

SCENE 1. A CITY PARK IN AUTUMN.

Four teenage youths sit in coats and hats, passing a joint.

SANDER
(Coughing)
Fuck. This is some good shit.

ROB and JANE snicker.

SANDER
What?

JANE
Pass it here.

ROB snickers again.

JANE
This is Gary's shit.

SANDER
So? Maybe he got some new shit.
All I'm saying is, I've only had,
like, two hits, and I'm fucking
baked.

ROB
You get baked off oregano.

SANDER
I do not.

ROB
You do too. Remember Damian's
shit? That was, like, all oregano,
and you fell off your bike.

SANDER
That's bullshit. That shit got me
high as hell. Besides, I think I
had the flu.

Nothing happens for a while, except that the kids cough
occasionally, rub their hands together, and pass the
joint.

ROB
Hey Adam, did you do the geography
homework?

ADAM
Not yet.

ROB
Can I copy it during lunch?

ADAM
As long as you don't burn it this time.

JANE
All I've got is shake. You guys gonna throw down on this one?

SANDER, ADAM, and ROB all pass her bags of pot. ROB's is large and full.

SANDER
Damn! Lemme see that shit. This is some beautiful shit, Rob.

ADAM
Where'd you get it?

ROB
I got it from some girl at that party up north.

JANE shakes her head and makes a face at ROB behind SANDER's back. ADAM looks away.

SANDER
I thought you weren't going to that party.

JANE studiously breaks up buds on a battered notebook. ROB looks like a deer in headlights.

ROB
Uh... Yeah. I wasn't going to go, but uh... You know my boy Gerardo? He paged me with his emergency code at, like, midnight, and said that that girl from St. Francis was there, and that she asked about me. So, it was, like, too late to call. But I scored some killer buds.

JANE
What about the girl?

ROB
Uh... She was, like, already passed out in the bathtub.

JANE

What a shame.

ROB lights a cigarette. JANE lights a cigarette. SANDER lights a cigarette. Nothing happens for a while, except that the joint gets passed around.

ROB

Man, I am stoned.

SANDER

You remember when we were smoking and a squirrel fell out of the tree and we were all like, "what the fuck?"

JANE

That was some funny shit.

SANDER

Seriously.

ADAM

Do you think animals get embarrassed?

SANDER

Yeah, man. Haven't you ever watched a dog take a shit?

ROB

That's nasty, man. You're a freak.

SANDER

Not like that!

JANE

Who took my lighter?

ROB

We need to build, like, an eternal flame...

JANE searched her pockets very slowly, and eventually finds a lighter. She relights the joint and passes it. Nothing happens for a while.

ROB

Man... I haven't been this stoned since...

Silence. JANE shivers and pulls her coat close around her.

JANE

It's cold.

There is a very bright flash, like lightning. In the afterglow, there is the spectral form of an eight year old child standing in front of them. He stares straight ahead.

CHILD

Take me home.

As the light fades, so does the image of the child.

SCENE 2. CITY STREET ON A SUNNY FALL AFTERNOON.

A short, middle-aged woman, SUZANNE, power walks down the street in a jogging suit with a no-nonsense haircut and a shitty little dog. She approaches a serene elderly couple who are out for a stroll.

SUZANNE

Hello, Irene. Hello, Chandler.

CHANDLER tips his hat.

IRENE

Hello, Suzanne.

SUZANNE

(Power walking in place)

I hope this construction isn't too much for you. Patrick, at Streets and Sanitation, he told me they don't usually repair potholes this late in the season, but I told him they were unsightly and dangerous, and he said "You're the boss." Of course, I put in a good word for him with O'Leary.

IRENE

Oh, my. I don't know what we'd do without you.

SUZANNE

(Beaming)

That's what you elected me to do. You folks enjoy your day. I bet we won't get too many more like this.

SUZANNE power walks away. Halfway down the block, she greets a man laden with heavy grocery bags.

SUZANNE

(Power walking in place)

Hi, Jerry.

JERRY

Hello, Suzanne.

SUZANNE

Jerry, I've been meaning to talk to you.

JERRY

What's on your mind?

SUZANNE

Well, I don't want to stir up trouble, but it's about the children.

JERRY

What's the matter?

SUZANNE

I don't want to alarm you, but a few days ago, I saw your Clara walking with Damian Ensberg.

JERRY

Hmm.. Oh yes, I've met the boy. They had a school project together.

SUZANNE

Oh, well, I'm sure it's alright then. It's just that Betty, Betty Landau? She's one of the counselors over there. Betty said that Damian is a truant, and that he smokes cigarettes and marijuana, and that they suspect him of selling LSD.

JERRY

Hmm, well...

SUZANNE

Not that it's any of my business of course, who Clara is hanging around with. It's just that if it were my Sander...

JERRY

Well, better these eggs home.

SUZANNE

Bye, Jerry.

JERRY

Bye.

SUZANNE turns a corner and sees a small crowd of gawkers out front of a high rise apartment building. There is an area cordoned off with police tape. A squad car sits out front. There is blood on the sidewalk, and chalk outlines of two bodies. JOLLY PETER paces back and forth near the scene. He is a dirty, unshaven, man in a ragged brown trenchcoat. Two policemen, RANDY MORAN and MARTY NOONAN, are filling out paperwork. SUZANNE waves her arms over her

head as she runs up to the crowd.

SUZANNE

Randy! Randy!

RANDY

Good morning, Mrs. Hamilton.

SUZANNE

What's going on, Randy?

RANDY

Double homicide, ma'am.

SUZANNE

In my ward? Oh dear, oh dear.

JOLLY PETER

(Mumbling and staring at
the blood stain)

The sidewalk drinks the blood. The
blood of judgement.

RANDY

Young couple. Just finished at the
university. Pushed from the
seventh floor.

SUZANNE

Heavens! Who would do such a
thing? And why?

RANDY

That's what we're trying to figure
out, ma'am.

JOLLY PETER

The scythe takes the young, and
the scythe takes the old, bundled
as one sheath.

RANDY

It's a shame. They had their boxes
packed and everything. They were
moving, probably today or
tomorrow.

JOLLY PETER farmer-blows a huge wad of snot onto the
sidewalk between SUZANNE and RANDY, and then wanders off.
RANDY notices a black Cadillac turn into the nearby alley.

RANDY

Marty will answer any other
questions for you, Mrs. Hamilton.

I have to go look for clues in the alley.

RANDY hurries away.

SUZANNE

Pleased to meet you, Marty. I'm Suzanne Hamilton, Alderman, but please just call me Suzanne. Randy and I go way back. My son, Sander, is good friends with Randy's daughter, Jane. Wonderful girl. Wonderful girl. And Randy is just so polite. Sometimes I can't stand it. So tell me, do you have any leads?

MARTY

(Without looking up)

Yup.

In the alley, RANDY stands beside the Cadillac. The window rolls down slowly, and a hand reaches out to take to take the notebook from RANDY's hands.

VOICE FROM CAR

Double homicide?

RANDY

Yeah, that's what we're thinking.

VOICE FROM CAR

It looks more like a suicide pact to me.

RANDY

Suicide, Sweet Tony? That's gonna be tough.

VOICE FROM CAR

You're a talented man, Randy. Talented and rich.

RANDY

It's such a shame...

VOICE FROM CAR

A shame?

RANDY

Yeah, Sweet Tony, a shame. Did you see the rack on that girl? It's a shame.

The notebook is passed back to RANDY. The Cadillac drives away. RANDY tears off a sheet, balls it up, and throws it in the dumpster.