaken Ed and Laura. She moves to get up but he stops her. A thunderstorm approaches.

ED
Go back to sleep.

He kisses her lightly and gets up.

INT PETE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP on James, yelling at Pete, shaking him awake.

JAMES
Pete, Pete, wake up, wake up!

ANGLE ON Pete: He wakes with a start. Disoriented, then just exhausted. Sweat dots his face.

JAMES
(continuing)
You're tossing and turning. And grunting, man. Like a pig.
(beat)
What's with that? Are you regressing to your original state, little brother?

PETE
I was not grunting!
(beat)
Everybody else was talking, no one could hear me.

JAMES
Oh, I heard you pretty good, and I'm in the next room!

James snorts like a pig.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

Ed pads quietly through the lightning flashes toward the

stairs.

BACK TO SCENE

PETE

Cut it out, James. I was on a baseball field, there was this dead body, and I kept missing all these fly balls.

James rises to go.

JAMES

Yeah well, missing those catches sounds pretty normal for you, junior -- sure you were dreaming?

PETE

Up yours!

JAMES

Well, looks like you survived. See you in the morning.

He heads for the door.

PETE

Hey, James?

James pauses.

JAMES

Yeah?

PETE

Does he ever scare you?

JAMES

Who?

PETE

You know.

JAMES

Dad?

Pete nods.

JAMES

(continuing)

Why? Because of the fight and the Karate?

PETE

Yeah.

JAMES

Aww, don't be crazy! He protected us today. He'd never hurt one of us. He wants to teach us that stuff.

PETE

I know, but, I just wonder if --

James returns to the bed.

JAMES

That's your problem. You wonder too much. Listen: have you noticed how happy Mom is these days? How he takes care of her? Do you remember after Dad was killed she wouldn't go out at night? Do you know how lucky she feels to have him? It's not just about you, you know.

PETE

(blurting)

Why hasn't anyone been caught for Dad's murder and where was he when Dad got killed?

JAMES

(shocked)

What are you talking about?

INT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT - STAIRWAY

Ed climbs the stairs.

BACK TO SCENE

PETE

He told you he was in that Force Recon, didn't he?

JAMES

Yeah --

PETE

(getting louder)

Those are the most trained guys in the Marines!

(MORE)

PETE (cont'd)
They can get in and out
of places without being seen --

ANGLE ON ED

as he hears the boys' voices indistinctly and pauses, then goes on.

BACK TO SCENE

PETE
(continuing)
You know he knows Karate. You think
he's never done anything like that?

JAMES
I sure don't think he's done it to
Dad. Don't be ridiculous, Pete. And
besides, his base was a hundred and
sixty miles away.

PETE
So?

JAMES
So, last week you thought the
killer was that detective. Then
some bum -- in an alley. Now him?

Pete is silent.

JAMES
(continuing)
So, I'll tell you what, little
brother. If I promise to find out
where he was that night, do you
promise to lighten up and give
everybody a break?

After a moment Pete nods. James turns to leave, then turns back.

JAMES
(continuing)
So, he just sneaked off a guarded --

ANGLE ON ED

He arrives on the landing outside Pete's room and hears James through the open door. We hear the first raindrops spatter on the house.

JAMES (O.S.)
 --Marine base, drove a hundred and
 sixty miles, killed Dad --

BACK TO SCENE

JAMES
 -- and drove back without being
 caught or seen by anyone.

Pete looks at James.

JAMES
 (continuing)
 And then he comes back two months
 later, starts dating Mom, and the
 next thing we know is they're
 married! I promise that I will find
 out where he was the night Dad was
 killed.

ON LANDING
 as Ed listens, shocked.

JAMES (V.O.)
 I'll find out exactly where he
 was.

Ed strains to control his rising hurt and anger. He enters
 Pete's room. The boys freeze.

ED
 What's going on up here?

JAMES
 Oh, ah, Pete had another nightmare
 so I had to wake him up.

ED
 Is that what you were doing just
 now?

James edges toward the door, Ed's eyes on him like lasers.

JAMES
 I guess we were talking about the
 game today -- helping him, you
 know -- understand -- the right
 play. G'night, Dad. G'night, Dopey.

James exits. Ed stares at Pete, who is transfixed, the deer
 in the headlights of a Mack truck. Finally Ed leaves, closing

the door.

EXT CLIENT'S HOUSE - DAY

Ed parks outside a huge new house just being finished. Dressed in a white pin-striped shirt and tie, he carries a metal clipboard and technician's briefcase. We follow him through a throng of workers to PATRICK, a co-worker, early twenties, who is wiring an alarm pad in the kitchen. Patrick is dressed in a dark Polo shirt with the emblem "Starr Security Systems" on the left breast.

ED

Hey, Patrick. What's the problem?

PATRICK

I just can't get the system to trip,
Mr. Pinckney. I think the chip is bad.

ED

Unlikely. They're all tested at the factory and the shop. Let's have a look.

Ed opens his briefcase and picks up a tester.

Ed's fingers carefully pick through the panel's wires and tests them with his volt meter.

His face is a picture of intelligent concentration, a detective sifting through the evidence. Patrick watches carefully.

ED

(continuing)

Here, look. fifty millivolts across this transformer is wrong. Should be twenty-seven to thirty-two millivolts.

PATRICK

Right. What caused that?

ED

Probably a system overload from the storm last night. Check the suppressor on the line and see if it's fried.

PATRICK

Right.

He starts to exit, turns around.

PATRICK
(continuing)
Mr. Pinckney?

ED
Yes?

PATRICK
Did you learn this stuff in the
Marines?

ED
Yeah.

PATRICK
Sounds like a pretty good deal,
getting paid to learn.

Ed is packing up his meters.

ED
(snorts)
That's right. Eighteen years
sticking your neck out for your
country and when you get back
people look at you like you're some
kind of --

He sees the look on Patrick's face.

ED
(continuing)
Hey, Patty, it ain't that bad --
the food's real good.
(laughs)
You just caught me on a bad day.
Ask me tomorrow and I'll tell you
about the adventure part. In the
meantime, go check out that
surpressor. And don't forget your
rubber gloves. If it was a
lightning hit, you could be
the one who gets fried next.

PATRICK
Okay. I'll be careful.

Patrick exits. Ed stops in the middle of packing up. He looks over his shoulder at the alarm, tapping his pen on the metal clipboard, thinking.

INT HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Pete walks through the emptying halls, dwarfed by the older kids of his brother's school. A hand grabs his shoulder from behind and he jumps and turns.

PETE

Hey!

MELISSA

(laughing)

Sorry! Aren't you jumpy.

Pete exhales. Gives her a dirty look, then looks around.

PETE

I thought you were somebody else.

(beat)

I'm looking for James.

MELISSA

He's rehearsing that play.

PETE

He promised to find out some stuff about somebody and I need to ask him if he's done it yet.

MELISSA

Can't you just ask him at home?

Pete looks at her like she's a dolt.

PETE

No.

MELISSA

Ohh.

She stifles a giggle.

INT AUDITORIUM - DAY

A school play in rehearsal. A few kids are in tired, generic costumes that look like they were in "Hamlet"'s original production. Mel and Pete take seats a few rows back.

MELISSA

(whispering)

I don't see him up there.

A frumpy girl with a tailor's tape and scissors on a string

around her neck leads James onto the stage. He's dressed in what can best be described as a gladiator's outfit found in some long-forgotten school locker. He is mortified.

PETE
(softly)
Yess!

MR COGSWELL, the drama teacher, a trim and overworked man in his late thirties, looks up to see James.

MR COGSWELL
Ah! Here's Horatio. Very good,
Tiffany. Thank you.

Titters and a few guffaws come from the kids over James' costume. Tiffany stalks off.

PETE
(sotto)
This is great!

Mel covers her mouth to stifle her giggles. Mel catches James' eye. He gives them a curt nod. She mouths the word "Hot" to him and leaves. Mr. Cogswell claps his hands for attention.

MR COGSWELL
People, please! Kevin, Mark, James -
- the way you're playing this we'll
be lucky to finish with anyone
alive in the audience, much less
awake! Pay attention, James!

JAMES
Sorry, Mr. Cogswell.

Pete lets out a snicker and James shoots him a dirty look.

MR COGSWELL
All right, now. Let's go from the
top -- and remember, this is
supposed to be very frightening for
the characters in it.

Pete starts drawing lions killing cubs as the Ghost Scene from "Hamlet" unfolds creakily. The students are clueless.

GHOST
I am thy father's spirit;
Doomed for a certain term to walk
the night,
(MORE)

GHOST (cont'd)
 And for the day confined to fast in
 fires,
 Till the foul crimes done in my
 days of nature
 Are burnt and purged away.

Even Pete can tell how bad it is.

GHOST
 (continuing)
 If thou didst ever thy dear father
 love --

HAMLET
 O God!

GHOST
 Revenge his foul and most unnatural
 murder.

HAMLET
 Murder!

Pete begins to listen more closely to the play.

GHOST
 Murder most foul. Thus was I,
 sleeping,--

MR COGSWELL
 Kids, hold on. Please. The way this
 is going, I might be sleeping soon
 myself.

There are a few titters.

MR COGSWELL
 (continuing)
 Listen, everyone, sit down on the
 apron, take a seat. Good. Now,
 look. Rick: this guy Hamlet you're
 playing isn't really much older
 than you are. That's right. A
 college student. And James, your
 character, Horatio, is really just
 one of Hamlet's drinking buddies.

More titters.

MR COGSWELL
 (continuing)
 Now, Hamlet's just out of college.
 He comes home to find his father,
 who is the King, is dead.

Pete looks up from his drawing.

MR COGSWELL

(continuing)

And now someone else is King. And suddenly in the middle of the night while Hamlet's walking around in the castle because he can't sleep, his Old Man's ghost pops up and tells him -- tells him what?

Not a sound. He's got their attention now. Pete is on the edge of his seat, riveted.

MR COGSWELL

(continuing)

He tells Hamlet he was murdered.

Pete is horrified.

CLOSE ON MR COGSWELL

MR COGSWELL

(continuing; rising intensity)

And he also tells him who the murderer is. And the murderer is -- the man who is now the King and married to Hamlet's mother!

The metal folder Pete's been drawing on clatters to the cement floor. Everyone turns toward him. He is petrified.

MR COGSWELL

(continuing)

And that's the kind of audience response we're looking for!

The students have a laugh at Pete's expense and AD LIB getting back to work as the CAMERA TIGHTENS on Pete.

CUT TO:

EXT HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

James and Pete get in James' Camaro with Mel.

PETE

(intense)

So what happens to Hamlet in the end?

JAMES

I don't know! Maybe he gets whacked investigating a case of "police corruption"!

Mel giggles as she flips the passenger seat forward for Pete to enter the backseat.

MELISSA

I had no idea you had such a deep interest in the "the-ah-tah", Peter.

PETE

The ghost -- does he come back and tell more?

JAMES

How the hell do I know? I didn't want to be in the damn play in the first place! You can read the script yourself. It's in my bag.

(sotto, to Mel)

I think he'll have some free time on his hands, don't you?

James puts his hand on Mel's bare knee. Pete sees it.

PETE

Here we go again.

The car shoots ahead.

INT MELISSA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Pete sits on the couch in Mel's living room absorbed in James' dog-eared copy of "Hamlet". He munches an apple absent-mindedly. Open school books and a bowl of apples sit on the coffee table in front of him. Various Catholic icons decorate the house -- a statue of Mary, a Crucifix on the wall.

INT MELISSA'S HOUSE BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

James and Mel are involved in a frantic make out session on her mother's bed. Their shirts are off and her bra is open. A picture of Jesus smiles down upon them.

ANGLE ON PETE

Absorbed in "Hamlet", he doesn't hear the sound of a car pulling up, nor does he see, as we do, a car stop in the driveway alongside the house outside the window.

ANGLE ON BEDROOM

James and Mel are also deeply absorbed in their activities.

ANGLE ON PETE

The SOUND of a car door slamming jolts Pete, and he sees the figure of Mrs. Heard, Mel's matronly mother, walking around the car. Instantly, he turns on the TV, which comes on LOUDLY.

ANGLE ON BEDROOM

The kids get their own jolt as the SOUND of the TV alerts them to the approach of Mrs. Heard. They rush to dress and straighten the bed.

EXT MELISSA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Pete rushes out to Mrs. Heard, her arms loaded with grocery bags.

PETE

Hi, Mrs. Heard! Let me help you!

MRS. HEARD

Why, thank you, Peter. What a helpful young man you are.

Under the guise of helping her, Pete blocks her way with fumbling and almost drops a couple of bottle filled bags.

MRS. HEARD

(continuing)

Easy, easy there, Peter, you --
WATCH IT!

PETE

I'm sorry, it just slipped. Maybe we should move these bottles --

And he lets the bag slip again.

MRS. HEARD

DON'T DO -- I've got it now. Why don't you just take the dog food, okay?

PETE
Yes, Ma'am.

With a furtive look into the house he picks it up and follows the now heavily laden and cranky woman.

PETE
(continuing)
I'll get the door, Mrs. --

He stumbles into her.

MRS. HEARD
I'll get it myself, thank you.
(to herself)
Klutz!

She cuts him off and enters. Still on the porch Pete HEARS Mrs. Heard in the living room.

MRS. HEARD
(continuing; angry)
Melissa!

Pete freezes, expecting the worst, then peers through the open door to see Mel and James, fully clothed, sitting on the couch, watching TV and eating apples.

MRS. HEARD
(continuing)
How many times have I told you not to eat in the living room without a napkin?

MELISSA
Oops -- sorry, Mom.

Mel gets up for some napkins as Mrs. Heard continues to the kitchen with the groceries. James rises to take a bag from Mrs. Heard, but she's had enough help for one day and swings her body away from him.

MRS. HEARD
I've got it, James.

She heads for the kitchen.

MRS. HEARD
(continuing; to herself)
They're always watching TV, never doing anything.

Behind her back James looks at Pete. They high five.

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The boys pull into the driveway and park. They exit the car, rambling toward the kitchen door.

PETE

I just think it's weird, that's all.

JAMES

Well, I think it's weird that you think that some old play written a zillion years ago has anything to do with us!

He opens the screen door.

PETE

At least I'm trying to figure out what really happened to Dad! You said you'd find out where he was the night Dad died, but you didn't! You don't give a --

The inside door swings open and Ed's glowering face pops into frame.

ED

What the hell are you boys arguing about?

Ed looks from one to the other. They are frozen.

ED

(continuing)

You boys better come in here. Your mother and I have something very serious to discuss with you right now.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The boys enter off balance.

JAMES

Hi, Dad. Hi, Mom.

PETE

Hi.

Ed turns to Laura, sitting at the kitchen table.

ED

They don't have a clue.

ED
Brother!

LAURA
Or sister.

He pops the cork.

ED
I don't think so.

LAURA
We'll see.

PETE
Can you tell yet?

LAURA
Not yet -- later. But I'm not sure
I want to. You know how I like
surprises.

Ed has poured three glasses of Champagne and passes them out.

He raises the bottle in salute.

ED
Leathernecks, I give you my wife,
and my child.

He puts the bottle to his mouth and drinks. The others watch
for a moment as he gulps it down.

JAMES
Cheers!

PETE
Cheers!

They drink and Pete coughs some up. James doesn't. Ed spills
some on his shirt and begins a wardance complete with whoops
and hollers. James joins in. Finally, so does Pete.

As Laura sits and watches, the three men dance until Ed
plops, exhausted, into a chair, takes a swig, and makes a
face.

ED
Not really my brew.
(belches)
Pete, grab me a Bud from the
fridge, there, pardner. Thanks.

Pete obliges.

ED

(continuing)

There's going to be a whole lot more whooping and hollering in this house soon. I'll lay any odds you want this kid is going to raise the roof off this old place!

He takes Laura's hand and looks into her eyes with love, gratitude, relief. She radiates happiness. This is as good as it gets between two people.

Ed pops the top of the beer Pete has handed him and drinks deeply.

LAURA

Are you boys ready for a baby in this house?

Pete and James mumble answers as Ed interrupts.

ED

Well, it won't be this house. I mean, now we'll have to move, honey. Just not enough space here. Besides everything else.

PETE

What do you mean we'll have to move?

ED

I mean, Pete, this house is nice, but it's old, drafty, and expensive to maintain. Truth is, it needs a lot of repairs. Your mother and I have decided to sell it, get something better.

Pete turns to Laura.

LAURA

Honey, your father is right. I love this old house, too, but maybe it's best to move.

ED

We're not leaving town, boys. Your mom and I want something closer to my job so I can get home quick in an emergency.

The boys look at their mother. She nods.

PETE

But this was my dad's house! He grew up here and so did James and me. He wanted us to live here and give it to our kids.

ED

Pete, look, I didn't say it would be easy --

PETE

You never even asked us!

ED

We don't have to ask you! I'm in charge of this family, not you!

PETE

Nobody asked me about that, either!

ED

What?! Boy, it's time you and I got together out back for a little --

Laura has gone pale and begins to retch. She rises and Ed instantly goes to her and supports her.

ED

(continuing)
What's wrong, baby?

She waves toward the bathroom.

ED

(continuing;
concerned)
Okay, okay, I've got you, honey,
don't worry.

They exit. Pete and James look at each other. James exhales.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT DRIVEWAY - DAY

Pete watches James work underneath the jacked-up front end of his new car.

PETE

Isn't it kinda dangerous under there?

JAMES

Yeah, but this oil leak is driving me crazy.

(beat)

If I had about three hundred bucks I could get some killer new shocks and then -- damn, this puppy'd rule!

PETE

Cool.

Pete looks over his shoulder and sees Ed leaning against the garage doorway. No telling how long he's been there.

PETE

(continuing)

Hi.

ED

Hi, Pete.

Ed studies them for a moment.

ED

(continuing)

I'm going to start my workout. Any of you lady killers want to join me?

JAMES

Yeah, sounds good. I can't find this oil leak anyway.

James slides out, wipes his hands and stands. Ed looks at Pete.

ED

How about you, Pete? Wanna try it?

PETE

(standing)

Uh, I really got to go to the library to finish a report.

ED

Okay, well, school work comes first.

PETE

Yeah. Thanks anyway.

Pete mounts his new bike and rides off.

EXT POLICE STATION - DAY

Pete rides up to the town police station, parks his bike and enters the side door. Painters have spread drop cloths and erected scaffolding and are hard at work. He walks through the old, columned lobby to the DUTY SERGEANT at the main desk.

PETE

Is Detective Mavity in right now?

DUTY SERGEANT

He might be. Who's looking for him?

PETE

Pete Haggerty. He knows me.

DUTY SERGEANT

One moment there, Mr. Haggerty.

The Sergeant picks up the phone and dials. Pete looks around as he waits.

INT PETE'S GARAGE - DAY

Ed watches James throw some karate punches at the bag.

ED

Not bad, killer. Let's see how you do against a human target.

JAMES

(confused)
What? Who?

ED

Me. Don't worry, I won't let you hurt me too bad.

JAMES

I don't know.

ED

Come on -- this is the next step. Don't be a sissy-boy -- take your best shot.

James is riled now and moves around Ed, who is keeping his arms open, leaving himself a target. James takes a couple of soft shots, Ed just slides out of the way.

ED
(continuing)
That ain't gonna get you out of
trouble, sissy-boy.

The taunting is having the desired effect. James picks up the intensity, landing a couple on Ed's body.

ED
(continuing)
You're connecting, but they ain't
hurting. is that the best you got,
girl?

James comes at Ed hard, throwing combinations. Suddenly Ed is fighting back. The look on his face is frightening. In a moment James is on the floor. Ed stands over him, chest heaving.

ED
(continuing)
You okay?

James doesn't answer. Still on the floor, he shakes his head to clear it.

ED
(continuing)
Hey, sorry. Didn't mean to hit you
that hard.

Ed extends his hand and James takes it. Ed helps him up. James' lip is bleeding.

JAMES
It's okay. I'm okay.

He walks out as Laura enters with the cordless phone. Her hand is over the mouthpiece.

LAURA
What happened?

ED
Got a little carried away with the
Karate. It happens. No biggie.

Laura looks over her shoulder at James' retreating back, then back to Ed. She looks concerned.

LAURA
Is James hurt?

ED
Bloody lip, that's all. Who's on
the phone?

Laura snaps out of it.

LAURA
(sotto)
Oh. It's your boss.

Ed towels off his hands and face and takes the phone.

ED
Ed Pinckney.
(beat)
That's okay, what can I do for you,
sir?
(pause)
Yes, I've got them. Sure thing, no
problem, I'll do it right now.
(pause)
No, no, not at all. I'll see you
Monday, Frank. Bye.

Ed presses the disconnect button.

ED
(continuing; to Laura)
Somebody's dropped the ball at the
office and I've got to make a quick
delivery.

LAURA
Where are you going?

ED
I'll be back in ten minutes.

He gives her a quick kiss and moves toward the house.

ED
(continuing)
I just have to drop some alarm
registrations down at the police
station.

Ed trots toward the house, glancing at his watch.

INT POLICE STATION - DAY

Pete is carefully checking the wanted posters in the lobby, going over each one minutely. We SEE a man's figure step behind him. The man's hand drops onto Pete's shoulder. Pete jumps and turns.

PETE

Hi.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Didn't mean to startle you, Pete --

PETE

That's okay. I was just seeing if I recognized any of those guys...

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Did you?

Pete shakes his head.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(continuing)

What can I do for you?

PETE

Have you gotten any more leads in my dad's case?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

You know we'll contact your Mom as soon as we --

PETE

I think I have some new information.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Really?

Mavity takes a long look at Pete. Pete's eyes are imploring.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(continuing)

Why don't we step into my office?

Mavity leads Pete through hallways to his office. Pete's eyes widen as they take in a smattering of cops and shady types. Mavity's small office is covered with files and nasty-looking mug shots. They sit. Mavity holds out a jar to Pete.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
(continuing)
Lollypop?

Pete assumes he's being patronized.

PETE
(miffed)
No thanks.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Okay.

Mavity takes one, puts it in his mouth. Pete is surprised.

PETE
I never saw a detective who liked
lollipops before.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
I'm trying to quit smoking. This is
the best I've come up with. My
dentist thinks it's a great idea.

He waits for the laugh, but Pete doesn't get it.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
(continuing)
What've you got, Pete?

PETE
Well, I was watching Hamlet, well,
reading it, actually, and see, my
brother's in it so I see it at the
high school? Anyway there's this
scene where Claudius, that's the
bad
guy, takes over Hamlet's family and
everything, even his mom, after he,
you know, kills Hamlet's father --
I mean his father's ghost tells him
and it just made me think of, you
know, what happened to my dad, sort
of.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
What?

PETE

See, my step dad was a Marine and he's really good at like, Karate, and I saw this show on lions where the males kill the old lion and take over and then they kill the old lion's cubs --

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Whoa, hold on there, partner. You lost me. Ghosts? Animals? Is this your new information?

PETE

Well, no, I mean my step dad -- did you, do you know where he was when my dad died?

Mavity is sympathetic.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Pete, we checked everybody out, even you.

Pete is shocked.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(continuing)

Sergeant Pinkney was on base all night. He was the Duty Officer that night -- had to stay on base.

PETE

But that's just it! He's Force Recon! Did you know that? They're infiltrators -- they're trained to sneak in and out of enemy bases without being seen!

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Are you getting along okay with your stepfather?

PETE

No, but --

DETECTIVE MAVITY

I interviewed him myself. He didn't even start seeing your mother till two months after the -- after your dad died. We've pretty much ruled hi out as a suspect.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE MAVITY (cont'd)
You see, Pete, this has all the
markings of a robbery homicide.
We're pretty sure a stranger did
it, which is why it's so hard to
find the guy. There were no prints,
no weapon found, very little to go
on.

(rises)
Now, I know it's tough on you, but
please understand we're doing all
we can.

Mavity takes Pete's arm and escorts him back toward the
lobby. This time Pete looks straight ahead, boiling. In the
hallway, Pete suddenly turns to Mavity.

PETE
If you were doing all you can,
you'd have caught the bastard by
now!

Pete runs into the lobby and toward the front doors. The Duty
Sergeant looks up at the commotion as Mavity reaches the desk
to watch Pete.

DUTY SERGEANT
(to Mavity)
What's that all about?

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Another satisfied customer.

The phone rings, the Sergeant answers it, and Mavity turns to
check some papers on the wall behind the desk. Pete sees Ed
entering the front door with a folder and a clean shirt on.
Pete ducks behind a pillar as Ed enters and crosses to the
desk.

ED
Afternoon, Sergeant.

DUTY SERGEANT
Can I help you?

ED
Yes, sir. I need to file these
alarm registrations for some new
clients.

DUTY SERGEANT
Let's have a look.

Ed hands the documents to the policeman, who studies them, signs and returns part of each. Mavity turns and recognizes Ed.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Hey, how are you, Mr Pinckney?

ED
Oh, hello, detective. Fine, thanks.

ED
(continuing)
Please -- just call me Ed.

Mavity steps around the desk and they shake hands.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
I was just --

Mavity sees Pete hiding from Ed.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
(continuing; catching
himself)
Thinking about you -- and the
family. How is everyone?

ED
Oh, about as good as can be
expected, considering.

In the b.g. Pete scurries across to the pay phone alcove near the side door where his bike is parked. Pete's bike is out the door over his shoulder. He just can't get to it yet.

Ed looks at his watch.

ED
(continuing)
Got to keep moving. Good to see you
again.

They shake again and Ed walks to the front door just as the painters close it off, taping up a sign directing people to the side exit. Ed heads for the side door. Mavity watches Ed. He sees that Pete is trapped in the phone alcove and will be seen by Ed in a few moments.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Excuse me, Ed?

Ed's head snaps around. He stops just short of seeing Pete, frozen with fear. Mavity steps toward him, getting Ed to turn slightly away from Pete.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(continuing)

I just wanted to let you know we're -- still working on the investigation.

ED

Thanks. I want to apologize for Pete's behavior last time. You know kids -- never know what they'll say next, eh?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Uh, yeah.

Pete is inching around to the exit behind Ed.

ED

And I meant it when I said I could get you fifty grunts up here to search that area.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Uh, thanks. I may call you on that.

Ed begins to turn toward the exit. Mavity can see Pete behind him.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(continuing)

Oh -- Ed?

ED

(turning to Mavity)

Yes, sir?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Is it true you were in Force Recon in the Marines?

Pete creeps closer to freedom.

ED

(beat)

Yes it is. Six years.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

You guys were pretty highly trained.

Pete slips behind a painter heading out.

ED
Best in the Corps.

Pete is out the door.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Damn right! Well, have a good
afternoon, sir. Sorry to keep you.

ED
No trouble. Glad to help.

Ed walks out.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
(to himself)
Fifty searchers.

EXT POLICE STATION - SIDE DOOR - DAY

There is no sign of Pete. Ed's face darkens.

ED
Who told him I was in Force Recon?

Ed slowly descends the steps, giving a last look at the station.

INT HIGH SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY

A rehearsal of "Hamlet" is in progress with props and sets. The students have improved somewhat. It is the final scene, and Hamlet duels with Laertes.

HAMLET
Come, for the third, Laertes: you
but dally;
I pray you, pass with your
best violence.

LAERTES
Say you so? Come on.

Laertes attacks Hamlet.

OSRIC
Nothing, neither way.

LAERTES
Have at you now!

Laertes attacks again and they fight across the stage. We find Pete and Travis hunkered down a few rows back, following intently. James is playing Horatio.

ANGLE ON PLAYERS

HORATIO

They bleed on both sides. How is it,
my lord?

LAERTES

I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

HAMLET

How does the queen?

KING

She swounds to see them bleed.

QUEEN

No, no, the drink, the drink -- my dear Hamlet -- The drink, the drink!
I am poisoned.

ANGLE ON BOYS

PETE

(whispering)
There. Do you see?

TRAVIS

(intensely)
Yeah.
(beat)
What the hell are they saying?

PETE

The King just killed Hamlet's mom!

Travis nods enlightenment.

ANGLE ON PLAY

HAMLET

O villainy! Ho! Let the door be lock'd: Treachery! Seek it out.

LAERTES

It is here, Hamlet; Hamlet, thou art slain;

(MORE)

LAERTES (cont'd)
 In thee there is not half an
 hour of life --

ANGLE ON BOYS

-- eyes and mouths wide open.

TRAVIS
 They just killed Hamlet!

LAERTES
 --the king, the king's to blame.

PETE
 Now do you see?

TRAVIS
 You got problems, dude.

INT MELISSA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) James and Mel are making out on the bed.
- B) Pete walks to the living room. We see a man's shadow flash across the thin drapes on the window as Pete's back is turned.
- C) Pete practices his idea of karate, amateurishly kicking and punching the air
- D) The shadow pauses again at another window and moves around the porch heading toward the door in the fading afternoon light.
- E) Pete gets more involved, backing up to the glass door
- F) The shadow's arm rises and strikes the glass
- G) Pete shouts in shock. He spins around, almost falling.
- H) Back on the shadow as it calls out

TRAVIS
 Hey, Pete, you in there?

Pete is deeply relieved. He goes to the door.

PETE
 Hey, Travis, what's going on?

TRAVIS
 (knowingly)
 What's going on here?

PETE
 The usual. Come on in.

TRAVIS
 Listen. I think I've got a solution
 to that problem of yours.

PETE
 What?

TRAVIS
 Come on.

EXT MELISSA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

He leads Pete outside to their bikes and mounts up.

PETE
 I can't go anywhere. I'm on, you
 know
 (nods head toward
 house)
 -- guard duty.

TRAVIS
 When's the old lady due back?

PETE
 She usually gets home about six.

TRAVIS
 That's an hour from now. This won't
 take that long.

Pete looks over his shoulder at the house. All quiet.

TRAVIS
 (continuing)
 Are you in danger or what?

Pete's still unsure about leaving.

TRAVIS
 (continuing)
 You're gonna need this! Believe me,
 son, you'll thank me for this
 later.

PETE

That's what I'm afraid of.

He takes a last look at the house. They ride off.

EXT STREETS - LATE AFTERNOON

The boys take a frantic ride to the bad side of town. Pete AD LIBS "Where are we going?", etc., in several shots. He goes from concern about leaving James to exhilaration in the speed of his new bike. They race across lawns and through alleyways at top speed.

EXT HACKMAN HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

They arrive at a large, gloomy house with an unkempt yard. Travis leads Pete to a basement door around back and knocks.

BOBBY (O.S.)

Yeah, hello, who is it,
waddayawant?

TRAVIS

Bobby, it's Travis.

Silence.

BOBBY (OS)

Enter!

INT HACKMAN HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

They enter Bobby's realm, Pete for the first time. It is obvious that no adult has been down here for a long time. Sonny and Cher sing "I Got You, Babe" on the stereo. Travis tries to act the "old hand". Pete gapes at hippie and Vietnam War posters and paraphernalia from the sixties. Clothes and magazines litter the furniture. A computer sits running at a makeshift desk.

TRAVIS

This is the kid I was telling you
about, Bobby.

BOBBY HACKMAN is dressed in black jeans and shirt and smokes a cigarette. He is a combination of street trash and hipster, all wrapped up in a very laid back fifteen-year-old with way too much time on his hands.

BOBBY

Hey. Pete, right?

PETE
Yeah. Cool place.

BOBBY
Thanks. Maid's day off.

TRAVIS
Listen, Bobby -- show him the
stuff.

Bobby looks at Travis. Measuring him. Travis shrinks. Bobby turns his gaze onto Pete, studying him. Pete returns the look.

BOBBY
Travis tells me you got a problem.

PETE
Yeah. My stepfather.

A man's muffled voice is HEARD O.S.

VOICE (O.S.)
Goddam sonofabitch!

Pete and Travis quickly glance up to the ceiling where the voice came from. Bobby doesn't react.

BOBBY
Yeah, I know what you mean.
(pause)
You need some equalizers.

Pete looks at Travis. Travis is nodding his head slowly.

BOBBY
(continuing)
Look, if I let you have some of
this stuff, and you get in trouble
with it, it's on you. Only you. It
can't get back to me or you'll be
in real trouble. Got it?

Pete looks at Travis, who looks away. He looks back at Bobby and nods.

BOBBY
(continuing)
Come on.

He takes Pete's arm, leading him to an interior door and gently pushes Pete ahead of him into a dim basement hallway.

INT HACKMAN HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Travis follows as Bobby leads them through a maze reminiscent of the horror house in "Silence of the Lambs". At one point they pass BOBBY'S MOM, a non-descript woman in a house dress taking laundry from a dryer. She looks up as they pass.

BOBBY

Hi, Mom.

BOBBY'S MOM

I told you don't smoke in here.

BOBBY

Okay, Mom.

He leads them to a padlocked door, pulls out a large ring of keys, selects one, and opens the lock.

INT HACKMAN HOUSE - BOBBY'S WORKSHOP - DAY

They enter what looks like a workshop. Open boxes, dangling wires, strange electronic devices, wiring diagrams, tools, etc.

BOBBY

Before I show you any of this stuff, you gotta understand something. This is serious stuff. Once you start using this shit, there's no turning back. This ain't for the faint of heart.

Pete looks at Travis. Travis is starting to look a little queasy.

PETE

(not sure)

Okay.

Bobby opens some lock boxes with more keys from the ring, and pulls out cherry bombs, trip wire devices, lighter fluid bombs, and more. Pete is awed and frightened.

PETE

(continuing)

Whoa!

BOBBY

Here are your basic defensive perimeter tools. Cherry bombs with

(MORE)

BOBBY (cont'd)
cut down fuses and trip wire
lighters
like this --

He operates a trip wire that lights a cherry bomb fuse. The boys scream and duck for cover. Bobby lights another cigarette.

BOBBY
(continuing)
Relax, it's a just a demo! There's no powder in it. Now, this little bad boy is a lighter fluid bomb -- easy to rig, cheap, and very effective at deterring those unwanted visitors. May I have a volunteer from the audience?

He pulls Travis to a spot in the center of the room.

BOBBY
(continuing)
Thank you, sir. Now, no matter what happens, don't FUCKIN move! Got it?

Travis is speechless. Bobby turns to Pete, continuing in his best salesman's voice as he indicates each link.

BOBBY
(continuing)
Tungsten wire across the doorway at about ankle height connected to the igniter connected to the release wire releasing the bag of a highly flammable mixture. It's the essence of simplicity.

He pulls on the wire stretched across the workbench. The boys' eyes follow the wire to an assembly over the door as it tugs on the igniter -- a "customized" lighter. It burns through rubber bands holding back a large baggie filled with fluid.

The baggie is tied to a rope fastened to the center of the ceiling and swings toward them, trailing FIRE! Pete ducks, screaming. The bag hits Travis square in the chest and explodes, covering him with -- water.

Travis screams bloody murder.

BOBBY'S MOM (O.S.)
Bobby -- is that you?

BOBBY

(shouts)

NO, MOM!

(to the boys)

Demo, boys, just a demo. Whaddya think, I'm gonna immolate my best test subject just to make a sale?

He notices his cigarette is drenched, and frowning, flicks it away. Travis almost faints.

PETE

I don't know if I'm ready for this kind of stuff. I mean --

BOBBY

Tell you what. I'll give you a thirty percent discount since I like you and, well, I've made a few bucks on your brother's football games.

PETE

(startled)

Oh, shit -- my brother!

Pete tears out of there, almost getting lost in the labyrinth of the basement.

EXT STREETS - LATE AFTERNOON

Pete rides hard through the streets till he reaches Mel's house, out of breath.

EXT MELISSA'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Pete runs up the steps to the porch and sees Mel's mother giving her hell. There is no James in sight. Mel is close to tears. Pete backs away quietly and rides off into the gathering night.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Pete walks into the darkened house.

PETE

Mom?

(beat)

James?

He's a little concerned as he walks into the hallway. Behind him a shadow moves on the wall and someone jumps him from behind, locking an arm around his neck. Pete is frantic.

PETE
(continuing)
NO-- no!

Grunting and scratching at the arm, Pete fights for his life. Another person enters the fight and swiftly pulls the attacker off of Pete. Only then do we see that the attacker is James, Pete's rescuer is - Ed.

ED
What the hell's going on here?!

Ed sways slightly. The boys are catching their breath.

JAMES
He let me down, sir. He was supposed to watch my back and he disappeared.

ED
Left your post? That's a serious charge, Marine.

James tries to get Pete again. Ed holds him off but loses his balance for a moment.

ED
(continuing)
Easy, there, boys. Pete, what's your side of this?

PETE
He's always making me look out for Mel's mom so they wouldn't get caught making out. I had to go somewhere and didn't get back in time, I guess.

JAMES
You guess? Now I can't see her anymore, you jerk!

ED
Wait, James. Maybe it was important. Where did you go, Pete?

PETE
Well, I had to go, I mean Travis needed me to look at something for a project we might be doing together.

JAMES

I had to lose my girlfriend for some stupid junior high project?! What kind of dumb-assed thing was so important you just left without telling me?

Pete's lies are used up. He is speechlessly looking from one to the other.

ED

Look, it really doesn't matter what he was going to see. The important thing is that you should have told James. You don't leave your buddy without cover.

PETE

(miserable)
Yes, sir.

ED

And James, don't worry about the girl. Plenty of fish in the sea. Soon as they find out you're in the game again, they'll be on you like desk jockeys at a victory parade.

(beat)

Ahh, hell -- I was saving this for when your mom gets home, but fuck it, here's the good news: I just got a phone call from the police.

James and Pete perk up.

ED

(continuing)
They arrested your dad's killer today.

The boys are dumbstruck.

ED

(continuing)
It was a vagrant with a knife that matches the stab wounds on -- the body.

The boys are confused and quiet.

ED

(continuing)

Look, I just want to tell you boys how sorry I am about your father. I'm sure he was a really fine dad. I hope -- well, I'm sorry.

PETE

A vagrant? What's that?

JAMES

It's a bum. Dad was killed by a bum.

PETE

Where did they catch this guy? How did they know? Did he confess?

ED

They caught him in Centerport, just down the road. Fool traded the knife to some other bum for booze, then the other guy got caught with it and squealed on the killer.

JAMES

Who is the guy? What's his name?

ED

Wiesner. Ellis Wiesner. Fancy name for a bum, huh? Thirty two, Mavity said, with a list of prior convictions long as your arm. Mavity wants us to come down to the courthouse tomorrow, see him at the arraignment.

PETE

But did he confess?

ED

No, Pete, he didn't. But they know he did it.

PETE

But why? Why did he do it?

JAMES

You know his wallet was taken. It was for money.

PETE

That's not what I mean!

JAMES

(angry)

Well, what did you mean?

ED

All right, take it easy! Listen, grunts, I'm just glad they caught the bastard that did it. Maybe we can all put this to rest now.

(pause)

Where I come from, boys, whether it's something you can't fix, like your dad's death, or something that just got fixed, like this crud being arrested, we usually buy each other a drink.

(beat)

Please join me in the drinking lounge. Walk this way.

Ed leads the boys toward the kitchen, bumping into a doorjam on the way.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

They enter the kitchen where we see Ed's glass and bottle on the counter. He fills two more and hands them to the boys, who look at the liquor and sniff it suspiciously. Ed refills his own glass.

ED

Here's to your old man. I wish him well, wherever he is.

They lift their glasses and drink, Ed and James tossing theirs back, Pete watching and following suit. Ed is halfway to pouring himself another as James stifles a few coughs and Pete suddenly sprays most of his drink into the air between them.

Ed bursts out laughing as James continues coughing and Pete runs to the bathroom to spit out the rest. Ed and James are alone.

ED

(continuing)

Want another, chief?

JAMES

No, thanks!

ED
(chuckling)
Don't tell me you never tried this
stuff before.

JAMES
Welll...

Ed wraps his arm around James' shoulder affectionately.

ED
You're a good kid. I'm gonna be
sorry when you have to go.

JAMES
Go? Go where?

ED
You know -- to college.

JAMES
Oh, yeah.

ED
(excited)
Hey! I got something for you.
(goes to a cabinet)
I was saving it, but now's a good
time.

He pulls out a box and puts it on the counter. Inside is a
set of automobile shock absorbers -- racing shocks.

JAMES
Wow! Koni's! Awesome, Dad! I really
need these! My shocks are totally
shot.

ED
No, shit, Sherlock. Tell you what:
why don't the two of us install
them Saturday morning while your
mom shows Pete the new house we
like. That is, now that your social
schedule's been freed up.

JAMES
Great, dad. Thanks a million.

ED
Forget it. I just like to see you
happy. And safe. Down the hatch.

Ed downs the shot and smiles at James.

CUT TO:

INT COURTHOUSE - DAY

The family sits expectantly in the second row of the old high ceilinged courtroom. Mavity sits in front of them. From a side door beyond the low banister, a guard leads a man out dressed in a set of white coveralls. Mavity turns to the family.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(whispers)

That's him. Get a good look.

Wiesner is unshaven with long, matted hair. He is well built but shuffles his feet. He doesn't look around the room, just down at the floor ahead of him.

Pete strains to read Wiesner's face. During the rest of this scene, the sound of dialog will fade in and out and the CAMERA SPEED will vary to suggest Pete's utter focus on this man.

The legal aid attorney, MR GREGORY, a small man in a brown suit, has joined Wiesner. The COURT CLERK sits at a low desk to the judge's right.

CLERK

(flatly)

Docket B617095.

Wiesner sneaks a look over his right shoulder as a guard passes between him and Pete.

Pete is desperate to see something in Wiesner's face.

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A blur changes to a man's body violently attacking the camera. We can't see who it is in the shadows.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Laura puts her arm around Pete.

JUDGE

(looking at papers)

-- homicide in the first degree,
assault with a deadly weapon, and
robbery.

(MORE)

JUDGE (cont'd)
How does your client plead,
Mr. Gregory?

Pete's hands tug at the fabric of his shirt. The answer he's been waiting to hear.

MR GREGORY
Not guilty, your --

EXT CONVENIENCE STORE PARKING LOT - NIGHT

On Tom, Pete's dad, as he backpedals, dropping groceries trying to defend himself from a slashing knife attack.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

The ASSISTANT D.A. is now standing. Like all else in this room, we see him from Pete's angle.

ASSISTANT D.A.
--munity, and this is a capital
crime. The people request the
defendant be held without --

Wiesner again makes a furtive glance over his shoulder and Pete's eyes bore into the side of his face looking for answers.

INT PETE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - WIDE SHOT

of Wiesner leaning over Pete in bed.

WIESNER
Our Father, who art in heaven --

PETE'S POV

Wiesner peering into the lens, a madman's face in a funhouse mirror.

WIESNER
(continuing)
Hallowed be thy name --

CLOSE ON PETE'S FACE --

a picture of fear and horror.

ED (VO)
Pete --come on!

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Ed leans over Pete, a concerned look on his face.

ED

It's time to go. Are you okay?

Pete can only nod. He looks around to see Wiesner being led away and Mavity leading the family out toward the lobby. He hurries to catch up.

INT COURTHOUSE - DAY - LOBBY

The family follows Mavity into the lobby and forms a circle around him. He looks at the boys.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Either of you seen this guy around your house, in your neighborhood?

JAMES

No, sir.

PETE

I -

He pauses. They all look at Pete expectantly.

PETE

No.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Mrs. Pinkney, have you seen this man?

LAURA

There was a -- homeless man who used to go through the garbage cans. Tom gave him a dollar or two sometimes.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Was this the same man?

LAURA

I'm so sorry -- I just don't know. I never really looked at him, I guess.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

That's all right. We'll check with your neighbors, see if they recognize him. That's a good start, Mrs. Pinkney.

PETE

How do you know he's the one?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Well, we've got two witnesses who swear that Wiesner had the knife around the time of the murder. He's got a long record of increasingly violent behavior -- we've seen this kind of thing before. We're searching the places he lives in and questioning those around him. We'll also be recanvassing the crime scene with Wiesner's mug shots, see if anyone recognizes him from that night. There's hardly the shadow of a doubt, Pete. It fits.

The family falls silent.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(continuing)

I've got to give some testimony in another case in a few minutes, so -- we'll keep you posted.

The family starts to leave. Ed shakes Mavity's hand.

ED

Thanks, detective.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

You're welcome, Sergeant. Now that this guy's in custody, we can all sleep better at night. And put our suspicions to rest.

Ed looks at Mavity, who is looking toward the boys. Ed turns his gaze to them. They don't return it.

ED

What do you mean by that?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(backpedalling)

Oh, just that sometimes people in
(MORE)

DETECTIVE MAVITY (cont'd)
 your family's situation -- I mean
 when there's no one caught for a
 while -- people can get suspicious
 of friends, others, that kind of
 thing.

ED
 Really? And what makes you think
 any of us have suspicions?

DETECTIVE MAVITY
 I -- don't think so. I'm just
 saying sometimes that happens,
 that's all. I wasn't thinking of
 anyone in particular.

ANGLE ON ED

as he looks at the boys. They can't return his gaze.

ED
 Of course not. Well, thanks again,
 Detective. You've been a big help.

Mavity nods. The family leaves.

ANGLE ON ED

as he walks away, his face a rock.

ANGLE ON MAVITY

DETECTIVE MAVITY
 (to himself)
 Whoops.

CUT TO:

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - DAY

CLOSE ON model train running down track. PULL BACK to reveal
 Pete, alone, watching the train. He pulls out the news
 clipping he's been keeping. He looks at it one last time,
 then slowly tears it up.

EXT MAIN STREET - DAY

It's two days later, a bright, wet Saturday morning. Laura
 and Pete pull into a parking space on Greenport's pretty main
 street.

LAURA
 I'll just be a minute, honey.

PETE
(exhales loudly)
Ohh-kay.

He watches idly as she enters a store. At that moment James exits an auto parts store a few doors down carrying a paper bag. Pete jumps out of the car.

PETE
(continuing)
James!

James sees Pete, gives him a dirty look and gets in his car. Pete runs to the driver's window.

PETE
(continuing)
Come on, James.

JAMES
All I asked you to do was to watch
out for us. Like I did for you.

He drives forward, forcing Pete to trot alongside.

PETE
I was trying to protect us.

JAMES
What?

PETE
I was getting perimeter defenses
for us. James, I didn't know that
guy they arrested was the murderer.

JAMES
(looks hard at Pete)
Christ!

James guns it and speeds off. Pete shouts at the retreating car.

PETE
I was trying to help!

INT MODEL HOME - DAY

Pete and Laura are inspecting a just finished new house. Outside the windows, mud and construction debris are everywhere. Laura leads a recalcitrant Pete to a bright,

sunny room.

LAURA

And this is where we thought you could set up your trains. What do you think?

Pete looks around the room, considering.

LAURA

(continuing)

I mean, it's a lot nicer than that old, dusty attic, you have to admit.

PETE

It's pretty nice.

He moves around the room, sizing it up.

LAURA

It was your father's idea.

He looks at her suspiciously, but can't hide his interest in the room.

LAURA

(continuing)

You know we can have it painted any color you want.

Laura sits on the wide shelf in the room's bay window.

LAURA

(continuing)

Come here, honey.

Pete sits across from her in the window.

LAURA

I know you've been through a lot. We all have. Your father and I have thought a lot about this move. It's just time to put the past to rest, sweetheart. Look at this place -- it's so much nicer than our old house. Just give it a chance. And give your father a chance. He's really trying to connect with you, Pete. Okay, son?

Beat.

PETE

Okay, Mom. I guess I --

A WOMAN pops her head in the room. It is the real estate agent.

WOMAN

I'm sorry to bother you, Mrs. Pinkney, but you've got a phone call. They said your cell wasn't answering. It's an emergency.

Laura meets the woman quickly in the middle of the room and takes the phone.

LAURA

Hello?

(pause)

What?

(pause)

Oh my God! We'll be right there.

Shaking, she gives the phone to the woman and turns to Pete.

LAURA

(continuing)

We have to leave right now. It's James.

CUT TO:

EXT PETE'S DRIVEWAY - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Laura's car driving up to crowd outside their house.
- B) Their POV from car: ambulance, firetruck, police cars, news crews, gawkers all over their yard.
- C) Laura and Pete jumping out and running through crowd toward the center of the action -- the garage. Laura is ahead of Pete.
- D) Pete's POV: Ed appears in front of Laura and stops her from going any closer to the garage. He is shaken, but pulls her into the house. In the b.g., we SEE a blanket over a body under James' strangely tilted car.
- E) We SEE Pete as he walks slowly toward the body in the garage through the milling crowd.

F) We SEE a leg protruding from the blanket and the broken jack nearby.

G) Pete's POV: out of the crowd appears Detective Mavity. He stands directly in the path of the CAMERA, crouching slightly to be at lens height and stopping the CAMERA's forward motion. He looks devastated.

H) SIDE ANGLE on Mavity and Pete. They look at each other.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - DAY

James' wake is in progress. Pete walks through the crowd stiff in his dark suit and unresponsive to the hands that reach out to touch him on the shoulder and stroke his hair. Amy and various GUESTS AD LIB condolences.

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - DAY - PORCH

Pete drifts out to the porch, flops onto the swing-couch. Tears begin to course down his cheeks when Melissa finds him and takes him into her arms.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ed comes downstairs and moves through the crowd.

ED

She's asleep now. She'll be all right soon.

He AD LIBS thanks to various guests. Working his way through the crowd, he finds himself moving onto the porch. Amy approaches him.

AMY

Tell me what I can do to help.

ED

(exhausted)

Oh, thanks, Amy. I don't know. I just need to be alone for a few...

AMY

Sure.

She watches him go out, then turns to the others.

AMY

(continuing)

Who'd like some fresh coffee?
Francis?

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - DAY - PORCH

Ed finds himself alone, finally, until he sees Pete and Mel still on the couch. Pete looks up, sees Ed and stifles his tears, wiping his face and sitting up. They stare at each other and each knows at that moment what is in the heart of the other.

Pete stands very deliberately, facing Ed, then turns away and leaves the porch. He stuffs his tie in his pocket and rides off on his bike, cutting across his street and forcing an oncoming car to hit the brakes hard and veer into the other lane.

He doesn't look back.

CUT TO:

INT HACKMAN HOUSE - BOBBY'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Pete and Bobby are putting various devices in a shoe box.

BOBBY

Okay, be careful with this one. Make sure you rig it exactly like I showed you. If you slip while you're setting it, it'll go off in your face. If you set it wrong, it won't go off at all. Then you could be really fucked. But if you set it right, whoever trips it -- next stop, burn unit.

There is a look of determination on Pete's face we haven't seen before. He reaches into his pocket.

PETE

How much do I --

BOBBY

It's on the house.

Their eyes lock, an understanding passes between them. Pete takes the box and leaves. Bobby watches him go.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Pete enters the darkened house, the box under his arm. Quietly, he mounts the stairs, alert for any sounds.

INT JAMES'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Pete enters slowly, absorbing the room. He shoves the box under the bed. He notices something underneath and fishes it out: it is the baseball bat given to him by Ed.

PETE
 (to himself)
 I thought I left this in the
 garage.

He is about to slide it back under the bed when a splinter catches in his hand. Looking more closely at the bat, he notices a splintered gash in the wood where the fibers have been smashed.

INT GARAGE - NIGHT

on James as he works under his car. He wears his costume from "Hamlet". The baseball bat is tapped gently in a man's hand as it is carried through the garage. PULL BACK to reveal that we have been watching a frame from a comic book held in a boy's hands. Pan to reveal Pete sitting in

INT MELISSA'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LIVING ROOM

as he becomes aware of danger to James. Pete drops the comic and runs into the make out bedroom.

PETE
 James! James!

He finds the bed rumpled but empty. There is a rending CRASH O.S. With a look of dread, Pete creeps back to the living room. All the furniture is gone, replaced by James' car, under which we see part of his body.

Pete discovers the broken jack in his hands. Where it snapped there are wood fragments.

INT PETE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CLOSE SHOT

Pete wakes screaming.

PETE
 James!

No one comes. Pete is alone in his room, gasping for breath and terrified.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - DAY

Pete comes home from school, drops his backpack in the kitchen, where he finds a note from Laura on the table.

INSERT ON NOTE

In perfect script the note says, "Pete -- had to go out with Dad. Back at five. Love, Mom."

We HEAR knocking O.S. Pete goes to the door to find Det. Mavity outside. Pete opens the door.

PETE

Hi.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Hi, Pete. Your parents home?

PETE

No. They won't be home till later.
Do you want to come in?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Well, I'll come back when your
folks are home. Tell them I dropped
by, okay?

PETE

Wait a minute!
(beat)
I'm sorry I yelled at you at the
station, sir.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

I'm getting used to it, Pete.

PETE

Did you find any evidence in the
garage?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Evidence of what?

PETE

Of murder, of course!

DETECTIVE MAVITY

As far as we can tell, it was an
accident. That's what I came to
tell
your folks. There's no --

PETE

Can you come in for a minute?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Well, I really should be --

PETE

There's something I want to show you. It's evidence.

INT JAMES'S BEDROOM - DAY - CLOSE ON

The baseball bat as Pete removes it from under the bed and shows it to Mavity. Pete holds it with two handkerchiefs.

PETE

Look here where it's splintered. It wasn't like that last time I saw it in the garage.

They transfer the bat and the handkerchiefs with some difficulty and Mavity examines it.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

And how long ago did you last see it in the garage?

Pete thinks.

PETE

About two weeks before James...

He can't say it.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Okay.

(beat)

Well, Pete, I'm sorry, but we examined the jack that collapsed under your brother's car pretty thoroughly, and there were no wood fragments on it.

PETE

Are you sure?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Afraid so.

He hands Pete the bat.

PETE

But where did this gash come from?
And how did the bat get up here?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

There aren't wood fragments on the
jack. And there are no witnesses
who
saw anything strange going on. I'm
afraid your brother was using an
old,
flimsy car jack while repairing his
vehicle. The report concludes
that he bumped against the car and
unbalanced the load on the jack,
causing the vehicle to fall on him.

Mavity heads for the door.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

(continuing)

Now, if you'll just tell your par--

PETE

What if -- what if there were wood
fragments on the jack?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

If the jack had fragments that
matched this bat, and a mark that
matched this dent, and if there was
a witness who saw something, then
there might be something to look
into. But there isn't, son. It was
an accident. Like I said, that's
what I came to report to your
folks.

Mavity turns away rolling his eyes and leaves Pete in his
room, staring at the bat he holds like an offering in his
hands.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - EVENING - CLOSE ON HANDS

as Pete, his fingers sweating and shaking, finishes rigging
the tungsten wire for a lighter fluid bomb across the closet
doorway.

Pete sits back on his heels to check his handiwork. Wiping
his hands on his shirt, he rises and gently closes the closet
door.

His face is covered in sweat and trembling slightly.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ed is putting a simple dinner of spaghetti on two plates at the stove.

ED
Pete! Dinner!

Pete enters and looks around the kitchen.

PETE
Where's Mom?

ED
She's feeling kind of crummy so she went to bed. It's just us guys.

PETE
Oh. Okay.

Pete smoothly gets silverware and napkins from the drawers and sets two places across from each other. Ed brings the plates over and Pete brings a carton of milk to the table and pours a glass for himself. They settle in.

ED
How was your day?

PETE
It was okay. Nothing special.
(beat)
Oh, yeah, there was something.

ED
What?

PETE
You know that detective, Mr. Mavity?

ED
Yeah?

PETE
He came by today.

ED
What for? That bum they arrested confess?

PETE
No, he wanted permission to look around the garage.

ED

What? Why?

PETE

I don't know -- he said they found some wood fragments or something on the jack and he -- just wanted to take a look around.

ED

You didn't let him, did you?

PETE

Well, yeah, I did.

ED

(angry)

You let a cop look around our property?

PETE

What's wrong with that?

ED

He needs a search warrant, that's what's wrong! There's something called a Constitution that gives us a few rights!

PETE

Well, he didn't find anything!

ED

That's not the point! I fought for those rights!

(beat)

What the hell was he looking for, anyway?

PETE

(scared)

He, he said the fragments were from the kind of wood they use for baseball bats, so I told him the only one we had was mine and it was in the garage, but we couldn't find it.

(beat)

I'm sorry, I didn't know --

ED

Couldn't find it? You mean you lost the bat I gave you?

PETE

No, sir. The last I saw, it was in the garage. But he asked me to keep an eye out for it and to call him when I find it.

ED

If you find it, you tell me. I'll call him. Understood?

PETE

Yes, sir.

ED

And there's no need to tell your mother about this. It'd only upset her. Let's keep this between the two of us.

PETE

Yes, sir.

ED

Outstanding.

They continue to eat in silence. PETE watches Ed.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - PARENT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laura is propped up in bed, the TV on low across the room. She looks worn out. We hear a light tapping on the door and Pete sticks his head in the room.

PETE

You okay, Mom?

LAURA

(tired)

Yes, darling. Come in.

He enters and sits on the bed. He looks concerned.

PETE

What's wrong?

LAURA

Oh, this kind of thing happens during a pregnancy. You should have seen what I went through when I had you!

(beat)

And James...

Her voice trails off.

PETE

He would have been with Melissa instead of fixing his car if I was watching out for them like I was supposed to --

He is crying. Laura takes him in her arms.

LAURA

Oh no, Pete. It wasn't your fault. Ssh. Not your fault. You couldn't have kept that from happening.

A noise O.S. startles Pete and he looks toward the partly open door.

PETE

I'm gonna take such good care of us. You'll see, Mom. I'm not gonna let anything happen. Nothing.

LAURA

You just let your father worry about that. He'll take care of us. That's his job. You don't have to worry about those things.

She slips back to the pillows, exhausted.

PETE

Okay, Mom. You rest now.

Pete tucks her in and leaves.

INT POLICE STATION - MAVITY'S OFFICE - DAY

Mavity sits among stacks of files, studying a report. A lollipop is in his mouth.

INSERT - ARREST REPORT

On Ellis Wiesner.

ANGLE ON MAVITY

Something is bothering him about the case. He goes to the file cabinet and after some fishing, pulls out a large envelope hand-lettered, "Haggerty".

Back at his desk, he removes a few cassette audio tapes from

the envelope and inserts one into a battered tape recorder.

ED (V.O.)
Eighteen years.

DETECTIVE MAVITY (V.O.)
Eighteen years in the Marines? And
when did you retire?

ED (V.O.)
Ten hundred hours, September
twelfth of last year, sir.
Honorable discharge.

Mavity fast forwards the tape. Their voices turn into mousy squeaks. He goes back to play mode.

DETECTIVE MAVITY (V.O.)
--brought you here, Sergeant?

ED (V.O.)
I grew up here, like I told you. In
the Marines you live in all kind of
hell-holes. I wanted to live some
place that felt like home.

He speeds up the tape again, then listens.

ED (V.O.)
(continuing)
Everybody knew Laura. One of the
sweetest girls in school. I tried
to
get a date with her, but a girl
like
that, you practically had to get on
line.

(laughs)
So I forgot about her until I ran
into her at the grocery store a
couple of weeks after I got back.
Got lucky. Funny, hadn't thought of
her in years, not since high
school, and there she was, sweet as
ever, right in the produce aisle.

Mavity stops the tape. Thinks.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - JAMES'S BEDROOM - DAY - CLOSE ANGLE

on James's bed as a man's hands lift the dust cover and reach
underneath the bed.

They become more excited as they reach deeper under the bed and find nothing.

ANGLE ON ED

as he sits on the floor in surprise and shock that the bat is gone. Then he realizes there is only one person who could have taken it.

INT POLICE STATION - LOBBY - EVENING

We find Mavity at the main desk signing out. Tired and disheveled, he's ready for a drink.

DUTY SERGEANT

Hey, Mavity, don't sign out just yet.

He nods at someone over Mavity's shoulder. Mavity stops, takes a deep breath, giving the Sergeant a dirty look. Turns. Ed is there.

ED

Detective? Sorry to bother you, but my son told me you were at the house yesterday and uh, well about that bat --

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Pete told you about the bat? Look Mr. Pinckney, I'm sorry, but --

ED

No, no -- no problem. Always happy to help. I just wanted to let you know that I found the bat you were looking for --

Ed pulls the bat from a bag and holds it up.

ED

(continuing)

And there are absolutely no marks on it or dents at all that I could see.

Mavity's gears start turning.

ED

(continuing)

Of course, you'll want to see that for yourself, I'm sure.

Mavity takes the bat by the ends and studies it.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

No marks at all.

ED

That's right.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Well, thank you for coming down here with it, Ed. Most people wouldn't bother.

ED

Pete insisted that it was "valuable evidence", so I figured, if it makes him feel better...

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Sure, I understand. Kids are always thinking up the wildest stories.

(beat)

What's this one?

ED

I'm not real sure, Detective. He's got a real active imagination -- he's always drawing strange animals -- you should see them! Anyway, I don't really listen anymore, just try to make it easy for him.

There is an uneasy silence between them.

ED

(continuing)

I guess I'd better be getting home. Good night, Detective.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

If you don't mind, I was just leaving -- can I drop off a receipt for this at your house tomorrow?

ED

No problem. Paperwork time is over for today, eh, Detective?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

That's right.

ED

I know that feeling. See you tomorrow, then.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Good night.

(holds up the bat)

And thanks for clearing this up.

ED

Least I could do. For Pete.

They shake hands and Ed leaves.

DUTY SERGEANT

You and that guy are practically old buddies by now, aren't you?

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Old buddies.

Mavity is suddenly wide awake, moving quickly toward his office.

INT MARINE BASE - OFFICE - EVENING

The beefy man on the phone is MARINE STAFF SERGEANT KELSO, forties. Rain beats against the windows. A plaque on his overcrowded desk reads "STAFF SERGEANT KELSO".

KELSO

-- told you months ago his record is as clean as a grunt's dingus on inspection day. He has never assaulted anyone. Christ, you've got his records there -- so why are you bothering me again?

INT POLICE STATION MAVITY'S OFFICE - EVENING

DETECTIVE MAVITY

How far back do you two go, Sergeant?

KELSO

Sergent Pinkney and I served together for six years through some ugly shit, and I've never seen him lose his cool, not once. The man's a fuckin' hero, got a chest full of medals to prove it, and you're acting like he's been passin' out the Koran at Sunday school!

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - EVENING

Hands change the wires in the transformer of Pete's train. The first flashes of a thunderstorm come through the window.

INT POLICE STATION - MAVITY'S OFFICE - EVENING

Lightning flashes weakly as raindrops begin to fall on Mavity's window. He is still on the phone.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Look, Sergeant, the file says he was duty officer that night. So he had to be on base all night, unless someone covered for him. Who would do that for him?

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Hands connect Ed's electrical tester to the transformer and the track. It pings off the scale.

CLOSE ANGLE ON ED

as he smiles in the lightning flashes.

INT POLICE STATION - MAVITY'S OFFICE - EVENING

Mavity squirms and checks his watch, listening to Kelso.

KELSO (V.O.)

-- saved my life once, you know. A man doesn't forget that very quick, not around here.

INT MARINE BASE - OFFICE - EVENING

KELSO

If it wasn't for that prick colonel giving him a couple of bad fitness reports, he'd be Master Sergeant by now and running this place!

A man in a Corporal's uniform enters with a clipboard which he hands to Kelso. Kelso glances at it and scribbles on it and the man leaves.

KELSO

(continuing)

Fuckin' paperwork -- see, that's why Ed left -- too much bullshit and ass-kissing. Real soldiers got left behind.

INT POLICE STATION - MAVITY'S OFFICE

Mavity's had enough.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Sergeant, I'm sorry to have
bothered you. I'll call you again
if I need anything else.

KELSO
Yeah, no problem -- there's no wars
going on right now so I got some
free time. Say, listen: tell Ed I
said "Semper Fi", okay? He'll know
what that means.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Yeah, will do.

KELSO
And tell him I said good luck with
that girl he was always talking
about -- what was her name, Lisa,
Linda Something?

DETECTIVE MAVITY
You mean -- Laura?

KELSO
Yeah, that's it -- Laura! Cute
blonde. He had pictures of her from
high school! Can you believe it?

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Pictures from high school?

KELSO
Yeah. he worshipped her, poor
sucker.
(to someone in the
room)
Yeah, okay, I'm on it!
(to Mavity)
Look, I gotta go -- my country
needs me.

The sergeant hangs up. Mavity scrabbles through the tapes on
his desk and fits one into the recorder. We hear the fast
forward squeaking, then:

ED (V.O.)
 -- wanted to live someplace that
 felt
 like home --

Mavity speeds forward and the tape squeals again.

CUT TO:

EXT STREET - EVENING

Ed's tires SQUEAL on the wet pavement as he comes to a stop outside a building with a plaque listing doctor's offices. He holds an umbrella over the passenger door and helps Laura out. They walk quickly toward the office door.

ED
 I really think I should come in
 with you.

LAURA
 Honey, it's just routine. You don't
 have to wait.

ED
 I don't mind.

LAURA
 Darling. Go have a beer or, even
 better, pick us up something for
 dinner.

ED
 All right, hon. Back in an hour.
 Love you.

LAURA
 Love you.

They kiss and he runs back to the car.

ED (V.O.)
 One of the best looking girls in
 school. I tried to --

INT POLICE STATION - MAVITY'S OFFICE - EVENING - CLOSE ON
 Mavity as he listens with growing suspiscion.

ED (V.O.)
 -- get a date with her, but a girl
 like that, you practically --

Mavity pushes the fast forward button and the tape squeals ahead as we

INT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Pete enters the darkened house and removes his wet raincoat and backpack.

PETE

Mom?

(pause)

Anybody home?

He rifles the fridge for a snack and heads upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION - MAVITY'S OFFICE - EVENING

Mavity plays the tape.

ED (V.O.)

Funny, hadn't thought of her in years, not since high school, and there she was, beautiful as ever, right in the produce aisle.

Mavity replays the tape again.

ED (V.O.)

(continuing)

-- hadn't thought of her in years, not since high school --

Mavity stops the tape.

INT DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Laura is approached in the brightly lit waiting room by a NURSE.

NURSE

I'm sorry, Mrs. Pinkney, but the doctor just had to leave for the hospital. An emergency delivery.

LAURA

Oh, I hope everything is all right.

NURSE

Oh yes. When you deliver babies, you've got to be ready to change your

(MORE)

NURSE (cont'd)
 schedule!
 (laughs)
 Would you mind stepping over to the
 desk so we can change your
 schedule?
 (laughs)
 I'm so sorry.

Laura follows her to the desk.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Pete enters and goes to the trains. He decides not to play
 with them. A shape moves into the room behind him.

ED (V.O.)
 Hey, Rabbit.

Pete jumps and turns to see Ed.

PETE
 Oh, hi. Where did you come from? I
 didn't see you.

Ed smiles.

ED
 That's okay. Sneaking up on people
 used to be my job. But you knew
 that.

PETE
 Yeah -- Force Recon, right?

ED
 Right. Where's the bat?

PETE
 I -- I couldn't find it. I told
 you.

Ed glides to the door and locks it. He starts moving toward
 Pete.

ED
 Don't lie to me, Rabbit. Now,
 Detective Mavity has told me how
 important that bat is to the
 investigation and I know you know
 where it is.

ANGLE ON PETE

as we SEE the fear on his face.

ED
 (continuing)
 You've got five seconds to tell me,
 boy.

INT DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Laura sits in the waiting room. The nurse approaches.

NURSE
 Mrs. Pinckney? I'm sorry, I didn't
 realize you had no car today.
 Please let us give you a ride home.

ANGLE ON LAURA

as she is about to accept the offer.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Ed is very close to Pete.

ED
 You're pretty smart, aren't you?
 (beat)
 I mean, you caught on when no one
 else did, didn't you?

Pete can't answer. Sweat glistens on his face.

ED
 (continuing)
 Just want my piece of the pie. My
 turn. That's fair, isn't it? I
 earned it, didn't I? And it was
 going A-OK until you and your
 brother had to stir things up over
 that flabby old man of yours.

Pete is shaking.

ED
 (continuing; screams)

WHERE'S THE BAT?!

Pete jumps. He can hardly speak.

PETE
In the -- closet.

ED
Good boy.

Ed goes to the closet a few feet away while keeping an eye on Pete. He studies the door before opening it.

ED
(continuing)
Hey, Rabbit, you know I haven't seen you play with that train set lately. Why don't you run it for me?

Pete is terrified; rooted to the spot. He can't take his eyes off of Ed.

ED
(continuing)
Go on. Start 'em up.

Pete's hands move toward the transformer.

Ed opens the closet door and out of the blackness comes a ball of flame swinging right at Ed's chest. We see his shock as it comes at him but it's too late -- it smashes into him and -- bounces off! it careens into a jumble of boxes where it bursts into flames. Ed, oblivious to the fire, looks at himself, a moment ago a dead man, and laughs.

ED
(continuing)
It bounced off! It bounced off!
Didn't you know these things are tricky?
(more laughter)
Where the hell did you learn to make one of those?

Pete deflates before our eyes. Ed rips off his kerosene soaked shirt and gets in Pete's face.

ED
(continuing)
You think you're gonna beat me, little boy? I killed twenty three men for my country! And a couple more just for me. You already lost.

He takes Pete's right forearm in both hands and drags him, hand first, to the growing fire. Pete's hand is inches away from the flame.

ED
(continuing)
I'm not going to ask you about that
bat again, son.

Ed is pushing Pete's hand into the fire when we HEAR gunfire O.S.

The wood splinters around the lock of the door as bullets tear through it, then the door is kicked open and Mavity stands in the doorway aiming through the smoke at Ed.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Police, freeze!

Ed turns, glaring at Mavity.

ED
There's no need for the weapon,
Detective.

The flames grow stronger.

DETECTIVE MAVITY
Let the boy come to me!

ED
Okay. Just take it easy.

PETE
He killed James!

Ed's hand slides to Pete's mouth, silencing him. Pete AD LIBS muffled sounds. Still holding Pete firmly, Ed edges toward Mavity as Pete squirms to get away.

ED
I think you've got the wrong
impression here. When I got home I
smelled smoke and then I found Pete
--

Ed's leg flashes up and kicks the gun from Mavity's hand. Another kick delivers a crushing blow to Mavity's stomach, dropping him to the floor writhing in pain. Ed turns Pete to face him.

ED
 (continuing)
 Do you see all the trouble you've
 caused? Now, where's that bat?

Pete closes his eyes, shaking violently. He points with his whole arm to a stack of boxes at the far end of the attic. Ed comes to Pete's face level.

ED
 (continuing)
 Right. Go get it.

Ed takes Pete by the collar forcing him to walk in front toward the burning end of the room.

PETE
 (mumbling)
 Our Father, Who Art in Heaven --

ON ED
 as triumph grows on his face.

ON PETE
 PETE
 (continuing)
 Hallowed be Thy name --

They've reached the boxes. Pete looks up at Ed, then steps around the boxes and reaches for something. Ed is ready to knock him down but Pete pulls the bat out of the darkness, hitting end up. He offers it to Ed.

ED
 Glad to see you take care of your
 toys, son.

As he lifts up the bat, Ed feels for the splintered dent. Suddenly, he notices for the first time a thin wire attached to the handle. His face changes to shock.

ON PETE
 PETE
 Thy Kingdom Come --

ON ED
 as he turns just in time to see a
 second ball of flame fly at

him. In SLOW MOTION WE SEE Pete dive for cover as the bag hits Ed and in an awful moment, nothing happens! But Ed is not so lucky this time. The fireball ignites and Ed is engulfed in flame. He stumbles back flailing wildly and

screaming.

From the floor Pete watches Ed stumble and fall, the flames sputtering out as he rolls over. Pete turns to the fire from the first bomb that is spreading toward the train table. He begins beating at the flames with a blanket as they approach a cache of lighter fluid, cherry bombs, and fireworks hidden under the table.

Pete fights valiantly but the flames are winning. We see a figure sit up stiff and dazed behind Pete as flames creep closer to the explosives.

A hand drops onto his shoulder from O.S. and Pete freezes.

His face a blackened ruin, smoke still rising from his charred clothes, Ed smiles down at Pete.

ED

I tried to save him, Laura. You can see I tried.

Pete breaks free, scrambling to his feet and backing away.

ED

(continuing)

Pete! Pete! Come to Papa!

Pete is backing away toward the window when they see each other through the smoke. Ed closes the distance between them when Mavity flies at Ed from the side of the frame, knocking him down.

DETECTIVE MAVITY

Get out, Pete!

Ed and Mavity struggle, blocking Pete's way to the door. Ed is running on pure training and adrenaline. He throws Mavity against the wall and as the detective bounces back Ed hits him four times with his fists and elbows, dropping him to the floor as white hot lightning flashes illuminate the room.

In the thickening smoke, Pete stumbles and falls as he works his way to the door. Something shiny is on the floor in front of his face. It is Mavity's gun, and he picks it up.

Over his shoulder, Pete sees Mavity on his knees, Ed standing over him slowly strangling the life out of him.

ED

You stupid fat fool!

In front of Pete are the stairs. He chooses.

Pointing the gun at Ed, he shouts through the smoke.

PETE
Let him go!

Pete's eyes are wide with fright and uncertainty. His hands shake.

Ed looks up to see Pete and the gun. He smiles.

PETE
(continuing)
LET HIM GO!

Ed laughs at Pete. Pete's eyes narrow and his hand steadies. He FIRES and misses and FIRES again and Ed is hit in the shoulder. Screaming in pain, he drops Mavity. Ed is enraged as he turns to Pete, still aiming the gun.

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Laura arrives in the rain to find firetrucks already at the scene and the house half on fire. She bolts from the car, her face a mask of fear.

LAURA
Please, God, no.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Suddenly Ed feints left and dodges right, coming at Pete full speed, diving to the floor and rolling the last few feet.

Pete FIRES again and again but misses each time and Ed has him again! Ed picks him up eye to eye.

ED
(almost
appreciatively)
You little shit!

Pete summons all his strength and kicks Ed in the crotch. Ed buckles -- he drops Pete and stumbles back a few steps toward the train table, clutching himself. Pete rushes at him and pushes him hard. Ed spins and falls into the train set.

ED
(continuing)

NOO!!

He crashes down into the table and the booby trapped track

explodes into a fiery shower of sparks as the electric current flows through Ed's body, jerking him like a rag doll.

Pete backs away in shock as electricity courses through Ed until he falls, limp and smoldering, through the train table.

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

ANGLE ON ATTIC WINDOW

as the blue flashes and sparks light the walls.

LAURA

PETE!!!

She runs toward the burning house but is cut off and pulled back by a policeman.

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Pete is dragging Mavity away from the flames toward the big window at the end of the room. He gets Mavity as far as he can and goes to the window and opens it.

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Pete leans out of the window.

PETE

HELP!!

Below him, firemen are racing to position their equipment: trucks, hoses, ladders are everywhere. Pete looks back at Mavity and sees him roll over, barely alive. Achingly slowly the mechanical ladder extends toward him as the smoke thickens in the burning room.

Pete looks again at Mavity. On the ground, a fireman speaks through a bullhorn.

FIREMAN

Stay where you are. We are coming to get you. Stay at the window!

Pete looks at the growing fire behind him and makes his decision. He races to Mavity. Outside Laura sees him leave the window.

LAURA

NOO!

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Pete is dragging Mavity by the collar of his raincoat slowly toward the door.

PETE
You stupid jerk! You wouldn't
believe me --

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FIREMAN
Come back to the window!

INT PETE'S HOUSE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Pete has Mavity at the top of the stairs, starting on his way down.

PETE
--Why should you listen to the dumb
kid? What did I know?

Two firemen race through the flames up the stairs . One shoulders Mavity and backs out. The second tries to pick up Pete, who backs away.

PETE
(continuing)
I can make it myself!

They look at each other for a moment.

SECOND FIREMAN
Anybody else up there?

PETE
No.

SECOND FIREMAN
Okay, let's get out of here!

He waves Pete in front of him and they rush down the stairs.

EXT PETE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

They stumble into the chaos of the front yard: hoses, lights, squawking radios and the reflection of the flames now consuming the house. The lightning storm throws the scene into white freeze-frames every few seconds. In front of them we can see Mavity being loaded onto a gurney behind an ambulance.

Suddenly we HEAR a terrible explosion as the last explosives in the attic go off, taking the roof off with them. Everyone ducks as debris rains down along with the spray from the hoses.

PETE

Mom! Mom!

LAURA

Pete!

Breaking free of her police escort and dashing into the melee, she searches desperately for her son. Firemen carrying hoses and axes, emergency medical technicians assisting injured firemen, newspeople and police crowd each other, all lit by the flames consuming her house and pummeled by the furious thunderstorm.

Pete searches for Laura through the surging crowd, exhausted but alive. He sees her in a flash of lightning.

PETE

Mom!

She turns and sees Pete. They run to each other and embrace for dear life.

LAURA

Oh my God! Pete, Pete, are you all right?

Pete is too overwhelmed to speak. Tears seep down his face. He nods his head, his eyes distant. Still embracing, Laura hugs him tighter.

LAURA

(continuing)

Oh, thank God, thank God! What happened up there?

Pete's face is covered in soot, cut and bleeding yet conveying a strength we haven't seen before. He holds her at arms length and looks at his mother, knowing the agony of what he must tell her. Slowly, deliberately, he wipes his tears away. Laura searches his face with growing fear.

LAURA

(continuing)

What --

Pete doesn't answer. Instead he pulls Laura's head to his chest and hugs her again, this time with great tenderness.

The camera PULLS UP AND AWAY, revealing the entire scene of destruction and confusion as it swirls around a tiny island of hope and relief.

FADE OUT.