

DOGWOOD

Written by

Jericho McCune

EXT. SMALL TOWN, MIDWEST - MIDDAY

SUMMER, 1989

We float over scenes from small town, USA during the late eighties. Two and three story houses set on small lots with somewhat taken care of lawns. Kids run around in neon and black T-shirts, someone break-dances poorly on a piece of cardboard thrown haphazardly on the lawn, a huge silver boom-box sits nearby.

EXT. SMALL TOWN, MIDWEST - CONTINUOUS

NARRATOR

In the eighties, in Nowhere Ohio,
There wasn't really shit to do.

We see a practice field with Junior High School kids playing football. They slam into each other with abandon. Some of the players are trickling off the field. One boy practices one last place kick, pulls off his helmet and walks off the field. He picks up a skateboard laying at the edge of the field.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

We did things we didn't like
because we hadn't figured out we
didn't like them.

Two kids on bikes ride down a street. They stop in front of a convenience store and drop their bikes on the ground. They sprint to an upright arcade machine.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

When we did figure it out, there
was so little going on that we had
to turn to passing fads and
mindless frivolity in order to
cope.

Two different kids roll down the street on skateboards. One tries a half-hearted ollie, but loses his skateboard and has to go chasing after it. He's able to collect it and jump back on just in time to turn down a side street.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

But every once in a while,
something would come along and
someone would catch on to it.

A dog chases a fat kid down the street. The boy reaches the top of a hill and jumps onto the skateboard he's carrying. As the skateboard picks up speed, he leaves the dog behind.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And it would become part of them.
It would help mold who they were.
It would help define what they were
becoming.

EXT. RYAN'S HOUSE, MORNING

A very average looking boy, JOE (13), rolls up to a small, suburban home and hops off of his skateboard. He's dressed in typical eighties skateboarder fashion - baggy pants, ragged shoes and a bright, tight T-shirt.

He picks up his skateboard and heads through a side door.

INT. RYAN'S BASEMENT, MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Joe storms down the basement stairs into a makeshift room. Walls built from bedsheets surround a space crammed with preteen treasures. Magazines, Nintendo games and clothes litter the floor and bed.

RYAN (12), the football player with a skateboard, is sitting on the couch playing Duck Hunt. Ryan has long hair and constantly wears metal band T-shirts. He's clean, but unkempt.

As Joe enters his sanctuary, Ryan points the light gun at him and fires off a volley of shots. Joe lurches violently, like a villain in a Die Hard movie, and the two boys laugh.

RYAN

What's up, man?

JOE

Nothin'. The guys are on their way over, but it looks like I beat 'em here. Mom home?

RYAN

Yeah, she's in the living room watching TV or something.

The upstairs door opens again. A mismatched pair of Converse All-Stars tread down the stairs.

MARC (12) appears in the space between the sheets that passes for a doorway. Ryan begins shooting him with the light gun.

Marc wears his hair short and spiked with too much gel. He's a bit stocky, but there's lazy muscle there as well.

MARC
Hey, guys.

RYAN
Hey.

JOE
Hey.

Marc ignores the light gun violence and throws himself into a chair, dropping his skateboard at his feet as he does.

MARC
Me and Sean went to see "Gleaming the Cube" yesterday.

RYAN
What! Why didn't you call me?

JOE
That movie is so good, dude!

MARC
Sean got free tickets, ass. But he was only able to get two so we couldn't take anyone else.

RYAN
I would have bought one, dick.

JOE
I want to see it again, so we can go tomorrow, dude. My mom needs to go downtown anyway. We'll probably have to go early, though.

RYAN
That's cool.
(looks pointedly at Marc)
Since I haven't seen it yet, any time is the perfect time for me.

MARC
Piss off, dude. The movie's been out for, like, six months. It's not my fault you haven't seen it.

RYAN
It's only been at the Lincoln for three days, and it is your fault I didn't see it yesterday.

MARC

Don't get your panties in a bunch.
You'll see it soon enough. Wait
'til you see the skating in it!

JOE

Totally your style. Even does a
Statue of Liberty.

MARC

I think it's Rodney Mullen or
somebody.

RYAN

Rodney Mullen is in it! Fuck you,
dude, you should have called me.

MARC

I figured you would be out skating
with Erik or something, anyway.

The upstairs door slams open and shut.

RYAN

Whatever.

(to Joe)

We gotta go tomorrow. Who else is
in it?

JOE

Lance Mountain, Natas Kaupas

MARC

Caballero, Guerrero, Hawk

JOE

Tony Hawk wasn't in it. I read the
credits.

MARC

He was the Pizza Hut guy, dweeb.

BRIAN (13) bounces into the room, completely out of breath.
Brian is the same chubby boy that was being chased earlier.

MARC (CONT'D)

(to Brian)

What's your problem, Chub?

RYAN

Hey, Chub. You gonna live?

BRIAN

Chased by Mrs. Mitchell's dog
again...

(gasp)

Ran through back yards...

(pant)

Dog faster...

(cough)

Skated down a hill to get away.

Brian clutches his side and flops into the couch. He pulls a Milky Way out of his pocket and starts eating it.

MARC

Maybe if you would ride that thing
instead of carrying it all the
time, you wouldn't have that
problem.

RYAN

(laughing)

You're one to talk, Noid.

Marc gives Ryan the finger.

MARC

At least I've seen Gleaming...

He lifts his index finger to join his middle finger.

MARC (CONT'D)

Twice.

BRIAN

You still haven't seen that? Shit,
dude. They're showing it at the
Lincoln all week. I'll go see it
again with you.

JOE

We're going tomorrow. You're coming
with us.

BRIAN

Sweet.

(to Marc)

Where the heck were you last night?
I went and saw "Batman" and I tried
to get ahold of you.

MARC

I went with Sean and saw Gleaming
again. Was it good?

BRIAN

Yeah, it was good. That's why I'm going with them tomorrow. Did you sleep through it last night, or what?

MARC

Batman, Chub. Batman.

BRIAN

That was absolutely the best movie ever made. Ever. The Joker has, like, a ten-foot gun he pulls out of his pants and the Batmobile is even cooler than in the comics.

MARC

Comics are for kids, faggot.

Ryan picks up a comic book and slaps Marc in the face with it.

RYAN

We are kids, asshole. When are you going to just burn in hell, dude?

MARC

I'm gonna go get a soda and hang out with Mom. I'll be back down in a little bit.

Marc heads upstairs. The other three laugh.

JOE

Don't hurry.

INT. RYAN'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Marc walks into the living room, cracking open a can of Mountain Dew. MOM (33) is sitting on the couch, watching a game show. Marc settles into a chair, the door opens and ERIK (12) enters.

Erik is tall, thin and wiry. His dirty blonde hair falls over to the side and almost covers one eye.

ERIK

Hi, Mom.

MOM

Morning. They're downstairs.

Erik bullets towards the stairs. On the way, he passes Marc and slaps him on the back of the head.

ERIK
One banana!

INT. RYAN'S BASEMENT, MORNING - CONTINUOUS

JOE
That's just stupid, Chub. Iron Man has a suit that Batarangs can't get through. He's a friggin' gazillionaire.

BRIAN
Bruce Wayne has just as much money. And besides, what if it's a special Batarang that makes the suit turn off?

Erik bounds into the room and interrupts the heated comic book debate. Ryan looks up from his game of Dragon Warrior.

Erik gives Joe a high-five. Ryan stands up.

ERIK
Two banana.

He gives a high-five to Brian.

ERIK (CONT'D)
Three banana.

Ryan and Erik spin their arms in huge circles, connecting with each other at the apex in a thunderous clap.

ERIK (CONT'D)
Four!

EVERYONE
Four bananas make a bunch and so do many more!
Tra La La, La...

Everyone takes their seats, except Erik. Ryan pauses his game.

ERIK
Ryan, do you think Mom will let you crash on Friday?

RYAN
Shouldn't be a problem.
What's going on?

JOE
If his suit turns off, he'll
just turn it back on. He has
to have a back-up power
supply or something.

ERIK
Sweet, dude. My neighbors are
having a band play in their
basement and they gave me an
invite.

BRIAN
Batman would kick his ass
before he had the chance to
turn it back on. Dude is
fast.

RYAN
In their basement? That's
weird.

JOE
Iron Man is inside a suit
made out of metal. How's he
going to get to him?

ERIK
Who cares if it's weird. It
sounds cool as hell. Besides,
I want you to meet these
guys. They moved here from
across town. They skate and
stuff, too.

BRIAN
He'll just tear the guy's
suit off. Geez, are you
always this stupid and I just
haven't noticed?

RYAN
Hell, yeah, I'm in!

JOE
What, he carries a special
power-suit can-opener on his
belt.

ERIK
All right. I'll tell him I'm
bringing someone. He won't
care, but I'll let him know
anyway.

BRIAN
He's Batman. He's got
everything on the belt.

Erik opens his backpack and pulls out a handful of zines -
half-paged, hand-copied punk fanzines, all the same.

Marc walks into the room and stops behind the superhero
argument, shaking his head. Joe and Brian pause to look at
what Erik is holding.

ERIK (CONT'D)
He gave me a bunch of these to give
out, too.

He hands one of the zines to Ryan.

ERIK (CONT'D)
It's pretty cool. There's some
funny stuff in there.

JOE

Let me get one of those?

Erik passes the stack of zines to Joe. Joe and Brian both grab one. Marc reaches down and takes two.

BRIAN

What is it?

ERIK

It's my neighbor's zine. It's a mini-magazine, but it's homemade. Or copy-machine made. He makes it himself.

MARC

It actually looks kind of interesting. I'll grab one for my brother, too.

Marc reaches down and grabs a small pile.

ERIK

Take a few and pass them out.

Joe grabs a pile as well.

JOE

Thanks, dude, I'll pass them out at Boy Scouts tomorrow.

Erik turns his attention to a cassette player on one of the tables. As the others start reading, he removes the tape that's in the player and replaces it with one from his bookbag.

He closes the deck and presses play. Nothing comes out.

He looks around and quickly spots the unplugged end of the cord. He shakes his head, and plugs it in. Heavy, poorly-recorded hardcore punk starts pouring out.

ERIK

This is my neighbor's band. They're having a show at some park in Canton in a couple of weeks.

Erik pulls out more papers, this time single-paged flyers on bright pink paper with black lettering. Jagged words that look they were written with the world's largest sharpie pop out; band names like Spit, Jar and Muffdeath.

ERIK (CONT'D)

It's four dollars, or three with a
canned good.

MARC

Canned good? Like peas or beets or
something?

ERIK

Yeah. Or whatever.

MARC

What the hell do they want with a
can of beets, man?

ERIK

They give it to the Salvation Army
or something, asshole. Maybe it'll
do you some good to do something
for someone besides your self for a
change.

MARC

Fuck them. I'll just give them the
four bucks. My dad can probably
drive us to the concert, too.

ERIK

It's not a concert. It's a show.
Either way, that would be rad. I
knew we kept you around for a
reason.

MARC

Fuck you, douche.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE, EVENING

Erik and Ryan climb onto the porch of a suburban home. A
couple of older teens are standing on the porch smoking. Loud
noises emanate from the house.

Erik pounds on the door and a head pops out, looks at him,
then lets them both in.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The living room is full of people - all between 12 and 20 -
laughing and joking.

Some of the kids are gathered around a table full of paints and a silk-screening box, printing shirts with the word "SNAP" painted across the front.

Others are putting together zines and flyers, cutting up magazines and gluing the scraps together in something cohesive.

TOM (13), a larger boy wearing a beaten-up polo and khaki slacks, types furiously on a typewriter.

A band can be heard tuning up in the basement.

Erik pulls Ryan through the crowd to where Tom is sitting.

ERIK

Tom, this is the guy I was telling you about.

Ryan, this is Tom.

Shake hands, be friends, play nice. Where's your brothers?

TOM

Easy killer. He's downstairs. You might as well just go down, he said he wants to talk to you about something.

ERIK

I won't interrupt him?

TOM

Sure you'll interrupt him. He just won't care. I think he wants to give you a secret decoder ring and let you join his cult.

ERIK

Sweet, I've never been in a cult before!

Erik runs off.

TOM

You're his best friend.

RYAN

So I've been told. And that makes him my best friend.

TOM

That's a situation someone should be apologetic for.

RYAN

Yet no one has said anything to me.

TOM

Hmm.

Erik said you wanted to get involved. Now too early to start?

RYAN

Shit, yeah. Where do you need me?

TOM

Have you ever silk-screened before?

RYAN

Sure, art class last year.

TOM

Ha, that's when I learned, too. It's when Troy started making me do shirts for him.

RYAN

You went to Longfellow?

TOM

Still do. We moved across town, but my dad wanted me to stay in the same school so I get to wake up a half an hour before most zombies do to make it on time.

RYAN

You going to the high-school next year, right?

TOM

Yeah.

He walks over to a pile of blank T-shirts. Leaning against the wall near them is a silk-screen box, bottles of paint, wax paper - all of the tools needed.

TOM (CONT'D)

Well, you can help us knock out the rest of these Snap shirts.

RYAN

That would be rad. Is that your brother's band?

TOM

Yeah. We want enough shirts that we can sell them at shows all year.

RYAN

How many is enough?

Tom points to the pile of shirts.

TOM

This many, until more come.

Ryan starts to laugh, but jumps - startled - when Erik sticks his head out of the basement door and screams.

ERIK

They want to start now! If you have a problem with that, take it up with the curb outside.

Erik disappears back downstairs. Everyone starts towards the basement at the same time and people start to flow in from other rooms.

TOM

Kills that idea, eh. What are you doing tomorrow?

RYAN

Making T-shirts. Feel like giving me a hand?

Tom laughs. He turns towards the basement. Ryan follows him downstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. COPY SHOP, MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

The copy shop is empty, except for a sleeping clerk behind the counter. Erik, Ryan and Tom crowd around a public copier.

TOM

Are you nervous yet?

Ryan drops a fresh stack of papers on the counter.

RYAN

Why didn't you tell me you were singing for Snap until today, asshole?

ERIK

I auditioned at the basement show. That's what they wanted me for. I wasn't even sure myself until Troy called me yesterday.

Tom picks up a hunter-orange flyer and reads it. The flyer is crammed with small pictures and tight text, and doesn't resemble a show flyer in the least.

RYAN

I should still beat your ass, dude.

TOM

(without looking up)
Who wrote this?

RYAN

Why?

TROY (16), Tom's brother, walks in. He's wearing a Jean jacket covered in patches, black denim pants that are a tad too tight and work boots.

He's followed by two girls. SAMANTHA (16) sports spikey-bleached hair. She is wearing a sleeveless lumberjack shirt, a huge black skirt and combat boots.

JENNIFER (12) is dressed like the older girls antithesis - white British Knights, bleached jeans with pegged cuffs, matching socks, scrunchy and jelly bracelets.

TROY

You poseurs ready yet?

TOM

We will as soon as your eunuch self helps us pack this stuff up.

SAMANTHA

Does he ever act like a little brother? Or even a kid?

TROY

I don't think he ever learned how.

Troy cocks his head at his brother.

TROY (CONT'D)
 What's a eunuch, toad boy?

RYAN
 Never mind, Troy. You really are
 better off not knowing.

TROY
 I'm glad these two found you. Helps
 to keep them in line.

Ryan begins shoving flyers and zines into boxes, backpacks
 and whatever else he can find.

Jennifer steps over to help him.

JENNIFER
 Hi, I'm Jen.

RYAN
 Hey. Ryan.

He keeps sorting flyers.

JENNIFER
 Do you go to Longfellow? I've never
 seen you.

RYAN
 No. I'm across town. Until next
 year.

JENNIFER
 High school?

RYAN
 Yeah.

JENNIFER
 Lucky. Two more years for me.

RYAN
 We'll prepare them for your
 arrival, then.

As they finish up, they start putting the boxes and bags into
 everyone's hands.

TOM
 My cousin said that Paul from
 Dogbone was going to come tomorrow.

ERIK
 Fuck 'em.

SAMANTHA

That attitude will make you a rock star, all right.

ERIK

To hell with being a rock star. I just want to sing really loud without anyone being able to stop me.

Everyone starts moving towards the door. Tom and Ryan hang back to make sure nothing was missed.

TOM

You never did tell me who wrote that flyer, dude.

RYAN

I wrote it in study hall a couple of days ago and typed it up last night.

TOM

It's good.

Ryan gets to the door first and holds it open for Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)

Don't stop

EXT. COPY SHOP - CONTINUOUS

The six load the bags and boxes into the back of Troy's hatchback - a beaten up Chevy Cavalier. Ryan walks over to where Jennifer is standing.

RYAN

Are you going to that show this weekend?

JENNIFER

I'm still not sure. I don't really like that kind of music, but I've heard they're really fun.

Troy closes the hatch and the group starts squeezing into the car.

RYAN

We'll be there.

Ryan points to himself, Erik and Tom.

JENNIFER
That's supposed to convince me?

CUT TO:

INT. DOGWOOD HALL - NIGHT OF THE SHOW

Dozens of kids and young adults dressed in every punk stereotype imaginable crowd the dance floor, moshing in an undulating wave across the floor.

NARRATOR
I was hooked, and I didn't need anyone's encouragement. By the middle of the show the next night we were all out of zines and had enough canned goods to feed the Michigan militia for a year.

Erik is on a raised platform that passes as a stage. He's holding the microphone with one hand above his head, singing as loud as he can.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Erik, not surprisingly, had catapulted to stardom by the end of the night.

In fact, we were all celebrities to some degree. We just didn't know what that meant.

The crowd pushes up against the stage. Erik leaps off the stage and spins backwards. The crowd catches him and he lays back and looks at the ceiling.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Snap was actually pretty awful. They all were at first. But he sang with more passion than anyone I have ever actually paid to see. And he made the audience feel that passion.

The crowd pushes him back onto the stage, where he slams into Troy. Troy pushes him back to the center of the stage and he immediately begins singing again.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
But that's what the scene was all about...passion. Passion and family. I mean, we were 13 and we had it made.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

We gave everything we had to the monster we called the scene and it gave back infinitely.

Tom and Ryan pop up out of the crowd and start singing with Erik. Marc, Joe and Brian can be seen pushing around in the crowd.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

It didn't make us rich or famous, but in less than two years I had travelled to shows in seven states. My parents weren't keen on the idea but I didn't get into trouble so they didn't bitch.

Ryan bounces into Erik. Erik pushes Ryan back. Ryan uses that momentum to crash into Tom and send him sprawling offstage into the crowd.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

What the hell did I care what my parents or anyone else thought, anyway.

I was fucking hardcore.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE, NIGHT

AUTUMN, 1991

Tom's porch is desolate. Brian, a little heavier and a little older, walks up the path to the house. He's dressed in a buttoned-up plaid lumberjack shirt, huge denim jeans with a silver wallet chain. His hair spills off the side of his head and covers one of his eyes. His shoulders are hunched around his ears to brace himself against the cold.

He opens the door without knocking and steps inside. The door shuts behind him immediately.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

More than a dozen people pack the small room, among them Ryan, Erik, Tom and "The Three Stooges." The boys are a little older and their clothes are now more stereotypically hardcore.

Skateboard parts cover every conceivable surface. Wheels, trucks, rolls of grip tape, bearings.

People are assembling boards, shaping and cutting grip tape and just generally acting crazy.

Erik sets on the couch, looking annoyed at a pizza box on his lap. His ears have multiple piercings and his hair is cut short, but he otherwise looks the same.

ERIK

Damn it, they put cheese on my fucking pizza.

JOE

Call them and get a new one.

Joe starts shaving the grip tape around the sides of his skateboard.

ERIK

That won't help me stop being hungry now.

MARC

I would say you could gobble my dick, but I don't think you could finish everything on your plate.

ERIK

Sucking dick is for carnivores, so you'll have to take care of that yourself.

Brian laughs.

BRIAN

Does that mean you don't eat pussy?

Erik picks up a skateboard wheel from the table and throws it at Brian. It misses, bounces off a wall and rolls into the hallway.

ERIK

Can you possibly wear that joke out any more? If pussy were food I would be fatter than you.

JENNIFER (O.S.)

Classy

Jennifer steps into the doorway, holding the wheel Erik just threw. Her clothes have evolved into something more grunge, but she still looks like the nice girl with the good grades in the front row.

Jennifer pointedly holds the wheel up.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

And whoever threw this better thank whatever goddess they pray to that it didn't hit me. Castration is messy and I don't do dissection for another two years so it'll probably be painful, too.

Erik opens his pizza box, puts his hands together in prayer, closes his eyes and starts bowing towards the pizza.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Have any of you miscreants seen my sister?

TOM

She's upstairs with Troy.

MARC

Probably in bed.

Most of the room starts laughing, except Tom and Ryan who look at each other and shrug. Jennifer storms up the stairs.

JENNIFER (O.S.)

Worthless. All of you.

Ryan grabs one of the wheels off of the table and launches it at Marc. It connects solidly with his groin.

MARC

(breathlessly)

I will kill you. Take warning.

Ryan looks at Mark with an expression of extreme seriousness.

RYAN

I understand. I have been warned and it won't happen again.

Marc leans back in his chair. He closes his eyes and sighs from residual pain.

Ryan grabs another wheel from the table and flings it at Marc, connecting with his groin again.

Ryan leaps to his feet and screams.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Take warning!

Marc jumps out of his chair, face covered with an expression of pure rage. His hands are balled into fists and his eyes are set on Ryan.

ERIK
Take warning!

Erik picks up another wheel and launches it across the room. It connects with Marc's crotch yet again and he drops straight to the floor this time.

The room explodes into a mosh pit with everyone screaming Operation Ivy lyrics. Erik is quickly buried underneath them.

EVERYONE
Enough is enough is enough
Why don't you just ease up
I saw another beat down last night
Take warning!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DOGWOOD HALL - NIGHT

Hands - many of them - reach down and pick Marc up from the floor. The chaos around him doesn't stop and before he's even upright, he's back in the fray.

NARRATOR
There was a show every Saturday. It was always crowded.

The mosh pit shifts violently out of control around the floor.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
For the most part it was testosterone filled teens with nothing to do.

The pit pushes towards the edge of the floor. Before it can erupt into the normal crowd, a line of kids puts their shoulders down and pushes the crowd back.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
If you looked deep enough, an entire community could be unearthed.

A couple of muscular teens wearing white tank tops, black pants and wallet chains stop a group of kids walking in the door.

Money is pulled out of wallets. Beans, peas and beets come out of backpacks.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

We provided an important service.
For just a few bucks, we gave
people something to do. Something
to look forward to.

Small groups are seen in the back of the hall. Some are trading zines. Some are talking animatedly. A couple are showing off skateboard tricks.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And it was something anyone could
be a part of. We didn't care what
color you were or how much your
family was worth. As long as nobody
started any shit everyone could
have fun.

INT. DOGWOOD HALL CONCESSION STAND - CONTINUOUS

Ryan, Tom, Jennifer and FAUN (15) are behind a huge window that serves as a bar for the kitchen area, if a refrigerator, microwave and sink can be defined as a kitchen. They're selling merch from this illustrious perch.

Faun is Jennifer's age. She has long, black hair and dresses as if punk is a fashion statement. She's leaning against Tom; his arm is around her back. His hand is in her back pocket.

FAUN

There's this guy at my school named
Rick. Rick Fite. He's a real dick.

TOM

Yeah, I've heard of him. Rick the
Dick. He's pretty famous.

RYAN

Isn't he that guy that's supposed
to be a badass or something?

TOM

Yeah, he thinks that just because
his last name is Fite he's expected
to be tough or something.

FAUN

Well, he found out you were my
boyfriend and he said he's going to
kick your ass. He's such a prick.

Tom and Ryan laugh. Jennifer shakes her head.

JENNIFER

That is so pathetic. Why would he be like that?

FAUN

That's just the way he is. He was being stupid in art today and I told him off so he just started running his mouth.

Ryan hops up on a counter to set.

TOM

Well, I'm not worried about it. If he runs his mouth at me, he just better be able to back it up.

PACO (16), a Latino kid with green hair walks up to the counter. Tom starts LAUGHING uncontrollably while he points at him.

RYAN

What the hell?!

PACO

Some people think it's natural.

He brushes his hand across his nose and then through his hair.

PACO (CONT'D)

But it's not.

JENNIFER

What did you do to your hair? It used to be black.

PACO

It was supposed to turn blue.

Ryan hands Paco a soda and a zine.

RYAN

Well, something went terribly wrong somewhere.

PACO

Thanks. I've been wondering about that.

RYAN

So how did you fuck it up that bad?

PACO
I didn't follow the instructions on
the bleach very well.

JENNIFER
Yellow and blue make green!

PACO
My hair proves it.

Paco turns and leaves. Everyone just shakes their head.

FAUN
Who was that? He goes to school
with you?

TOM
Yeah, that's Paco. He's a junior.
And he's punk as fuck.

JENNIFER
I really hate that phrase.

FAUN
That's because you're not punk.

Faun sticks her tongue out at Jennifer.

Jennifer smiles back at her.

JENNIFER
Thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT, DAY

The strip mall is mostly empty. A group of boys cluster at the edge of the parking lot, near the street.

Ryan, Erik, Brian and Joe are using candles to apply wax to a long curb. They've been working long enough that the wax is thick and the curb is coated for ten or fifteen feet behind them.

Their skateboards lay around them, except for Joe who sits crosslegged on his while he works.

All of the boys have thick, black Xs on the back of their hands.

BRIAN
Is being a vegan hard?

ERIK

Sometimes. When you're looking for something to eat at 7-11 it can be really hard. But usually it isn't too bad.

RYAN

I can imagine. Being vegetarian is hard enough on me. Giving up cheese is just too much right now.

JOE

That's because you're a pussy.

BRIAN

I think I want to try being a veggie-head, at least.

ERIK

Hell, yeah.

BRIAN

It'll help me lose weight, right?

RYAN

Definitely. But then we'll have to call you Chub ironically.

JOE

I'll just tell people it's because his dick is so fat.

RYAN

You guys might want to move in just a minute.

Ryan jumps to his feet and grabs his skateboard. He runs out of the parking lot and up the steep hill that is the street.

EXT. TOP OF HILL - CONTINUOUS

Ryan looks down the hill. He's breathing heavily and sweat is dripping off his face.

He hesitates for the briefest of seconds, then jumps on his skateboard.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The boys jump up off the ground and scramble to move their boards out of the way.

JOE
Holy shit. He's flying.

EXT. HILL - CONTINUOUS

Ryan's skateboard is wobbling back and forth because of the speed.

He bends at the knees and shifts to balance himself. His hands thoughtlessly grab his pant legs and adjusts them.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

The boys start screaming as Ryan turns into the parking lot.

He kicks the back of his board down and ollies into a perfect grind. He has to lean into it because the board barely slows down.

The board stops completely.

Ryan flies into the air. His body twists as he tries to tumble into the fall, but it is too late.

He lands on the side of his face and slides along the ground.

Joe and Brian start sprinting to where Ryan is laying on the ground.

Erik remains motionless, mouth agape.

BRIAN
Dude, are you OK?

CLOSE-UP OF RYAN'S FACE ON THE GROUND

Ryan's face is contorted in pain, but he doesn't make a noise.

He puts his palms on the ground and pushes up. Small pebbles and dirt stick to his face as he lifts himself off the ground. Blood starts to seep out of lacerations all over his cheek.

He grunts and gets on his feet.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Ryan starts to brush himself off.

RYAN
That sucked

JOE
You must have hit a burr or something.

RYAN
You think that was it?

BRIAN
Dude, you need to wash that up. Maybe we should take you to the hospital?

RYAN
Nah, it's not that bad. I can do without finding out my parents can't afford the hospital bills.

BRIAN
You're bleeding a lot, dude.

Erik walks up to them, laughing hysterically.

JOE
You think this is funny. That's nice.

Erik makes gestures with his hands, trying to describe what he just saw.

ERIK
Like cartoon...
whoop... then Superman
fly... can't land

He continues to laugh

JOE
My house is the closest. Let's go back there and at least wash you off and stuff. Put some peroxide on it.

RYAN
Sweet. I have to do something first, though.

BRIAN
What?

Ryan looks pointedly at Erik, who is now doubled over from laughing and pointing directly at Ryan.

RYAN

Make this prick stop laughing so hard. He looks like he's going to have a hernia.

Ryan walks over to his board and picks it up. He starts jogging back up the hill.

BRIAN

Fucking hardcore.

CUT TO:

INT. JOE'S HOUSE, EVENING

A group of people set around Joe's converted basement. The walls are covered in wood that looks like it was scrounged out of the inside of a trailer and all of the furniture looks like throwbacks from the seventies - oranges, browns, and sickly greens. The TV is an old, boxy floor model and in the back is a ping-pong table covered with stacks of magazines, random cardboard boxes, and black trash bags full of clothes.

The only thing stopping us from thinking we're in an episode of The Wonder Years are the dozen or so kids floating around.

Jennifer, Tom, Faun and some others have joined the four boys.

JOE

(from the stairs)

Hey, my mom's making some veggie burgers and stuff. She said there's bagel bites up there, too, if any of you carnivores are hungry.

JENNIFER

This cannibal is!

JOE

Cool, I'll tell her.

He runs up the stairs.

RYAN

You had such potential to be the coolest person I know, but you just have to feast on flesh. Disappointing.

JENNIFER

Sucks to be me. I'll have to settle for second best. Who wins the most coolest award, then?

TOM

Me, of course. Was there ever any doubt?

ERIK

The price of being family. I'm not allowed to be nominated.

JENNIFER

Wow, conceited much?

ERIK AND TOM

Convinced.

The room breaks out into laughter. Joe comes down the stairs.

JOE

All right, Ren and Stimpie is starting so zip it all.

ERIK

Who's up for the Milk and Honey Drop after?

Most of the people in the room voice their assent, then everyone hushes as a commercial ends and the movie starts.

INT. JOE'S HOUSE - TOM AND FAUN, CLOSE - CONTINUOUS

The two lovers cuddle close and off in a corner of the floor to avoid the others.

FAUN

I don't think you should go to Milk and Honey. Rick goes there all the time.

TOM

Don't worry about him. People that run their mouth can't usually back it up.

FAUN

I'm not worried about him. I'm worried about you, dumb ass. He's really big, Tom.

TOM

That doesn't mean as much as you think it does.

FAUN

Well, if you're going to go there, I'm going over to Jen's tonight. I don't want to see something bad happen.

TOM

I understand. I just hope that he's got someone to care about him as much as you do about me.

He cups her head, fingers behind her neck, and kisses her.

BRIAN

(imitating Data from
"Goonies")

Shame, shame, know your name.

Chuckles break out around the room.

Tom continues his kiss. One of his hands lets go of her head and he salutes the room with his middle finger.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILK AND HONEY DROP, NIGHT

Tom, Erik, Ryan, Joe and Brian pile out of an old hatchback in front of a strip mall on a small hill. One of the stores in the mall is named "Milk and Honey."

A pair of quarter pipes are setting in the parking lot, along with a long grinding bar, some orange street cones and an old shopping cart.

A handful of other kids are skating around. A small group is gathered at the other end of the parking lot, chatting.

Erik immediately jumps on his board and skates up to the long bar. He grinds most of its length. The others queue up to take their turn at the bar, except Brian who just starts casually skating around the lot.

Tom rides up to the bar, grinds a short distance and rides off towards the gathered group, waving.

Ryan skates up to the bar, but instead of grinding he just ollies over it and skates through.

After a few feet, RICK (16), a muscular, bald skater wearing a buttoned down flannel and gauged ear plugs, slams into him. They both fall to the ground.

RICK
Watch where the fuck you're going,
Scarface.

Rick jumps to his feet first and starts towards Ryan.

RYAN
Sorry, man. Didn't see you coming.

Ryan gets to his feet slowly, dusting off his legs and looking around for his skateboard.

Tom and Erik begin to ride over, as do most of the rest of the kids hanging around.

RICK
You're lucky I don't just knock you
the fuck out.

Tom has nearly reached the pair. He jumps off of his board.

He kicks the tail, the skateboard hops into the air and he grabs onto it by one truck.

RYAN
You need to relax, dude.

RICK
You're about to get relaxed,
faggot.

Rick steps toward Ryan. Ryan steps away from him, and readies himself to fight.

TOM
Hey, aren't you Rick Fite?

Rick pauses and turns towards Tom, keeping one eye on Ryan.

RICK
Yeah. Who the hell are you?

Tom's arm is halfway through a swing when Rick notices the skateboard in his hand. The trucks on Tom's board crash into the side of Rick's face.

Rick falls to the ground. Tom drops his skateboard and jumps on top of him.

Tom punches Rick in the face a couple of times.

TOM
I'm the guy who's ass you're going
to whip!

Rick brings his arms up to cover his head, but Tom's punches are vicious, fast and well-aimed. Rick's nose and mouth start spurting blood.

Erik and Ryan grab Tom's shoulders. They lift him off Rick.

RYAN
Shit! Dude! Holy what the fuck!

ERIK
Get in the fucking car.

Brian and Joe beeline to the car and get in. Erik starts dragging Tom towards the car, but he struggles to hold him. Ryan starts looking for their skateboards.

TOM
Who the fuck are you that you're
going to whip my ass?

Tom breaks out of Erik's grasp and rushes forward. He kicks Rick in the face. Blood sprays from Rick's mouth.

TOM (CONT'D)
Mother fucker!

Ryan grabs Tom with Erik. This time they both drag him to the car.

RYAN
We need to fucking go!

They get Tom to the car and shove him in the back seat. Joe already has the engine running.

Ryan and Erik get in the car and Joe begins pulling away.

TOM
My deck!

JOE
I got it.

Joe hits the gas and cuts the wheel. He drives up to the dropped skateboard. Two kids are kneeling beside Rick and the others are shouting at the car.

Joe opens his door, reaches down and pulls the skateboard into the car. He slams the door shut and the car screeches away.

The car bottoms out as it bounces out of the parking lot and onto the main road, then it disappears down the road.

INT. JOE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Joe and Brian set in the front of the car, while Tom, Erik, and Ryan set tight in the back. Joe passes Tom's skateboard back to him.

ERIK

What the hell were you thinking?

TOM

I wasn't thinking. He got what was coming to him.

ERIK

He runs around with the guys in the Last Chance Crew. They're going to be out for blood.

TOM

Then fuck them, too. Bunch of racist asshole skins, they should get beaten.

ERIK

Bunch of Big As Hell racist assholes. Shit! Now they're probably going to show up at the next Dogwood show.

TOM

Don't worry. I'll take care of it.

ERIK

You better. If I don't get to play because some shit start from this, I'll beat your ass myself.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK, LATE AFTERNOON

The park is wide open and covered in lush, green grass. The leaves on the trees are just beginning to turn and add a little color to the world.

Two silhouettes are walking across the field. Moving in closer reveals them to be Jennifer and Ryan. They walk close to each other and talk animatedly.

JENNIFER

What the hell happened last night? Faun called me and told me Tom got in a fight with that Rick asshole.

RYAN

It wasn't really a fight. It was more like a beatdown.

JENNIFER

What started it?

RYAN

Nothing, really. Rick was trying to start with me and then Tom just destroyed him. Hit him with a skateboard and then jumped on top of him.

JENNIFER

Why would Rick want to fight you? What did you do?

RYAN

What do you mean what did I do? I didn't do shit.

JENNIFER

There had to be something.

RYAN

I was just skating across the parking lot. He ran into me. I tried to apologize and he got hard with me.

JENNIFER

People don't start fights with other people for no reason, Ryan. Did you say something to piss him off?

Ryan stops walking. After a couple of steps Jennifer stops as well. She turns to face him.

RYAN

Yes, People do. Are you really that stupid? You haven't figured out yet that most people suck.

JENNIFER

Maybe they suck because you're an asshole.

(MORE)

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Most people aren't bad, they're just put into bad situations.

RYAN

The dude told Faun he was going to whip Tom's ass. Then when we ran into him, he started shit with me before he even knew who we were. He wanted to get in a fight and Tom obliged him.

JENNIFER

There had to be another way.

RYAN

Yeah, for me to fight him. Fuck! I just said I tried to apologize to the guy. But if Tom wouldn't have wrecked his day, I would have had to go a round with him.

Ryan starts to walk away. Jennifer grabs his arm, but he pulls away and keeps walking.

JENNIFER

Ryan, hold on.

RYAN

Piss off. I need to get to Snap's rehearsal so I can get the interview done in time for the next zine. I don't have time for this shit.

Jennifer runs behind him until she catches up with him.

JENNIFER

Look, I'm sorry. I just really hate it when this kind of stuff happens.

RYAN

You think I like it? Rick's friends are a bunch of skinhead punks from Cleveland. You can bet your ass that they're going to want to start some shit with us now.

JENNIFER

What are you going to do?

Ryan stops again.

RYAN

Right now I'm going to interview a band.

JENNIFER

I mean about his friends.

RYAN

I'm not going to do anything. But if they show up at Dogwood, I'm going to stand beside my friends.

Ryan walks away. Jennifer stays where she is and watches him walk.

JENNIFER

Why is everyone I know so stupid?

She turns to follow him.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM'S BASEMENT, EARLY EVENING

Ryan is standing around with the members of Snap - Erik, Troy, PETE (19) and CRAIG (18). Pete is a tall, wiry bassist with tattoos covering everything visible except his face. Craig is an enormous man that sits squeezed behind a drum set.

Samantha and Jennifer set in the back of the room, deep in conversation.

Ryan holds a pile of notes, which he quickly references.

RYAN

All right, next question. Where did the name Snap come from?

TROY

I just like the sound of it. Pete's the one that came up with it, so maybe he can field this one a little better.

PETE

I like the name because it has a double meaning. Music is sound. And it's sound that makes you feel something. When you hear a snap, it grabs your attention. Makes you look around.

CRAIG

Yeah, and it also means going crazy. If I didn't have these drums to bang on, I would probably snap and kill someone.

Craig pounds on the drums as the rest of the band laughs.

Ryan looks at his notes.

RYAN

There's a band in New York named Snapcase. Are you worried that since you play a lot of the same shows and are so close to each other that people will get confused?

ERIK

Snapcase is one of the most amazing bands in the hardcore scene right now. If people confuse us, they don't know shit about the music scene.

TROY

Are you trying to say we suck?

ERIK

No, I'm trying to say that we're completely different. We just haven't made a name for ourselves yet and they have.

CRAIG

We've been around two years, man. People know who we are.

PETE

People around here know who we are. People in New York and Indianapolis know who Snapcase are. Is.

TROY

People in California know who Snapcase is, too. That's what happens when you get signed to Victory.

ERIK

I'm not worried about Snapcase. We've been called Snap since well before I started singing with you guys, so we have seniority.

TROY

Yeah, you're a regular Henry
fucking Rollins, aren't you?

RYAN

The hardcore scene is made up of
all kinds of different people.
We've got skate punks, straight
edge punks, vegan punks, Oi punks
and whatever else punks. What kind
of punk are you?

TROY

We're just hardcore. All of those
other labels are just people trying
to be cool. Two of us are veggie
heads, we're all straight edge and
one of us skates.

CRAIG

And we all hate Oi.

RYAN

If you're all straight edge, why
aren't you a straight edge band?

PETE

Because we're not preachers. We're
playing music we want everyone to
get into. If we sing about straight
edge and tell everyone how wrong
they are and how much they're
destroying themselves we couldn't
rock out as hard as we wanted.

Erik holds up his arms, crossed at the forearms. Both of this
hands have thick, black Xs drawn on them.

ERIK

I come labeled as it is. When
people see me, they know what I'm
about. I set examples rather than
give examples.

RYAN

Good shit. It looks like that's
everything, guys. How about you do
some rehearsing so I can listen a
bit?

Craig immediately starts banging on the drums. Pete and Troy
pick up their guitars and Erik starts looking for the
microphone.

TROY

Good interview, man. It'll be in the next issue?

RYAN

Yeah, although it's longer than I thought. I might split it up between two.

TROY

Sweet. That just means we get two issues.

Erik picks up his microphone and looks at the others.

ERIK

Can't complain about that, bitches.

Hit it.

The music slams in so hard and fast it makes Ryan flinch. Then he starts dancing violently.

As if from everywhere, people appear. Tom, Joe and Faun come barreling down the stairs. Joe slams into Ryan, knocking him flat.

Tom slams into Joe, knocking him over Ryan.

Faun springs onto Tom's back. He catches her, but Jennifer springs onto Faun's back and they all tumble into the pile.

Samantha lands on top of everyone. She poses like a victorious wrestler and points at her boyfriend.

CUT TO:

INT. COPY SHOP, LATE EVENING

Ryan and Jennifer are working at a station. Jennifer is perched on a stool, cutting words out of a magazine and gluing them to a sheet of paper.

Ryan sets a sheet of paper into one of the copy machines and hits a button.

The machine starts spitting out copies. Ryan grabs the first one and looks at it.

RYAN

We've been hanging out a lot, recently.

JENNIFER
Is that a bad thing?

She pauses in what she's doing and looks at him.

RYAN
How could that be a bad thing?

JENNIFER
I don't know. I'm not really
hardcore enough, you know.

RYAN
You are as punk as they come.
You're a fucking riot girl wrapped
up in a preppy disguise that we
will one day unleash upon the
world.

She gives him a look of confusion.

JENNIFER
Do you really know me at all? I
would never do all of that crazy
stuff you guys do.

Ryan moves closer to her and sets the page he's holding on
the counter. Jennifer turns and faces him squarely.

RYAN
That's exactly why you're so
fucking hardcore. Because fuck what
we think; you're doing what you
want to do.

JENNIFER
But what I'm doing is not being
hardcore. I don't drink and smoke
and stuff, but not because I
straight edge. Because I'm fourteen
and smoking is stupid.

RYAN
Why do you stay out all night and
go to punk shows?

JENNIFER
Because I have fun and my friends
do it. I'm...

She raises her hand and makes quotes.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Jumping someone else's train.

RYAN

And the fact that you can quote
that just makes you even cooler.

JENNIFER

It's just a song.

Ryan steps in closer to her.

RYAN

It's just a song b a band that I
like and is liked by other people
that I like.

JENNIFER

So you like me because of the music
I listen to.

RYAN

Among other things.

He leans in to kiss her, slightly inexperienced. She's frozen
in surprise for a second, but starts to kiss him back.

They stop kissing and stare at each other for a second.

JENNIFER

You kissed me.

She touches her mouth

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I wasn't really expecting that.

RYAN

I would have warned you, but I'm
surprised as you.

His face flashes an epiphany.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Look for it coming this time.

JENNIFER

What do you ...

He quickly leans in again and cuts her off. She recovers
quickly and starts kissing him back, hard.

Ryan pulls away. Jennifer grabs the back of his head with one
and he pulls her partially out of her seat before she lets
him retreat.

She drops back into her seat. He steadies himself.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I think the rule is that we're officially together if you do that again. I could be wrong, but that's what I think.

RYAN

You're not wrong.

He takes a huge step forward to kiss her. He misjudges the distance and slams into her.

She slides straight back on the stool, then slips off the other side and falls straight to the ground. She lets out a little scream as she falls.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Holy shit!

CUT TO:

INT. TROY'S CAR, NIGHT

Samantha and Troy are in the front of the car. Ryan and Jennifer are in the back. Ryan is setting upright in the middle of the seat and Jennifer is draped over him. Her feet are shoeless and propped on the back of her sisters seat.

SAMANTHA

I'm just asking if I have to tell Troy to kick your ass.

Ryan and Troy both laugh.

JENNIFER

I think it was as much my fault as it was his.

TROY

It sounds like someone just got too eager.

SAMANTHA

Get used to that.

TROY

That's cause I make your ass feel like hers does right now on a daily basis.

JENNIFER

That's not saying much. I caught myself with my hands, so my ass really doesn't hurt at all.

RYAN

Ok, do we really need to continue talking about this?

TROY

Looks like our young prodigy will just have to work harder.

RYAN

Really are a lot of interesting things happening in the world right now.

Samantha smiles widely. She turns in her seat to face Ryan.

SAMANTHA

Ryan, can I ask you a question?

RYAN

Do I have to answer it?

JENNIFER

I don't think you have to answer it.

SAMANTHA

You're the little sister, so you don't get a vote.

TROY

I'm not getting into this one. You're on your own, Romeo.

RYAN

You're a fucking pal.

SAMANTHA

Are you a virgin, Ryan?

JENNIFER

I want to change my vote.

SAMANTHA

You're my little sister. You can do whatever you want.

RYAN

I don't think I have to answer that.

SAMANTHA

If you want to keep your balls
attached, you will.

CUT TO:

INT. DOGWOOD HALL, LATE AFTERNOON

Ryan, Tom, Joe, Paco and Marc are setting up the hall. Paco and Marc are putting up tables. Joe is pulling chairs out of a back room. Tom and Ryan are sweeping the floor.

TOM

Did you tell her the truth?

RYAN

Hell no.

TOM

Why not? You don't think she'll
find out eventually?

RYAN

No. I think when she does find out
eventually, I can just tell her I
wasn't really thinking clearly and
I was afraid of how she would
react.

TOM

That's eighteen ways of hard as
fuck, dude.

RYAN

What does that even mean?

Whatever. Only a few people
actually know the truth, so there's
a good chance I don't have to worry
about coming clean.

TOM

What if she meets Joyce?

RYAN

I never fucking slept with Joyce,
man, you guys need to get over
that.

JOE (O.S.)

I call bullshit on that!

RYAN
Fuck you, too!

JOE (O.S.)
Not after you put your thingy in
Joyce's thingy!

TOM
If you didn't hump her, who did you
hump?

RYAN
That girl when I went on vacation.

Tom stops sweeping. He leans on his broom and looks at Ryan.

TOM
Really?

RYAN
What? I told you about that.

TOM
Really?

RYAN
Don't try and say I didn't either.

TOM
Really. You're going to use the
"girl from another state humped on
vacation" story and claim that the
"dirty slut everyone knows about
and some claim witness to" is
bullshit?

RYAN
Piss off, dude. That's just the way
it is.

TOM
Either way, I'll tell her you're a
virgin. Until she finds out, then
I'll just tell her I thought you
were a virgin because no one would
give it to you.

RYAN
You're a pal. Try sweeping. If you
have time to lean, you have time to
clean.

TOM
Yeah, I saw that movie, too.

FADE TO:

EXT. DOGWOOD HALL, LATE AFTERNOON

Tom and Marc are grabbing cases of soda out of Joe's Chevette.

TOM
Hey. You're friends with those guys from Cleveland, aren't you?

Up close, Marc has changed quite a bit. Thick tribal tattoos peek out from his sleeves and shoulders. His hair isn't completely shaved, but it's nearly gone. He wears cargo pants, boots, red suspenders and a tight, white T-shirt.

MARC
Kind of. They're cool. I've only hung out with them a couple of times. I went to some shows in Akron and they were there.

TOM
What about that Rick Fite guy?

MARC
Yeah, I know him. He wants to fucking kill you. Be careful, man, that dude can whip some ass.

TOM
Do you know if they're going to be here tonight?

MARC
They're all going to this big show in Cleveland tonight. I don't think you have anything to worry about.

TOM
Cool. I'd hate for some shit to get started here, you know what I mean.

MARC
Yeah, I get you.

The two pick up cases of soda and start for the door.

MARC (CONT'D)

That was a pretty pussy way to
handle yourself, you know?

Marc, carrying a load half again as big as Tom's, walks
quickly away from him.

NARRATOR

And that's how it was. We were
punks which, by definition, meant
we were bound to get in, start or
find trouble.

FADE TO:

INT. DOGWOOD HALL, EVENING

A show is in full swing. Walking through the hall involves
pushing through everyone and getting jostled unmercifully.
People are comparing zines, girls are standing around holding
jackets, against the back wall two people are standing on
skateboards and pushing against each other, trying to get the
other to fall.

NARRATOR

For the most part, things were
cool. Especially at shows. There
were rules to be followed.

The crowd undulates as a popular song reaches a crescendo.
People scream towards the singer. People in the back start to
push forward.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

When we assembled, we were a tribe
of tribes. Dozens, sometimes
hundreds and occasionally thousands
of people that were proud of the
fact that they were different than
everybody else.

The singer finishes his part and jumps into the crowd.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

We knew that perpetuating the
stereotype would get us shut down.
When we gathered we tried to keep
things friendly.

The crowd catches him, but he shifts and drops to the floor.
Everyone near him stops and helps him to his feet. They push
him back on stage.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

We knew it couldn't go on forever,
but we let ourselves get lost in
the moment and we believed we were
immortal. So we ignored the warning
signs and didn't guard our little
Utopia against the coming storm.

The crowd starts moshing again. The singer, now recognizable as Erik, stands over the edge of stage, screaming into the microphone and staring at the lights.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL LUNCHROOM, MIDDAY

Ryan, Marc, Joe and Brian are sitting around a lunch table.

Ryan and Joe both have huge piles of french fries. Marc has a typical school lunch. Brian has a sacked lunch, two slices of cheese pizza, cups of ice cream and a bowl of macaroni and cheese.

JOE

You know, Chub, being a veggie head
won't help you lose weight if you
don't quit eating so much.

BRIAN

I get hungry.

Brian shoves a slice of pizza in his mouth. Joe looks on in wonder.

MARC

There's a show in Akron. Tomorrow
night. Anyone want to go?

RYAN

Yeah, I heard about that. Splinter
is playing, right?

JOE

Shit! Bleachmouth puts on a hell of
a show!

BRIAN

(with a full mouth)
Speed of lightning!

Roar of Thunder!

RYAN

I'm going over to Jennifer's,
tonight. Maybe I can convince her
and Sammy to go.

MARC

Yeah, okay, I'll count you out.
What the fuck do you see in that
poseur?

Ryan bites off half of the french fry he's holding. He throws
the other half at Marc.

MARC (CONT'D)

You're going to get your ass
whipped one of these days.

RYAN

That poseur is more punk rock than
you'll ever imagine being.
Especially with that faux Oi look
you're starting to sprout.

MARC

This isn't Oi, shit for brains.

Joe laughs.

JOE

You sure look like a skin to me.

MARC

Being a skinhead doesn't mean being
Oi, asshole.

JOE

Then what does it mean?

MARC

Read the book "Skinhead" and you'll
figure it out.

JOE

Why are people always telling me to
read books? Can't someone just
bother to explain shit once in a
while?

RYAN

Who's it by?

MARC

This British dude named Richard
Allen.

Brian stops shovelling food in his mouth for a second.

BRIAN

Isn't there a group of skinheads
that hate other skinheads?

MARC

Yeah, they're called SHARP.
Skinhead against racial prejudice.

BRIAN

See, how can you get more punk?

Marc sits up straighter at the table.

MARC

Yeah, the skin movement gets so
much shit because of the neo-Nazi
assholes. But originally it was a
great thing. There wouldn't be a
hardcore scene at all if it wasn't
for the skinheads and the mods.

Tom walks up to the table with a plate full of french fries
and a caffeine free Mountain Dew.

TOM

Didn't it start as a working class
movement? Like, because mods were
so uppity and stuff?

Marc's face drops as Tom sits down between Ryan and Joe.

MARC

Exactly. I knew you were smarter
than you looked.

TOM

Too bad it ended up as a bunch of
assholes that just like to fight
and mess up a good time.

Marc stands up. He glares at Tom, then looks at the other
guys at the table.

MARC

So who wants to go with?

BRIAN

I can make it. Not like I'll do my
homework anyway.

Marc raises his eyebrows to Joe in question.

MARC

If you don't want to drive, I'm sure my old man won't have a problem giving us a lift.

JOE

Me and my brother have to help parents with some shit around the house. Next time.

How long before you start driving yourself?

MARC

Ten more months. You're an old bastard.

Marc looks at Brian.

MARC (CONT'D)

Get over to my house before five so we can get there a little early.

He turns around and walks away.

TOM

I'm going to that show with my brother and his girlfriend.

RYAN

I was going to try and convince Jennifer to go.

TOM

Good luck on that. She told Sam she had a special night planned for you.

Brian and Joe laugh.

BRIAN

Shame, shame, know your name.

TOM

Ha, if I know Jenjen then it's going to be a long night of "Pretty Woman" and Scrabble.

RYAN

That movie isn't really all that bad.

TOM

You suck.

CUT TO:

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE, NIGHT

Ryan is sitting on a couch, Jennifer is standing up. There is a large, floor-model television. On top of the television sets a top-loading VCR.

Jennifer slides a video into the VCR. She closes it and walks over to where Ryan is. She plops down beside him.

JENNIFER

I have a surprise for you.

RYAN

I hope it's a good one. I'm missing what should be a good show to be here.

He gives her a subtle smile that says he's joking, but not completely.

JENNIFER

I think you'll like it.

She points a remote control at the TV and pushes a button.

Music blares out of the TV. Ryan's eyes open cartoon wide.

RYAN

Is this a skate video?

JENNIFER

Yeah, it's called "Video Days." The guys at the Skate Source said that this was the best new one they had.

RYAN

"Video Days!" Everyone has been talking about this! I've been wanting to see it.

Jennifer looks pleased.

JENNIFER

Well, now I own it. And you can watch it whenever you want.

Ryan leans over and kisses her

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
As long as you do what I say.

He laughs. Her expression turns serious.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
I'm very serious, young man. And
we're going to start by not letting
you watch the movie right now.

Ryan turns to her.

RYAN
What do you mean?

She grabs the back of his head and pulls him towards her.

JENNIFER
You're going to be too busy to
watch it.

As she kisses him, she falls backwards onto the couch,
pulling him on top of her.

RYAN
Are you sure we're ready for this?

JENNIFER
You wouldn't believe how sure.

They continue kissing.

Jennifer grabs one of his hands and slides it underneath her
shirt.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT, EVENING

Tom, Troy, Faun and Samantha are standing around Troy's car.
Kids of all ages are streaming towards the doors of the
building.

Tom and Troy dig through a pair of back packs. Samantha and
Faun chat a couple of feet away.

A group of skinheads, dressed in bomber jackets and boots,
walk into the parking lot and head towards the bar. Marc,
Brian and Rick are among them.

FAUN
Oh, shit. Is that Rick?

Samantha looks over immediately.

SAMANTHA

Damn it.

FAUN

Hey, faggot! You should turn the fuck around before my boyfriend hands you your ass again.

Troy and Tom look over and see the skinheads. The skinheads turn towards them.

SAMANTHA

Shut up! What are you doing?

Rick points at his own chest, points to Faun, then points to himself again.

FAUN

Yeah, I'm talking to you. Too much cum on the brain to understand?

Tom and Troy both straighten up. Looks of resignation cross their faces.

Rick looks at his friends. They all start towards the car.

Tom and Troy square up towards them. As soon as the skinheads get close, Tom and Troy launch forward.

Tom punches Rick in the face. Rick's nose explodes in a bloody mess.

Troy takes a shot at the largest of the skinheads, BUCK. His punch glances off the jaw of the huge teen without slowing him down.

A big skinhead punches Tom. Tom hits him back.

Buck bowls Troy over. He knocks Troy across the hood of the car. The backpacks spill onto the ground, dumping zines everywhere.

Samantha pushes Faun towards the bar's entrance.

SAMANTHA

Call the fucking police!

Faun runs towards the door. Samantha sprints up to the big teen beating on Troy.

Samantha punches Buck on his shoulder. Buck barely feels it. He backhands her and she falls to the ground.

Tom steps forward and kicks Rick in the ribs. He punches the big skinhead again.

Marc kicks Tom from behind. Tom stumbles over Rick and the big skinhead punches him in the back of the head.

Tom falls to the ground. Marc and the big skinhead start kicking him. Rick jumps to his feet.

Samantha gets off the ground and rushes Buck. A fifth skinhead grabs her and holds her back.

Buck slams Troy's head into the hood of the car.

Brian stands away from the commotion. Samantha sees him.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Do something you fat piece of shit!

BRIAN

What can I fucking do!?

SAMANTHA

Help them!

Brian starts crying. His head shakes back and forth.

BRIAN

I can't!

A crowd is gathering. Police sirens are heard.

Someone yells and the skinheads back off. Rick stomps on Tom one last time and they start to run.

Marc runs to Brian.

MARC

Let's go, Chub!

He tugs on Brian's shirt, but doesn't slow down. Rick rounds a corner and the skinheads are gone.

SAMANTHA

Get out of here!

Brian runs away.

Samantha kneels beside Troy. Troy tries to push himself upright. He uses the car for balance.

Tom is lying on the ground. He's bleeding from the mouth and nose. His eyes are unfocused.

He coughs and starts to look around.

FADE TO:

INT. JENNIFER'S HOUSE - SIMULTANEOUS

Ryan and Jennifer are sitting on the couch. Jennifer has her back to Ryan. His hands are inside her sweater, trying to fasten her bra.

Music and the sounds of skateboarding are coming from the television.

He gets the bra fastened. Jennifer turns around and leans back. She tucks her body into his shoulder and relaxes.

JENNIFER

Something monumental just happened.

RYAN

It's not often you can say that and really mean it.

JENNIFER

I'm glad you missed your show.

She looks up at him and smiles.

RYAN

I'll miss a show for you any time you want. Missing this one changed my life.

He smiles back at her. He traces her lips with one of his fingers.

RYAN (CONT'D)

You are amazing. Tonight was the most important night of my life.

JENNIFER

You're not the only one that can say that.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Tom is on a stretcher being wheeled to an ambulance. Troy and Samantha walk alongside.

Troy's eye has a bandage on it. His face is cut. His left cheek is red and swollen.

TOM
How long before I can skate if I
have a broken leg?

MEDIC
Eight or ten weeks, kid.

TOM
Troy?

Troy moves closer to the gurney.

TROY
What do you need, bro?

TOM
What the fuck happened to Faun?

TROY
Not sure. She hasn't turned up yet.

TOM
When she does, tell her I said to
fuck off.

SAMANTHA
I'll take care of that for you.

Tom smiles. The gurney is lifted into the ambulance.

TOM
Punk fucking rock.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL LUNCHROOM, MIDDAY

Ryan, Joe, Erik and Paco are sitting around a lunch table.

Paco is eating a pair of hamburgers. The other three have huge piles of french fries sitting in front of them.

ERIK
Have you talked to him?

RYAN
Yeah, I talked to him on the phone
but only for a couple of minutes.

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

He's getting out of the hospital tomorrow and I'm going to go over to his house with Jennifer and see how he's doing.

ERIK

Sweet. I'll go over there with you guys.

JOE

Fuck! I knew I should have went up there with Marc and Chub.

RYAN

Troy told me it was Marc's friends that did it to him.

ERIK

I never did like that asshole.

Paco looks up from his burgers.

PACO

Nobody liked him. Except Brian.

ERIK

Chub! Why does he hang out with that dude so much?

RYAN

They've known each other since they were babies.

ERIK

Fuck 'em both, then.

PACO

Yo, I started a zine!

Paco reaches into a backpack and pulls out a pile of zines. The cover shows a drawing of a dollar bill being crucified.

PACO (CONT'D)

It's called "My God Is Bigger Than Your God."

He starts passing the zines around.

PACO (CONT'D)

Take a couple for Tom and his brother.

RYAN

Sweet. Do you see Jennifer at all during the day or should I grab her one, too?

PACO

Not really. I see her around the art room sometimes. But I don't have photography today.

RYAN

Covered. I gotta bounce. She's waiting for me, probably.

PACO

Punk rock. Tell me what you think.

Ryan heads off.

ERIK

I think it sucks ass.

Erik stands up.

ERIK (CONT'D)

I'll give you a better review once I've read it though.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL ART ROOM

Jennifer is alone in the room. She is standing in front of a table, working on a large collage.

Ryan walks in to the room. Jennifer doesn't hear him. He sneaks up behind her.

He reaches out with both hands and pinches her on both sides.

RYAN

I'll eat your soul!

Jennifer screams and wheels around. She holds an X-acto knife in front of her like a weapon.

JENNIFER

You shit! You're lucky I don't cut off your man toy.

RYAN

I'll be more careful in the future.

Jennifer wags the knife back and forth. She isn't very menacing.

She smile and presents her lips for a kiss. Ryan gives her a peck.

JENNIFER

I'm glad you're here. I want your opinion on something.

Ryan steps up to the table and looks at the collage.

RYAN

Okay, but I'm not exactly sure what it is.

JENNIFER

That's my freshman project.

RYAN

Don't you think it is a little too early to start that?

JENNIFER

Too early is an impossibility. But that's not what I want you to see. Come with me.

She grabs him by the hand and pulls him towards the corner of the room, where a photography closet revolving door is located.

She spins the door around to reveal the opening.

RYAN

You have my attention. I haven't actually been in there.

She steps through the doorway. She pulls him in after.

JENNIFER

It's not what you think,

She spins the door around

INT. SCHOOL DARK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JENNIFER

Pervert.

The dark room is simple. There is a single string running across the room, holding a half dozen photos.

Jennifer steps over to the photos. Ryan moves over, too, but slower.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

This is what I wanted you to see.

She reaches up to a photo. She pulls it from the clip and hands it to Ryan.

RYAN IS ON HIS SKATEBOARD. HE IS SLIDING DOWN A LONG RAIL. HIS ARMS ARE HELD OUT TO THE SIDE LIKE THE CRISTO REDENTOR, AND HIS HEAD IS TILTED BACK JUST SLIGHTLY.

RYAN

This is awesome.

JENNIFER

I was hoping you would like it.

RYAN

You should work for Thrasher or something.

JENNIFER

Hah! Let me get through high school first.

RYAN

High school is overrated.

Jennifer takes the photo from Ryan. She hangs it back on the line.

JENNIFER

Not for all of us, punk boy. Some of us have bigger plans than skating around the country listening to people bang on things.

She grabs Ryan's hand and steps back into the doorway.

RYAN

I have goals.

She spins the door around.

INT. SCHOOL ART ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ryan flinches from the light.

JENNIFER

Like what?

RYAN

I plan on skating all over the world listening to people bang on things. I may even get a job so I can pay for it if nobody wants to let me do it for free.

JENNIFER

Well, it's good to know you have ambition.

Jennifer walks back to her collage. She picks the knife up and reaches for a magazine.

RYAN

Have you heard from Faun since the fight? She seems to have just disappeared.

Jennifer's face drops. She starts chopping at the magazine in front of her.

JENNIFER

Yeah.

RYAN

I take it I shouldn't have brought that up.

JENNIFER

It's okay. That bitch's name would have came up at some point anyway. I just can't believe her!

RYAN

What happened? Troy told me she went to call the cops and then never showed back up. Even though she basically started the fight.

JENNIFER

She said that Tom's a pussy and she doesn't want to be around people like that any more. Then she called me a poseur and hung up.

RYAN

That's just jacked up.

Jennifer gives Ryan an earnest look.

JENNIFER

Why do people suck so much? I genuinely thought she was a good person.

Ryan puts his hands on her shoulders.

RYAN

I've been asking that question a long time, remember, and I still haven't worked it out.

He kisses her on the forehead.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I can promise you that even though most of humanity is a waste of sperm, there are a few good ones running around.

JENNIFER

But how can you be sure? Faun was my best friend. One phone call later and I realized that she wasn't in the least bit like I imagined her being.

RYAN

I don't think we can be absolutely sure. But we can trust our instincts and hope they do us right.

JENNIFER

And when they don't?

RYAN

Take the lesson learned and move on.

She takes his hands off her shoulders and holds them. She swings them back and forth slowly.

JENNIFER

If you ever betray me like that, I'll hunt down everyone you know and torture them in front of you.

RYAN

Everyone? Don't tempt me.

JENNIFER

Okay, not everyone you know. But everyone you like.

RYAN
I don't like anyone.

JENNIFER
You like me.

RYAN
You'll torture yourself?

JENNIFER
I do every day I'm with you.

Ryan gives her a smile. He kisses her and starts walking away.

RYAN
I gotta go, sweetie. I'm going to leave one of Paco's new zines in your bag.

JENNIFER
Okay. Will I be able to see you tonight?

RYAN
Are you going to my grandma's birthday party?

JENNIFER
I'm not sure that sounds like my scene.

RYAN
Then we'll catch up tomorrow, how's that?

JENNIFER
Sounds good. Send your gammy my love, though.

RYAN
Will do. Tomorrow I'm going to Tom's. We'll meet there?

JENNIFER
I'll have my sister pick us up from school and we can go over there together.

RYAN
Punk rock. I'll see you.

He pulls a zine out of his bag. He drops it on her backpack and walks out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM, LATE AFTERNOON

Tom, Ryan, Jennifer, Troy and Samantha are sitting around the living room. Tom is healed somewhat. One of his legs is in a cast. He winces in pain occasionally.

SAMANTHA

Are you sure you won't even take some Tylenol or something?

Tom holds his arms up with his forearms crossed. Thick black Xs are on the back of his hands.

JENNIFER

You know, when drugs are prescribed by a doctor, they're not really that bad for you.

TOM

Pain only hurts for a little while. That crap

He motions towards the pill bottle.

TOM (CONT'D)

Messes with you forever.

JENNIFER

If it was really that bad for you, do you think they would give it to you?

TROY

Of course they would. How else are they going to make their money?

Ryan puts his hand on Jennifer's knee. He pats it lightly.

RYAN

I hate to tell you this, but you're really wasting your breath with this argument.

Tom laughs, then clutches his side.

TOM

Bastards broke three ribs. Once I'm a hundred percent they better watch their damn backs.

JENNIFER

You need to just drop it. You can't fix violence with violence.

TOM

Tell that to the united Allied forces, hippy.

JENNIFER

I resemble that remark.

TOM

Did you know your girlfriend was a fucking hippy, bro?

Ryan looks at Jennifer with a critical eye.

RYAN

She's the most hardcore hippy I've ever met, so I guess that's not such a bad thing. As long as I can keep her away from the hippy sweat.

TOM

What the hell is that?

RYAN

Hippy sweat?

TOM

Yeah.

RYAN

Patchouli oil.

JENNIFER

I do actually kind of like the smell of that stuff.

RYAN

I haven't cried in a long time. Don't make me start now.

JENNIFER

You just wait. I'm going to make you cry so much puppies will drown.

TOM
There are times that you just get
creepy as hell.

She picks up stuffed animal laying on the floor and stands
up.

JENNIFER
(singing)
Dead puppies, aren't much fun to
play with.

TOM
Just creepy.

RYAN
So how long with the cast?

TOM
Too long. But it'll give me an
excuse to knock out a new issue of
"Pepper Spray Express."

RYAN
It has been a while, hasn't it?

Samantha walks over to Troy and pulls him out of his chair.

TOM
More than a few. I put out the last
one before summer vacation

Troy and Samantha disappear around the corner and up the
stairs.

JENNIFER
God, do they ever stop?

TOM
Hell no.

RYAN
Marc and Brian didn't do anything
to help you? At all?

TOM
Marc was one of the assholes that
broke my ribs.

RYAN
You didn't tell me that.

TOM

Don't worry about him. He's just trying to be cool in front of his friends. Besides, he kicks like a girl.

Jennifer coughs loudly.

TOM (CONT'D)

You're practically a riot girl. You don't count.

JENNIFER

Should I be complimented by that? I will be, since you're all strung up in bandages and all.

RYAN

Did you hear the Jane's Addiction news?

TOM

No. Did they put out a new album?

RYAN

Not even close. They broke up.

TOM

What the shit!

RYAN

Yeah. Totally sucks.

TOM

What the bloody hell is happening to music? Guns -n roses is selling millions of albums and the best rock band around splits up. Ridiculous.

JENNIFER

I just heard some new stuff by a band called Nirvana you might like. I think it was really good.

TOM

Where are they from?

JENNIFER

What does that have to do with anything?

RYAN

I heard Seattle or something.

TOM

What the hell is in Seattle? Do they sing about rain and being close to Canada. That'll never take off.

JENNIFER

I'm telling you, it's good.

TOM

Do you have it on tape?

JENNIFER

Yeah, I'll send it over with my sister tomorrow.

RYAN

At least the Violent Femmes are still going strong.

TOM

You are such a pussy.

RYAN

You're the one with a broken leg.

TOM

Are you going to the show this weekend?

RYAN

Of course. Are you?

TOM

A broken flipper isn't going to keep me down.

RYAN

Punk fucking rock.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN'S BASEMENT, NIGHT

Ryan's bedroom looks exactly the same as before, with the addition of a thick layer of zines, pamphlets and flyers over everything.

Ryan and Jennifer are lying on the bed, curled around each other.

JENNIFER

Your mom has to be the coolest mom
on the planet.

RYAN

We get along. I think I'll keep
her.

JENNIFER

Does she let you have girls stay
over all the time?

RYAN

Every Saturday. I have a harem that
springs up. You should stop by
sometime and meet the ladies.

JENNIFER

Only if you can guarantee me a
massage or three.

RYAN

We can swing that. I'll just run it
by the girls later.

Jennifer slaps his chest, palm flat so the sting of the slap
can be heard as much as felt.

JENNIFER

You are such an ass.

RYAN

Hey, you know better than to ask
stuff like that. I told you, you're
the first.

JENNIFER

That's not what I heard.

RYAN

What did you hear?

JENNIFER

Joyce never spent the night here?

Ryan sighs. He rolls his eyes.

RYAN

Which idiot told you that?

JENNIFER

I don't name names.

RYAN

Well, it's crap. She and I are just good friends.

Jennifer adjusts her position so she can look Ryan in the face.

JENNIFER

Promise? I didn't completely believe it when I heard it, but I asked around a little and some other people said it was true so now I don't know what to believe.

RYAN

I promise. When I first met her we acted like we did it to make the other guys jealous, but nothing actually happened. I think we acted too well, because now people won't believe me when I tell 'em the truth.

JENNIFER

Why would you even do something like that?

RYAN

I don't know. To be cool.

JENNIFER

Because you were worried about what other people thought of you.

RYAN

Pretty much.

JENNIFER

That's not a very punk rock way to act.

Ryan laughs.

Jennifer sets up and swings her legs off the bed.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

I'll be right back. I need to tinkle.

RYAN

Okay. I'll wait patiently for your return.

Jennifer walks towards the gap in the makeshift walls that Ryan calls a door, but after a couple of steps she slips on the thick carpet of magazines and comic books that cover the floor. She grabs onto the bed to steady herself.

JENNIFER

You should really consider cleaning this hole.

RYAN

I'm waiting until I can afford a maid.

JENNIFER

Jeez, you've got some patience.

She walks out of the room.

Ryan reclines back on the bed and stares up at the ceiling.

INT. RYAN'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mom is sitting on the couch, watching a late-night talk show. Jennifer walks into the room and Mom waves to her.

MOM

Hey. Are you guys okay down there?

JENNIFER

Yeah, everything's good.

MOM

Okay, but if you do end up needing anything, don't be afraid to help yourself. There's pop and snacks in the kitchen.

JENNIFER

Sounds good. Thanks for letting me stay here tonight.

MOM

No problem. Where do your parents think you are?

Jennifer looks a little shell-shocked. Her mouth opens and closes silently while she gathers her thoughts.

MOM (CONT'D)

Come on. I know better than to think your parents know that you're spending the night at your boyfriend's house.

JENNIFER

You're letting your son's girlfriend spend the night at your house.

MOM

And you don't think that's strange?

Mom picks up a small pipe and lights it. The pipe is obviously a marijuana pipe and she holds the smoke in for a few seconds before exhaling mightily.

JENNIFER

Completely flabbergasting.

MOM

You seem like a smart girl. I would rather you two spend the night together in my house where I can keep an eye on you. I can't stop you from doing what you want to do, but I can at least try and keep you responsible about it.

JENNIFER

Would you mind if I hit that?

Mom looks a bit surprised.

MOM

You don't think Ryan will get upset?

JENNIFER

He doesn't have the right to get upset. I'm responsible for myself.

MOM

That won't stop him. How's your schoolwork?

JENNIFER

My math teacher is pretty awful, but that's the only class I'm really struggling with. If I can do well enough on the exams and Tina Hattery doesn't I still have a shot at valedictorian.

Mom holds the bowl out at arm's length but doesn't make any effort to move from where she's sitting. Jennifer walks over to her and takes the pipe.

MOM
Who's your math teacher?

Jennifer takes a large hit from the pipe. She answers while she holds in the smoke.

JENNIFER
Mrs. Istnick.

She exhales a huge, billowing cloud of smoke. Mom motions for her to take another hit.

MOM
I had Colonel Istnick when I was in school. She was a tough bitch then, too, but if you can do what she asks you to there shouldn't be a problem.

Jennifer exhales again. She hands the pipe back.

JENNIFER
Thanks for that. I should get back before I'm missed too much.

MOM
Do me one favor?

JENNIFER
Anything.

MOM
Don't hurt him too bad.

Jennifer takes a couple of steps, then stops and turns back towards Mom.

JENNIFER
I don't plan on hurting him at all.

MOM
I know.

Jennifer walks off. Mom hits the pipe again, then turns the sound on the TV up and focuses her attention on the talk show.

CUT TO:

EXT. RYAN'S HOUSE, DAY

EARLY SUMMER, 1994

Ryan, Erik, Tom, Joe and Paco are sitting on stairs leading to the front porch. Paco has orange hair now. Erik is the only boy with black Xs on his hands.

NARRATOR

The next couple of years were a blur. There were problems with Last Chance Crew, but it never got Crips and Bloods so we didn't think it was a big deal.

The boys are talking. Joe says something. Everyone responds positively. They jump to their feet.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Jennifer and I were still together. We went to a show at least two or three times a month. Everyone was healthy.

Skateboards are collected from the yard and porch. Everyone runs to Joe's Chevette and starts piling inside.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Freshly graduated, we were ready to take on the world one cliché at a time, and if you would have told us the end of our era was coming, we would have spit in your face.

The car starts. Smoke spits out the tailpipe and it peels off.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

You can't end hardcore. Hardcore ends you.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE, LATE AFTERNOON

Tom, Troy, Erik, Joe, Paco, Samantha, Jennifer and two other girls (JOYCE and AMY) are sitting around the living room.

PACO

What's the most punk rock thing you've ever seen?

JOE

That's easy.

Joe throws a dart at a dart board leaning against the wall.

JOE (CONT'D)

Big Z.

ERIK

That was one hardcore dude.

JOE

There was this one night, Ryan, you were there. It was one of those nights that Chub was able to extricate himself from asshat. We met up with Big Z to go skating.

FADE TO:

EXT. GAS STATION, NIGHT

Ryan, Joe, Brian and BIG Z are standing near a pay phone. They are all holding bottles of Gatorade or water. Skateboards are in their hands, or nearby. Big Z is much larger than the other boys - half again as large as Brian.

HILLBILLY is smoking a cigarette. He walks over to use the pay phone. He's wearing work clothes, mildly disheveled.

BIG Z

Second hand smoke is just as bad as smoking.

Hillbilly stops and turns towards Big Z.

HILLBILLY

What?

BIG Z

Which part?

HILLBILLY

You're talking to me?

BIG Z

No, I'm talking to the other asshole smoking.

Big Z look around. He shrugs his shoulders in bafflement.

BIG Z (CONT'D)

Holy hell, nobody else is fucking up my air so it must be you that I'm talking to.

Hillbilly walks over to Big Z.

HILLBILLY

This is America, boy. It ain't your air, it's everyone's air.

BIG Z

I shouldn't have to breathe that death in just because you're an idiot. Put it out.

HILLBILLY

And if I don't?

Hillbilly takes a drag from his cigarette.

BIG Z

Then I'll have to assist you.

Hillbilly blows a large cloud of smoke into Big Z's face.

Hillbilly takes the cigarette between his thumb and first finger. He flicks it at Big Z, bouncing it off his chest.

Big Z looks down at his shirt. He looks back up at Hillbilly.

Big Z steps forward and grabs Hillbilly's head with both of his hands. He smashes his forehead into Hillbilly's nose.

Hillbilly's nose starts spurting blood. He falls straight to the ground, screaming.

All of the boys start cheering.

FADE TO:

INT. TOM'S HOUSE, LATE AFTERNOON

JOE

We were gone before the guy even got off the ground.

ERIK

I heard about that! God, I wish Big Z were still around.

JOE

Where is he?

RYAN

Chicago, last I heard. He's going to some cooking school to be a vegan chef or something.

JOE
Awesomeness.

PACO
All right, who's up?

TROY
I got this. Do you guys know Dough-
E?

PACO
Yeah, we hung out a couple of
times. I've seen him at some shows,
too.

TROY
Well, we were up at Aardvark
Tattoos. It was a couple of
Christmas' ago and he was getting
some work done on that back piece
he has.

FADE TO:

INT. TATTOO SHOP, EVENING

Troy, Pete and Craig are sitting at one end of the room, a small seating area composed of a table, a few chairs and some old magazines, zines and flyers, stickers and tapes.

The grossly overweight TATTOO ARTIST (30s) is holding a tattoo gun in one hand and examining the back of a client. He is wearing a red Santa hat and small bells on his shoes. They ring whenever he moves his chair.

DOUGH-E is laying on the tattoo chair. His back has a mural of Muppets on it.

TATTOO ARTIST
You okay there? I'm going to start
on the red now, or do you need a
break?

DOUGH-E
I'm fine. Can I ask you a question
before you get back into it?

TATTOO ARTIST
Sure. What's up?

DOUGH-E

Do you have those bells on your shoes so that you can warn everyone when you're backing up?

Troy, Pete and Craig break out laughing.

Tattoo artist reaches over to the wall. He can't quite reach and his bells jingle as he pushes the chair a foot or so. He grabs a bottle of alcohol from a shelf.

As he pushes the chair back towards Dough-E, he spins the lid off and dumps alcohol all over Dough-E's back.

Dough-E's whole body tenses. He screams in pain and clutches the edge of the bed.

The boys are laughing so hard they're crying.

PETE

Oh my god!

CRAIG

So painful!

TATTOO ARTIST

Ready to start on that red?

DOUGH-E

I should kill you.

Tattoo artist sets his forearm on Dough-E's back, tattoo gun at the ready.

TATTOO ARTIST

Stop being a bitch.

He starts tattooing. Dough-E screams again.

FADE TO:

INT. TOM'S HOUSE, LATE AFTERNOON

TROY

Have you seen that piece, though? It's turning out completely amazing.

RYAN

Yeah, I saw it after he had Bert and Ernie added to the one window.

TROY
He's gotten two more pieces since
then.

RYAN
What?

TROY
A super Grover, and then Jim Henson
in one of the clouds looking down.

SAMANTHA
Kind of like he's a god or
something.

JENNIFER
That sounds awesome.

SAMANTHA
It's great work.

PACO
I still think Big Z has that one
beat.

TOM
I got one for you guys. It happened
while I was working at the shoe
store in the mall.

FADE TO:

INT. MALL SHOE STORE, AFTERNOON

The shoe store in the mall is empty, except for Tom, who is walking behind the counter, and a single customer.

The shoe displays are full of Doc Martins, Vans and Airwalks, as well as some more unique designs. Skateboards, attention grabbing T-shirts and colorful hats fill some of the space.

PREPPY PUNK, a late twenty-something man dressed in Dockers and a knitted sweater, is sitting in the middle of the store, waiting for Tom to return.

Tom walks out of the back. He carries a shoebox holding dark green boots.

TOM
Sorry, but we're all out of the ten
hole green Docs. I pulled a pair of
the twelve hole out. Give them a
try, you might be surprised.

He holds the box out. Preppy Punk looks at them a second, then takes the box.

PREPPY PUNK
Cant hurt, right. Might as well.

He pulls off one of his worn-out oxbloods, tosses it aside and slips on one of the green boots.

TOM
I actually prefer the twelves. They feel like they give my ankles better support.

Preppy Punk laces the boot up.

PUNKETTE walks in. Punkette has immaculately-styled hot pink hair, a black leather coat with Hello Kitty patches and random other pop-punk paraphernalia decorating her.

Preppy Punk notices her walk in. He laughs a little, shakes his head and finishes lacing up the boot.

Punkette hears the snort. She walks over to where they are and stands directly in front of Preppy Punk, hands on her hips.

PUNKETTE
You got a fucking problem, buddy?

Tom steps back a couple of paces.

Preppy Punk pulls the second oxblood off. He puts on the second green boot, then begins lacing it up.

PREPPY PUNK
No problem, killer. Just relax.

PUNKETTE
I'll relax my foot up your ass. Who the fuck are you laughing at?

Preppy Punk sighs and looks up at her.

PREPPY PUNK
You're going to push this, aren't you?

Punkette turns towards Tom.

PUNKETTE
Don't sell this shit-head a pair of Docs. Docs are for punks and cool people, not frat boy bitches.

PREPPY PUNK

(mocking)

Docs are for punks and cool people.

(normally)

You think sticking your head in a cotton candy machine and dressing like a Nintendo game make you a punk?

PUNKETTE

More punk than your lame ass will ever be. You don't know the first thing about punk with your pressed little Dockers and your cute little sweater and your...

As her tirade rambles on, Preppy Punk stands up. He pulls his sweater off over his head. Underneath it is a stained, torn Ramones shirt.

He throws the sweater onto the bench. As he sticks his tongue out at the girl, he reveals a tongue ring for the first time.

He spits in Punkette's face, then turns towards Tom.

PREPPY PUNK

Can I just wear them out? Put the old ones in that box?

He picks up his sweater and starts walking towards the counter.

TOM

That's cool, let me ring you up.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM'S HOUSE, LATE AFTERNOON

RYAN

No shit!

ERIK

Punk rock!

TOM

That isn't even the part that is totally punk. After he paid, he went back and talked to her for about twenty seconds, then walked out with her.

PACO
We have a winner!

The room explodes in cheering, except Jennifer.

JENNIFER
Hold the heck on. Let me get this straight - beating people up and spitting in their faces is the pinnacle of punk?

RYAN
As long as it's for the right reasons.

ERIK
Standing up for yourself is what punk is all about.

JENNIFER
You can stand up for yourself without head-butting someone. What constitutes right reasons?

TOM
Beating people up just because you're a bully and you want people to think you're tough isn't punk.

RYAN
Spitting in someone's face just because you think you're better than them - that's just ignorant.

JENNIFER
Like Rick and Marc and them.

ERIK
Exactly. Those guys are some of the biggest poseurs out there.

TROY
I can't believe you still use the word poseurs.

ERIK
I can't believe you don't have hemorrhoids from taking it up the butt so much.

JENNIFER
I think if I asked Rick and Marc, they would tell me they were sticking up for themselves.

(MORE)

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

And the pink little punk girl was just defending herself against being laughed at.

ERIK

She deserved it for running her mouth like that.

TOM

People like Jesus and Ben Franklin are the real punks. America wouldn't be here if it wasn't for violence. And the French would be speaking German right now.

JENNIFER

Wasn't Jesus exactly the opposite of violent?

RYAN

The point is, the fighting isn't what's punk. Why they were fighting is.

JENNIFER

I just don't get it. I don't think I ever will.

CUT TO:

EXT. MILK AND HONEY DROP, NIGHT

Ryan, Joe, Erik and Tom are skating around, along with about half a dozen other kids. Ryan skates over to Joe's car, where a gallon jug of Kool-Aid sets on the hood.

He picks up the jug and takes a huge drink of the bright blue liquid.

Brian walks up to the car, holding his skateboard. Brian has gotten larger, and lost most of the fat that covered his body. He's dressed in a black bomber jacket, with huge denim pants and broken down Vans. His hair is almost nonexistent.

BRIAN

Hey, man. What's up?

Ryan sets the gallon jug down. He replaces the cap.

RYAN

Not much. Been skating a lot less and hanging out with Jen a lot more. Getting ready to go to school. In New York.

BRIAN

Sweet! I'm leaving for the Army next month.

RYAN

I heard a rumor. What made you decide to do that? You've never really seemed like an Army guy.

BRIAN

Come on, man. I can't get into school with my grades, you know that. The Army will pay the bills so I can at least give school a shot later.

RYAN

True that, Chub, true that.

BRIAN

We should hang out before I leave.

RYAN

Hell yeah. That would be sweet.

Joe rolls up to the pair. He jumps off his board, kicks the tail and grabs the truck as the skateboard pops up.

JOE

Chub!

He gives Brian a big hug, lifting the huge teen off his feet. Brian looks a little uncomfortable.

BRIAN

I probably shouldn't tell you guys this, but I'm meeting Rick and Marc and a few others here. They'll probably be here in a few minutes.

JOE

Shit. I'm really not in the mood for a fight.

RYAN

Maybe Jennifer has the right idea.

JOE

What do you mean?

Ryan yells for Erik and Tom. The two boys start skating over to the car.

RYAN

Let's go somewhere else and not even worry about it. I haven't been to the church on 12th in a while. We're going there.

JOE

Sounds good to me.

He looks over at Brian.

JOE (CONT'D)

You should come. Just tell Marc you got lost on the way here.

BRIAN

Nah, we have some stuff we have to do afterwards, too. But I'll get in touch with you soon.

The boys climb into the car.

Joe starts the car and drives off slowly.

Brian walks towards the group of skaters across the parking lot, board firmly in hand.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM, NIGHT

Tom, Joe, Ryan, Erik, and two others are working on T-shirts and flyers. Everyone looks a little bored with what they're doing.

NARRATOR

We saw Chub one more time before he left. He came over to my house and we cooked veggie burgers and played frisbee tag in the middle of the street until someone called the cops.

BOY 1

I need a smoke. I'm going to head outside for a minute.

BOY 2
Yeah, I'll join you.

The two boys get up and leave the room.

NARRATOR
The summer wore on, but everyone was leaving or had already left. We were the young kids when the scene started. Now that we were running things, it was impossible to get anyone to help.

The four boys work on silently, bowed to their tasks.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
In the beginning, being part of the scene meant helping to put the shows together. Now, though, it just meant showing up to them.

ERIK
You're going to miss the show on Saturday?

RYAN
Yeah. This weekend is getting spent with Jennifer. I'll be there the next week, though.

ERIK
You sure as hell better be. That's the last show before you go to New York.

TOM
I heard there isn't much of a hardcore scene there.

Ryan shrugs his shoulders.

RYAN
It's New York. That means there's going to be all kinds of music. Even if it doesn't have a great hardcore scene, I'm sure there will be plenty to listen to. Maybe I'll go all Swing Kids and start listening to jazz while smoking cloves.

ERIK
I will so kick you in the cunt.

RYAN

Besides, it's not like I won't be back. It's the last show before I leave, not the last show ever. And pretty soon, you guys will be required to come see shows in New York.

ERIK

That would be awesome.

JOE

I'll drive.

TOM

Shotgun.

ERIK

You can't call shotgun now.

TOM

Seems to me I just did.

CUT TO:

INT. RYAN'S BASEMENT, NIGHT

Ryan's room is perfectly clean, mostly because everything has been packed into the boxes that make up the walls of the room. The sheets that used to hang up are missing, and the basement feels cold and hollow.

Ryan and Jennifer are laying in bed. A sheet is over them, magically L-shaped.

JENNIFER

I can't believe you're leaving so soon.

RYAN

I know. It's weird. I never even thought of college, really. I didn't think I would go.

JENNIFER

I knew you would.

RYAN

That's because you're smarter than me.

JENNIFER
I need to talk about something,
though.

Ryan rolls over so that their heads are resting close to each other, face-to-face. He looks into her eyes.

RYAN
You just said "I need to talk about
something."

JENNIFER
Yeah.

RYAN
That line is almost never the start
of a good conversation.

Jennifer hesitates a moment.

JENNIFER
I know.

Ryan kisses her for a few seconds. She doesn't resist, but she doesn't exactly kiss back either.

They stop kissing. Ryan takes a deep breath

RYAN
Okay, I think I'm ready.

JENNIFER
I don't know if I am.

She hesitates again.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
I think we should stop seeing each
other when you leave.

RYAN
How did I know you were going to
say that?

JENNIFER
I'm sorry.

She curls up a bit and puts the top of her head against his chest.

RYAN
Why do you think we should stop
seeing each other?

JENNIFER

Because it just won't work. We work because we're together. That far apart, too much will go wrong.

RYAN

Like what?

A tear rolls down her cheek.

JENNIFER

When you go to New York, you're going to lose yourself in your new world. You won't have time for what you left behind.

RYAN

I'll always have time for you.

JENNIFER

I would love to believe that. But if something isn't happening around you right now, you don't give it a second thought. You live completely in the moment; that's what I love about you.

RYAN

I can live in the moment and still be with you.

JENNIFER

No you can't. If I try and hold on to you, we'll just start hating each other.

RYAN

Let's just wait and see. Can't we at least try?

Jennifer raises her head a little. She kisses his chest.

JENNIFER

I'll try then, but don't be surprised later.

RYAN

I love you.

JENNIFER

I know. I love you, too. But that's never enough.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - PORCH ROOF, NIGHT

Tom and Ryan are sitting on the roof of the house, passing a joint between them.

TOM
Why were we ever straight edge?

RYAN
Because it was cool. Because everybody we knew was straight edge for a minute.

TOM
Pot is so lovely.

RYAN
And that is the answer to why we are no longer straight edge. But don't start loving it too much or you didn't learn a gosh-danged thing.

Tom looks over at Ryan. Tom takes a huge hit off the joint and holds it in. He passes the joint to Ryan.

TOM
She was going to break up with you?

Ryan hits the joint and exhales.

RYAN
Yeah. But we talked and it's better now.

He takes another hit, then passes it back to Tom.

TOM
Good. You two are great together.

Tom looks at how little of the joint is left, hits it and throws it off the roof.

RYAN
I agree.

TOM
You're moving to the fucking Apple, dude! You better come visit.

RYAN
Of course. But you better return the favor. I've been to Columbus.
(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

A lot. OSU is old hat, sir. You've never been to New York.

TOM

True. Old hat?

RYAN

Never mind.

Tom lays back and looks up at the stars. Ryan starts looking around, as if he misplaced something.

TOM

Saturday is going to be the best show ever.

RYAN

Why's that?

TOM

It's the last one we'll all be at for a long time. I know I'm going to go completely nuts.

CUT TO:

INT. DOGWOOD HALL, EVENING

The hall is crowded. The pit is out of control and seems to break out everywhere at once. People that aren't interested in dancing huddle against the walls.

At the center of the maelstrom are a group of skinheads, swinging their arms wildly and slamming into each other. Rick, Marc and Buck are among them. Faun, hairless, can be seen in the crowd, holding Buck's coat.

Tom, Ryan, Jennifer and Samantha are in the back, behind the kitchen bar.

Erik walks into the kitchen.

ERIK

Here's the deal.

RYAN

It's a fucking mess out there. What is their problem, man.

TOM

Good shows are becoming impossible.

ERIK

We're on next. I want you guys to dance.

RYAN

Hell no. I'll end up knocking someone out if I get out there.

Jennifer looks at him with disgust and rolls her eyes.

JENNIFER

You will not. I'll kick your ass if you even think about it.

ERIK

Dude, it's the last time you'll get to see us play in a while. Piss on them, just have fun and dance around them.

RYAN

All right. But if it gets too crazy I'm out.

ERIK

Whatever. I just want to see you out there. If you do end up hitting someone, all the better.

JENNIFER

Don't you get started, too. I swear to fucking god, if a fight starts...

ERIK

Sorry. Don't worry. Nothing's going to happen. But I want you guys to mosh, man.

Ryan looks over the crowd and sighs.

RYAN

Bunch of monkeys with car keys running around.

The music stops with a squeal of feedback. The hall starts emptying as kids move to the parking lot to cool off and smoke.

ERIK

That's us. Ten minutes.

RYAN

Sweet. We'll be there.

Erik runs out the door.

TOM
That "Smells Like Teen Spirit"
video really assed-up the pit.

RYAN
I know. Next thing you know there
are going to be frat boys moshing
and skanking.

TOM
That, my friend, will never happen.
Punk will have to die first.

FADE TO:

INT. DOGWOOD HALL, EVENING

Erik is standing on the stage, coughing into a microphone.

NARRATOR
At the time, I didn't realize just
how prophetic those words were.

Tom and Ryan start pushing their way to the stage. The floor
is full. Joe, Paco and everyone else can be seen jostling
around.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Walking towards the stage, I didn't
feel the tension that was filling
the room.

Tom and Ryan push people out of their way until they're close
to the stage.

Marc whispers something into Rick's ear. Rick laughs and
turns to tell Buck.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
Subconsciously, I had to have
realized it was there. Otherwise I
wouldn't have done it.

The band starts playing and the whole floor erupts.

Buck shoots across the floor and rams Tom, slamming him
against the makeshift stage.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

I would have at least considered
the consequences.

Ryan helps Tom up. He turns towards the pit.

Buck starts a second charge.

Ryan's foot flies up at just the right moment, in a field
goal kick aimed directly at Buck's face.

Buck's head snaps back. His nose explodes in blood.

CUT TO:

JENNIFER, CLOSE - CONTINUOUS

Jennifer is standing on top of the bar. Her face drops
completely and she puts her hands up to cover her eyes.

CUT TO:

DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The huge skinhead falls to the floor. The music stops.
Everyone looks over at Buck, then at Ryan.

Rick starts moving forward.

Erik leaps off the stage with his microphone in both hands
and smashes it on Rick's head.

CUT TO:

JENNIFER, CLOSE - CONTINUOUS

Jennifer pushes her way through the crowd, crying
uncontrollably. Samantha is directly behind her.

Jennifer reaches the door, pushes it open and runs outside.

Samantha starts to follow her, but then stops as she sees
something on the dance floor.

CUT TO:

DANCE FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

There's a full brawl going on the dance floor. Nearly everyone is involved, except Ryan. Samantha charges across the floor and punches Faun in the jaw.

Faun drops to the ground.

Ryan pushes his way through the crowd.

Ryan passes Samantha. She shrugs her shoulder, then jumps on Marc's back to try and knock him down.

Tom starts kicking Rick.

Ryan pushes his way to the door. He goes outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOGWOOD HALL - CONTINUOUS

NARRATOR

She was gone.

Ryan charges into the parking lot, amongst the other kids fleeing the scene. Jennifer is no where to be seen.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Just like that.

Ryan stops to catch his breath.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

It was the last time I saw her before I left. I went away to college before we had the chance to talk.

Ryan turns back towards the hall. The adrenaline is gone, so the foot he kicked with explodes in pain when he steps down.

He winces.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

It was the kick heard 'round the scene. It was the only act of violence I committed. And it killed hardcore. When the parents and police got wind of what happened, the Dogwood shows were shut down for good.

Ryan hobbles towards the building, head held low.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM HALLWAY, AFTERNOON

Tom, Joe and Erik walk down the hall. They stop at a door with a "Punk is Dead" poster.

Tom pounds on the door.

Ryan, dressed somewhat preppy, answers.

RYAN

Nice. What the hell are you guys doing here?

There are hugs all around.

JOE

Coming to pick your sorry ass up. There's a show tomorrow, so we need to leave as soon as you're done grabbing your backpack.

RYAN

The hell? Show?

TOM

My basement.

ERIK

Just like the old days.

RYAN

So the scene isn't dead?

ERIK

Of course it is.

TOM

Don't be silly.

ERIK

This is a new scene.

FADE OUT.