

REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE

by

Stewart Stern

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JIM'S FAMILY

JIM'S GRANDMA: A chic, domineering woman in her sixties who has made her son Frank dependent upon her for every breath he takes. She is the irritant in the household--the silent ruler--the silent enemy of Frank's marriage.

JIM'S FATHER: Frank is an unfeathered man who has never been able to have fun. He is anxious to be a real father to Jim, but has never learned how.

JIM'S MOTHER: Tense and immature, she has never found the husband she married. Upset by the presence of her mother-in-law, mated with an ineffectual and joyless man, she takes out her disappointment on him and on her son.

JIM: The angry victim and the result. At seventeen he is filled with confusion about his role in life. Because of his "nowhere" father, he does not know how to be a man. Because of his wounding mother, he anticipates destruction in all women. And yet he wants to find a girl who will be willing to receive his tenderness.

JUDY'S FAMILY

JUDY'S FATHER: a junior partner in a law firm. Boyish, attractive and debonair. Because he is frightened by the adolescence of his daughter, Judy, his only recourse is to criticize her.

JUDY'S MOTHER: Self-centered and frightened by the coming of middle-age. She feels that Judy's blossoming youth is threatening her wifely position as the desirable object of the husband's attentions.

JUDY: The victim and the result. At sixteen, she is in a panic of frustration regarding her father--needing his love and suffering when it is denied. This forces her to invite the attention of other men in order to

punish him.

BEAU: Judy's brother. Because he is very young he is a danger to nobody and thus will grow up happily--certain of the love of his father who feels comfortable in giving it.

PLATO: Son of a divided family--an absent father and a traveling mother--he feels himself the target of desertion. At fifteen he wants to find a substitute family for himself so that he need no longer feel cold, and especially a friend who will supply the fatherly protection and warmth he needs and cannot find.

BUZZ: A sado-masochistic boy of seventeen, who acts out aggressively his idea of what a man should be in order to hide his real sensitivities and needs. He was probably rejected by both parents and must constantly court danger and must constantly court danger in order to achieve any sense of prestige or personal worth.

THE KIDS

HELEN, CRUNCH, MOOSE, GOON, CHICK, COOKIE, MIL: All searching for recognition in the only way available to them; all suffering from unfulfilled hungers at home; all creating an outside world of chaos in order to bear the chaos they feel inside. They are soldiers in search of an enemy.

FADE IN.

A deep night sky. Matte shot. Camera searches slowly upward through the heavens and the silver tone of a bell is heard sounding the strokes of midnight.

On the final note of the bell, camera is full on the Milky Way and there it rests, just long enough for a burst of Easter singing to arise. The hymn is sung by the crude, unmatched voices of children. Camera pans down to include:

Spire of a church. Camera continues its downward pan as the singing continues and we pass a window beyond which is the source of the singing. Camera pans off window to show--

Long shot. City. Night. Suddenly revealed--crisp and sparkling with lights. Camera pans down and over:

A lonely street full of parked cars. The singing diminishes but a thread of it remains. A car has just parked. The headlights snap off. A MAN emerges whistling the same melody and pulls some gifts from the front seat. He slams

the door and starts down the street in the direction of a house with bright windows. He must pass an empty lot full of rusty grass and litter which lies in darkness between two street lights.

As the MAN walks by the lot, still whistling, a GROUP OF FIGURES rises silently from the grass, figures who have been lying in concealment until now. They step noiselessly onto the pavement and follow the MAN. At the sound of their boots the whistling stops.

The MAN glances behind him and sees the figures walking after him, filling the pavement. A street light shows them to be boys and girls and all quite young. The MAN moves on more swiftly and the sound of their pursuit increases. He begins to run toward the lighted house and the following steps run too. Suddenly he stops under the next street light and turns to face the figures. They are upon him and around him quickly. Nobody speaks for a moment, then one of the boys grins. His name is BUZZ. He is big and filled with an awareness of his own masculinity.

BUZZ

(friendly, cool)

That was pretty what you were whistling. Whistle some more.

The MAN whistles a nervous phrase, trying to make a joke of the situation which he doesn't understand.

BUZZ

(continuing; suddenly)

You got a cigarette?

MAN

Oh, I think so--

The MAN fumbles in his pocket, finds a pack and drops it in his nervousness. The FIGURES wait until he picks it up. He offers one to BUZZ.

MAN

(continuing)

Filter tips.

BUZZ

(smiling, encouraging)

You smoke it. Smoke it, Dad.

Smiling uncertainly, the MAN puts the cigarette in his mouth. BUZZ, still smiling, takes out a packet of wooden matches.

BUZZ

(continuing)

I'll light it for you, Dad.

BUZZ ignites a match and holds it near the Man's face for a second, searching it. Then he ignites the whole box under his nose. The MAN shrieks, and his packages fall. BUZZ slaps him sharply, his smile gone.

The camera pans away as the figures enclose him, and holds on a small mechanical monkey which has dropped from its wrappings. It begins to dance madly on the pavement, then runs down.

The feet of the figures scatter past the unmoving monkey. Then camera rises to show that the man has disappeared. There is a moment of awful stillness, then we see a boy coming down the street alone. He is quite drunk, and he slips once. This is JIM, a good-looking kid of seventeen with a crew-cut and wearing a good suit. The spilled packages on the pavement stop him. He bends down to see what they are and picks up the mechanical monkey from the wreckage. He smiles and winds it up. He sets it on the sidewalk and sits down. He watches it dance for a moment, happily. A siren is heard distantly, growing louder. JIM pays no attention to it as he winds the monkey again and releases it for its dance.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: "REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE" STARRING _____ as siren rises piercingly close, and JIM looks up, we:

DISSOLVE TO:

Close shot. Throbbing light of police car. Night. The siren screaming wildly, then dying. The sound of brakes. Camera moves to reveal the police car stopped at the entrance of a Precinct Station. Two officers dismount, bearing between them the struggling JIM. They bear him up the steps and in through the double doors.

Inside precinct station. Reception area. A large open space onto which several corridors converge. In the middle is a Sergeant's desk, really a quadrangular counter in the center of which the SERGEANT stands. There are a few glass-walked interviewing rooms which open off the area, and several benches lining the walls. The scene is one of confusion, activity and waiting. Phones ring. The arrested pass in custody of officers. Present among others at JIM's entrance are: JUDY, who is blonde and sixteen. She sits on a crowded bench wearing an expression of downcast bitterness. On a bench across the way from her are three remarkably dirty little Mexican children without shoes or socks. The oldest

is a BOY of four who is protecting his little SISTER who in turn mothers an infant crying on the bench beside her. Standing at a corner of the desk is a docile, undersized boy of fifteen named JOHN "PLATO" CRAWFORD. He is shivering. With him is a large NEGRO WOMAN, his maid. JIM comes through the doors and is led to the desk. One of the officers presents a brief report to the SERGEANT, who examines it.

SERGEANT

Mixed up in that beating on Twelfth Street?

OFFICER

No. Plain drunkenness.

SERGEANT

This says he was picked up there.

OFFICER

They had him on the carpet for an hour at Headquarters. He's clear. Plain drunkenness.

SERGEANT

Young squirt. All right--You want to lean him against something? Stand him over there.

The officer leads JIM to JUDY's bench and stands him against the wall beside it.

JIM is frisked, a look of prayer on his upturned face. The OFFICER finds the toy monkey in his pocket and would take it, but when JIM asks to keep it, the OFFICER hands it back and moves away. Another officer enters and leads the prisoner who is sitting next to JUDY into another room. JIM sits beside her. He smiles at her but receives only a chilling look. He winds the monkey up and sets it dancing on the floor, but she is not amused. Camera pans to show others reacting to the monkey with pleasure. We see PLATO look up and smile a little. Camera stops on the MEXICAN CHILDREN who are smiling too. A bald JUVENILE OFFICER named GENE, squats before them, smiling.

GENE

You going to tell me your name now?

The little boy shakes his head.

LITTLE BOY

(touching GENE's bald pate)

Where's your hair?

GENE

It's all gone.

LITTLE BOY

Did you get a haircut?

GENE

No--it just fell out!

LITTLE BOY

(sympathetically)

Aw--

GENE laughs as another Juvenile Officer enters and pauses to look at the children. His name is RAY.

RAY

What gang does he belong to?

GENE

Give him a couple of years.

RAY

Where's your mamma, honey?

LITTLE BOY

I don't know.

RAY and GENE exchange looks, then RAY moves across to JUDY-- camera following. He looks down at her, consults the file in his hand.

RAY

Judy--we're ready for you now.

JUDY

(a mumble)

He hates me.

RAY

What?

JUDY

He hates me.

She rises. RAY leads her to one of the glass-walled offices. Camera moves with them. JIM watches them go.

RAY

What makes you think he hates you,

Judy?

JUDY

I don't think. I know. He looks at me like I'm the ugliest thing in the world. He doesn't like my friends--he--

RAY leads her into the office.

Inside small office as JUDY comes in, RAY following. He indicates a chair for her while he sits down behind a desk.

JUDY

(continuing)

He doesn't like anything about me-- he calls me--he calls me--

She starts to cry. She doesn't hide it, but keeps wiping the tears with the palms of her hands.

RAY

He makes you feel pretty unhappy?

JUDY

(crying)

He calls me a dirty tramp--my own father!

RAY

Do you think your father means that?

JUDY

Yes! I don't know! I mean maybe he doesn't mean it but he acts like he does. We're altogether and we're going to celebrate Easter and catch a double bill. Big deal. So I put on my new dress and I came out and he--

RAY

That one?

JUDY

Yes--he started yelling for a handkerchief--screaming. He grabbed my face and he rubbed all my lipstick off--he rubbed till I thought I wouldn't have any lips left. And all the time yelling at me--that thing--the thing I told you he called me. Then I ran out

of the house.

RAY

Is that why you were wandering
around at one o'clock in the morning?

JUDY

I was just talking a walk. I tried
to call the kids but everybody was
out and I couldn't find them. I
hate my life. I just hate it.

RAY

You weren't looking for company,
were you?

JUDY

No.

RAY

Did you stop to talk to anyone,
Judy?

(she is silent)

Do you enjoy that?

JUDY

No. I don't even know why I do it.

RAY

Do you think you can get back at
your Dad that way? I mean
sometimes if we can't get as close
to somebody as we'd like we have to
try making them jealous--so they'll
have to pay attention. Did you
ever think of that?

JUDY

I'll never get close to anybody.

RAY

Some kids stomped a man on Twelfth
Street, Judy.

JUDY

You know where they picked me up!
Twelfth Street! I wasn't even near
there!

RAY

Would you like to go home if we can
arrange it?

(no answer; to WOMAN OFFICER)
Did you notify the parents?

WOMAN OFFICER

She wouldn't give me their number.

RAY

What's your number, Judy? We'll
see if your Dad will come and get you.

JUDY looks up hopefully.

RAY

Unless you really don't want to go
home.

(silence)

Would you rather stay here?

Camera moves close on JUDY. She looks up and speaks very
quietly.

JUDY

Lexington 05549.

The wail of a siren is heard. JUDY looks off through the
glass wall toward JIM. RAY is heard dialing.

Med. shot. JIM's bench. JIM sits with his head back, eyes
closed. As the siren mounts louder, JIM opens his mouth and
imitates it--a long, forlorn wail.

Med. shot, PLATO and NEGRO WOMAN. PLATO smiles faintly and
moves out toward JIM, NEGRO WOMAN following. Camera pans
with them. PLATO sits by JIM. She stands over them. JIM's
wailing continues.

Med. shot. JIM, PLATO, NEGRO WOMAN. An OFFICER moves into
shot.

OFFICER

Hey!

JIM continues for a moment.

OFFICER

(continuing)

Hey! That's enough static out of you.

JIM

Want me to imitate a stupid cop?

OFFICER

Cut it out now. I'm warning you.

JIM

Yes, ma'am.

The OFFICER moves out. The NEGRO WOMAN bends over PLATO who is shivering violently.

NEGRO WOMAN

You shivering, John? You cold?

PLATO shakes his head. JIM notices him.

JIM

Want my jacket?

PLATO looks up at JIM.

JIM

(continuing)

You want my jacket? It's warm.

PLATO wants it but shakes his head "no."

Full shot. JUDY's office. RAY and JUDY seated as before. JUDY is still gazing through the glass.

RAY

Your mother will be down in a few minutes, Judy--

JUDY

(clearing)

What?

RAY

Your mother will be down in a few minutes.

JUDY

(startled)

My mother?

RAY signals to a WOMAN OFFICER just outside and leads JUDY to the door.

Outside door as RAY turns JUDY over to the WOMAN OFFICER.

RAY

She's being called for.

JUDY

You said you'd call my father.

RAY

Goodbye, Judy. Take it easy.

JUDY doesn't answer. RAY goes back inside as camera leads the WOMAN OFFICER and JUDY past JIM's bench. Camera stops on JIM, PLATO and the NEGRO WOMAN. JIM stares at JUDY and whistles but gets no reaction. GENE enters and comes to the **NEGRO WOMAN**.

GENE

John Crawford?

NEGRO WOMAN

Yes, sir.

GENE

Come with me, John.

PLATO rises and goes with GENE, the NEGRO WOMAN following. JIM is alone. He closes his eyes, throws his head back and gives another siren wail as camera moves close on his face.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Jim!

JIM looks up suddenly, scared. Then he smiles mysteriously and staggers to his feet.

Low angle. Tight three. JIM's parents and grandma framed in the doorway, frozen. They are all dressed in evening clothes. The MOTHER is a very chic but rather hard-faced woman. The FATHER is an unfeathered man. The GRANDMA is the smallest, also very chic and very bright-eyed.

Med. shot. JIM as he faces them.

JIM

Happy Easter.

Tight shot. The family.

MOTHER

Where were you tonight? They called us at the club and I got the fright of my life!

Silence.

FATHER

Where were you tonight, Jimbo?

Close shot. JIM. He says nothing.

Close shot. FATHER laughing uncomfortably.

Med. shot. JIM.

JIM

You think I'm funny?

JIM turns suddenly and walks to the glass wall of the office behind which PLATO, the NEGRO WOMAN and GENE are visible. He looks through the glass partition which separates him from PLATO.

JIM

(continuing)

Why didn't you take my jacket?

Inside office. JIM is seen through the glass. He moves away. PLATO is still shivering, cracking his knuckles.

GENE

Do you know why you shot those puppies, John?

(silence)

Is that what they call you or do you have a nickname?

PLATO

(a murmur)

Plato.

NEGRO WOMAN

You talk to the man nice now, hear? He's going to help you.

PLATO

Nobody can help me.

GENE

Can you tell me why you killed the puppies, Plato?

PLATO

No, sir. I just went next door to look at them like I always do. They were nursing on their mother and I did it. I guess I'm just no good?

GENE

What do you think's going to happen, you do things like that?

PLATO

I don't know. End up in the electric chair?

GENE

Where did you get the gun?

PLATO

In my mother's drawer.

NEGRO WOMAN

She keep it to protect herself, sir. She scared without a man in the house.

GENE

Where's your mother tonight, Plato?

PLATO

She's away.

NEGRO WOMAN

Seems like she's always going somewhere. She got a sister in Chicago and she go for the holiday. She says her sister is all the family she has.

GENE

Where's your father?

PLATO is silent.

NEGRO WOMAN

They not together, sir. We don't see him in a long time now.

GENE

Do you hear from him, son?

PLATO looks up as JIM and his family move into the next office. JIM smiles at PLATO, who returns it feebly, then looks away--embarrassed.

GENE

You know if the boy ever talked to a psychiatrist?

PLATO

(smiling a bit)
Head-shrinker?

NEGRO WOMAN

(laughing)

Oh, Mrs. Crawford don't believe in them!

GENE

Well maybe she better start.

Other office. JIM, his parents, GRANDMA and RAY are gathered in the small room. JIM is humming THE RIDE OF THE VALKRYIES to himself as if he had absolutely no interest in what is happening around him. RAY suspects this is something more than mere disinterest, so lets the humming go on, in order to discover its real purpose. GRANDMA watches everything like a tennis match, reacting with soft little sounds of terror or astonishment or sympathy. No one pays any attention to her. For a moment no one talks. RAY watches JIM as he hums. Then the FATHER shakes his head and looks up.

FATHER

I don't see what's so bad about taking a little drink.

RAY

You don't?

FATHER

No. I definitely don't. I did the sa--

RAY

He's a minor, Mr. Stark, and it looks to me like he had more than a little drink.

FATHER

(chuckling)

Say, listen--

MOTHER

(to JIM: in intimate,
half-humorous disapproval)

Jim--don't hum.

JIM merely rolls his eyes at her, then away--but continues his humming.

FATHER

I guess I cut pretty loose in my day too.

MOTHER

Really, Frank? When was that?

FATHER

Listen--can't you wait till we get home?

RAY

Whoa! Whoa! I know you're a little upset but--

FATHER

Sorry.

RAY

What about you, Jim? Got anything to say for yourself?

JIM stops humming and shrugs.

RAY

Not interested, huh?

JIM shakes his head.

MOTHER

Can't you answer? What's the matter with you anyhow?

FATHER

He's just loaded, honey.

MOTHER

I was talking to Jim.

FATHER

(to RAY)

Let me just explain to you--we just moved here, y'understand? The kid has no friends yet and--

JIM

Tell him why we moved here.

FATHER

Hold it, Jim.

JIM

You can't protect me.

FATHER

(to JIM)
You mind if I try? You have to
slam the door in my face?
(to RAY)
I try to get to him--what happens?
(to JIM)
Don't I give you everything you
want? A bicycle--you get a bicycle.
A car--

JIM
You buy me many things. Thank you.

FATHER
Not just buy! You hear all this
talk about not lovely your kids
enough. We give you love and
affection, don't we?

Silence; JIM is fighting his emotion but his eyes grow wet.

FATHER
Then what is it? I can't even
touch you anymore but you pull away.
I want to understand you. Why'd
you get drunk? You must have had a
reason.

JIM stares straight ahead, trying not to listen.

FATHER
Was it because we went to that
party?
(silence)
You know what kind of drunken
brawls those parties turn into--
it's no place for kids.

MOTHER
A minute ago you said you didn't
care if he drinks.

GRANDMA
He said a little drink.

JIM
(exploding)
You're tearing me apart!

MOTHER
What?

JIM

Stop tearing me apart! You say one thing and he says another and then everybody changes back--

MOTHER

That's a fine way to behave!

GRANDMA

(smiling)

Well you know who he takes after!

RAY

Outside, Jim. Come outside.

RAY pushes him out the door firmly, and into office vacated by PLATO and GENE.

RAY

Excuse us a minute?

FATHER

(very overwrought)

Sure. Sure.

GENE's office. RAY and JIM alone.

JIM

Someone should put poison in her epsom salts.

RAY

Grandma?

No answer. JIM turns away from RAY.

JIM

Get lost.

RAY

Hang loose, boy. I'm warning you.

JIM

Wash up and go home.

RAY

Big tough character. You don't kid me, pal. How come you're not wearing your boots?

Suddenly JIM flings himself at RAY who deftly flips him past and drops him near the desk.

RAY

(continuing)

Too bad you didn't connect. You could have gone to Juvenile Hall. That's what you want, isn't it?

JIM

No.

RAY

Sure it is. You want to bug us till we have to lock you up. Why?

JIM

Leave me alone.

RAY

No.

JIM

I don't know why--!

RAY

Go on--don't give me that. Someone giving you hard looks?

JIM

I just get so--
(fighting tears)
Boy, sometimes the temperature goes way up.

RAY

(suddenly gentle)
Okay. Okay. Let it out.

JIM starts crying.

RAY

You feel like you want to blow your wheels right now?

JIM

All the time! I don't know what gets into me--but I keep looking for trouble and I always--I swear you better lock me up. I'm going to smash somebody--I know it.

RAY

Try the desk.

JIM smashes his fist against it, letting loose for a moment.
RAY watches, then sits near him.

RAY

That why you moved from the last town? 'Cause you were in trouble? You can talk about it if you want to--I know about it anyway. Routine check.

JIM

And they think they are protecting my by moving.

RAY

You were getting a good start in the wrong direction back there. Why did you do it?

JIM

Mess that kid up?

RAY just nods.

JIM

(continuing)
He called me chicken.

RAY

And your folks didn't understand?

JIM

They never do.

RAY

So then you moved?

JIM

They think I'll make friends if we move. Just move and everything'll be roses and sunshine.

RAY

But you don't think that's a solution.

JIM is silent; he picks at his nails.

RAY

(continuing)
Things pretty tough for you at home?

JIM

She eats him alive and he takes it.

JIM stares at his family through hole in door.

JIM

What a zoo!

RAY

What?

JIM

A zoo. He always wants to be my pal, you know? But how can I give him anything when he's--I mean I love him and I don't want to hurt him--but I don't know what to do anymore except maybe die.

RAY

Pretty mixed up?

JIM

If he could--

RAY

"If he could" what? You mean your father?

JIM

I mean if he had the guts to knock Mom cold once I bet she'd be happy and I bet she'd stop picking. They make mush out of him. Just mush. One thing I know is I never want to be like him.

RAY

(interrupts)

Chicken?

JIM

I bet you see right through me, don't you?

RAY shrugs.

JIM

How can anyone grow up in this circus?

RAY

You got me, Jim--but they do. Want some water?

JIM

(as RAY gets a cup of
water from cooler)

Boy--if I had one day when I didn't
have to be all confused and ashamed
of everything--or I felt I belonged
some place.

RAY

(giving him water)

Here. Look, will you do something
for me? If the pot starts boiling
again, will you come and see me
before you get yourself in a jam?
Even if you just want to talk--come
in and shoot the breeze. It's
easier sometimes than talking to
your folks.

JIM

Okay--

RAY

Any time--day or night. You calmed
down enough to go back now?

JIM

(smiling)

You serious?

RAY smiles and opens the door.

RAY's office as JIM comes towards his MOTHER and forces
himself to kiss her.

JIM

I'm sorry.

MOTHER

All right, darling.

She rises and takes his arm. They start out through the
door into the hall, followed by GRANDMA and FATHER.

GRANDMA

(to RAY)

This was all very unfortunate, but
he made a mistake and he's sorry--
so we're not going to have any more
trouble. He's always been a lovely
boy--

JIM

Lovely! Grandma--if you tell another lie you're going to turn to stone.

RAY

Luck, Jim. Don't forget.

FATHER

(offering RAY three cigars)
Have some cigars.

RAY

No thanks, I don't smoke.

FATHER

Go on--Give 'em to your friends.

RAY

No--thanks, very much, Mr. Stark.

MOTHER

Frank--he doesn't want any.

JIM grins at RAY who nods. They all leave. RAY looking after them, shakes his head and lights a cigarette. We see JIM and his family pass through the main door. Waiting to enter, in the custody of some uniformed police, are BUZZ and the kids we saw at the opening, sullen and truculent. As they march into the lobby and JIM grows smaller in the distance, the music comes up and out.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

Low angle. Alley. Morning. A rabbit comes running down the alley followed by a group of young kids, screaming with pleasure.

As camera pans with the group, the littlest, a boy of five, stops near us looking after the disappearing group. The shouts of the children wane.

JUDY rushes out from a backyard beyond him. She is carrying school books and a bag lunch. She wears a polo coat against the winter wind.

JUDY

(yelling)

Beau!

The boy, who is her brother, BEAU, looks up but doesn't move. JUDY stops at her gate. A car careens down the alley, past him.

Long shot. JUDY and BEAU seen through a window in JIM's house. JIM is in f.g. looking out through the curtains. He smiles.

JUDY

(yelling)

What are you trying to do, get yourself killed?

BEAU

(laughing)

Yes!

MOTHER (O.S.)

Your eggs are on the table, dear.

JIM turns from window and passes camera.

Full shot JIM's dining room. The MOTHER is just settling a plate of eggs at JIM's place. They FATHER is seated, drinking coffee and looking at the newspaper. GRANDMA comes in from kitchen. JIM is neatly dressed in tie, tweed jacket and slacks.

MOTHER

(continuing)

Sit down and eat--you'll be late.

JIM

(approaching table)

It'd stick in my throat, Mom. I'm nervous or something--

GRANDMA

It's a wonder we don't all have TB or some other terrible disease after living in all those smokey cities!

MOTHER

Well, drink your milk anyhow.

GRANDMA

(muttering)

There aren't so many factories here.

FATHER

Mother--

JIM

(still standing; he drinks)
You make any sandwiches?

FATHER

My first day of school, mother'd
make me eat and by golly I could
never even swallow till recess--

MOTHER

(bringing bag of
lunch from buffet)
There's nothing to be nervous about.
Here's peanut butter and meat loaf--

JIM makes a mouth-stuck-together-with-peanut-butter sound.

GRANDMA

What did I tell you? Peanut butter!

MOTHER

Well, there's a thermos of orange
juice and some apple-sauce cake in
the wax paper to wash it down.

GRANDMA

I baked that!

JIM

(kisses her cheek)
'Bye, Mom.

MOTHER

Goodbye, dear.

FATHER

(rising)
So long, young fella. Knock 'em
dead, like your old man used to!

JIM

Sure--
(gets to door and turns)
You know something? I have a
feeling we're going to stay here.

FATHER

And listen--watch out about the
pals you choose--Know what I mean?
Don't let them choose you--

But JIM is on his way out.

Full shot. JIM's backyard as JIM comes out of the kitchen door into the early sunshine.

JUDY (O.S.)

Come out of the alley, Beau! This is the last time I'm going to call you.

JIM blinks, pauses and sees JUDY. He takes off his tie and puts it in his pocket. Then he starts across the backyard, camera panning with him to:

Full shot. The Alley with JIM coming out his gate, JUDY and BEAU visible beyond. He stops again.

JUDY

Beau! All right--go to school alone!

She starts down the alley. BEAU skips after her and starts tightrope-walking the gutter gravel.

JIM

(calling)

Hey!

JUDY glances at him briefly, but continues. JIM follows a few yards, but on his side of the alley.

JIM

(continuing)

Hey, didn't I see you before some place?

JUDY ignores him, but something self-conscious happens to her walk. JIM runs across the alley.

Med. shot. JUDY stopping as JIM enters. BEAU tight-rope walking on down the hill.

JIM

Hi. I saw you before.

JUDY

Bully for you.

JIM

You don't have to be unfriendly.

JUDY

Now that's true!

JIM

(smiling)

See?

JUDY

"Life is crushing in on me."

JIM

(smiling)

"Life can be beautiful." Hey, I know where it was.

JUDY

Where what was.

JIM

Where I saw you.

(no answer)

Everything going okay now?

(no answer)

You live around here?

JUDY

(relieved)

Who lives?

JIM

See, I'm new.

JUDY

Won't mother be proud.

JIM

You're really flipped--aren't you.

JUDY looks up a little surprised.

JIM

(continuing)

Where's Dawson High School?

JUDY

You going there?

JIM

Yeah--why--

JUDY

Dig the square wardrobe!

JIM

(defensively)

Yeah. So where's the high school?

JUDY

(softer)

University and 10th--Want to carry my books?

An auto horn, stuck, in the distance.

JIM

I was just getting my car. I could take you.

The horn approaches, loud.

JUDY

The kids take me.

JIM

Oh.

Another angle. JIM and JUDY as the car, horn blowing, wheels into view above them and comes careening into the alley. JUDY sees it and moves a step away from JIM.

JUDY

I'll bet you're a real yo yo.

JIM

A what?

JUDY

(yelling over horn)

Goodbye! See you!

JIM

(yelling)

I'm not so bad.

JUDY is moving toward the car.

Med. shot. Car full of kids as it comes to a jolting stop near JUDY. The boys wear suede coats, leather jackets, black peggers, boots. Their clothing is not uniform--it is the air they assume which is uniform: swaggering, self-conscious, piratical. Someone is always combing his hair.

The driver is BUZZ, whom we recognize as the leader of the stomp gang we met on Easter. He wears a leather jacket. With him are CHICK, a slight bespectacled lad; CRUNCH,

BUZZ's first lieutenant; COOKIE, a hanger-on; GOON, a character; and the girls HELEN and MILLIE. The kids are screaming as BUZZ jams on the brakes. JUDY comes forward. JIM hangs back.

BUZZ

Stella-a-a-a!

JUDY comes to them quickly, smiling.

JUDY

Steady Marlon!

BUZZ

Wanna make the colored lights go around and around?

JUDY and BUZZ kiss ardently and without love. JIM goes for his car.

BUZZ

(looks after JIM then
at JUDY)

What's that?

JUDY

A new disease.

BUZZ

(a little suspicious)

Friend of yours?

JUDY

I'm glad they let you out.

BUZZ

Nobody chickened.

JUDY

I heard about it. You're lucky he lived.

BUZZ

They always live.

During this JIM has gotten his car and has driven up.

JIM

Where's University and 10th?

JUDY

(pointing right)

That way!

CHICK

(pointing left)

That way!

BUZZ

(pointing up)

That way!

Simultaneously, the kids laugh wildly. The radio blares. JUDY lays her head on BUZZ's shoulder and his arm goes around her as the car zooms away. JIM looks after them a moment, then follows.

DISSOLVE TO:

Close shot. Bicycle rack. Wheels spin in, one after another and drive straight into their slots. As the nearest bike moves in:

Med. shot. PLATO just getting off his motor scooter. He comes forward, passes camera which pans with him then stops--as the school is suddenly revealed. Music starts with a crash and keeps mounting through the following. PLATO sighs and moves away from us to join the parade of students filling the Main approach.

Parking lot as cars scream into their places noisily. JIM gets out of one and comes forward. A motorcycle roars by, just missing him. JIM stares off and starts to move as camera pans with him to:

Another angle. School. Another crash of music. JIM moves toward the parade.

Full shot. Mid-way down main approach. A number of kids pass, gossiping happily as they greet each other for the first time since vacation. Camera searches over them and stops upon our special group moving toward us--BUZZ, JUDY and the rest, all abreast. Others must park at their passage or be elbowed out of the way, staring resentfully, but not daring to challenge the group's priority. PLATO runs forward, past them.

Door from within bouncing from hand to hand as students enter. PLATO moves through the door and disappears in a milling of kids. JUDY enters with her group and moves on with them.

Med. shot. Monitor (inside corridor). The Monitor is an athletic letter-sweater boy with an arm brassard that bears the letters "HC". Kids pour past him. JIM enters.

JIM

Hi--can you tell we where I go?
I'm just starting here.

MONITOR

(pointing at brassard)
Mr. Bassett's office--203. He'll
tell you where your home room is--

JIM

Thanks a lot.

JIM moves out.

Angle shot. Corridor. Shooting past a row of steel lockers. The clash and slam of doors as kids throw in coats, pull out books and primp for the day ahead. PLATO comes to his locker, which is the nearest, and opens it.

Full shot. Corridor. JIM moves toward us from the distance. Crowded at the entrance to a classroom in f.g. are JUDY and her pals. They are sneaking a smoke, passing the cigarette from one cupped hand to another. As JIM comes near, JUDY sees him. So do the others. They fold their arms across their chests and whistle "We are the girls of the institute"--all but JUDY. JIM glances at her and continues on past camera. A bell starts ringing crazily over the music.

Close shot. PLATO. He is straightening his tie in the mirror. Above it, pasted to the locker door, is a still of Alan Ladd. In the mirror we can see JIM moving past. PLATO sees him too. He wheels around and stares.

PLATO

(to himself)

Hi.

The strident music of the students diminishes. The ringing of the bell stops. There remain only JIM's footsteps.

Long shot. JIM moving off down the corridor. PLATO is in f.g. looking after him. He slams his locker and starts after JIM, moving at the same speed and hovering near the wall. The footsteps of the two boys echo stonily. They are alone. JIM stops at a bulletin board near a bend in the corridor. PLATO stops too.

Bulletin board. JIM looking at the notices. PLATO drifts in several yards away and hangs near the wall watching JIM who doesn't see him. JIM reads:

Insert: Bulletin board, "Attention All Juniors and Seniors"--
Planetarium field trip--2 pm--Sharp!"

Another angle. JIM and PLATO as JIM turns from bulletin
board and starts away.

PLATO

(clearing his throat)

Hi.

JIM

Hi there.

PLATO

You remember me?

JIM

No. I don't think so--

PLATO

I'm sorry--I made a mistake.

JIM starts toward camera as PLATO after another look, turns
in the opposite direction and walks away from us, smashing
his fist against the wall as he goes. JIM stops, full in
camera. His face clouds, trying to remember. He turns full
around to look after PLATO, then turns back and continues on
his way. The footsteps fade.

DISSOLVE TO:

Full shot. Planetarium seen from the parking lot--a great
dome crowns it--the city lies below. Camera picks up JIM's
car maneuvering through the crowded lot. In b.g. a few
other late-comers are dashing up steps to Planetarium. JIM
drives into a small lot behind observator, parks, then runs
to observatory entrance.

Full shot. Lobby as JIM runs through, opens door of theater
and passes inside.

Long shot. Sky full of stars seen past JIM's head.
Darkness. This is not our sky. It is a replica of it
projected onto the dome of the Planetarium. The stars slide
their tentative ways in an ever-changing pattern. One of
them is much larger than the rest and increases in size as
we watch. Music of the spheres is heard--a high threatening
tremolo.

LECTURER (O.S.)

For many days before the end of our
earth people will look into the

night sky and notice a star,
increasingly bright and increasingly
near.

JIM looks around for a seat and passes down aisle. Seen
beyond him is the projector, moving slowly, its great dumb-
bell head sparkling with pin-points of light. JIM takes a
seat in front row. PLATO, in the row behind him, moves over
a seat to be nearer. They exchange looks.

Full shot. Normal students watching intently.

LECTURER (O.S.)

As this star approaches us, the
weather will change. The great
polar fields of the north and south
will rot and divide, and the seas
will turn warmer.

Low angle. LECTURER. A dry, elderly man in a stiff white
collar. He is seated at a desk, the light from the reading
lamp spilling upward onto his face.

LECTURER

The last of us search the heavens
and stand amazed. For the stars
will still be there, moving through
their ancient rhythms.

Angle shot. Students. Some watching, some taking notes.
An OLD LADY TEACHER in f.g. taps the heads of two kids in
the row before her. They stop their whispering. She smiles
at them.

LECTURER (O.S.)

The familiar constellations that
illuminate our night will seem as
they have always seemed, eternal,
unchanged and little moved by the
shortness of time between our
planet's birth and its demise.

Med. shot. PLATO staring upward.

LECTURER (O.S.)

Orion, the Hunter.

PLATO looks off.

Med. shot. JIM (from PLATO's angle). JIM is seated in the
row ahead of PLATO. His lips are parted as he looks up.

JIM

Boy!

PLATO

(leaning forward)

What?

JIM

(surprised)

Once you been up there, you know
you been some place!

LECTURER (O.S.)

Gemini, the Twins.

Two shot. JUDY and BUZZ. BUZZ has his arm around her. He is nuzzling her ear. She is blandly watching the dome.

LECTURER (O.S.)

(continuing)

Cancer, the Crab.

BUZZ pokes JUDY who looks at him. He curves his wrist toward her, opening and closing his first two fingers like the pincers of a crab.

BUZZ

I'm a crab!

She laughs. So do the others.

Med. shot. JIM (PLATO behind). Seen from JUDY's angle. JIM turns at the sound of the laughter, and smiles.

LECTURER (O.S.)

Taurus, the Bull.

JIM

(in good imitation)

Moo!

He waits for approval.

Angle shot. JUDY, BUZZ and group (seen from JIM's angle). He is in f.g. They are staring at him. Nobody laughs.

CRUNCH

(flat)

Yeah, moo.

BUZZ

Moo. That's real cute. Moo.

GOON

Hey, he's real rough--

CRUNCH

I bet he fights with cows.

BUZZ

Moo.

They turn from him. JIM withers and looks front. JUDY smiles a little and looks away so the others cannot notice her amusement.

LECTURER (O.S.)

Sagittarius and Aries--all as they have ever been.

PLATO leans in and touches JIM's shoulder, lightly at first, then harder. JIM turns to him.

PLATO

You shouldn't monkey with him.

JIM

What?

PLATO

He's a wheel. So's she. It's hard to make friends with them.

JIM

I don't want to make friends.

He turns back, unhappy at having revealed himself.

Another shot. JUDY, BUZZ, CRUNCH. JIM seen in b.g. The kids are whispering among themselves and pointing at JIM, who looks up and notices. He is getting uncomfortable.

LECTURER (O.S.)

And while the flash of our beginning has not yet traveled the light years into distance--

Full shot. The dome. The star rushes nearer, looming larger and larger. The music rises in tension and volume.

LECTURER (O.S.)

Has not yet been seen by planets deep within the other galaxies, we will disappear into the blackness

of the space from which we came.

Two shot. JIM and PLATO staring upward, cringing back into their seats as the light on their faces increases. Music is up loud.

Full shot. The dome seen past PLATO's head. The heavens grow brighter as the star plummets near. Music at crescendo.

LECTURER (O.S.)

Destroyed as we began in a burst of gas and fire.

The sky is blasted by a wild flash of light. Music reaches explosion. The stars appear again.

Moving shot. Faces of normal kids watching seriously--very impressed.

LECTURER (O.S.)

(continuing)

The heavens are still and cold once more. In all the complexity of our universe and the galaxies beyond, the Earth will not be missed.

Med. shot. JIM and PLATO looking up.

LECTURER (O.S.)

Through the infinite reaches of space, the problems of Man seem trivial and naive indeed. And Man, existing alone, seems to be an episode of little consequences.

PLATO ducks his head down on the back of JIM's chair. JIM looks at him.

LECTURER (O.S.)

That's all. Thank you very much.

The lights go on. The rustle and confusion of kids stretching after sitting too long. Scattered applause. JIM rises and ruffles PLATO's hair.

JIM

Hey, it's over. The world ended.

PLATO looks up at him.

PLATO

What does he know about Man alone?

Med. shot. LECTURER as he reaches over and turns a dial. "Morning Song" by Grieg comes on softly. Low angle. OLD LADY TEACHER rising. She stares around at the bustling students and claps her hands sharply, but the noise is barely heard above the tumult.

TEACHER

(shrill)
May I have your attention? May I
please have your attention?
Classes will meet at the busses
outside. May I have your attention?
(to herself)
The heck with it.

She picks up her coat and bag.

Planetarium parking lot. School busses and autos, some new and some heaps, are parked in f.g. Beyond is the dome of the Planetarium. Kids mill about, some already driving off in their cars. One bus, already full, pulls past camera.

Med. shot. Front of bus seen from within. Driver in f.g. Kids swarm up the steps and enter. PLATO is among them, but keeps looking back for JIM. PLATO boards the bus and pauses near the driver to peer through windshield. His face clouds.

Long shot. JUDY and group. Seen from PLATO's angle through windshield. They are standing idly in a loose line near BUZZ's car. They are looking back toward Planetarium.

Med. shot. Front of bus, seen from within. PLATO turns suddenly and pushes his way past the kids who are boarding.

PLATO

Excuse me. Excuse me.

Full shot. Parking lot. Bus in f.g. Beyond it JUDY and the group are visible. PLATO squeezes out.

MALE TEACHER

John, where you going?

PLATO

I forgot something. I'll get a hitch.

PLATO moves quickly past the teacher who climbs in. The door slams, the bus moves away. PLATO stops and looks after it. The last cars are clearing the lot. Only JIM's and BUZZ's remain. PLATO looks at the small, waiting group.

Med. shot. The group seen from the rear. PLATO in the distance facing them.

BUZZ

What you looking at?

Med. shot. PLATO wild-eyed with fear.

PLATO

Nothing.

He runs off, camera panning with him. His goal is the Planetarium Entrance, visible beyond. He races toward it frantically.

Med. shot. The group looking off after PLATO. BUZZ, nearest camera, pulls a switch-knife from his pocket and pops the long blade open. JUDY stares at it, then looks up at BUZZ apprehensively. CRUNCH sits down on the bumper and lights a cigarette.

Display lobby. Planetarium as PLATO rushes in, out of breath, stops and looks around. In distance he sees JIM leaning over the pendulum pit, smoking quietly. PLATO doesn't move. JIM hasn't even looked up.

PLATO

(screaming as if he
were yelling "fire!")
What's your name!

JIM

Jim. What's yours?

PLATO

(a little quieter)
Plato. It's a nickname.

JIM nods. PLATO goes over to him, camera following, until they are close together, both leaning over the rail.

PLATO

Listen, I told you not to fool with them. Now they're waiting for you.

JIM

I know. That's why I came back.

PLATO

You scared?

JIM

I just don't want trouble.

PLATO

He has a knife.

JIM

I saw it. Gee, look at that thing swing, will you? Do you think it never stops?

PLATO

No. It's perpetual motion.

JIM

Oh, I bet some little guy comes in here at night and pushes it. Go-go-go!

PLATO walks cautiously to the door and starts outside, camera following.

Long shot. Kids (corner of Observatory) with PLATO leaning out of door, seeing them, pulling back quickly.

Inside display lobby as PLATO pulls back through the door. JIM seems to have disappeared. PLATO stares around frightened.

PLATO

Jim?

JIM is looking at another exhibit whose mechanical voice is heard.

JIM

I'm here.

PLATO

(coming with him)
They're still there!

JIM nods. They watch the exhibit a while longer.

PLATO

Jim--Do you think when the end of the world comes it'll be at night?

JIM

No. In the morning.

PLATO looks up questioning. JIM smiles and shrugs.

JIM

I just have a feeling.

They start moving, camera leading.

PLATO

If you don't want trouble, I know a
place we can go--

JIM looks up at him.

PLATO

It's a big mansion and we could
sneak around there and they
wouldn't even know. You could be
safe--

They turn a corner quickly.

Doors to balcony (from inside) as JIM and PLATO come to them
from behind camera, fling the doors open and step outside.

Balcony as JIM and PLATO come onto it, lean on the parapet.
PLATO points off.

PLATO

There it is.

High long shot. Mansion. (Matte). It is falling into
elegant ruin, casting long afternoon shadows on the great
lawns and promenades.

Closeup PLATO looking urgently at JIM.

PLATO

Should we go?

Two shot. JIM and PLATO. PLATO's back is to us. JIM looks
past him and sees something.

JIM

(quietly)
The shadows are getting long.

PLATO turns to look too.

Long high shot. Parking lot. JIM's car is where he left it.
Into the driveway, like logs driven before a sea, the
shadows of the waiting kids appear and advance until the
kids themselves come into view. They pause there a moment,
then look up.

HELEN

(smiling)
Le soleil tombe dans la mer.

Laughter. The kids scatter along the wall at the foot of the balcony stairs. BUZZ goes to JIM's car, knife in hand, and stands silently.

Low angle. Two shot. JIM and PLATO staring down from balcony parapet. At last JIM moves out past camera.

Low angle. Long shot. JIM and PLATO. JUDY in f.g. The two boys walk down the stairs. Camera pans with them as they reach parking lot level and start walking past other members of the group.

Traveling shot. JIM and PLATO coming forward.

Dolly shot. BUZZ from JIM's angle. As camera moves in toward BUZZ standing alone at the car, he suddenly bends down and slashes JIM's tire. Camera stops. There is the hiss of air escaping. BUZZ straightens and smiles past camera.

Close shot. JIM inhaling sharply in shock and suppressed anger.

Full shot over JIM's car. Group in b.g. motionless. JIM and PLATO approach the car. JIM stops and looks down. BUZZ stands smiling and puts away the knife.

Close shot. Rear wheel. The tire slashed, the wheel rests on the ground.

Full shot. Car. Shooting between group and BUZZ toward backs of JIM and PLATO, who are looking down at car which rests on its rims. JIM turns and moves toward group. He stops, looks from one to the other and smiles nervously. Then he looks straight at BUZZ.

JIM
(wearily)
You know something?

BUZZ
What?

JIM
(reproachfully)
You watch too much television.

Med. shot. The group and JIM. JUDY has come to BUZZ, stands on the wall above him.

BUZZ

Hey, he's real abstract and different.

JIM

I'm cute, too.

Suddenly GOON starts clucking softly like a chicken. One by one the others pick it up. BUZZ, the last, crows. Silence.

Med. shot. The group and JIM.

JIM

Meaning me?

BUZZ

What?

JIM

Chicken?

The group gives a quick, short laugh.

Med. shot. JIM as he takes off his glasses, smiles. Shakes his head disapprovingly.

JIM

You shouldn't call me that.

Close shot. PLATO watching anxiously.

Med. shot. BUZZ with JUDY watching above him. JIM enters shot until he is close to BUZZ's face. He looks up at JUDY. Camera closes in until we are tight on the three. The heads are nearly touching.

JIM

(softly to JUDY)

You always at ringside? You always travel in this rank company?

BUZZ clutches JIM's hair and jerks his head up. He cracks JIM smartly across the face with the palm of his hand.

Close shot. JUDY looking at JIM. Her eyes clear in recognition.

Another angle. The group and JIM as JIM tears free and comes at BUZZ, slugging. But BUZZ, with a laugh, leaps onto the parapet and turns, the knife in his hand again. JIM stops short. The group and PLATO move in around him.

JIM

I thought only punks fought with knives.

BUZZ

Who's fighting? This is the test, man. It's a crazy game.

HELEN

Les jeux de courage!

Close-up. CRUNCH. He is smiling. His arms are around the shoulders of the kids who flank him.

CRUNCH

(wetting his lips)
Machismo. Machismo.

Med. shot. Group.

JIM

Machismo?

BUZZ

Somebody find him a knife.

Close shot. PLATO seen between heads of MIL and COOKIE. COOKIE holds up a switch knife and tosses it over into the circle.

PLATO

Jim!

Full shot. Circle as the knife falls at JIM's feet. JIM stoops and picks up his weapon, then faces BUZZ. Then he springs his blade.

BUZZ

You know the action? No cutting. Just sticking--jab real cool.

BUZZ hops from the parapet. They begin stalking each other. BUZZ slides his knife from hand to hand trying to hypnotize JIM. Suddenly he pokes out and pricks JIM's shirt. The group sighs "Ole!" JIM makes no effort at self-defense. Silence. BUZZ pricks JIM again, "Ole!"

BUZZ

(as he maneuvers)
What you waiting on, Toreador? I thought you wanted some action!

JIM cuts out half-heartedly.

BUZZ

Big brave bull. Hah! Toro! Hah!
Hah!

GOON

Moo!

BUZZ

Come on--Fascinate us. Impress us.
What's happening? Let's go!

JIM

I don't want trouble.

BUZZ

(furious suddenly)
You crud chicken! You're wasting
our time!

BUZZ viciously slaps JIM across the face. JIM lashes out
and misses. BUZZ hops back.

BUZZ

Yeah--that's pretty close. How
about a little closer, Toreador?
Cut off a button and you get to
join the club!

Outside entrance of parking lot. A uniformed GUIDE of
middle-age stares past camera. Cries of "Ole," are heard in
the distance.

GUIDE

(turning)
Mr. Minton! Mr. Minton! Trouble!

The LECTURER appears running. He stops short at what he
sees, and blinks in the sunlight.

GUIDE

Look. There's your audience.

LECTURER

Oh, I don't think so. From the
school?

Inside circle. JIM is covered with sweat and about to drop.
He is getting the worst of it, still refusing to defend
himself.

Close shot. PLATO. He is looking on in despair.

GROUP

Ole! Ole!

Suddenly, with a cry, PLATO pushes through.

Inside circle as PLATO comes through. His eyes are wild. He holds a tire chain in his hand.

MIL

Buzzy! Look out! He's got a chain!

BUZZ

(smiling as he sees PLATO)

Hey! Chicken Little!

BUZZ trips PLATO quickly and kicks him while he's down. CRUNCH grabs the chain.

JIM

All right--you want it, you got it!

Suddenly JIM transforms. He bores forward expertly--pricks BUZZ again and again. Cries of Ole greet him. BUZZ is surprised.

Full shot. Group. We hear only the breathing of the combatants. Beyond we see the GUIDE approaching swiftly. The LECTURER trails at a safe distance.

Closeup. CRUNCH. He looks up. His smile fades.

CRUNCH

Honk. Let's split.

Group as they look off and see the GUIDE and LECTURER approach. BUZZ and JIM are both breathing hard. PLATO is getting to his feet.

BUZZ

Split for what? Couple old poopheads?

He folds up his knife and puts it away. So does JIM.

JIM

You satisfied or you want more?

BUZZ

How 'bout you? Say the word and you're cold, Jack--you're dead.

JUDY

Buzzie--we better get out of here.

BUZZ

What's eating you, Judy? You want him alive?

JIM

Where can we meet?

BUZZ

Know the Millertown bluff?

COOKIE

The bluff, Buzz! That's dangerous up there.

BUZZ

Draw him a picture, Chicken Little. Eight o'clock. Cookie, you call Moose and get a couple cars. We're going to have us some real kicks. Little chickie-run. You been on chickie-runs before?

JIM

Sure--that's all I do.

The GUIDE bursts in among them. The LECTURER remains on the fringe.

GUIDE

All right--all of you--start moving!

JUDY

You mean l'il ol' us? What's the matter with the nice man?

GUIDE

Don't clown with me.

BUZZ

Why'nt you go suck on something sweet?

GUIDE

You think you're tough? I got a son twice your size and I can still handle him.

LECTURER

Don't lose control, Mr. Jamison. I think if we just explain--

GUIDE

Explain to these? They think they

own the world!

CRUNCH

The world is round!

MIL

The world is flat!

COOKIE

All the world's a stage!

There is wild laughter from the kids as they close around the GUIDE and start edging him away, up the steps toward the Planetarium balcony.

KIDS

The world goes round the sun!
Goodbye proud world!
I got the world on a string!
The world's my oyster!
Hey! A fish-eater! Brain food.

They are gone. The LECTURER looks after them then comes to JIM. JIM looks down at his shirt. There are spots of blood. PLATO opens it, spits on a handkerchief and starts to wipe the blood away.

LECTURER

(smiling wanly, to JIM)
Sometimes the world is too much
with us, isn't it, son? What was
the disturbance?

JIM

Nothing.

LECTURER

You're bleeding. Are you all right?

JIM

I scratched my mosquito bites. I'm
fine.

LECTURER hesitates.

JIM

I'm fine--thanks!

LECTURER goes. JIM impatiently closes his shirt.

PLATO

Are you really going to meet them?

JIM

Who knows. Plato?

PLATO

What?

JIM

What's a chickie-run?

DISSOLVE TO:

Downstairs hall. JIM's house. A single light is burning. JIM steals in from the kitchen, peers cautiously into the living room, then starts up the stairs. A crash is heard above. JIM stops, undecided whether to go or stay, then moves quickly up the stairs, no longer trying to be quiet.

Upper hall. JIM's house as JIM rises into view at the top of stairs. He sees a figure on hands and knees mopping something off the rug. Leaklight from the staircase dims details. An apron is tied around the figure's waist and its bow sticks bravely in the air.

JIM

Mom?

The figure straightens and turns around, smiling. It is the FATHER. He is neatly dressed in his business suit but wears a Mary Petty apron.

FATHER

Hiya, Jimbo.

JIM leans against the wall, shaking his head and trying not to laugh. The FATHER laughs unhappily, trying to make it all seem a joke.

FATHER

You thought I was Mom?

JIM

Yeah!

FATHER

It's just this get-up. The girl's out and I was bringing Mom's supper.

JIM

(giggling)

And you dropped it?

FATHER

(laughing too)
Yeah! Shh!

JIM

That's funny!

FATHER

I better clean this up before she
sees it.

He starts dabbing among the spilled dishes with a wet cloth.
JIM watches him.

JIM

Let her see. What could happen.

The FATHER continues dabbing.

JIM

Dad--

The FATHER looks up at him.

JIM

Dad--don't. Don't.

JIM touches his FATHER's elbow, bringing him to his feet.
They look at each other a moment then JIM goes to his
bedroom. The FATHER goes back to mopping up the mess.

Inside JIM's room as he comes in, shuts the door and throws
himself miserably on his bed. He writhes as if the pain he
feels were physical. Outside, radios are heard in the
night--tuned to different stations. He feels under his
jacket and holds up his hand to the moonlight. There is
blood on it. He reaches up and takes his alarm clock and is
setting it as camera glides to his window and holds over the
rooftops.

Full shot. JUDY's backyard. Moonlight. JUDY stands near
camera looking up at the moon. The radios seem louder out
here. One breaks through.

ANNOUNCER

Time now for the seven o'clock news.
Friends, the next time you go
shopping.

JUDY'S FATHER (O.S.)

Judy.

She wheels around.

Long shot. The FATHER standing erect on back porch, silhouetted against a window.

JUDY'S FATHER

What are you wishing for, Judy?

Med. shot. JUDY. She hasn't moved.

JUDY

(softly)

I wasn't wishing. I was looking at the moon.

Full shot. Backyard featuring the FATHER. We see him now as a tall and handsome man. There is something boyish and appealing about him.

JUDY'S FATHER

(singing lightly)

"Man in the Moon, how came you there--
Up in the sky where you are shining--
Floating so high in the frosty air--?
Oh, say--Man in the Moon!"--

JUDY comes forward, stands below him on the step. Her look is adoring.

JUDY

(astonished)

How did you know that?

JUDY'S FATHER

We used to sing it in school.

(smiles)

Don't look at me with such horror. They had schools in those days.

JUDY

But the same song. I think it's fantastic!

JUDY'S FATHER

We were romantic then too--

JUDY

Are you and Mom home tonight?

JUDY'S FATHER

No. Why?

JUDY

Nothing, only it'd be nice to spend an evening together for a change.

JUDY'S FATHER

With us old creeps? Come on, we have to eat.

JUDY

(rising)

Daddy--

He looks at her.

JUDY

Good evening.

JUDY'S FATHER

Hi.

He turns away and goes into the house. She hesitates and then follows. Something in the moods has changed. He has neglected to hold the door for her.

Dining room. JUDY's house as the FATHER comes to the head of the table and takes his seat. Three places are set. JUDY follows. She stands above his chair, looking down at him as he drinks his tomato juice.

JUDY

(quietly, afraid)

Didn't you forget something?

JUDY'S FATHER

What?

JUDY doesn't answer, but leans down and kisses him quickly on the lips.

JUDY'S FATHER

(continuing; shocked)

What's the matter with you?

JUDY freezes, frightened. He collects himself a little.

JUDY'S FATHER

(continuing)

You're too old for that kind of stuff, kiddo. I thought you

stopped doing that long ago.

JUDY

(very hurt)

I didn't want to stop.

The mother enters briskly from another part of the house--an attractive, brittle woman of thirty-five.

JUDY'S MOTHER

Didn't want to stop what?

JUDY'S FATHER

Nothing.

JUDY

I was talking to Dad.

JUDY'S FATHER

I didn't kiss her so it's a big thing.

JUDY'S MOTHER

(calling to kitchen)

Bertha! You can serve the souffle!

(to FATHER)

Fish souffle.

(to JUDY)

You don't have to stand there,
darling. Drink your tomato juice.

JUDY slides into her chair reluctantly and unfolds her napkin.

JUDY

I guess I just don't understand
anything.

JUDY'S FATHER

I'm tired, Judy. I'd like to
change the subject.

JUDY

Why?

JUDY'S FATHER

I'd like to, that's all. Girls
your age don't do that. You need
an explanation?

JUDY

(very low)

Girls don't love their father?
Since when? Since I got to be

sixteen?

She half-rises to kiss him again.

JUDY'S FATHER

Stop it now! Sit down!

Suddenly the FATHER slaps her. Even as he does it he is as stunned as JUDY. The mother stops eating. She has never seen such a display and is shocked. He tries to control himself by buttering a piece of bread. There is a terrible silence into which BEAU enters in his pajamas. He runs to his FATHER's chair, then halts--looking from face to face. The FATHER puts an arm around him, hugs him almost savagely.

JUDY'S FATHER

(thickly)

Hi, rascal.

BEAU

(hushed)

Hi.

JUDY rises, weeping.

JUDY

May I please be excused?

She starts out. The FATHER rises and follows after her.

JUDY'S FATHER

(softly)

Hey, hey, Glamorpuss. I'm sorry.

She leaves the room, interrupting the joke he was going to make. He turns back to the table and sits down. The MOTHER rises and comes to him.

JUDY'S FATHER

(continuing)

I don't know what to do. All of a sudden she's a problem.

The mother stands behind his chair. She tips his head back against her body and kneads his neck and shoulders.

JUDY'S MOTHER

She'll outgrow it, dear. It's just the age.

BEAU

(in a sudden burst)

The atomic age!

The door slams.

JUDY'S MOTHER

(kissing her
husband's hair)

It's the age when nothing fits.

Inside JIM's room. We see him lying on his bed as before. His eyes are open. The alarm clock goes off. JIM starts as if shot, then stops the wild ringing. The time is seven-forty-five. He makes no move to leave the bed. There is a light tap on the door, then it opens and the FATHER is there, seen in light from the hall and still wearing the apron.

FATHER

You awake?

JIM

Yes.

FATHER

Listen--I took a steak out of the freezer. I thought we could have a real old-fashioned stag party--just the two of us, what do you say?

JIM

I'm not hungry.

The FATHER turns away.

JIM

Hey--I want to ask you something.

FATHER

(happily)

Shoot, Jimbo.

JIM

Suppose you knew that you had to do something very dangerous--where you have to prove something you need to know--a question of honor. Would you do it?

FATHER

(laughing)

Is there some kind of trick answer?

JIM

What would you do, Dad?

FATHER

(evading)

I wouldn't do anything hasty.
Let's get a little light on the
subject.

The FATHER turns on the light and looks at JIM who is now sitting on the edge of the bed. He removes his jacket and the bloody shirt is revealed. The FATHER stares.

JIM

Blood.

FATHER

How'd that happen! What kind of
trouble you in?

JIM

The kind we've been talking about.
Can you answer me now?

FATHER

Listen--nobody should make a snap
decision--This isn't something you
just--we ought to consider all the
pros and cons--

JIM

We don't have time.

FATHER

We'll make time. Where's some
paper. We'll make a list and if
we're still stuck then we ought to
get some advice--

He goes out, to the study next door. JIM rises.

JIM

What can you do when you have to be
a man?

FATHER

Well, now--

JIM

Just give me a direct answer!

(pause)

You going to stop me from going, Dad?

FATHER

You know I never stop you from anything. Believe me--you're at a wonderful age. In ten years you'll look back on this and wish you were a kid again.

JIM

Ten years? Now, Dad--I need an answer now!

FATHER

I just want to show you how foolish you are. When you're older you'll laugh at yourself for thinking this is so important--

During this, JIM has kicked off his shoes and put on his boots and jacket and goes out.

Living room featuring stairs. JIM comes running down the stairs and out the kitchen door.

FATHER (O.S.)

Jim? Will you listen? You can't go out till we--Jim!

The FATHER comes down the stairs, goes to the front door and calls:

FATHER

Jim? Jim!

He goes to kitchen door, calls again, gets no answer, comes back into the living room, sees he is still wearing the apron. He rips it off and throws it down--then starts for the stairs.

DISSOLVE TO:

The Plateau. Moonlight. Wind shrieks over the exposed plateau, which is several hundred yards long. It cuts into the darkness like the prow of a ship and ends in empty air. A dozen cars are scattered about, defining a sort of runway in the center. There are twenty kids present, but very little talk. Most of them belong to BUZZ's group but there are a few whom we have not met before. They stand in small clots, murmuring and smoking. The atmosphere is strung tightly, like the moments before a dawn attack. In b.g. near the cliff's edge, are two cars of similar make and model. They face away from camera toward the edge of the plateau. There are no headlights anywhere...blackout

conditions.

MOOSE, a boy in a leather jacket and cheap yachting cap stands guard between the cars, his back to us. His hands are on his hips. His legs are spread. Some girls drift in.

Another angle. Plateau featuring PLATO as he wanders through the crowd searching for JIM. He passes BUZZ's car where BUZZ, JUDY and the rest are eating hamburgers. They have all changed into fighting wardrobe.

BUZZ

(calling out)
Hey, Chicken-Little.

PLATO stops.

BUZZ

Where's Toreador? He beg off?

PLATO

He's not scared of you.

BUZZ

(laughing)
Yeah?
(to GOON)
Goon! You seen that adolescent type anywheres?

COOKIE

He won't show.

GOON

Well, you going to wait all night?
I'm getting nervous, man! We got to do something!

CRUNCH

(looking off)
Hey, Buzz!

BUZZ

What?

COOKIE

Over there.

BUZZ snaps on the spotlight again and swings it off.

Full shot. JIM's car as JIM gets out and PLATO runs to him.

JIM

How'd you get here?

PLATO

I hitched.

JIM

Boy, I bet you'd go to a hanging.

PLATO

My personality's showing again.
Should I leave?

JIM

No. It's okay.

BUZZ enters.

BUZZ

Come on. Let's see what we're
driving.

JIM gets out; PLATO starts to follow.

BUZZ

Just him.

JIM

Stay there.

The two boys move away. PLATO looks after them, hurt, then
goes to side of JUDY and stands.

Dolly shot. JIM and BUZZ as they come forward.

BUZZ

What you say your name was?

JIM

Jim Stark.

BUZZ

Buzz Gundersen.

JIM

Hi.

BUZZ

Glad to meet you.

They shake hands briefly as they walk. They come to MOOSE
and stop.

MOOSE

Got some goodies for you, Buzzie-boy.

BUZZ

Flashlight?

MOOSE produces one and hands it to BUZZ who goes to one of the guarded cars, motioning JIM to come, too.

Closer shot. BUZZ, JIM and MOOSE seen as hood is raised, revealing their faces beneath it. BUZZ explores the motor with the flashlight.

BUZZ

Looks good.

MOOSE

Clean as a whistle. They both got plenty breeze.

BUZZ

Look good to you?

JIM

Sure. It's fine.

BUZZ

Okay.

He closes the hood. Group moves across to other car.

JUDY and PLATO. The other kids are behind them. JUDY looks to see that their attention isn't on her, then speaks quietly to PLATO.

JUDY

Is he your friend?

PLATO

Yes. My best friend.

JUDY

What's he like?

PLATO

Oh, I don't know. You have to get to know him. He doesn't say much but when he does you know he means it. He's sincere.

JUDY

Well, that's the main thing--don't you think so?

PLATO

Maybe next summer he's going to take me hunting with him--and fishing. I want him to teach me how and I bet he won't get mad if I goof. His name's Jim. It's really James but he likes Jim more.

(laughing)

People he really likes--he lets call him "Jamie."

JUDY

Want to finish my hamburger? I only took a bite.

PLATO

Okay.

Full shot. Guarded cars. JIM is close in f.g. at wheel of his car. BUZZ is beyond, at wheel of his. Both boys are gunning their engines, listening critically. JIM lets his idle.

JUDY, GOON and group. They watch in silent anticipation. PLATO starts away from them.

Traveling shot. PLATO hurrying away from the group. He stops, looking off.

JIM and BUZZ. PLATO in distance.

BUZZ

Better try the doors. Jump out.

JIM opens his door.

BUZZ

No--quick, man! You got to break quick.

JIM shuts his door and tries again. So does BUZZ. Then both boys walk forward to the edge. Neither says a word. BUZZ puts his hand on JIM's shoulder.

High angle. The edge of the bluff (process). JIM and BUZZ are directly below us. Under them the plateau falls steeply away in a sheer drop of a hundred feet to the ocean below.

Two shot. JIM and BUZZ. JIM is staring below. He is

beginning to perspire. He lights a cigarette. Without taking his hand from JIM's shoulder, BUZZ borrows the cigarette from his lips, takes a drag and hands it back. JIM takes another puff then tosses it into the abyss.

BUZZ

(quietly)

This is the edge, boy. This is the end.

JIM

Yeah.

BUZZ

I like you, you know?

JIM

Buzz? What are we doing this for?

BUZZ

(still quiet)

We got to do something. Don't we?

Long shot. JIM and BUZZ with PLATO in f.g. JIM and BUZZ appear to him as two close friends. Suddenly they break and go, without speaking further, to their cars. They back up to the opposite end of the plateau, headlights dark. PLATO follows them with his gaze.

Group shot. GOON and others looking up as the cars glide by.

Med. shot. JUDY waiting as BUZZ and JIM move into starting position next to her. JUDY goes to BUZZ. JIM is in b.g.--looking on.

JUDY

Feel okay?

BUZZ

Give me some dirt.

She bends out of sight for a moment as BUZZ goes on talking, then hands him the dirt. He rubs it into his palms.

BUZZ

Hey, Toreador! She signals. We head for the edge. The first guy who jumps--chicken!

JUDY and BUZZ kiss, without much interest.

BUZZ

What's happening?

JUDY

Good luck, Buzz.

She starts out, without kissing him again.

JIM

(calling softly)

Judy.

Med. shot. JIM's car as JUDY comes to him.

JIM

Me too.

She looks at him a moment then bends and hands him some dirt. Their heads touch for an instant.

JIM

Thank you.

She breaks the look and hurries away.

Long shot. The cars. They are lined up in two rows-- headlights facing each other. JUDY comes into shot. When she gets near camera, she stops and turns back to face them.

BUZZ

Hit your lights!

Suddenly the headlights of all the cars come on full.

Reverse shot. JUDY. She is in the center of the glare. Behind her we see the other kids filing out of their cars, hurrying toward the edge of the bluff. The sound of the two motors revving then dying and revving again.

Inside JIM's car. JIM grips the wheel firmly, relaxes his hands to rub his palms together and crack his knuckles. He grips the wheel again. Steps on the accelerator, winding his engine into a roar. He lets up, looks tensely at--

BUZZ in his car. His chin juts forward. He lets go of the wheel, starts to comb his hair.

Slow pan shot. Spectators staring off at the cars. A boy has his arm around the girl in front of him, his cheek against hers. Both are looking off. Some of the kids smoke. All are involved in the blasting of engines.

PLATO among the spectators near edge of the bluff. He is

chewing his lip. Camera pans down to show that the fingers of both his hands are tightly crossed.

Close shot. JUDY staring tensely into the glare. Suddenly she raises her hands high above her head.

Close shot. JIM sweating it out. He leans forward, squinting, ready.

Close shot. BUZZ. He puts his comb between his teeth and clamps it hard. He settles himself for the run.

Long shot. Plateau. The cars are in close, seen from the rear. JUDY is a small distant figure, arms stretched high. The exhaust blasts. Now she drops her arms. The cars leap ahead.

Med. shot. JUDY. She whirls to see the cars snap by, then begins running up the center of the plateau between the lines of spectators.

Full shot. Spectators. Shooting over their shoulders as the cars approach and scream past.

Pit shot. Cars. As they approach, gaining speed, and thunder over the camera.

Inside JIM's car. (Process). He is tense.

Inside BUZZ's car. (Process). His hands hard on the wheel. The comb is still between his teeth. He begins edging toward the door on his left.

Moving close shot. JUDY biting hard on her finger, as she runs forward.

Close shot. PLATO. Both hands cover his mouth. The fingers are still crossed.

Inside JIM's car. (Process). As he edges to his left. He is driving with one hand. He opens the door, gets set for his jump.

Inside BUZZ's car. (Process). He reaches for the door handle and misses. As he raises his arm to reach again, the strap of his windbreaker sleeve slips over the handle. He looks down in panic, then back at the drop ahead. He tugs but cannot get the sleeve loose.

Closeup. PLATO staring. He shuts his eyes tight and keeps them shut.

Shooting at backs of the two cars as they race through the row of lights toward the edge.

Inside JIM's car. (Process). His face is soaked. He looks once toward BUZZ--then ahead. His eyes widen in fear. He shoves left and flings himself forward, and out.

Outside JIM's car as he sprawls forward--into camera.

Inside BUZZ's car. (Process). BUZZ leans way forward now. He seems to rise in his seat. His mouth opens and the comb falls out.

Full shot spectators staring in disbelief. Suddenly a youth ducks his face into the neck of his girlfriend so he cannot see. At the same instant--

CROWD

(in a single breath)

Oh!

Rear view. Edge of the bluff as the two cars go over. There is NO human sound.

Close shot. JIM as he stops rolling.

BUZZ's car in flight. (Special effects). The car soars through the night, the vehicle of a terrible journey.

Med. shot. BUZZ. (Process). Surprise has gone. He rides lightly on the thrill of his last moment--then suddenly, his face twists in a spasm of protest and loss.

The kids staring at his flight.

JIM unaware of the disaster--glad he made it.

Low angle. Edge of the bluff. With headlights blazing, both cars dive down.

Med. shot. JUDY standing frozen as the spectators shove past and around her.

Wide angle. Edge of the bluff as spectators swarm to it, stand looking down.

JIM on hands and knees, trying to rise. Legs rush by him, knock him onto his face.

Long shot. (Special effects). Both cars plunge into the ocean below.

JIM at edge of bluff. He is pushing through spectators.

JIM

(a harsh whisper)
Where's Buzz! Where's Buzz!

PLATO working his way through the crowd.

PLATO

(calling)
Jim! Jim!

CRUNCH. CRUNCH looks up as he hears JIM's repeated cry. JIM enters behind him, continuing blindly on his way.

CRUNCH

(tight fury)
Down there! Down there is Buzz!

JIM looks over the edge.

Rear view. Spectators. A siren wail approaches. The kids wheel and scatter, panicking past the camera.

Close shot. MOOSE. Looks at JIM. Runs.

Close shot. GOON. Turns. Runs.

Med. shot. JIM seen between legs of hurrying kids. The sirens and the pounding of their feet on the hard turf. JIM is sitting on the edge of the bluff. PLATO rushes in, stops short as he sees him.

PLATO

Come on, Jim! We got to get out of here!

JIM doesn't move. PLATO grabs his arm and yanks.

PLATO

Get up! Get up! Come on!

JIM stands. PLATO pushes him.

PLATO

Go on! Move!

They start away, PLATO still pushing from behind.

Med. shot. JUDY. She is standing alone in the wind on the emptying plateau. JIM and PLATO move past in the distance. JIM sees her and stops.

Close shot. JUDY. She is shuddering violently but there are no tears. She seems not to see or hear or be aware of anything around her.

Full shot. JIM and PLATO watching JUDY. JIM moves toward her, camera panning with him and leaving PLATO behind. JIM stands before JUDY until she notices him. He shakes his head for all the sorrow he feels, but no words come. Tentatively he offers her his hand. After a moment, she takes it. She knows only that help is being offered and that she will accept it with trust. JIM leads her away toward the car.

DISSOLVE TO:

High long shot. JIM's street. Night. There is no movement anywhere. In the house bordering the street a few lights still burn. JIM's car approaches out of distance and slows when it reaches the alley.

Med. shot. JIM's car as it slows and stops. JIM, JUDY and PLATO in the front seat. JUDY has the door open before the car even stops. She is shaking, agitated and withdrawn.

JUDY

(hardly audible)

This is fine--

She gets out and starts away, leaving door open.

JIM

(calling quietly)

Judy. Will you be okay?

PLATO looks at him. JUDY hesitates. JIM raises a hand to her in a shy farewell. She smiles vaguely, then hurries away from them.

Near JIM's backyard (alley). JIM and PLATO.

JIM

I got to go in. You better get home too.

(touches PLATO)

Hey--what?

PLATO

Why don't you come home with me? I mean nobody's home at my house--and I'm not tired, are you? I don't have many--people I can talk to.

JIM

Who has?

PLATO

If you want to come we could talk
and then in the morning we could
have breakfast like my dad used
to--

(pauses--then
excitedly as though
an idea had suddenly
struck him)

Gee...if you could only have been
my father...we could...

JIM

(interrupting)

Hey...you flipped--or something?
You better take off...

PLATO

(suddenly, pleasantly)

O.K. G'night. I got to pick up my
scooter. See you tomorrow.

JIM

Yeah.

PLATO turns, walks up the alley to the street. JIM goes
into his kitchen door.

Hallway. JUDY's house. Three doors open onto it: one is
closed--this is JUDY's room:--another, leading into BEAU's
room is open, but the room beyond is dark: the third, also
open, reveals the bedroom of JUDY's parents. As JUDY comes
into the hallway, the parents, who are reading in their
beds, look up. JUDY hesitates, then starts toward her own
room.

BEAU (O.S.)

(quietly)

Hello, little cute sister.

JUDY stops. BEAU appears at his door in white pajamas, a
small ghost. JUDY looks at him.

BEAU

Hello, darling, baby-pie, glamor-
puss, sweetie--

JUDY touches BEAU's head and tries to smile.

JUDY'S FATHER

(calling from his bed)

Beau! You belong in bed!

BEAU flees. JUDY turns without another glance at her parents, and opens the door of her room.

Inside bedroom of JUDY's parents. As JUDY slams her bedroom door o.s., the FATHER reacts. Perhaps, he wishes she had given him a chance to say goodnight. The MOTHER, who use reading glasses, looks up at the slam. Then she looks over at her husband, shrugs when she catches his gaze, and goes back to her magazine.

Inside JIM's living room. The television is on, but only a hum comes from it, and the screen is a flickering gray. The FATHER sits lumpily in a chair by the fireplace, still dressed but with his collar open. The sound of JIM's step in the dining room makes him open his eyes. Fear of facing his son makes him shut them again. The boy comes in, a bottle of milk in his hand. Seeing his FATHER there, he stops short--his impulse is to flee. Instead he comes in and looks down at the sleeping man whose eyelids, fluttering in the FATHER's masquerade of sleep, make him seem to be having a dream. JIM is torn between his desire to leave and his need to speak. He turns off the television quietly, then lies down on the couch across the way. He mumbles the things he would say to his FATHER and the answers he feels he would get. The old man opens his eyes once, sees the boy there, head banging upside down from the couch. Then he shuts them again.

Upside down long shot. Room (JIM's viewpoint). Suddenly, inverted in his vision, the MOTHER appears at the head of the stairs, in bathrobe and nightgown. She pauses a moment, then runs down crying:

MOTHER

He's home! You're home! You're
all right!

The camera rights itself suddenly.

JIM as he completes his turn, pulling his head up and sitting.

FATHER as he pretends to awaken with a start.

Full shot, room as the MOTHER hurries to JIM, holds him, inspects him, kisses him.

MOTHER

What happened, darling. We were so worried. I was going to take a sleeping pill, but I wouldn't till I knew you were home.

JIM

I have to talk to someone, Mom. I have to talk to you both. And Dad this time you got to give me an answer.

FATHER

Go ahead.

JIM

I'm in terrible trouble.--You know that big high bluff near Miller-town Junction?

FATHER

Sure--there was a bad accident there. They showed the pictures on **T.V.**

JIM

I was in it.

MOTHER

How!

JIM

It doesn't matter how. I was driving a stolen car--

MOTHER

Do you enjoy doing this to me or what--

JIM

Mom--I'm not--

MOTHER

And you wanted him to make a list!

FATHER

Will you let him tell it!

JIM

She never wants to hear. She doesn't care!

MOTHER

I guess when I nearly died giving birth to you--that shows how much I don't care!

FATHER

Just relax, please relax!

JIM

I told you Dad, it was a question of honor. They called me chicken--you know, chicken! I had to go or I would never have been able to face any of those kids again. So I got in one of these cars and a boy called Buzz got in the other. We had to drive fast and jump before the cars went over the edge of the bluff. I got out okay but Buzz didn't. He was killed.

MOTHER

Good Lord!

JIM

I can't keep it to myself anymore--

FATHER

Well, just get it off your chest, son.

JIM

That's not what I mean. I've never done anything right. I've been going around with my head in a sling for years...I don't want to drag you into this but I can't help it. I don't think I can prove anything by going around pretending I'm tough any more, so maybe you look like one thing but you still feel like another.

FATHER

You're absolutely right!

JIM

Are you listening to me? You're involved in this! I want to go to the police and tell them I was mixed up in this thing tonight?

FATHER

You what?

MOTHER

No!

FATHER

Did anyone see you there? I mean did they get your license number or anything?

JIM

I don't think so--

FATHER

Well--

MOTHER

What about the other boys--Do you think they'll go to the police?

JIM

What's that got to do with it?

MOTHER

Why should you be the only one.

FATHER

Look Jim. Far be it from me to tell you what to do, but there's--

MOTHER

Are you going to preach now? Are we going to have a sermon?

FATHER

I'm just explaining what you mean! You can't be an idealist all your life! Nobody thanks you for sticking your neck out!

MOTHER

That's right!

JIM

Except yourself!

FATHER

Will you wait a minute?

JIM

You don't want me to go.

MOTHER

No! I don't want you to go to the police! There were other people and why should you be the only one involved!

JIM

But I am involved! We're all involved, Mom! A boy was killed! I don't see how we can get out of that by pretending it didn't happen!

FATHER

You know you did wrong. That's the main thing, isn't it?

JIM

No! It's nothing! Just nothing! You always told me to tell the truth. You think you can just turn that off?

MOTHER

He's not saying that! He's saying don't volunteer!

JIM

Just tell a little white lie?

FATHER

You'll learn as you get a little older, Jim.

JIM

I don't want to learn that!

MOTHER

Well, it doesn't matter anyhow-- because we're moving.

JIM

No! You're not tearing me loose any more.

MOTHER

Do I have to spell it out?

JIM

You're not going to use me as an excuse again, Mom. Every time you can't face yourself you want to move and you say it's because of me or the neighborhood or some other

phony excuse. Now I want to do one thing right and I'm not letting you run away.

(silence)

Dad?

FATHER

Son--this is all happening so fast--

JIM

You better give me something, Dad.

You better give me something

(stops as he sees the emptiness in them)

Mom?

MOTHER

Jimmy, you're very young--and a foolish decision now could wreck your whole life.

JIM

Dad--answer her--aren't you going to stand up for me?

The FATHER is mute, helpless... Suddenly JIM screams.

JIM

Dad?

He leaps at his FATHER, dragging him to his feet, hands at the man's throat.

MOTHER

Stop it! You'll kill him! Jim!
Do you want to kill your father?

Suddenly JIM loosens his hands and rises. He looks swiftly at each of them--moves a few steps toward the door, looks back at them again--then rushes out of the house. The parents stand frozen.

DISSOLVE TO:

Outside Precinct Station. JIM's car comes to a stop at the curb. JIM gets out and approaches the flight of steps leading up the entrance. A bare bulb on either side is the only illumination. As he mounts the first step, the double doors above him swing open revealing several people. JIM stops short. So do they.

Low angle. CRUNCH, MOOSE and their parents. JIM's back in

f.g. The boys stare down at him.

High angle. JIM (from the boys' point of view) as he stares up at them. MOOSE's father takes his arm and starts him down the stairs, the others moving too.

MOOSE

Let go of me--

MOOSE'S FATHER

You want a good crack in the mouth?

JIM starts forward up the steps. CRUNCH grabs him.

CRUNCH

This place appeal to you or something?

They move down the steps as JIM breaks away and continues up. He goes through the doors.

Inside doors as JIM comes through and stops. He looks back through the glass. We see the group reach the curb where their cars are parked. There is a brief discussion which we cannot hear, then CRUNCH and MOOSE move off to MOOSE's car. JIM turns back. He looks worried as he passes camera.

Med. shot. CRUNCH and MOOSE. They stop at MOOSE's car and look back at the entrance. The parents are seen beyond them, getting into their cars. CRUNCH is near tears with anger.

CRUNCH

What's he going to pull--

MOOSE

Nothing, Crunch. They picked him up like the rest of--

CRUNCH

You see any cops?

MOOSE'S FATHER

(yelling)

You monsters start home. We're going to--

MOOSE

Yeah. Yeah.

MOOSE'S FATHER

We're following you so better get there.

CRUNCH

You see any cops?

MOOSE

No--

CRUNCH

He's going to cheese, I tell you.
Nobody arrested him!

MOOSE

I think I should go home.

CRUNCH

No. We're going to bring him down.

MOOSE

Crunch--my father's--You going to
kill him?

CRUNCH

(crying)

You clean out of your head? Come on!

CRUNCH gets into the car. MOOSE follows. They gun the motor and throw the car into a sharp U-turn. MOOSE'S FATHER jumps into his car. He steps on the starter but nothing happens--just the empty whirring, over and over. Finally it starts, but the boys have gone.

Inside Precinct Station. Juvenile division. A desk sergeant is writing in the record book. Facing him across the desk and handcuffed to an officer is a young hoodlum, very different in appearance from the kids we have met--a typical duck-tail 'cat'.

SERGEANT

(spelling)

W-O-J-T-what?

HOODLUM

O-W-I-C-Z. Wojtowicz. What's the
matter, man? That's the craziest
name in town! It swings!

JIM

Excuse me--but--You know where I
can find--I mean I don't remember
his last name--

SERGEANT

Look--can't you see I'm writing?

HOODLUM

(combing his duck-tail)
Man, this cat never stops. He just
keeps going like Big Jay at a session!

OFFICER

Shut up.

HOODLUM

He's writing a book about me--

SERGEANT

What I could write about you they
wouldn't print.

JIM

I think his first name's Ray--I
have to see him. It's very important.

SERGEANT

What's the charge?

OFFICER

Assault with a deadly weapon.

JIM

Listen--

SERGEANT

(annoyed)
He's not here. He's not at
Juvenile Hall. I don't know where
he is. He's out on a call and
he'll be out all night. How old
are you?

JIM

My parents know I'm out. They know
I'm here.

SERGEANT

Come back tomorrow.

JIM

I'll wait for him.

SERGEANT

Why don't you come back tomorrow,
son?

(to hoodlum)
Ever been booked before?

JIM turns away, notices a phone on the wall--puts in a coin, asks for a number.

Bedroom of JUDY's parents. Through an open door we hear a radio playing-- a late disc-jockey show for teenagers in which numbers are dedicated by request. JUDY'S MOTHER and FATHER are in bed, FATHER has phone in his hand.

JUDY'S FATHER

Who wants her? Who? Jim who?
Never heard of you.

He hangs up phone, looks at his wife. She rolls over in bed. The FATHER turns off the bed lamp, then sits up, worried in the dark.

JUDY's bedroom. It is her radio we have heard. She turns off light, opens the door a crack, and looks out toward her parent's room.

DISSOLVE TO:

Traveling shot. PLATO. He is coming up the walk to his house. When PLATO has come a few feet, somebody whistles. PLATO and camera stop. Short, quiet whistles come from the boxwood and shrubbery on both sides of the walk. PLATO turns and starts to run, camera following. He gets to his door, tries the key, but in his panic it will not go into the lock. Suddenly a hand reaches in and jerks him around. CRUNCH stands above him. GOON closes in from the other side. All very tense and hotted up!

PLATO

What do you want!

CRUNCH

You know what we want. We want
your friend.

GOON

We got eyes for him.

PLATO

Listen, you guys ought to go home.
The cops are cruising every--

GOON

Where does he live?

PLATO reaches up swiftly and rings the bell. GOON grabs him. CRUNCH cracks him.

CRUNCH

You better tell us and I'm not kidding.

PLATO

My old man's got a gun.

GOON

His old man's got a gun. What do you think of that!

(drives a hard blow
at PLATO's belly)

Your friend talked--

(belts him again)

Now you talk! Talk!

The door opens and the NEGRO WOMAN is there. CRUNCH sends PLATO spinning into the house past her. He falls.

NEGRO WOMAN

(yelling)

What you doing! What you doing to him! You clear out of here 'fore I call the police!

She swings at CRUNCH who faces her, challenging.

NEGRO WOMAN

Clear out. Go on! Go on now!

MOOSE

Let's go, Crunch.

They turn and move past camera. PLATO gets up off the floor. We hear the sound of a heap starting. The NEGRO WOMAN closes the door.

Inside PLATO's foyer as NEGRO WOMAN bolts the door.

NEGRO WOMAN

Why you like to mix with bad boys like that? Why you get in trouble all the--

PLATO

I have to go out. I have to warn him.

He starts up the stairs. She follows him heavily.

NEGRO WOMAN

You not going anywhere! You

staying home while your mama's away.

Bedroom of PLATO's mother, a lacy affair with imported dolls on the pillows. PLATO rushes in, opens the drawer of the night-table and pulls out a gun. He checks to see that it is loaded. The NEGRO WOMAN appears in the door and stares at him, turns on the light which illuminates the bed-lamp.

NEGRO WOMAN

John! What you doing with that!
You leave that be! Put it down
before you hurt yourself. Hear me?

But PLATO moves past her and out of the room. She turns after him.

NEGRO WOMAN

(continuing)

John! You stay home! John! John!

The slam of a door is heard below.

DISSOLVE TO:

JIM's garage. Night. JUDY waiting inside. JIM's car pulls in, a radio going softly. He turns the motor off and is about to turn off the radio when we hear the announcer:

ANNOUNCER

Coming up now another request--this time from the boys down at Anna's Pizza Paradise--A new arrangement of a great oldie in rhythm and blues. Jim, this is dedicated to you--from Buzz.

JIM stares at the radio, then turns it off.

Another angle.

JUDY

They'll be looking for you.

JIM

They saw where I jumped! I didn't chicken! What do I have to do--kill myself?

JUDY

It doesn't matter to them.

JIM

You were looking for me, weren't you?

JUDY

(a small voice)

No--I was just--maybe--

JIM

I tried to call you before.

JUDY

I thought so.

JIM

Want some milk?

JUDY comes forward.

JIM

That's all I can do when I'm nervous. Drink milk. Here--have a slug.

She shakes her head. He takes a sip.

JIM

You still pretty upset?

JUDY

I'm numb.

She is shuddering a little.

JIM

You cold?

JUDY

Even if I'm near a fire, I'm cold. I guess just about everybody's cold.

JIM

I swear, sometimes, you just want to hold onto somebody! Judy, what am I going to do? I can't go home again.

JUDY

Neither can I.

JIM

No? Why not?

(no answer)

You know something? Sometimes I figure I'll never live to see my

next birthday. Isn't that dumb?

JUDY

No.

JIM

Every day I look in the mirror and say, "What? You still here?" Man!

They laugh a little.

JIM

Hey! You smiled!

JUDY shakes her head--beginning to warm to him.

JIM

Like even today. I woke up this morning, you know? And the sun was shining and everything was nice. Then the first thing that happens is I see you and I thought this is going to be one terrific day so you better live it up, boy, 'cause tomorrow maybe you'll be nothing.

JUDY

I'm sorry I treated you mean today. You shouldn't believe what I say when I'm with the kids. Nobody acts sincere.

JIM

Why'd you get mixed up with them? You don't have to prove anything.

JUDY

If you knew me you wouldn't say that.

JIM

I don't think you trust anybody, do you?

JUDY

Why?

JIM

I'm getting that way, too.

JUDY

(looks at him)

Have you ever gone with anyone who--

JIM

Sure. Lots of times.

JUDY

So have I. But I've never been in love. Isn't that awful?

JIM

(smiling)

Awful? No. It's just lonely. It's the loneliest time.

She looks up. He kisses her forehead.

JUDY

Why did you do that?

JIM

I felt like it.

JUDY

Your lips are soft when you kiss.

JUDY rises.

JIM

Where you going?

JUDY

I don't know, but we can't stay here.

JIM

Where can we go? I can't go back into that zoo.

JUDY

I'm never going back.

JIM

Listen! I know a place! PLATO showed me before. An old deserted mansion near the planetarium

(rises)

Would you go with me?

JUDY hesitates.

JIM

You can trust me, Judy.

JUDY

I feel as if I'm walking under water.

They start out.

DISSOLVE TO:

Inside bathroom. JIM's house. The water is running in the sink and JIM's father is fixing a stomach settler. Gradually he grows aware of a heavy pounding which insinuates itself above the splash of water. The FATHER pauses, then turns off the tap. The pounding continues. JIM'S MOTHER appears at the bathroom door. She is seen in the mirror tying her robe.

MOTHER

Frank? I'm frightened.

FATHER

What's that pounding?

MOTHER

I don't know. First I thought it was Jim but--

FATHER

He's home. I heard the car.

MOTHER

Are you going down there?

FATHER

Look--just relax, will you?

The pounding ceases.

FATHER

See? It stopped.

MOTHER

I still think you should go down.

He goes out of the bathroom, into the hall.

Foyer. JIM's house as the FATHER comes down the stairs, turning on the light as he comes. He reaches the door and pauses. The MOTHER stops midway down the stairs.

FATHER

(through the door)

Who's there?

(silence)

Anyone there?

MOTHER

(low; at balustrade)
Open it.

The FATHER opens the door and looks up sharply.

Close shot. Door. FATHER's head in f.g. as he stares at it. Nailed to the door by its outstretched wings, its head hanging in an attitude of crucifixion, is the freshly killed carcass of a chicken. Low whistles are heard from outside. The FATHER, frightened, looks out into the night.

Full shot. Front lawn and street. Shooting over the FATHER's head. The whistling continues.

FATHER

(hoarsely)
Who's out there?

VOICE

Where's your son?

FATHER

What?

ANOTHER VOICE

Where's your baby boy gone to,
Daddy? We want him.

Suddenly the FATHER slams the door and rushes past us into the house.

Full shot. Foyer as the FATHER rushes to the bottom of the stairs.

FATHER

Look in his room!

The MOTHER disappears.

FATHER

Jim! Jim!

The FATHER dashes into the living room, then into the hall again and down through the kitchen door.

Back yard as the FATHER comes out. He closes the door quietly and calls in a low voice:

FATHER

Son?

He stares around the yard, then hurries to the garage.
JIM's car is missing. He looks up suddenly.

Reverse shot. JUDY'S FATHER seen across the alley wall. He
is standing in his own back yard.

JUDY'S FATHER

Is anything wrong? I'm your neighbor.

Med. shot. JIM'S FATHER. He smiles feebly.

FATHER

Oh, no, thanks. I just wanted to--
to be sure my garage was closed.

JIM'S FATHER closes his garage door and walks back toward
his house.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Is he there?

FATHER

No, honey. No, he's not here.

He starts for the house again after a quick look in the
direction of JUDY'S FATHER.

Full shot. JUDY's back yard. JUDY'S FATHER watches MR.
STARK disappear, then...

JUDY'S FATHER

(softly)

Judy?

The alley by JIM's house. PLATO drives up on scooter. He
checks the garage, sees JIM's car is gone, is about to take
off in confusion, hears door slam in JIM's back yard, shuts
off engine, fixes tie, combs hair, goes in the fence gate to
JIM's back yard.

Full shot. JIM's back yard. JIM'S FATHER is coming toward
him. JIM'S FATHER and PLATO simultaneously say:

FATHER

What are you doing?

PLATO

Where's Jim?

FATHER

I don't know. Do you--do you know
where he is?

PLATO

No. No, I don't.

Closeup. PLATO remembers about the mansion--then almost to himself:

PLATO

I know where--

Back to full shot. FATHER and PLATO.

PLATO

Hope I didn't bother you. Goodnight.

He runs to scooter.

FATHER

Hey, come back here. Who are you?

DISSOLVE TO:

Split screen montage. It begins with a telephone ringing alone in the corner of the screen. As camera moves back we see that the phone is in an office at Juvenile Hall. RAY is standing by, trying to make sense out of the incoming reports.

The other part of the screen lights up and becomes:

Bedroom of PLATO'S MOTHER where the NEGRO WOMAN is speaking hysterically into the phone.

Bedroom of JUDY's parents. The FATHER is on the phone. BEAU has awakened and is crying. His MOTHER tries to divert him.

JIM's bedroom. JIM'S FATHER sits disconsolately on the bed, the phone in his hand. He is talking earnestly.

During this the sound of the telephone ringing has increased to become the sound of many and this has been submerged in a deep rising riot of sirens whose wail mounts higher and higher until:

DISSOLVE TO:

Full shot. Planetarium. Moonlight. A lone siren wails in distance. Aside from this, all is very still. Camera pans past the dome and settles on an isolated mansion set high on a hill nearby. Stone balustrades drop down to sunken gardens where the grass has gone to seed around a waterless fountain.

Closer shot. Mansion. Night. A Mediterranean villa with a large domed solarium which is connected to the main building by a low enclosed arcade. A crash and the falling of splintered glass is heard.

Long shot. Promenade. Shooting through pillars of the main entrance portico, down the long promenade outside arcade. Two figures, seen in the distance, are disappearing through a window. Camera tracks down promenade until it reaches a broken window through which JIM is just disappearing. When he gets inside, he reaches back and takes his leather jacket which has been spread on the sill to protect them from splinters, shakes it out and puts it on. Running footsteps are heard approaching. JIM looks out nervously. PLATO bursts in, out of breath.

PLATO

Jim!

JIM

Who's that!

PLATO

It's me!

JIM

How'd you find me? What's happening?

PLATO

They're looking for you!--

JIM

Yeah?

PLATO

Everybody! Crunch and Goon and everybody! I think they're going to kill you.

JIM

We know.

PLATO

They think you told the police on them. They--who's in there?

JIM

Judy.

PLATO

Help me in!

JIM gives PLATO a hand over the windowsill.

Inside arcade. JIM and JUDY are seen in an entering shaft of moonlight. PLATO hits the floor and disappears into darkness.

JIM

Hey where'd you go?

PLATO

I'm here. Shut up.

JIM

Come out come out wherever you are!

PLATO

Shut up. Are you nuts?

JIM

No. I'm scared.

A match flares and lights a candle on an antique Spanish candelabra. PLATO is revealed bending over it. He lights the other candles through the following:

PLATO

We're safe here. I hope.
(holds up candelabra)
What do you think?

JIM

(gazing around)
Wow! Well now-there-then!

His wonderment is justified. The floor of the arcade is marble and there are marble benches and neo-Roman busts lining the walls.

PLATO

Isn't it crazy?

JIM

Wowee ow wow! Let's take it for the summer.

JUDY

Oh, Jim!

JIM

No--come on. Should we rent or are we in a buying mood, dear?

JUDY

(laughing)
You decide, darling. Remember our budget.

PLATO

Don't give it a thought. Only three million dollars a month!

JUDY

Oh, we can manage that! I'll scrimp and save and work my fingers to the bone...

JIM

Why don't we just rent it for the season?

JUDY

You see, we've just--oh, you tell him, darling. I'm so embarrassed I could die!

JIM

Well--we're newlyweds.

JUDY

There's just one thing. What about--

PLATO

Children? Well, we really don't encourage them. They're so noisy and troublesome, don't you agree?

JUDY

Yes. And so terribly annoying when they cry. I just don't know what to do when they cry, do you dear?

JIM

Of course. Drown them like puppies.

JUDY

See, we're very modern.

PLATO

Shall I show you the nursery? It's far away from the rest of the house. If you have children--Oh I hate the word!--or if you decide to adopt one--they can carry on and you'll

never even notice. In fact, if you lock them in you never have to see them again, much less talk to them.

JUDY

Talk to them! Heavens!

JIM

Nobody talks to children! They just tell them one thing and mean another.

PLATO

It's wonderful that you understand so well--and so young too! You know the most wonderful feature about the nursery?

JIM

What?

PLATO

There's only one key.

JIM

We'll take it!

PLATO

Come on!

PLATO leads them away from us down the arcade, the candelabra casting wild shadows on the walls. They are laughing as they disappear through the glass doors at the end and their laughter echoes stonily.

DISSOLVE TO:

Med. shot. A street and an alley. Night seen through the windshield of a police car. Its radio is on low. Two officers are in the front seat. One of them drinks coffee from a container. Suddenly MOOSE's heap moves past on the street ahead. In it are MOOSE, GOON and CRUNCH.

Full shot. The street as MOOSE's heap continues up the empty street. The police car slides out of the alley where it has been concealed, and follows at a distance. Its headlights are off.

Close shot. CRUNCH, GOON and MOOSE (Process). They are in the front seat of MOOSE's heap.

MOOSE

What time is it?

CRUNCH

Hang loose. We got all night.

MOOSE

That maid saw us. She could identify us too.

CRUNCH

You still want to go home, Moose?

MOOSE

No.

CRUNCH

Then shut your mouth before your guts run out!

GOON

What guts?

DISSOLVE TO:

Inside glass solarium. A swimming pool lies at the center. There is no water in it. Framing the pool is a flagstone walk with marble benches spotted here and there. The great glass room had once been planted thickly with tropical foliage.

But now what palms and lianas remain are withered and dead with lack of care. At the edge of the pool, near the deep end, a blanket has been spread and a candelabra burns upon it. In its mysterious light our three kids are revealed: JIM, bouncing precariously at the end of the diving board; JUDY on the blanket nearby; PLATO on the pool's bottom. All three are laughing hysterically when suddenly JIM starts to lose his balance.

JIM

(yelling)

Quick! Fill the pool!

JIM falls in. PLATO rushes to him.

JIM

Let's see how long we can stay under.

PLATO

Man, you're schizoid!

JIM

(in another outburst
of laughing)
I'm what? What?

JUDY

You can't talk underwater!

JIM

(gargling)
I bet you hear everything I say!

PLATO

(gargling)
Isn't he schizoid?

JIM

(gargling)
Hey! How 'bout that!

They laugh again. JIM swings up the ladder and goes to JUDY.
PLATO follows.

PLATO

Haven't you noticed your personality
splitting?

JIM

Not lately.

They all sit on the blanket.

JIM

How do you know so much about this
junk, Plato?

PLATO

I had to go to a head-shrinker. I
only went twice though. My mother
said it cost too much, so she went
to Hawaii instead.

JIM lies back with his head in JUDY's lap. She strokes his
hair and smiles at him. PLATO looks away.

JIM

No. Seriously. What's your trouble?

PLATO hesitates a moment, then leans back, cuddling between
the two of them.

PLATO

I don't know but whatever it is,

it's gone now. I mean I'm happy
now. Here.

JIM puts his arm under PLATO's chin.

PLATO

I came here before.

JIM

When was that?

PLATO

When I was here? When I ran away.
I used to run away a lot but they
always took me back.

JIM

Who?

PLATO

Mom and Dad. I used to be in my
crib and I'd listen to them fight.

JIM

You remember that far back? Boy, I
can't even remember yesterday.

JUDY

Plato, where's your father now?

PLATO

He's dead. He was a hero in the
China Sea.

JIM

You told me he's a big wheel in New
York!

PLATO

I did? Well, he might as well be
dead. What's the difference?

JUDY

It's all right.

JIM

Sure.

PLATO closes his eyes. JUDY hums a lullaby as she strokes
JIM's lips with a finger. He snaps at it. Then he kisses
her hand, looks at her palm. They whisper.

JIM

(continuing)
You have a long life-line.

She takes his palm and examines it.

JUDY

So have you.

She kisses it, holds her cheek against it.

JIM

Ever been in a place like this before?

JUDY

Not exactly. It's certainly huge.

JIM

How many rooms do you think there are?

JUDY

I don't know.

JIM

Should we explore?

She looks at PLATO. JIM shrugs--tests to see if the boy is awake, but there is no reaction.

Carefully, they crawl to their feet. JIM supporting PLATO's head with his hands as they do so. JIM takes the other blanket and covers PLATO with it. JUDY kneels on the other side and tucks it in. They look at each other across him and smile. Then suddenly JUDY bends down and kisses PLATO's cheek very softly. JUDY and JIM rise.

JIM takes a candle from the candelabra and leads JUDY along the edge of the pool to the glass doors beyond. Silence except for their footfalls on the flagstone. In the distance we see the doors open and the couple pass through. When they close again, a sob comes from PLATO.

High angle closeup. PLATO lying as they left him, but his eyes are open and he is crying. Camera booms up as PLATO throws off the blanket and looks after them. Camera booms higher until he is revealed as a small and lonely figure sitting by himself. The pool echoes his weeping.

DISSOLVE TO:

Inside library. Mansion. Night. The door opens slowly and JIM appears with the candle. JUDY lingers at the door. The flickering light reveals a formerly lavish room, paneled in oak. There is a tapestry couch, empty bookcases, some dim

portraits, a leather table and several chairs around a great stone fireplace.

JIM

Hey! Will you look at this room!
(looks behind him)

Judy?

She comes forward. JIM drips wax on the table-top and sticks the candle on it. His hand shakes. JUDY sits on the couch.

JIM

(continuing)

Want to read any books? Take your pick!

(sits beside her)

Isn't this the craziest?

JUDY

Hi.

JIM

Hi.

He takes her hand. She looks at him and smiles.

JIM

(continuing)

What?

JUDY

Your hand's all wet and it's shaky.

(kisses it)

You're so funny.

JIM

Why?

JUDY

I don't know--you just are.

Leaving a light for Plato. That was nice.

JIM

Maybe he's scared of the dark.

JUDY

Are you?

JIM snuffs out the candle. They are left in moonlight. A pause.

JIM

(singing)

Here we are--
out of cigarettes--
Junior's in the nurs'ry--
See how late it gets--

JUDY

You don't need to do that.

JIM

There's something I should tell
you, Judy.

JUDY

I know already. We don't have to
pretend now.

JIM

(laughing)

What a relief!

He leans back, relaxed at last. She snuggles close to him.

JUDY

Is this what it's like to love
somebody?

JIM

You disappointed?

JUDY

(mussing her hair)

Funny Jimmy. You're so clean and
you--this is silly.

JIM

What?

JUDY

You smell like baby powder.

JIM

So do you.

JUDY

I never felt so clean before.

JIM

It's not going to be lonely, Judy.
Not for you and not for me.

JUDY

I love somebody. All the time I've been looking for someone to love me and now--I love somebody. And it's so easy. Why is it easy now?

JIM

It is for me too.

JUDY

I love you, Jim. I really mean it.

She kisses his lips gently and looks into his face. He returns the kiss. Their arms go around each other.

JIM

I mean it too.

He kisses her again--

Full shot. Road near Planetarium. MOOSE's heap crawls up and turns left. A moment later, the police car appears and does likewise--still holding its distance.

Full shot. The mansion as MOOSE's heap moves past on the road below. Suddenly it stops.

Inside MOOSE's heap. CRUNCH looks off, curious.

GOON

What you stopping for?

CRUNCH

You scam a car up there?

MOTHER

So what?

CRUNCH

Nobody's lived in that hunk of junk for five-six years.

He switches on the spotlight. It illuminates JIM's heap.

CRUNCH

Well, what do you know! I feel a kick coming on!

He turns off all the lights and gets out. The others follow.

Med. shot. Police car. It has halted. One of the officers

gets out and draws his gun. The other makes radio contact in a low voice:

OFFICER

This is Unit 17. Unit 17.

RADIO

Come in, Unit 17.

OFFICER

We just zeroed three kids in a heap. Crest Drive and Observatory. Looks like house-breaking. Send us some help. They may be armed. Over.

Close shot. PLATO asleep on the blanket. Only a single candle burns in the candelabra. The same low whistles heard earlier come from all around him and rise in volume. Suddenly his eyes open. He doesn't move, but he has come suddenly awake.

Low shot. PLATO lying in f.g. Next to his face are a pair of booted feet. He looks up. Camera pans up to show CRUNCH. He is smiling. He holds a tire chain in his hand which he swings.

CRUNCH

Good morning.

Full shot. The swimming pool. GOON and MOOSE are behind CRUNCH. They too are armed with tire chains. They all laugh. PLATO rolls away from them and runs toward the deep end of the pool.

CRUNCH

Moose! Take the steps! Goon! The other side.

The boys run to their assigned places. PLATO sees no exit. He flings himself down the ladder and into the pool. He feints this way and that, the boys responding as if they were fencing. CRUNCH swings down the ladder and his boots make a loud report as they hit the pool. MOOSE advances down the steps at the shallow end. GOON climbs onto the pool bottom at the opposite side. The feinting continues, wordlessly, as the circle closes around PLATO. The only sounds are the stamping of their boots as they try to distract him from side to side, and the animalistic grunts they make to scare him. Suddenly PLATO sees an opening and plunges past MOOSE, pushing him over, and stumbles up the steps.

CRUNCH

Come on! Let's make it!

They stream out of the pool after PLATO. He reaches the glass doors first, streaks through, and bangs them shut behind him.

Traveling shot. Arcade. PLATO's face is visible only when the moonlight strikes him through the passing windows. The sound of running steps behind him.

Full shot. Main room. A pattern of moonlight on the bare floor as PLATO dashes in and through it. He falls over a piece of furniture and comes scurrying in to camera, wheels around on hands and knees to face the door. The boys plunge into the moonlit square and stop. PLATO tries not to breathe. A match is struck. CRUNCH looks around, but can see nothing. That match goes out. The boys start up the stairs, whispering. Immediately, PLATO crawls forward, under the piano. He hears a murmur of voices from behind the oak door of the library--next to the piano. He moves to it stealthily.

Close shot, PLATO at door listening through it, on hands and knees. His confusion mounts. He shakes his head to clear it. Then, suddenly he rises and tries the knob. The door is locked. He beats on it.

PLATO

Save me!

The boys run across the room. As they hit the moonlit square. PLATO spins and fires. Somebody drops and starts moaning. JIM opens the door.

PLATO

(shrieks)

What you run out on me for! What you leave me alone for?

JIM

Plato!

There is a rush of boys coming forward.

PLATO

(with hate)

I don't want you for my father!

JIM

Your father!

PLATO fires at JIM. JIM leaps at PLATO with a cry and knocks him down.

JIM

(in rage)

You crazy nut! You crazy, crazy nut!

PLATO

(screaming)

Get away from me!

He rolls away from JIM and runs to the main door.

JUDY

Jim!

Main door, from inside. PLATO falls upon it, fumbles with the bolt and swings the door wide. He steps out into the waning moonlight and we see him running down the lawn. JIM rushes into the doorway and stops short.

Full shot. Mansion. The OFFICERS are moving away from us toward it. PLATO runs wildly toward them.

OFFICER

(sharply)

Halt!

PLATO stops, confused.

OFFICER

(continuing)

Come here.

JIM runs out on the promenade and starts over the balustrade.

JIM

Plato!

Close shot. PLATO. His face is working desperately in growing panic.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Come here, son.

PLATO

No!

JIM (O.S.)

Plato!

OFFICER (O.S.)

Just walk over here quietly now--
and there won't be any trouble.

PLATO runs out.

Close shot. JIM as he screams.

JIM

Plato!

Full shot. Main doorway as JUDY rushes out, followed by
GOON and MOOSE. They all stop dead at the balustrade.

JUDY

Jim! Watch out!

Reverse shot. Lawn. JIM seen in f.g. PLATO bolting toward
the woods in the direction of the planetarium. The officers
have both hit the ground in the distance. They fire again.
JIM hesitates a moment, then rushes after PLATO. The
officers fire again.

Moving shot. JIM as he runs after PLATO.

Med. shot. OFFICERS as they rise to their feet.

FIRST OFFICER

Take the house! I'll head him off.

Full shot. Front of mansion. JUDY flies down the stairs
and rushes past camera.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Halt! Halt!

Prowl car. Another part of town (Process). RAY is driving.
JIM's father is beside him. The mother is in the back seat.

RADIO

--located at Summit Drive--the
Planetarium.

RAY

(snapping on mike)
The planetarium? One kid inside--
five housebreaking in area. Will
proceed.

(turning to JIM's parents)
There are some kids in trouble--
you'll have to go with me.

FATHER

Perfectly all right.

Edge of woods as JIM hurtles in from the open ground beyond. He stumbles against a tree and sinks down.

JIM

(yelling)

Plato!

Traveling shot in the woods as PLATO rushes through the moonlit trees, sobbing.

JIM (O.S.)

(distant)

Plato!

Med. shot. JIM at the base of a tree. He is whimpering, shaking his head. JUDY crashes through the brush and drops beside him.

JUDY

Did he hit you?

She is on the verge of hysteria.

JIM

No!

JUDY

We have to go back!

JIM

No! I got to find him.

He starts to rise.

JUDY

After he tried to shoot you?

JIM

He didn't mean it--we shouldn't have left him. He needed us.

JUDY

He needed you, maybe. So do I.

There is a sound of distant gunfire. Both kids freeze.

JIM

He needs you too. Come on.

JUDY, breaking into a run, follows after him through the brush.

JUDY

You should have heard him talk
about you tonight. Like you were
the hero in the China Seas.

JIM

Sure. He was trying to make us his
family.

JUDY

They're killing him!

JIM runs ahead blindly and disappears in the trees. JUDY
rushes after him a few steps, then stops.

JUDY and JIM running.

PLATO running.

The planetarium. Moonlight. Shooting from the bridle path
and panning to the building. PLATO reels in and goes to the
front door.

Med. shot. Door to planetarium. PLATO clutches the handle.
The door is locked. He whimpers once in frustration.

Med. shot. Policeman running up same path PLATO has followed.

PLATO at door to planetarium. He smashes the glass with his
gun and dives through.

Inside planetarium as PLATO lands. He is cut and bleeding.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Come out of there.

PLATO wheels and skitters backward across the floor of the
observatory on his hands and knees until he comes to the
door of the planetarium theater.

Reverse shot. Main entrance. Seen from inside. The
OFFICER in b.g., PLATO in f.g. The OFFICER appears in the
entrance, then moves quickly to one side to be less of a
target. He reaches in to unlatch the door.

OFFICER

You're making it tough on yourself,
kid. Come out quietly now. You
didn't kill anybody yet.

PLATO fires at him, then opens the door of the planetarium
theater and runs inside. The door swings shut behind him.

Outside planetarium. The OFFICER is hugging the outside wall. Another siren wails and a spotlight catches the OFFICER who runs out into the light.

OFFICER

(running)

Need a little help here!

Full shot. Parking lot as the CHIEF's car wheels to a stop. It is followed by a civilian car and a cab.

CHIEF's car.

CHIEF

We heard firing. He get anybody?
You alone?

OFFICER

We got a cookaboo inside. He
wounded some kid earlier.

CHIEF

How'd he get in?

OFFICER

Smashed the front door.

CHIEF

Any other entrance?

OFFICER

(leaving)

Down in back.

Med. shot. Bushes bordering planetarium as JIM climbs through them and stops short, staring in amazement. JUDY is in b.g.

Full shot. Parking lot. JIM seen in f.g. hiding in the screen of leaves. Beyond we see the full activity--the crowd, the cars, searchlights playing on the planetarium entrance, police moving in under direction of the CHIEF.

CHIEF

(loud on speaker)

Silence. Please maintain silence.
Keep back and stay off the
pavements. Keep back and stay off
the pavements. There will be
emergency vehicles coming through.
This warning is for your own

protection.

RAY's prowl car come in. JIM's parents climb out, curious. RAY hurries to consult with an officer who briefs him, then hurries to the chief's car.

Parking lot. Several patrol cars now line the parking lot. The NEGRO WOMAN in her nightgown and overcoat pushes forward from a cab and accosts an OFFICER.

NEGRO WOMAN

What's going on?

OFFICER

I don't know, lady. Some kid's in trouble. Stand back, please.

NEGRO WOMAN

I got to know. My boy run off tonight. He had a gun with him, too.

Med. shot. CHIEF's car as RAY hurries in.

CHIEF

Hello, Ray--Know anything about this?

RAY

As much as you do--Loan me your mike, will you?

CHIEF

(handing it to him)
Help yourself.

RAY

(into mike)
I am addressing the boy in the planetarium. I am speaking to the boy inside. This is Ray Framek from the Juvenile Division--

Close-up JIM as he reacts to RAY's name. He rises and looks off.

RAY (O.S.)

(over speaker)
You are now surrounded. You are surrounded by many armed police. Whoever you are, drop your weapon and come outside.

Med. shot. JIM'S FATHER standing by RAY's car, gazing off

with interest. His wife comes out and stands beside him, looks at him questioningly.

RAY (O.S.)

(over speaker)

Come outside. Clasp your hands over your head and come outside quietly--

The FATHER's gaze has traveled over the scene. Suddenly he sees his son followed by JUDY, run into the planetarium.

MOTHER

Frank!

FATHER

Stay here.

(goes over to RAY)

That was my son!

RAY

You sure?

FATHER

I think I know my son.

The FATHER moves behind the crowd, camera trucking with him, until he reaches the bushes at the edge of the parking lot and stops, gathering himself. Meanwhile RAY's voice continues over:

RAY (O.S.)

(over speaker)

Jim Stark! I'm addressing Jim Stark. Nobody will harm you or your friends if you follow these instructions. We are here to protect you. Drop your guns and come outside. Nobody will hurt you if you do as I say--

The FATHER starts forward along the bushes as if stalking game. Each step is carefully placed and quiet, but his heart tugs him along like a kite dragging an anchor.

CHIEF

Officers! Another boy and girl just ran into the planetarium. We do not know if they are armed. Hold your positions until further instruction.

Inside planetarium as JIM comes dashing in, spins around, staring. JUDY follows. A siren is heard outside growing shrill.

CHIEF (O.S.)

(over speaker)

Ambulance. Ambulance is coming through. Clear a passage. Will you people make way there?

Floodlights strike the door and illuminate the lobby dimly.

JIM

(softly)

Plato?

Silence. JIM moves cautiously to the door of the planetarium theater. JUDY hangs back. Another siren is heard approaching. More floodlights strike the door.

JIM

(continuing - calling softly)

Plato? Plato, you in there?

(silence)

Hey, I'm going to open the door now. You'll be able to see me and you can shoot me if you want, but just remember one thing, Plato--You're my friend. That means a lot to me.

JIM opens the door slowly.

Inside theater. Darkness except for the splash of light from the door where JIM stands in silhouette. He lets the door close. Blackness.

JIM

Plato?

PLATO

I'm here.

JIM

Boy, I'm blind as a bat! You got a match? I'm going to break my neck in here. Where are you?

PLATO

I've got a gun.

JIM

I know. Light a match, will you?

PLATO obeys.

JIM

That's swell. How are you?

PLATO

I'm fine.

Another siren is heard outside. JIM has reached the lecturer's desk and, just as the match goes out, he throws a switch. The stars appear on the dome and the projector starts its slow revolution.

PLATO

You think the end of the world will come at nighttime, Jim?

JIM

No. At dawn.

PLATO

Why?

JIM

I just have a feeling. Where are you?

PLATO

Here.

JIM

Well, stop hiding and stand up. I can't talk to you if I don't see you.

JIM waits. Nothing happens.

JIM

Hey, look at the stars, Plato. Stand up and look at the stars.

Plato rises from behind a row, then JIM continues:

JIM

That's fine.

JIM approaches slowly.

JIM

I'm not going to hurt you.

PLATO

Why did you run out on me?

JIM

We didn't run out. We were coming right back.

PLATO

You sure?

JIM

Sure I'm sure. Judy's waiting. You ready to come out now?

A siren is heard.

PLATO

No.

JIM

I promise nothing'll happen if you do.

(silence)

You want my jacket? It's warm.

JIM takes off his jacket and holds it out to PLATO.

PLATO

Can I keep it?

JIM

What do you think?

JIM gives him the jacket--PLATO puts it on.

JIM

You want to give me your gun now, Plato?

PLATO

My gun?

JIM

In your pocket. Give it to me.

PLATO

I need it.

JIM

You trust me, don't you? Just give it to me for a second.

PLATO hands him the gun. JIM removes the cartridges and puts them in his pocket.

PLATO

You promised to give it back.

JIM

Friends never break promises, do they?

(gives him back the gun)

Okay. Here. Now listen. There are a lot of people outside and they all want you to be safe. You understand that? They said I could come in and bring you out.

PLATO

Why?

JIM

They like you. Okay?

PLATO

Come on!

JIM opens the door for PLATO, then follows him out. JUDY joins them.

JUDY

Hi, Plato!

PLATO

Hi.

Observatory as JIM, JUDY and PLATO come to the entrance. PLATO sees an OFFICER.

PLATO

Who's that?

JIM

Just a guard.

PLATO

I shot at one of them.

JIM

But you didn't hurt anybody.

Outside observatory as PLATO and JIM come forward into the early dawn. PLATO stops and looks off, scared.

Slow pan shot. The crowd. It has grown enormously. Silence. There are armed officers everywhere--all waiting, alert.

Med. shot. NEGRO WOMAN. Her eyes are moist. Her lips move in silent prayer.

Med. shot. JIM's parents. The FATHER looking on anxiously. The MOTHER is crying against the car.

Med. shot. JIM and PLATO.

PLATO

Those aren't my friends. Make them go away.

JIM

(tense; calling past camera)
Ray! Will you tell these guys to move back?

Suddenly PLATO bolts. JIM wheels after him.

JIM

(yelling)
Plato! Don't be a fool!

Full shot. Planetarium as PLATO dashes to the stairway leading to the balcony.

JIM'S FATHER and MOTHER. Their faces reflect panic as they see PLATO running in JIM's coat.

MOTHER

It's Jim!

Full shot. Balcony. Shooting down the stairs as PLATO rushes up. JIM closes behind him. Camera pans with PLATO as he climbs the ladder to the ledge of the small dome. JIM stops at the foot of the ladder.

JIM

Plato!

PLATO

Keep away from me! I don't believe you anymore!

He raises the gun as if to shoot JIM. An OFFICER drops to one knee and fires a shot at PLATO.

Full shot. Small dome. PLATO drops like a stone to JIM's feet.

Close-up. JIM.

JIM

(screaming--wildly)
But I've got the bullets! The gun
was empty!

Close shot. NEGRO WOMAN as she screams, a handkerchief in
her mouth.

Close shot. JUDY. She sobs once and runs up steps.

Med. shot. JIM staring down at PLATO.

JIM

Plato?
(crouches over PLATO)
Plato. Hey, Jerkpot!

There is nothing. He rises and faces the crowd, shaking his
head in wonder and reproach.

JIM

(quiet)
What did you have to do that for?

Full shot, the roof. Parents and Officers. The NEGRO WOMAN
is hysterical. RAY shoves past her, followed by JIM'S
FATHER and MOTHER. They rush toward camera.

Ambulance crew. They spring into action, arrive with
stretcher.

The balcony. JIM is at PLATO's side. A couple of OFFICERS
rush forward to take JIM. The FATHER comes in and pushes
them aside.

FATHER

Let him alone! He's mine! I'll
take care of him!

RAY, who has witnessed this, motions to the officers.

RAY

It's all right! It's all right!

The FATHER stares down at JIM for a moment. Then he kneels
beside his son, puts his coat over JIM's shoulders. He
speaks very gently.

FATHER

For a minute...that jacket...I
thought...

(breaks off, then)
You couldn't help it, son.
(reaches out, gently,
but firmly)
You did everything a man could do.

He takes JIM by the elbow and starts to bring him to his feet. The boy suddenly resists, and remains kneeling.

FATHER

Stand up, Jim. I'll stand up with you. Let me try to be as strong as you want me to be.

A faint hope appears in the boy's face. He no longer resists as the FATHER helps him to rise. But he still keeps his back to him. The ambulance attendants start putting PLATO on a stretcher. JIM moves, as if to stop them, but the FATHER still holds his shoulders.

JIM

He depended on me.

FATHER

And you can depend on me, son.
Trust me. Whatever comes we'll face it together, I swear.

JIM feels, for the first time, the love and security he has always wanted. He clutches at his FATHER, crying unashamedly. The FATHER's arms envelop him. PLATO, through his death, has helped these two find each other.

Close shot. JUDY and RAY watching.

Low angle. NEGRO WOMAN as she bends over PLATO's body.

NEGRO WOMAN

(as they lift PLATO
onto litter)
This poor baby got nobody. Just nobody.

As he is carried past her, she follows.

Balcony stairs. From below as JIM, supported by his FATHER, comes down. RAY is behind them. They pause for a silent meeting with the MOTHER at foot of the stairs. She kisses JIM and starts wiping his tears away, but he is weeping soundlessly and it does no good.

JIM looks back up at the dome. The ambulance attendants are

bearing PLATO's litter down the last few stairs, followed by the NEGRO WOMAN.

Group. The ambulance attendants come down the last few stairs followed by the NEGRO WOMAN. JIM steps forward suddenly and adjusts the blanket covering PLATO. JUDY comes to JIM's side. The litter passes camera and we hold on two shot of JIM and JUDY, seen against the lightening sky.

JIM

(to JUDY, half to himself)
He was always cold.

JUDY moves to JIM and touches his arm lightly. He looks down at her.

Med. shot. The group. JIM's arm is around JUDY as he leads her, firmly, towards his MOTHER and FATHER. His voice is warm, brimming with the new found pride he takes in his parents as he introduces JUDY to them.

JIM

Mom--Dad--this is my friend. Her name is Judy.

The parents nods warmly and smile at her. She smiles shyly in response, happy at being accepted. There is a warmth emanating from the tight little group. Changes have happened to them. Old things have been shed and a new start has been made. Camera booms--pulls back high to:

High general shot. Planetarium, JIM and JUDY, FATHER and MOTHER threading their way through the crowd as the camera continues to pull back.

FADE OUT.

The end.