

Coolidge's Corner
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. HUNTINGTON AVE - DAY

SUPER: Boston, Tuesday, April 7, 1975

A GREEN LINE TRAIN rattles down the middle of this busy divided street. A student slum for a half-dozen schools. Garishly customized VW microbusses still abound, though looking a little worse for wear from their 60s heyday. Everybody white and young has long stringy hair. Everybody black and young has big afro hair. Anyone not young doesn't belong in this neighborhood.

A young man is weaving through traffic on his bicycle, no helmet. He is XANDER LEWIN, 21, skinny, out of control hair tied back, student attire, violin case strapped at an angle around his back. His innocence and puppy-dog optimism betray his Wisconsin upbringing. He is listening to the Red Sox game on his pocket radio, with one earphone on loud enough to hear the announcer bleed.

ANNOUNCER

...and the count is 1 and 3 on Garcia. 1 out, man on first and third, tying run at bat. Tiant has pitched 9 innings and he's gotta be tired.

Xander non-chalantly weaves through traffic, narrowly missing death and dismemberment with each swerve.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

The Sox look strong today. Maybe this will be the year the Curse of the Bambino is finally broken and they go all the way...

His yellow light turns red but he just pedals harder to get to the other side.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Tiant looks to the plate...he looks at the runner on first...the windup, the pitch... and it's a ground ball double play! The Red Sox beat the Milwaukee Brewers 5 to 2 in the opening game of the 1975 season!

Xander pumps his hand into the air and SHOUTS in exultation, momentarily losing control of the bike and nearly causing an accident. Horns HONK as he regains his balance.

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CABBIE

Asshole!

Xander stops in front of an institutional-looking building.

XANDER

This must be the place.

INT. WALDEN COLLEGE AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

A play is in tech rehearsal. It is the end of The Taming of The Shrew except that men are acting the women's parts and women the men's and everyone is in drag.

Xander enters from the back, quietly approaching the lighting and sound mixing desk. RICKIE, 22, petite, adorable, tomboy-but-sexy, is stage managing, calling out lighting cues on her headset.

Onstage, the gender-reversed cast is in costume, and includes ADRIANA, exotic, gorgeous (and knows it), complete with paste-on mustache, playing Petruchio; and GERALD, very gay, playing Katharina.

RICKIE

73...and...go.

GERALD (KATHARINA)

...Then vail your stomachs, for it
is no boot,
And place your hands below your
good husband's foot:
In token of which duty, if he
please,
My hand is ready; may it do him
ease.

ADRIANA (PETRUCHIO)

Why, there's a wench! Come on, and
kiss me, Kate.

The show's director, MARNIE, 23, tall, lean, butch, steps out of the shadows near Rickie and Xander.

MARNIE

Stop! Adriana, let me hear your
voice in the back row. And
Gerald...once more: *feminine* not
swishy. Please.

GERALD

(defiant)

You knew what I was when you cast
me, honey.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Back at the desk, Rickie whispers to no one.

RICKIE
Yeah, a royal pain in the ass.

Marnie shoots her a dirty look.

MARNIE
OK, let's take a half hour and go
vail our stomachs.

RICKIE
(shouting)
Lunch! Take 30.

The actors and crew disperse.

MARNIE
And, Rickie, a *lot* less fill. More
Midsummer's Night, less High Noon.

Xander, intrigued yet oblivious that he might be butting in,
catches Marnie's eye.

XANDER
Shakespeare with men in the women's
parts and visa versa, huh?

Marnie looks at Rickie *Who is this?* Then back at Xander.

MARNIE
It challenges our preconceptions
about gender roles. I think
Shakespeare was an unknowing proto-
feminist which becomes obvious if
the roles are reversed.

Try it some time, kiddo.

Marnie splits, leaving Xander with Rickie.

RICKIE
Might be more convincing if Gerald
wasn't such a queen already. Are
you the guy who called?

XANDER
Yeah, Xander. I'm a student at
George Tech and--

RICKIE
Georgia Tech?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

No, George Tech. Music school up on
Boylston. The founder of the school
was a guy named Something George.

RICKIE

Where are you from?

Xander gives her a blank look.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

The accent?

XANDER

Oh...Wisconsin. Anyway, I wrote
this big piece and I need a space
to perform it in. This...

Xander looks around taking it all in.

XANDER (CONT'D)

...would be perfect.

RICKIE

Why don't you put it on in your own
school's theater?

XANDER

We don't have one. Did I mention
it was cheap to go there?

RICKIE

What's the show?

XANDER

Worlds in Collision. It's a neo-
mythic science fiction rock opera
inspired by the cosmological
theories of Immanuel Velikovsky and
the book of Exodus.

He is oblivious to how ridiculous this sounds.

RICKIE

Your basic boy meets girl, boy
loses girl, then?

XANDER

Kinda. But with a structure derived
from Golden Mean sections and the
Fibonacci series.

She stifles a laugh. He's a geek but he's a cute geek.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RICKIE

Need a stage manager? Or a director?

XANDER

Stage manager, *possibly*. But not a director. We're doing it concert-style - stand and deliver, no sets or blocking.

RICKIE

Too bad...for Marnie. You know, she may even be as brilliant as she thinks she is. How 'bout you, Wisconsin?

She gives him a wink.

XANDER

Could you show me the lighting plot? And an audio signal flow diagram?

Chatter comes over her headset. She writes something on a sheet of paper and hands it to him.

RICKIE

Look, I gotta an off-axis par to refocus before they finish stuffing their faces. Why don't you come to the cast party on Sunday and I'll show you anything you want? About the hall.

She walks toward the stage.

XANDER

OK...Hey, what's your name?

RICKIE

(still walking away)
It's on the sheet.

XANDER

Rickie...Thanks.

She's gone.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The door to the Dean's office is half-open. There is a counter and a desk to the right and a bench on the left. Directly ahead, there is a plaque on the wall that reads:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATHANIEL GEORGE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

FOR MUSICAL ARTS AND EDUCATION

STEVEN GEORGE, PRESIDENT

There is an inner office to the right. Its closed door has letters stenciled on its translucent glass: Office of Dean Robert Green.

Xander is at the desk on the PHONE. A CLOCK on the wall says 12:55. He is the only one in the office.

XANDER

(making his voice deep)

Yes, I understand. Thank you so much, I will send a deposit check immediately.

PAT DOOLEY, 21, nerdy, rumpled shirt, glasses askew, appears at the door.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Please hold it under Prof. Xander Lewin, George Tech. Thanks.

He looks up and sees the Dean's Secretary, Mrs. Filipetti, rotund, 50s, push by Pat.

MRS. FILIPETTI

Xander. Any calls?

XANDER

No. Quiet today, Mrs. Filipetti. Say, you look lovely today. There's something about you that's different.

She smiles and chuckles.

MRS. FILIPETTI

Well, I DID go to the hairdresser...

XANDER

That's it! You are envy of all the stylish young women in the school.

She knows he's laying it on thick but enjoys it.

MRS. FILIPETTI

Oh, Xander...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PAT

Hey Xander, can we go?

XANDER

Sure. See you tomorrow Mrs. F!

They leave.

INT. HALLWAY AT GEORGE TECH - DAY

Xander and Pat walk down the busy hallway, each peering down at an open 3-ring notebook. As they walk they are oblivious to the many near-collisions with other students they cause.

PAT

Prof. Lewin?

Xander takes a moment to understand.

XANDER

Oh. The phone call.

In order to rent the hall at Walden I have to be a "colleague". Hands across the Fenway and all that. Using Dean Green's phone is the only perk I get for working lunch hour. That and fixing my grades.

PAT

Really?

XANDER

No...So did you check out the changes I made in Act 2?

PAT

(with fan-boy enthusiasm)
Yeah! Great stuff! Now it's the *giant condor* that leads them to the sacred cave where our clairvoyant heroine sees the future in the reflecting pool.

XANDER

But after the mountain splits in two when the giant lightning bolt from the comet hits it, the marauding nomads flee in terror.

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PAT

Got it. And the psychic albino avatar from Act 1 is the disembodied voice just before the battle scene?

XANDER

Yeah. Do you think the singers can handle the odd meters in the Time Passes sequence?

PAT

If we rehearse them till they bleed, no problem.

They stop in front of a rehearsal room where a dozen singers are warming up inside.

XANDER

I reserved the Walden College auditorium for October 24th - that was the only date they had open.

PAT

That's a little tight, isn't it?

XANDER

Yeah...I drew up a schedule.

He pulls out a much scribbled-on piece of paper.

XANDER (CONT'D)

We'll have to find a place to rehearse this summer. *If* the singers are around - and willing. I haven't finished the instrumental score and I haven't figured out where we're going to rehearse the band, either. I can't afford a copyist and I can't copy the parts myself because-

PAT

Your music notation looks like a secret code written by someone with involuntary muscle spasms.

XANDER

But the worst is I gotta find \$2,000 to pay for the hall before Sept. 1 or I lose it.

PAT

Let's see that schedule.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They look at it together.

BOTH
We're fucked.

INT. LOFT PARTY - NIGHT

Beautiful bohemian twenty-somethings writhe to the pulsing beat of a bottom-heavy stereo. All shades of clothing and hair, all manner dress and undress, couples and groups, straight, gay, and indeterminate. Xander wanders through, Dorothy in Munchkinland, waiting for someone to ask him to return the ruby slippers. He spies Rickie dancing with Adriana - Petruchio from the play - and approaches.

But Marnie, the director, gets there first. She spins Rickie around and they argue, impossible to hear over the music. Adriana slips away. Marnie stomps off and Rickie turns, looking for Adriana, and sees Xander instead. She motions him over.

RICKIE
You made it!

XANDER
You remember me.

RICKIE
Of course.

The music shifts. Rickie reacts sensually.

RICKIE (CONT'D)
Ooh, I love this...Do you dance,
Wisconsin?

XANDER
Sort of.

RICKIE
Let's see.

She starts sexily moving her hips to the music. He responds, not as smooth, but not total klutz, either.

RICKIE (CONT'D)
(1000 watt smile)
You'll do.

They dance. The beat slows and she puts her arms around his neck.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - NIGHT

A Brookline studio apartment where everything is in the same room. Rickie and Xander in bed making love with great abandon.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - MORNING

Rickie and Xander lie in bed, naked, a few feet from the kitchen nook on one side and the front door on the other. Both hold mugs of tea. Xander animatedly pontificates.

XANDER

...and because of these Americans who taught music in Japan after the Meiji Restoration, most Japanese people think "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" - or at least its melody - is a Japanese folk song!

Rickie, not really listening, dreamily gazes at his not-quite-yet-a man face.

RICKIE

You remind me of my brother.

XANDER

But I bet you never slept with your brother.

RICKIE

(teasing)

Are you sure? I dunno...he's pretty cute. Like you.

She kisses him sweetly.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

Who's the most embarrassing person you ever slept with?

XANDER

That's easy. Janie Liebowitz.

RICKIE

What happened?

XANDER

I took her to my Aunt Zelda and Uncle Max's house for passover. They're orthodox, but Zelda is the coolest old lady on the planet.

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XANDER (CONT'D)

Unbeknownst to me, Janie had just gotten a new tattoo that day - on her ass. So, we're just about to the "Let my people go" part of the ceremony when Janie volunteers the news about her new tat and asks if they want to see it.

RICKIE

Awesome.

XANDER

You could have measured absolute zero on the surface of Uncle Max's face right then. He says,
(making his voice deep)
"You know you can't be buried in a Jewish graveyard if you have a tattoo." Dead silence. Even clueless Janie knows she's fucked up. Then Zelda chimes in, "Oh Max," she says. "Who's to know? She'll be buried face up!"

They laugh.

RICKIE

I love this woman. She on your mom's or your dad's side?

XANDER

Dad's. My mom's a Shiksa - a non-Jew. So, technically, I'm not Jewish, 'cause it's matrilineal. Although, as my sister points out, the state of Israel may not recognize me as a Jew under the Law of Return, but the next Hitler will throw me in the ovens with everyone else.

Rickie lazily picks up her watch lying by the bed and looks at it. She sits upright with a jerk and starts dressing.

RICKIE

Shit...You gotta go.

Xander misunderstands, still mellow.

XANDER

That's OK. Compositional analysis 101 will survive without me, although Prof.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER (CONT'D)

Choudhury will probably be disappointed that he doesn't get to bust my balls again today.

Rickie bustles about cleaning, picks up a used condom, grimaces and quickly tosses it into the garbage.

RICKIE

I got someone coming over.

Xander begins to get it and starts getting dressed.

XANDER

Your boyfriend?

There is a KNOCK on the door.

RICKIE

Crap, crap, crap on a crap cracker.

A key turns in the lock and the door opens. It's Marnie. She spies Xander and a half-amused, half-revolved look crosses her face.

MARNIE

So this is your revenge fuck, huh?
Scraping the bottom of the barrel
this time, kiddo.
(to Xander)
No offense.

XANDER

So you two are...?

Rickie takes a deep breath.

RICKIE

Marnie is not only my director, she
is my mother, my boss, my obsessive
compulsive controlling psycho-bitch
prison warden...and my girlfriend.

Xander dresses rapidly.

XANDER

I think I better go.

RICKIE

I think that's a good idea.

Xander grabs what clothes he hasn't gotten on yet and heads for the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

In the hall, he looks back one last time to see Marnie and Rickie standing side by side looking back at him. The door closes.

EXT. BOSTON COMMONS - DAY

SUPER: Wednesday, April 16, 1975

Boston's Central Park. An ICE CREAM CART and a HOT DOG STAND. Bostonians and state government types bustle purposefully while tourists amble. A guy throwing a frisbee to his dog.

Xander is playing the VIOLIN with his case open. He plays a dour, difficult piece of 19th-century repertoire. A handwritten sign in his case says: Please Help Put Me Through Music School. People walk by, ignoring him. All except Nate, 70s, rumped, Jewish, who sits on a bench nearby.

NATE

Not much business, today, huh,
Xander?

Xander finishes the piece.

XANDER

Not much business any day, Nate.
Hey, you listen to me every day. Am
I really that bad? What am I doing
wrong?

He sits down beside Nate.

NATE

Are you asking my advice? 'Cause I
don't want to give anybody any
advice if they're not asking.

XANDER

I'm asking.

NATE

Well, you always play this worthy
repertoire by the venerable
masters.

XANDER

Yeah. Everyone loves the
greats...right?

NATE

Look at these people. Do they look
like they want to hear that crap?

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CONTINUED:

Xander glances at the working-class passers-by.

XANDER

I dunno.

NATE

You gotta put yourself in their shoes. Play to your audience. What would you want to hear if you were them? See that guy? 3 o'clock.

He points out a red-faced blue collar worker to their right.

XANDER

Yeah.

NATE

If he's not Irish, I'm Tasmanian. He thinks he's a tough guy but you'd melt his heart with Take Me Home Again Kathleen.

XANDER

How about him? Uh, 11 o'clock?

He indicates a youth with a tie-dyed T and faded denims.

NATE

Ahh. A student like yourself. What do you like?

XANDER

Jimi Hendrix?

NATE

The young man who sets his guitar on fire? You don't have a spare violin and besides, that kid's probably as broke as you.

He spies two well-dressed middle-aged women coming from the left.

NATE (CONT'D)

A-ha! Two Lay-dees. I peg them as executive secretaries for some big *macher*. You can't see it, but they used to swing...Know any jazz?

XANDER

How 'bout this?

Xander stands and launches into Take The A Train.

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CONTINUED: (2)

NATE

Duke Ellington...now we're talkin'!

Nate starts playing rhythmic accompaniment by slapping his hands on his legs. As Xander goes into a second chorus and starts improvising, Nate starts singing a bassline. A small crowd gathers led by the two women. They throw money in the case as Xander and Nate finish with a flourish. The crowd applauds and moves on.

XANDER

(looking into the case)

Wow. Ten bucks! Nate, half of this is yours.

He picks up some money but Nate waves him off.

NATE

I got a pension, you got tuition.

XANDER

Thanks, Nate. Can I at least get you a popsicle?

NATE

Sure. Diabetes be damned. Orange.

Xander hands some change to the ICE CREAM VENDOR who is wrapped up listening to the ball game on his tiny portable radio. Xander returns with two popsicles and sits down beside Nate. They unwrap their bounty.

XANDER

(between bites)

You're pretty good, you know. You a pro?

NATE

Was. Retired when I started up the family business that pays my bills today. But back in the day, my nickname was "Golden Ears". I used to have a gig where I transcribed records the day they came out for the dance band I was in. Two passes, one to get the tune and the changes, the next for the harmonies and the counterlines.

XANDER

Wow. It takes me two passes just to figure out what key it's in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NATE

I doubt that - like you said, I hear you play every day. You're a fine musician, Xander. Just keep an eye on your audience and you'll do OK.

Suddenly, the ICE CREAM VENDOR and the HOT DOG GUY erupt in exultation.

ICE CREAM VENDOR

Sox win 4 to 2! Woo-hoo!

HOT DOG GUY

Go Freddy Lynn! Yaaaay!

Nate nods to the antics of the two men who are doing a wild victory dance.

NATE

On the other hand, keep playing that boring crap nobody wants to hear and you'll end up like them.

Off the vendors going nuts.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - NIGHT

A third floor walkup in Roxbury Crossing. This would be your typical male student apartment with found furniture decor and bomb-just-hit-it housekeeping were it not for the hundreds of percussion instruments strewn about and the upright piano in the corner of the living room. Xander shares this spacious-if-grody two bedroom with RICK "RIMSHOT" MACDONALD: drummer, friend, wiseacre. As Xander enters, Rimshot is practicing loudly on a drum kit, playing along to Black Sabbath's *Iron Man* on headphones.

RIMSHOT

(singing out of tune)

Has he lost his mind? Can he see or is he blind?...

Rimshot sees Xander and takes off the phones.

RIMSHOT (CONT'D)

Hey, Xander. Did you know that if you listen to this shit backwards it hypnotically reverses your world view? Like if you're deeply committed to something you might just do the opposite?

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CONTINUED:

XANDER

Thanks, Rimshot, I'll remember that the next time I get the urge to root for the Yankees.

RIMSHOT

I made some veggies and tofu for you, man, except I smoked a spliff and got the munchies and I kinda ate it all.

XANDER

Well, thanks for the thought. Is there anything left in the fridge?

RIMSHOT

I don't know, man.

XANDER

You're a font of information, Rimshot.

RIMSHOT

Anything to help, bro.

Rimshot puts his phones back on. Xander goes to the kitchen.

RIMSHOT (CONT'D)

(singing)

Heavy boots of lead, fills his victims full of dread...

Xander peers in the refrigerator. Empty.

RIMSHOT (CONT'D)

(from the living room)

Oh, I almost forgot. You got a phone call.

Xander rifles the cabinets, finds a box of cereal with a crumpled up empty bag in it. He picks up a bag of espresso, takes a sniff, and is blown back by its intensity.

XANDER

Yeah?

RIMSHOT

Some chick with a dude's name. Tony? Ralph?

XANDER

(annoyed)

Rickie. What did *she* want?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Rimshot stands in the doorway. Xander looks under the sink. Then tries the fridge again.

RIMSHOT

She said you might be hostile. You know anger will just consume you from the inside, man. You gotta let it go. Especially since she said she was sorry and wants to make it up to you.

XANDER

And how was she going to do that?

RIMSHOT

She invited you over for dinner at her place...uh, now.

Xander shuts the refrigerator door.

XANDER

Beats my other options.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander KNOCKS. Rickie opens the door to reveal a table with food and a candle...and Marnie sitting behind it, smoking a CIGARETTE. Xander takes one look at Marnie and starts to turn tail.

XANDER

Shit.

Rickie takes his arm.

RICKIE

(gently)

C'mon. Your roommate said you'd be hungry.

XANDER

He made sure of that.

He lets her lead him in. He takes a seat opposite Marnie. Rickie sits beside her and starts serving the food. Marnie puts out the cigarette.

MARNIE

Hi. I think we got off on the wrong foot.

She offers her hand to shake. He hesitates, then takes it. They eat in silence for a moment.

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CONTINUED:

XANDER

Mmm. This is good. I was so hungry.

RICKIE

Thanks. Marnie's recipe.

MARNIE

So Rickie says you wrote an epic musical based on the theories of some science guy.

XANDER

Immanuel Velikovsky. He believes that the planet Venus was once a comet that had a near-collision with earth which explains the events described in the Book of Exodus: pillars of smoke and fire, stones falling from the sky, seas parting, the whole thing. He even thinks the length of the day and the orbit of the earth were changed.

There's not a single reputable scientist who supports his ideas.

RICKIE

So why...?

XANDER

...spend two years writing a piece inspired by the ideas of a crackpot? Remember when I told you about passover with my aunt Zelda and Uncle Max-

RICKIE

...and the bimbo with the tat on her ass, yeah.

Marnie raises an eyebrow like, "What did I miss?"

XANDER

What I *didn't* tell you was that when we got to the part about the Ten Plagues, I realized that this is what Velikovsky was talking about. The passover ceremony *is* the Book of Exodus.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER (CONT'D)

And I began to think, "What would it be like to live when stuff like this was happening - when everything you ever thought was permanent and unchangeable was up for grabs?" The idea was so compelling that I didn't care whether it made scientific sense any more.

Marnie gets it, Rickie tunes out.

XANDER (CONT'D)

So I came up with this idea of a young girl, an outcast, with psychic powers who saves her people when the world is threatened with cosmic obliteration.

MARNIE

And what happens to her?

XANDER

She ends up stranded on an mountaintop with an impassable chasm between her and her love.

RICKIE

Nice.

XANDER

Hey, it's an opera.

They laugh.

RICKIE

I told you he was cute.

MARNIE

(to Rickie)

OK, Deal.

XANDER

Am I missing something...?

Marnie hesitates for a moment.

MARNIE

Rickie and I have had an issue for awhile now...

XANDER

What issue?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARNIE

Monogamy. I'm in favor, she's not.

XANDER

(not seeing)

I see.

MARNIE

Whether it is common courtesy as I describe it, or uptight bourgeois values as Rickie maintains, the fact of the matter is it drives me cuckoo when she sleeps with other women.

RICKIE

She's a classic U-haul lesbian.

XANDER

U-haul?

RICKIE

As in, "What does a lesbian bring on her second date?"

ALL

A U-haul.

MARNIE

But she has made it clear to me that monogamy is as unacceptable to her as her sleeping with other women is to me. So we have arrived at a compromise.

XANDER

What compromise?

MARNIE

You.

Xander just fell down the rabbit hole.

XANDER

What...how...?

Rickie puts her hand on his.

RICKIE

It means you and I can still see each other. Just some nights, I'll spend with Marnie...and some with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

XANDER
Do I get a vote in this?

RICKIE
Not really.

XANDER
So when does this...
arrangement...begin?

Marnie stands and picks up her things.

MARNIE
Tonight. If you're ready, cowboy.

She points at him, winks, and "shoots" him with her hand. She walks out the door.

Off Xander's stunned face, pull back through the window to reveal...

EXT. RICKIE'S BUILDING - NIGHT

The ball game is on a TV SET in the apartment below Rickie's. Three men are watching, seated.

TV ANNOUNCER
...And that wraps it up! An
incredible come-from-behind victory
for the Sox with back to back
homers from Jim Rice and Fred Lynn.

The three men jump up like kangaroos on amphetamines. Cheering and high-fives all 'round.

CONTINUOUS MUSIC MONTAGE:

EXT. HARVARD SQUARE - NIGHT

Xander and Rickie hold hands in Harvard Square at night watching a juggling act. One of the jugglers pulls Rickie into the act - she is supposed to be a patsy but surprises them by stealing their bowling pins and juggling them herself. The crowd goes crazy. Xander loves it.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander and Rickie in bed. Love-making turns into a pillow fight.

EXT. BOSTON COMMONS - DAY

Xander plays the violin to an appreciative crowd. Nate jitterbugs with Rickie until he hurts his back. She rushes to him but he happily waves her off.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander waits by the door. Marnie and Rickie enter from outside. Marnie give Rickie a long, deep, sensual KISS. She looks over at Xander, and, like before, points, winks, and "shoots" him before turning and leaving.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander and Rickie make love, less playfully, more passionately than before.

INT. NO NAME RESTAURANT - DAY

The No Name Restaurant is a Boston landmark down on the pier that allows you to pick out your lobster from a tank. Rickie and Xander point one out to the guy behind the counter.

EXT. NO NAME RESTAURANT - DAY

Rickie and Xander leave the restaurant, Xander carrying an open cardboard box. Inside the box an uncooked and very much alive LOBSTER SQUIRMS.

EXT. BEACON HILL AREA - DAY

Xander and Rickie ride bicycles around this oldest and most beautiful part of Boston: the swan boats in the public gardens, the statehouse, the colonial townhouses on Acorn St. Then down the steepest run on Beacon Hill, the uneven cobblestones making for a comically bumpy ride. They park in front of an ice cream shop and when Xander gets off he pretends he can't stop shaking, turning into a parody of Elvis as Rickie laughs.

INT. CHEESY NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Xander plays electric violin on stage with a psychedelic rock band at The Beanery, a dump even by local band standards. Rimshot is on drums. A hand-painted sign says PASS THE HAT NIGHT with a piece of cardboard in a slot below it that says Cthulhu, which is the name of the band. The number ends and Xander looks out into the audience. Marnie and Rickie are at a table, someone hands them the "hat". Marnie puts in a dollar and waves to the stage as she and Rickie stand to leave. Xander points at Marnie and, winking, "shoots" her with his finger. She smiles and "shoots" him back.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - NIGHT

Marnie and Rickie make passionate love. Marnie looks at Rickie's face tenderly and brushes the hair out of her face. Marnie protectively puts her arm around Rickie and they snuggle tight, eyes closed.

The lobster from the No Name traverses a new FISH TANK by the window. Out through the window, across the street, Xander stands, his legs straddling his bicycle, violin strapped to his back. He looks up at Rickie's window for a moment, then rides away.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. COMPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS CLASS - TOO EARLY

Stuffy PROF. CHOUDHURY draws at the blackboard with musical staves printed on it, completing an example of an arcane form of academic music torture called *Shenkerian analysis*. Pat is here, but not Xander. Most of the students are bored, spaced, or actually asleep except for one bright-eyed blond Aryan dream in the front row named ERIK, who hangs on every word.

PROF. CHOUDHURY

...and that brings us back to the tonic. Tristan Und Isolde reduced to but a handful of harmonic gestures by the magic of Shenkerian analysis.

Erik raises his hand.

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)

Erik?

ERIK

(Bavarian accent)

That iss so beautiful, Prof. Choudhury. The simplisticness!

PROF. CHOUDHURY

Uh...yes. Class you will need to know all of this for the test--

Xander tries to enter the room as quickly and quietly as he can but blows it when he trips on a chair leg.

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)

Except for Mr. Lewin who believes he already knows everything because he is a genius.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There is a sense of deja vu about this scene. Erik snickers. Xander takes a seat beside Pat.

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)
Can anyone give us another example
from the required listening list?

Erik waves his hand like he's flagging down a taxi in a Manhattan thunderstorm.

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)
Anyone else?

No takers. Not a chance.

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)
Alright. Erik.

Erik hops up and, consulting his notebook, quickly puts up a handful of notes, specialized symbols, and roman numerals. Prof. Choudhury nods approval.

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)
Anyone recognize this?

Like asking to speak now or forever hold your peace at a shotgun wedding. Xander unenthusiastically raises his hand.

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)
Xander?

XANDER
Beethoven's Ninth.

PROF. CHOUDHURY
(annoyed he's right)
Yes. Mr. Lewin is correct. Class,
note the elegance of the
substructure as we travel to the
various tonal regions yet return,
as we must, to the tonic.

Xander, exasperated with what he considers pseudo-intellectual twaddle, starts to fidget.

PAT
(whispering)
Don't go there...

Xander visibly can't restrain himself.

PAT (CONT'D)
No...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER
 (can't hold it back)
 So what?

Silence.

XANDER (CONT'D)
 I mean, you have reduced one of the
 greatest works of western culture
 to a few meaningless abstractions.
 It doesn't tell you much about the
 melody. And it doesn't tell you
anything at all about the rhythm.

PROF. CHOUDHURY
 Mr. Lewin, even you should know
 that rhythm is strictly a
 foreground structure. The essence
 of a piece is this.

He smacks his chalk into the board for emphasis, breaking it.

XANDER
 There's a lot of great music that
 Shenkerian analysis doesn't work at
 all for.

PROF. CHOUDHURY
 I rather doubt that. Perhaps you
 would like to educate us, Mr.
 Lewin. Please.

He motions for Xander to come to the front of the room.
 Xander picks up the chalk as if it were a stick of uranium.

XANDER
 Does it have to be from the
 required listening list?

PROF. CHOUDHURY
 No. Anything you want.

Xander thinks for a moment then picks up the eraser.

XANDER
 May I?

PROF. CHOUDHURY
 Of course.

Xander wipes the board clean. Then puts up a single note, the
 "E" above middle C.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

PROF. CHOUDHURY (CONT'D)
What's this?

XANDER
Another of the greatest works of
Western civilization, James Brown's
classic, "I Feel Good." Reduced by
Shenkerian analysis. Can't you just
feel the funk?

He does James Brown's footslide. The class laughs. Prof.
Choudhury is not amused.

PROF. CHOUDHURY
Our hour is up, class. If you
intend to pass the final I
recommend studying the listening
list. Which does *not* include the
oeuvre of Mr. Brown.

The students get to their feet and gather their papers. Pat
leans over to Xander.

PAT
How did you know it was the
Beethoven?

XANDER
(nodding toward Erik)
He was the only German left on the
list.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM AT GEORGE TECH - DAY

A dozen seated singers are struggling through a difficult
piece from Xander's opera including Doug, 21, deep-voiced,
tall, handsome, arrogant. Pat plays the piano, Xander
conducts. He stops them.

XANDER
Let's take it from letter B. Doug,
you're late on the downbeat. It's
in 7/4 which means you count 4 then
3 then come in on the downbeat of
the bar. The chorus answers you on
2.

DOUG
(defensive)
I'm coming in with everyone else.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Yeah, that's the problem. You're supposed to come in *before* everybody else. Let's try it again.

Pat plays an intro. Xander tries to guide Doug by singing his part with him.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Time...

DOUG

(still a beat late)

Time...

XANDER

Stop, stop.

Pat and the chorus stop.

DOUG

Why don't you just add another beat?

XANDER

(patiently)

Well, you know how in, say, *Beethoven's Ninth* the third phrase of Ode to Joy is anticipated? *DAH-dah-dah-dah-dah-dah...*?

Xander smiles hopefully. Doug is clueless.

XANDER (CONT'D)

It gives you a sense of being off-balance. The uncertainty of life. Like when, say, you start dating a girl and she's already sleeping with another girl?

Everyone looks at him - what *is* he talking about?

XANDER (CONT'D)

Anyway, that's what I'm trying to do here by taking away a beat from the end of the phrase and having you come in on the downbeat all by yourself.

DOUG

It's too complicated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

(beginning to get testy)
If you had practiced reading the
music along with the tape I
expressly made for you to practice
to--

DOUG

You said this was gonna be a *rock*
opera. But instead there's all
this *reading*.

XANDER

Just because it's *rock* doesn't mean
it has to be *dumb as a rock!*
Beethoven was pretty rockin' and
the singers in his--

DOUG

You ain't Beethoven!!!...And I'm
outta here.

He stomps out. Everyone else is stunned.

XANDER

Alright, folks. Let's take it from
letter B--

PAT

Xander, we're already five minutes
over. They're gonna kick us out any
minute.

XANDER

OK, everybody. That's it for now.
Rehearsals will continue through
the summer, place to be determined.
Thank you all for your hard work.

The singers rise to leave.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Oh, and one other thing. Anyone
know anybody who sings bass? And
reads?

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - DAY

Xander sits side by side with Rickie at her desk, situated
directly to one side of her bed. From the looks of how the
books and papers are piled up they've been here awhile.
Xander is a man on fire, Rickie nearly asleep.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER
...so x equals?

He unconsciously mouths "four"

RICKIE
4?

XANDER
Or?

RICKIE
Or what? Didn't I just get the
answer?

XANDER
Well, half of it. It's a
maxima/minima thing.

RICKIE
(shrugs)
Close enough.

XANDER
Close enough? Don't you want get it
right? You won't pass the exam with
"close enough."

RICKIE
I think you care more about this
stupid math course than I do.

XANDER
You can't graduate without passing
this "stupid math course." Hey,
you're the one who asked for help.

RICKIE
OK. So, stop.

XANDER
Stop what?

RICKIE
Helping me.

He is befuddled.

XANDER
But...

RICKIE
I'll do it on my own. Or maybe I
won't.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RICKIE (CONT'D)

A degree in theater arts isn't exactly crucial. I got my job at the Walden theater without even having a degree.

XANDER

You don't mean that. I know you want to get your BA.

RICKIE

You don't know what I want, Xander. For such a smart guy, you're pretty dumb about how people *feel*. You know all the facts and figures, but you don't know how to slow down and just be present with someone. You are so intent on telling me "the facts" that you don't notice that you've also just told me in a hundred ways that I'm an incompetent loser. It's like you're *disconnected*. Like no one else exists.

She gets up and goes over to the kitchen area. She opens a drawer and pulls out a JOINT.

XANDER

Look, I'm sorry.

She's still miffed.

XANDER (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to offend you. I just get...*excited* about this stuff.

She LIGHTS UP the joint.

RICKIE

Yeah, I know, you can't help it. Like when you talk about the Meiji Restoration, or Immanuel Velikovsky, or the Fibo- Fibo-

XANDER

The Fibonacci series. You *have* been listening.

She rolls her eyes.

RICKIE

You know, Marnie knows all about that egghead stuff.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

XANDER

Oh?

RICKIE

She's just smart enough to know...

She takes a hit and holds her breath.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

(holding her breath)

...nobody else gives a shit about it.

She lets it go.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

On the other hand. *This* shit is the real shit.

She takes and holds, then walks over to Xander and straddles his legs. Grasping his head in both hands she SHOTGUNS him. He puts his arms around her and they roll onto the bed.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: Friday, May 30, 1975

Xander, by himself, nervously tapping his fingers. The clock on the wall reads 12:58. The phone RINGS.

XANDER

Yes...

(deepening his voice)

...this is Prof. Lewin...Aha, I see...Excellent...Give Prof. Crane my regards...Oh, it didn't? No problem, I'll put a stop payment on the original and send another...Ta-ta!

Xander breathes out a sigh of relief as Mrs. Filipetti, enters

MRS. FILIPETTI

Hi, Xander. Any calls?

She turns on the radio. He collects his books.

XANDER

No, Mrs. Filipetti. They know that when you're not here, there's no one worth talking to.

She smilingly waves off his flattery.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. FILIPETTI

Bye, Xander.

ANNOUNCER

...and the Sox lose 4-3 to the Minnesota Twins despite a homer from Fred Lynn and a double from Bernie Carbo.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander, sitting at the kitchen table, watches as Rimshot holds a set of MOROCCAN CLAY BONGOS over the lit stovetop burner, one head just above an open flame. He lifts it off and whacks it a couple of times.

RIMSHOT

...And now it's in tune.

XANDER

That's great. I gotta try that with mine.

The phone RINGS. Xander answers.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Hello...Hi, babe...You can't?...OK
Well, study hard and I'll see you
on Thursday. G'night.

Rimshot sits at the kitchen table with the drum in his lap and starts playing a cool bongo groove. As he speaks, he emphasizes key words with drum hits.

RIMSHOT

So, how's it going with cutey-pie
Tony?

XANDER

Rickie. Great.

RIMSHOT

Fan...ta...ta...ta..tastic!

XANDER

I mean, I think so.

Rimshot stops playing and gives him a whachusay? look.

RIMSHOT

Little weirded out from playing
"who's on first?" with her and
Moonie?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Marnie. Actually...strangely...no.
We each do something different for
Rickie - it's not really a
competition.

RIMSHOT

So what's the bake?

XANDER

Well, you know how sometimes I
kinda go on about music, and
history, and science, and
philosophy, and stuff?

RIMSHOT

Ooooooh yeah.

XANDER

All that stuff leaves her cold. And
she says I don't have a sense for
what other people are feeling.

RIMSHOT

Like when you bulldoze over anybody
you don't think is as smart as you
are?

XANDER

Do I?

RIMSHOT

Xander, sometimes I start reading a
book - you know I *do* sometimes -
and you pick it up to read in the
can or something and you finish it
before I get to the second chapter.
Then, you tell me all about it. In
detail. So I never finish it.

XANDER

Sorry.

RIMSHOT

No sweat. I love ya anyway, bro.
But could be that's what's going on
with Little Miss Hot Pants. Maybe
you need to be a little more Dr.
Feelgood and a little less Geek-
zilla.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

I wish for once I didn't have to stick a sock in who I am just to be "not irritating". But, if that's what it takes, that's what it takes. She's beautiful. She's great fun. She has the best laugh. And the sex is *incredible*.

RIMSHOT

Luuuhv is all you need, brother.

XANDER

Is it?

RIMSHOT

I dunno. But if that animal chemical shit ain't there...

Rimshot starts grooving again.

RIMSHOT (CONT'D)

You...got...nuh...thin'.

The phone RINGS. Xander smiles as he picks up the receiver and puts a finger in his other ear.

XANDER

Hello...Mom?

Not who he expected. He takes the phone, 20 foot extension trailing behind, into his bedroom and closes the door.

INT. XANDER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

XANDER

Everything ok?

INT. XANDER'S MOM'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

MOM

(slightly slurring)
Yeah, honey, just fine.

She sits at the kitchen table and pours herself another Jack Daniels.

INTERCUT with Xander's bedroom.

MOM (CONT'D)

How's my boy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Good, mom. Good.

MOM

Eating ok?

XANDER

Oh, yeah. Rimshot says I've even been putting on a few pounds.

He pats his stomach. Manifestly untrue.

MOM

(hesitant)

Look, baby. I know I said I'd send you another check this month, but...the crap insurance company...

XANDER

Don't worry about it, mom. The band is doing great. We're making good dough. Got a bunch of regular gigs. You could say we're "in demand."

He looks over at a poster on the wall for "Pass the Hat Night" at The Beanery, the crappy club we saw him performing in earlier. Cthulhu are at the bottom of a long list of band names.

MOM

That's great. Really great.

Long pause.

MOM (CONT'D)

I really miss him, Xander.

XANDER

Me, too.

MOM

Funeral was a year ago today.

She downs her drink. And pours another.

XANDER

I know. But drinking's not gonna bring him back.

MOM

That's what my doctor says. But, you know, it's all I got.

She laughs, with an edge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

You should get some sleep, mom.

MOM

You, too, son. I love you.

XANDER

Love you, too. G'night.

Each of them stares off into the night, remembering.

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

An elegant MODERN DANCE TEACHER leads a class of about twenty, mostly young women, including Adriana ("Petruccio"). Xander accompanies them in an unusual one-man band style: he sits in front of a PIANO while holding his VIOLIN in place with the pressure of his chin. His right hand holds the bow while his left alternates between piano and violin. Meanwhile, his right foot holds the sustain pedal of the piano while his left keeps time on a TAMBOURINE lying on the floor. Occasionally, he sings harmony with the violin or picks up a HARMONICA with his left hand and plays a few notes on that, too. He looks like he does this all the time - which he does.

DANCE TEACHER

...and seven and eight and we're done!

The class applauds.

DANCE TEACHER (CONT'D)

Great work on the combination, class.

She turns to Xander.

DANCE TEACHER (CONT'D)

Thank you, Xander.

The dancers file out. Xander packs up his instruments and prepares to go, too. Marnie enters and doubletakes on seeing Xander.

MARNIE

Hey, you. Whatcha doin' here?

XANDER

I'm a dance accompanist. One of my six jobs. How 'bout you?

Adriana walks by on her way out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ADRIANA
(nodding)
Marnie.

MARNIE
Adriana.

Marnie looks around, puzzled.

XANDER
Why are you here?

MARNIE
I thought Rickie would be here. She wrote down this address at this time on a pad by the phone. I thought I'd surprise her.

XANDER
I've never seen her in this class. This is Level 3 Modern - not exactly her thing.

MARNIE
Yeah, she's more Level 1 Hippie Formless. Oh well...

XANDER
Walk you back to the subway?

MARNIE
Why not?

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE - DAY

They walk side by side at an easy pace, Xander carrying his violin and Marnie carrying Xander's percussion bag.

XANDER
I saw it, by the way.

MARNIE
What?

XANDER
Taming of the Shrew - a la Marty.

MARNIE
Oh...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Weren't you worried that the audience would think gender role reversals were sort of a pretentious gimmick?

MARNIE

Pretentious? Oh, you mean like a "neo-mythic science-fiction rock opera inspired by the works of Immanuel Velikovsky"?

XANDER

We're talking about *your* goofy, eggheaded, hyper-intellectual, historically revisionist show, not mine.

MARNIE

Hated it that much?

XANDER

No, not at all. Loved it, actually. I just happen to have a soft spot for, ya know--

MARNIE

Goofy, eggheaded, hyper-intellectual, historically revisionist shows.

XANDER

Yeah. You did it so seamlessly, and with such great wit, that I think it actually accomplished what you intended.

MARNIE

And what do you think that was?

XANDER

"To force the viewer to reexamine gender stereotypes", I believe it said in the program notes. Or just to blow their little minds, which I think may be what you were really driving at.

MARNIE

(laughing)
Maybe a bit of both.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

I was also impressed, frankly, by the way you packed the house.

MARNIE

I've always had a gift for marketing. I just found the right "pretentious gimmick" to attract attention.

XANDER

It didn't hurt to have that picture of Adriana in drag with a...uh...

MARNIE

Bare boob?
(shrugs)
You use what you got.

They pass by an OLD BLUESMAN playing guitar and blowing harmonica in a rack. Xander tosses him some money and he nods. Marnie likes his generosity.

BLUESMAN

Bless you.

They continue walking.

MARNIE

So what about your neo-mythic sci-fi rock thingy. Pretentious?

XANDER

Guilty! Look, I stick all those adjectives together because I don't know *what* to call it. It's not really like anything I've ever heard before. I just know I hear it and see it in my head as real as you or me and if I can't get it out into the world, my head will probably explode.

MARNIE

I'll alert the bomb squad if your performance dates get cancelled.

They walk by a natural foods cafe with outdoor tables.

XANDER

A pastry and a cup of tea? This place is great.

She hesitates, and looks at her watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

XANDER (CONT'D)

I'll buy?

MARNIE

Sure.

They sit outside. A WAITRESS comes to take their order.

XANDER

Could we have two of those amazing scones you make? And a cup of O-cha for me and...

(to Marnie)

...for you?

MARNIE

Espresso.

The waitress goes inside. They sit for a moment. A BEAUTIFUL GIRL walks by. Both of them clock her in tandem. Then another walks the other direction and they do the same thing. When they realize what they just did they LAUGH.

XANDER

I feel like I'm hangin' with one of the guys.

MARNIE

For all intents and purposes, you are.

XANDER

Have you always been...gay?

MARNIE

Have you always been an asshole? I mean, straight?

XANDER

When I was four years old I convinced the little girl next door to take off all her clothes and make a naked sandwich with me between our couch pillows. Yeah, I've always been straight.

MARNIE

When I was in the second grade, I had an *intense* crush on Suzy Winterbottom. I didn't know what I was feeling, I just wanted to be near her all the time.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARNIE (CONT'D)

So we're doing this play about the princess and the frog and I try to convince my teacher, Mrs. Akins, to let me play the prince just so I could get kissed by Suzy.

XANDER

But no gender reversal allowed in the second grade?

MARNIE

No, I convinced her! I don't know how but I did - probably just wore her out until she said yes. But the problem was, as I discovered to my horror, the princess doesn't kiss the prince - she kisses the frog! Mrs. Akins put some other kid in the frog outfit so we could make a presto-change-o switcheroo. I tried to convince her to let me swap roles but she'd had it with me by then.

XANDER

I'm surprised it didn't crush your theatrical ambitions then and there.

MARNIE

On the contrary, I think that's when I decided to become a director. So no one could keep me from being a frog if I wanted to be one.

The waitress arrives with their order.

XANDER

Thanks.

MARNIE

Thanks.

The waitress leaves. Marnie takes a bite of the scone.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

You weren't lying. These are good.

XANDER

(mouth full)

I know my sweet cakes. Mm-mm!

He sips his tea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

XANDER (CONT'D)

OK, so much for the second grade.
But did you ever think of changing
teams?

MARNIE

Or playing for both sides, like
Rickie?

She pulls out a cigarette.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

You mind?

He shakes his head. She lights up and takes a puff.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Funny you should use a sports
metaphor. I knew this woman once,
Jenny Margolis, who was a great
athlete and kind of a legend in the
community. She was a gold star,
never-been-fucked by a man, butch
dyke lesbian separatist. She was
also captain of the all-lesbian
baseball team that I played on.

XANDER

You play?

MARNIE

Shortstop. Hit left, field right.

She takes another puff on her ciggy.

So, we were playing this big game
against a team of transvestites,
when a fly ball ricochets out of
Jennie's mitt and bounces off her
head. She picks up the ball and,
with a throw that can only be
described as miraculous, puts the
runner out at home. The fact that
the runner was in heels probably
contributed, but, hey, an out's an
out. Our team won the game.

She leans back and blows a SMOKE RING.

XANDER

Impressive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

MARNIE

Anyway, coupla years ago, she tells a friend she's having these weird dreams about...men. Like, ya know, having sex with them. Then she *disappears*. Then word starts circulating: she's met some guy, fell in love, got married. I don't believe it. But just last week I'm walking down the street and I see this woman pushing a stroller coming the other way. It's her! She gives me the "I know I know you from somewhere" look and starts to introduce herself. But I cut her off and say, "I know who you are. You're Jenny Margolis, the lesbian who got hit on the head with a baseball and went straight."

She takes one last drag and puts out the cigarette.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Barring neural trauma, we are what we are. You, me, and sandwich girl, too, most likely.

She stands. Xander stands and puts some money on the table.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Thanks for the snack, kiddo. See you round the corral.

She "shoots" him before he can draw and walks off, passing by a newspaper vending machine. The headline on the paper reads:

SOX IN TIGHT RACE FOR LEAD

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The last day of school. Hustle, bustle, and fond farewells in the hallway. Xander is on the phone at the desk, one finger in his ear to hear above the din.

XANDER

(deep voice)

This is Prof. Lewin...I called before and...I'm so sorry, it must have gotten lost in the mail. When do you close? I will send a courier over with a replacement check this afternoon. Thanks.

He hangs up. Pat runs in, breathless.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAT
Xander!

XANDER
Hey, Pat. Just the man I need.
Does your checking account have
enough in it to cover a \$200 check?

PAT
\$200?

XANDER
It's to hold the hall at Walden. I
can pay you back in cash. Next
week.

PAT
Uh, we'll talk about it. But first
you gotta see something.

Looks at the clock. It's 12:30.

XANDER
Can't. Gotta hold down the fort
till one - or nearly.

PAT
On the last day of school? C'mon.

XANDER
(agreeing)
Aw, what the hell.

Xander follows Pat out of the office, through the lobby, out
the front door of the building, and across the street to ST.
AGATHA'S CHURCH.

EXT. ST. AGATHA'S - DAY

Xander hesitates at the ornate front door.

PAT
C'mon!

INT. ST. AGATHA'S - DAY

A serene, contemplative space with a vaulted ceiling and
stained glass windows. There is a large open area around the
podium in front of the pews.

PAT
Our new rehearsal space. Voilá!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

A church?

PAT

Hey, it worked for Bach.

XANDER

(looking around)

Do you think they'll be okay with electric guitars and drums?

Sister Eileen, a jovial nun, surprises them from behind.

SISTER EILEEN

The psalms say make a joyful noise unto the Lord. They don't specify instrumentation.

The boys turn.

PAT

Sister Eileen...Xander Lewin.

They shake.

SISTER EILEEN

Master Dooley here says you're quite the young genius. A great classical violinist and composer.

XANDER

He's a liar.

Sister looks askance.

XANDER (CONT'D)

I mean...I'm not a classicist. More of a rock 'n roller.

She stares off wistfully.

SISTER EILEEN

My dear departed brother was a great musician.

(big smile)

A great *rock 'n roll* musician.

XANDER

So, we can really use the space to rehearse?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SISTER EILEEN

I will talk to Father O'Connell. It might help if you volunteered to do some little thing around the church.

XANDER

Sure. What?

SISTER EILEEN

(pointing skyward)

The stained-glass windows here haven't been washed in years.

PAT

No problem.

She turns to go, then turns back to Xander.

SISTER EILEEN

And say hello to your uncle for me.

She's gone. Xander turns to Pat.

XANDER

My uncle?

PAT

I was a little worried they might say no. So I said you that you were Archbishop Lewin's nephew.

XANDER

Who is Archbihop Lewin?

PAT

Hell if I know.

Xander looks up.

XANDER

One other problem.

PAT

Whazzat?

XANDER

I'm afraid of heights.

INT. RICKIE'S APT. - NIGHT

SUPER: Wednesday, June 18, 1975

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Xander comes up the steps and hears WOMEN'S LAUGHTER from inside Rickie's apartment. He KNOCKS. Marnie opens the door.

XANDER

Oh...I'm sorry, I thought it was my night.

He sees Rickie sitting at the table, an unopened bottle of champagne in front of her with two mugs beside it.

XANDER (CONT'D)

(to Rickie)

Didn't you say Thursday on the phone?

MARNIE

It's Wednesday.

XANDER

So it is. Shit. I'm sorry.

He turns to go.

MARNIE

C'mon in. We're celebrating. Rickie passed her exams.

RICKIE

You're looking at a college graduate.

Xander comes in.

XANDER

That's fantastic. Congratulations, scholar!

Marnie picks up the champagne bottle.

RICKIE

Let's bust this thing open.

Marnie POPS THE CORK which goes flying out the open window. She rushes over to the window and looks out.

MARNIE

(serious)

Shit. I think I killed somebody.

(sing song)

Oh, well...

Rickie puts out a third mug. Marnie pours. They hold up their mugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARNIE (CONT'D)

To Rickie. Whose bachelor degree in theater arts from the esteemed Walden College prepares her for...

RICKIE

...absolutely nothing.

They clink and drink.

MARNIE

(to Xander)

Hey, we were gonna go to see Juliet of the Spirits. Wanna come?

XANDER

Wow, Fellini! I saw Satyricon a couple of years ago and it was incredible.

RICKIE

I'm glad you know who this Felloni guy-

MARNIE

Fellini. Frederico Fellini.

RICKIE

Yeah, 'cause after the show I know Marnie's gonna want to talk about it...and talk about it...and she'll have you.

MARNIE

Let's go...

Looks out the window.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Before the cops find the body.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Rickie sits between Marnie and Xander. All three stare intently at the screen. Marnie takes the hand of Rickie's closest to her. A few moments later, Xander does the same from his side.

They continue to sit, staring upwards, Marnie holding hands with Rickie and Rickie holding hands with Xander.

EXT. BEACON STREET - NIGHT

They walk three abreast, Marnie and Xander excitedly talking past Rickie who is clearly not into it.

MARNIE

Wasn't Giulietta Masina *wonderful*?

XANDER

Absolutely! You know she's Fellini's wife? Do you think he was trying to tell her something about his extracurricular activities?

MARNIE

Hah-hah! Maybe...And how about the image of the covered trees at the end...

XANDER

I *loved* that. I thought it symbolized...

MARNIE

...the death of her marriage.

XANDER

Exactly!

Xander and Marnie do a high five over Rickie's head.

RICKIE

Enough, you two! Why do you always have to analyze everything to death? Why can't you just enjoy a beautiful experience for what it is?

Chastened, Marnie and Xander fall silent. They reach the intersection of Beacon and Harvard streets: Coolidge Corner.

XANDER

(softly)
Coolidge's Corner.

MARNIE

What's that?

XANDER

Something my dad said.

RICKIE

Your dad from Wisconsin?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Actually, he was born and bred in Boston, here in Brookline to be exact. The world's kindest and smartest man. I think about him a lot. He died a couple of years ago after a long awful illness. Toward the end he was saying really crazy shit like the CIA and the space aliens were coming for him, that kind of thing. He was losing - and confusing - his memory and he knew it. It infuriated him. He couldn't remember the names of his kids, but he did remember - or thought he remembered - a lot about growing up at Coolidge's Corner.

MARNIE

You mean Coolidge Corner?

XANDER

Yeah, that's what *I* said, but he was very insistent: *Coolidge's Corner*. "Don't you remember? Don't you remember? It's called *Coolidge's Corner*," he'd say. The fact that it all happened before I was born was lost on him. It was as though he was saying: If you're the only one who remembers something, then it only exists - if it exists at all - in your own tiny universe. But if even one other person remembers, then that universe is infinitely expanded.

Marnie nods. Suddenly, a CAR with three drunken young YAHOOs pulls up beside them. They lean out the windows whistling and leering.

YAHOO 1

Hey, baby. Look what I got for you!

He lolls his tongue suggestively. Instinctively, Rickie grabs Marnie's hand.

YAHOO 2

Lookitthat! They're lesbos.

YAHOO 3

How about a little girl on girl action?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The car is pacing them.

MARNIE
(softly)
Just keep walking.

YAHOO 1
I got what you need, baby. Do it
with me and you'll never go back to
muff diving.

YAHOO 3
I gotta dick big enough for both of
you hunnybuns.

MARNIE
Don't say any-

Xander can't take it.

XANDER
Look, bozos. You're drunk and
they're not interested. Capisce?

Bad idea. The car screeches to a stop and the men pile out.

YAHOO 1
Who asked you, faggot?

YAHOO 2
What kind of man hangs out with
lesbo pervs?

They surround him. Yahoo 1 pushes Xander.

YAHOO 1
Fuckin' pansy!

XANDER
Takes one to know one!

Yahoo 1, enraged, POPS ONE across Xander's face. He reels. A couple of blocked punches, then Xander gets in a shot. He smiles, watching Yahoo 1 shake his head to clear it. But his triumph is short-lived as Yahoo 2 sucker punches him hard in the stomach. He goes down.

They are about to descend on him when they hear a BIZARRE YODELING SHOUT. It's Marnie, standing atop the hood of a parked car. She RIPS her shirt open, and pounds on her chest like Tarzan, all while continuing to yodel.

The men are dumbfounded.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

YAHOO 3
She's fuckin' nuts.

Lights TURN ON in the apartments above them.

YAHOO 2
Let's get outta here.

Yahoo 1 gives Xander one last kick.

YAHOO 1
Pansy!

The get in their car and SPEED OFF. Rickie helps Xander to his feet. He looks in amazement at Marnie, who rejoins them.

XANDER
I like your style.

She buttons her shirt.

MARNIE
Back atcha. But,uh..."Takes one to know one?" That the best you could do?

XANDER
(shrugs)
My last fight was in the third grade.

They laugh. Xander touches his face and winces.

XANDER (CONT'D)
This is gonna hurt tomorrow.

Rickie looks up at the street sign.

RICKIE
So is it true?

Xander and Marnie look at each other. What?

RICKIE (CONT'D)
Did they call it Coolidge's Corner back when?

XANDER
Not a clue. Someday I gotta spend a day at the library and try to find out. But right now, I'm going this way and you two are going that way.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He gives Rickie a hug, then Marnie.

ALL
(not simultaneously)
Good night.

As the women walk south on Harvard, away from Xander, Marnie looks back over her shoulder and sees him looking back at her. She starts to "shoot" him, changes her mind and blows him a kiss instead.

He smiles, turns and walks east on Beacon.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - SUNRISE/DAY

Undercranked footage from darkness through sun rising over Boston streets, continuing up into the morning sky.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - DAY

Xander asleep in bed as a CLOCK RADIO ALARM goes off, catching a sports announcer in mid-sentence.

ANNOUNCER
...on the road. Yesterday's game will certainly go down as one to remember at least for Fred Lynn. The centerfielder hit three home runs, a triple and a single for 10 runs batted in as the Bosox dismantled Detroit 15 to 1. Tiant picking up his ninth...

Xander smacks the top of the clock and it goes silent. He rises, wearing just his undies, walks down the hall to the bathroom. He has a BLACK EYE from last night.

He opens the door and is startled to see Rimshot, fully clothed, asleep in the tub. Rimshot awakens.

RIMSHOT
(weakly)
Hey, man. Big night. Took a whiz and couldn't make it back to the bedroom...

Rimshot surveys Xander's shiner.

RIMSHOT (CONT'D)
Need to use the john?

XANDER
That's cool, I'll wait.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Xander makes his way to the kitchen.

He goes about making himself a cup of tea, then pauses in front of the BAG OF ESPRESSO on the shelf and decides to make that instead.

He looks at the wall, where a hundred phone numbers are written, picks up the phone and dials.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Morning, it's Xander...Last night was really nice...yeah, well, except for that part...Oh, it's ok. Hey, would you like to come to a rehearsal of my show? We're running the second act today at 1, just the singers, and I could use your...You would? Great. Yeah, the church across from GT on Boylston...Bye.

The sound of a technicolor yawn echoes down the hall.

RIMSHOT

(weakly)

Oh man! You'd think they'd get along 'cause they're both Mexican, but tequila and peyote really don't mix.

INT. ST. AGATHA'S - DAY

The Sanctuary of St. Agatha's: serene and timeless, with other-worldly light streaming through the stained glass windows. Xander, his bruise now greenish, conducts the eleven remaining singers who are lined up in a row, sitting in front of music stands, while Pat accompanies them on the organ.

SINGERS

...We're like blind men who've regained our sight/ and it's time to start again...

He brings them to a close.

XANDER

That was terrific folks. Thanks for coming to Church.

They LAUGH.

XANDER (CONT'D)

See you all next week.

They file out as he turns to see Marnie sitting in a pew.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER (CONT'D)
So, what do you think?

MARNIE
It's *wonderful*. Beautiful songs,
fantastic vocal colors, deep
collective unconscious kind of
resonances.

She looks up at the stained-glass windows.

MARNIE (CONT'D)
This place is no kind of theater,
of course. But it even has the
right vibe - if it only had a
lighting grid, and a sound system,
and about a hundred other things
you wouldn't need Walden.

XANDER
And the story?

MARNIE
Well, the biggest problem is it's
hard to follow. You have a lot
going on. And, without staging, the
words have to tell everything. But
there are a few simple things you
could do to make your words work
harder.

XANDER
Like what?

MARNIE
For example...

She gets up and walks to the altar.

MARNIE (CONT'D)
You really want your albino avatar
to read as something ethereal. So
what if he was up here...

She walks to a platform in the back and stands on it.

MARNIE (CONT'D)
...and held up a white mask in
front of his face. With a single
spot you could illuminate the mask
and give the sense that it's
floating.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

What about his microphone?

MARNIE

Not a problem - he's not actually wearing the mask. He holds it on the audience side of the mic while he sings into it on his side.

XANDER

(thinking it over)

Mm-hmm.

MARNIE

And you could use the same riser at the end of act 3 when she's stuck on the opposite side of the chasm. With her up here, and him down there, you'd do a much better job of conveying that it's an impassable barrier than you will by having them stand in a row...And the giant condor? Dancers! A dozen people wearing gossamer outfits moving their arms in tandem!

He's doubtful.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

This is simple stuff, just enough to clarify the story for the audience.

XANDER

Simple? I go to a music school. Where am I going to find a mask maker? Not to mention a dozen dancers?

MARNIE

I could help.

He looks at her: really?

MARNIE (CONT'D)

There are kids at Walden who would give their left tit to be part of something spectacular like this. I could make a few calls. Ride herd. Direct...a little.

He smiles at her equivocation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

XANDER

You really think it's that good?

MARNIE

I said "spectacular" as in "a spectacle". But, yeah, I think it's that good.

XANDER

Great. I was afraid I might have to pull a Kepler.

MARNIE

Kepler?

XANDER

Johannes Kepler? The 17th century mathematician?

MARNIE

I know who Kepler is - I took high school science. But what does that have to do with--

XANDER

Kepler was a devout acetic Protestant who worked for astronomer Tycho Brahe. Tycho was also a gluttonous, women-chasing, hard-partying Catholic. He once lost part of his nose in a drunken duel and wore a gold prosthetic the rest of his life.

MARNIE

Sounds like some frat boys I know.

XANDER

Yeah. But, anyway, *Kepler* worked for years on the idea that the orbits of the planets corresponded with a succession of perfect solids that each fit into the next like Russian dolls.

MARNIE

Perfect solids? This is ringing a bell. Is this that "Music of the Spheres" thing?

XANDER

It is! He even wrote music based on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

He hesitates.

MARNIE

Except?

XANDER

His theory disagreed with Tycho's observations by a half a degree of arc. Almost nothing. Here was an idea so perfect and profound that it had to be divine in origin - a glimpse into the mind of God. But he knew that Tycho - Catholic, hedonist, frat-boy Tycho - was too good to have made that big of a mistake.

MARNIE

So...?

XANDER

So, he threw out his life's work and started over again. He eventually came up with the idea of elliptical orbits and the three laws of motion - all still used today. He was very disappointed that they were not as elegant as his original idea, but they had one enormous advantage.

MARNIE

Which was?

XANDER

They actually agreed with reality.

MARNIE

Hmm...But you said you *don't* have to pull a Kepler.

XANDER

(looking directly at her)
No, 'cause Tycho just said the theory matches the observations.

She smiles.

MARNIE

I'm flattered to be compared with an obese, drunken womanizer with a fake nose. But I have a confession to make.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

XANDER
What's that?

MARNIE
Mine's made out of latex. Can't
hardly tell.

She wiggles her nose for emphasis. Xander laughs.

XANDER
Hey, you don't know anybody who
sings bass do you?

EXT. BOSTON COMMONS - DAY

Nate in his usual spot on the bench, Xander sits beside him.

NATE
Little old lady and businessman, 3
o'clock.

XANDER
70s...Italian?...Jewish?

NATE
Who's the guy?

XANDER
Uh...uh...her lawyer? Her
accountant? Her *son!* Definitely
Jewish.

NATE
Bingo! So what do you play?

XANDER
The hatikvah?

Nate shakes his head.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Hava Nagila?

Nate looks at him: are you crazy?

XANDER (CONT'D)
Sunrise, Sunset!

Nate smiles - that's my boy. Xander stands and launches into an instrumental version of the song from Fiddler on The Roof about children growing up. The old lady and her son, moving slowly, finally stop in front of Xander. He gives it everything he's got. The woman begins to cry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUSINESSMAN

You made my mother cry...You made
my mother cry!

She's bawling like a baby now. Her son embraces her. Xander
begins to worry - is he in trouble?

XANDER

S-sor--

BUSINESSMAN

Thank you. Thank you!

He reaches into his wallet and pulls out a bill. He also
takes out a business card and holds it in his hand.

BUSINESSMAN (CONT'D)

If you ever need anything, call me.

He drops the money in the case and places the card in
Xander's hand, which Xander puts in his pocket. The
businessman walks away, an arm around his mother.

XANDER

You are a genius, Nate.

NATE

It was all you. Well, almost all.

Xander bends over to inspect the contents of the case.

XANDER

Wow, a twenty! It's great but not
nearly enough.

NATE

What, you've suddenly developed
expensive tastes?

XANDER

I need 2,000 bucks for the hall for
my opera. I'm working every job I
can. I managed to save about half
of that this summer, but I'm
running out of time to raise the
rest. Plus, I still gotta pay my
rent and eat now and again.

NATE

Your parents can't help?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

My dad's dead and, as it is, my mom had to take out a loan for my tuition.

He sits on the bench.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Sometimes I wonder if I should go back to computer science.

NATE

Computer whatzit?

XANDER

Before I went to GT, I was a computer science major at the University of Wisconsin.

NATE

You're an awfully young fella to have had a previous career.

XANDER

Went to college when I was 16. If I had stayed in comp. sci. I'd have a degree by now and a decent paying job with a future instead of hustling old ladies on the Commons. It might take me another ten years to get a music career off the ground.

NATE

Uh-huh.

XANDER

I was good at it, too. Only one in my class of 200 to get a perfect score on the mid-term. But I kinda blew my final project.

NATE

Howzat?

XANDER

I mis-typed something - all it takes is a comma instead of a period somewhere - and my program wouldn't run. But I didn't have time to fix it 'cause I had a road gig with my band.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NATE

And this gig was more important than your final?

XANDER

Let's put it this way. I could have stayed around the computer center with a bunch of guys carrying slide rules and wearing pocket protectors or go to my gig where really cute girls thought I was sexy.

NATE

Choice is clear to me...Xander, let me ask you something.

XANDER

Shoot.

NATE

Do you love music? I mean really love it?

XANDER

I can't wake up without wanting to play it, can't walk down the street without making up a tune, can't go to sleep without hearing a symphony in my head. In fact I'd say I doubt whether there is a moment in my existence that doesn't relate to music somehow.

NATE

That bad, eh?

XANDER

That bad.

Nate collects his thoughts.

NATE

Xander, I think you've got to take the long view here. So what if it takes you ten years to get established? Let's say you *don't* do music for the next ten years, say you become Mr. Hotshot Computer Scientist for some Fortune 500 company. Ten years from now what do you think you'll still be thinking about every moment of your existence?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

XANDER

Cute girls?

Nate scowls at Xander. Xander grins.

NATE

One other thing, Mr. Smartypants. Despite your lame sense of humor, you are an otherwise likable young man. I would wager you have friends. Now they may not be the kinds of friends who can pony up a thousand bucks. But when you really need help, remember to ask them. They'll be there. That's what friends do.

XANDER

Thanks, Nate.

He stands.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Back to hustling old ladies.

He reaches in his pocket to look at the card the businessman gave him. He turns back to Nate.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Hey, check this out...

INT. XANDER'S APT. - DAY

Xander is on the phone in the kitchen.

XANDER

...so he turns out to be the ticket manager for Fenway Park. I got four tickets for Thursday's game...

EXT. FENWAY PARK - DAY

XANDER (CONT'D)

...behind the dugout!

Fenway Park was built in 1912. It's one of the oldest, most beloved, and intimate of ballparks - and surely the quirkiest. This is the home of "The Triangle", "Pesky's Pole", and the fabled Green Monster - the 37 ft. wall that is the left field fence. The scoreboard shows that it's the top of the 4th and the NY Yankees lead 1-0.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Marnie, Rickie, Xander, and Rimshot sit in a row left to right with Rimshot on the aisle. Xander has a fielder's mitt on and occasionally pounds it with his bare hand.

MARNIE

(shouting)

C'mon, Luis. Strike him out.
That's it, swing away, Bonds. You
couldn't find your dick if you were
looking for it with both hands!!

Pitcher Luis Tiant puts out Yankee Bobby Bonds with a called strike three.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

(standing and hollering)

Whoo-oo!! 2 down, 1 to go.
Whitfield next? You're a *bum*,
Whitfield, you hear me? A *bum*!

She sits back down.

RIMSHOT

Wow, your girlfriend's girlfriend
sure takes baseball seriously.

XANDER

Method acting.

RIMSHOT

What?

XANDER

She's a theater director, ya know.
We're at a baseball game. She's
playing the role of an enthusiastic
fan. So she *becomes* the...

(toward Marnie)

Obnoxious, overbearing, bordering
on psychotic, enthusiastic fan.

Whitfield grounds out to first. The crowd cheers. Marnie leaps to her feet and pounds on her chest.

MARNIE

(yelling like Tarzan)

AH-AH-AH-AH-AH-AH-AH!!!

(chanting)

3 a-way! 3 a-way! 3 a-way!

RICKIE

No, Marnie really is as insane as
she looks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

The Yankees do that to people.

RICKIE

Why the Yankees more than anyone else?

XANDER AND RIMSHOT

Curse of the Bambino.

RICKIE

What's that?

XANDER

People say the Red Sox are cursed because they traded Babe Ruth to the Yankees.

RIMSHOT

They've never won a world series since.

RICKIE

When was that?

XANDER

1920.

A young HOT DOG VENDOR, a hippie with a day-job, long hair sticking out under his white cap, walks by.

RIMSHOT

Anyone wanna dog?

XANDER

Sure.

RICKIE

OK.

MARNIE

Yeah. Extra mustard.

XANDER

Good idea.

RICKIE

Me, too.

Rimshot tries to flag down the vendor.

MARNIE

Burleson's up.
(moaning provocatively)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Ricky, Ricky, hit me with your
sticky!

Hearing her name, Rickie looks at Marnie

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Not you, kiddo.

XANDER

(to Rickie)

It's a shortstop thing.

The crowds cheers as Burlson hits a single.

The hod dog vendor stands beside Rimshot. Xander reaches for his wallet, but Rimshot waves him off.

RIMSHOT

You got the tickets.

He pays the vendor and motions him closer, like he has a secret.

RIMSHOT (CONT'D)

(stage whispering)

We got a major mustard jones thing
happening here. Could I borrow your
jar - for just a moment?

VENDOR

(stage whispering back)

Sure man.

The vendor hands him a large plastic tub of mustard and a plastic knife.

VENDOR (CONT'D)

Take it. I got an extra. I'll get
it on my way back.

They do a complicated knuckle bump.

RIMSHOT

Thanks, bro.

(turning to the others)

3 Fenway dogs with extra mustard.

He passes down the dogs and the tub.

MARNIE

Alright. Yaz is up.

RICKIE

Yaz?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

XANDER

Carl Yastrzemski, left field. The Red Sox's Mighty Casey.

MARNIE

(between bites of her dog)
Careful with that analogy. Mighty Casey struck out. But our Yaz...

SFX: CRACK of a bat. Crowd cheers louder than before.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

(hot dog bits flying)
...just hit a single! Man on first and third. And here comes Fred Lynn!

RIMSHOT

Half of the gold dust twins.

RICKIE

And they are who or what?

XANDER

Fred Lynn and Jim Rice. Both rookies. Both hot.

SFX: Crack of the bat.

RIMSHOT

It's a pop foul. It's coming this way.

XANDER AND MARNIE

I got it!!!

IN SLO-MO:

*They both jump up and reach for the ball over Rickie, colliding. The ball ricochets off of Xander's glove. Time almost stops as it **BOUNCES OFF MARNIE'S HEAD** and caroms back past Xander, out of frame. Meanwhile, hot dogs and the mustard tub are flying. Rickie SCREAMS, pitched down, as three hot dogs and a container filled with extra mustard rain down on her.*

Rickie stands, covered in yellow goo, grossed out and humiliated...

FULL SPEED:

RICKIE

Look at me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MARNIE
Where did the ball go?

XANDER
I don't know I thought you had it.

RICKIE
Doesn't anybody give a *FUCK* about
me?

Marnie and Xander look at Rickie, with their backs to the field. Suddenly, The crowd goes ape-shit.

RIMSHOT
Yeah! A homer.

Marnie and Xander turn to see, but it's too late.

XANDER
I don't believe it.

MARNIE
We missed it.

Rickie SCREAMS in aggravation and, pushing her way past the other three, runs up the aisle in tears.

RIMSHOT
What's she upset about? We're ahead
3 to 1.

Xander and Marnie both go chasing after Rickie.

INT. FENWAY PARK - DAY

They catch up to her in the concourse standing beside a fast food counter. Marnie puts her hand on Rickie's shoulder.

MARNIE
(soothing)
Honey, honey. I'm sorry.

Rickie starts to cry.

MARNIE (CONT'D)
It's alright.

RICKIE
No it's not. Everybody going on and
on about Bambunis and gold dust and
Yazrusky and, meanwhile, I'm
covered in SHIT!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Well, mustard actually.

They look at him, like he's from the moon. Then, without warning, Marnie LICKS Rickie's shirt.

MARNIE

Yeah, not dijon, but not bad.

The sheer bizarreness of this catches Rickie off-guard. Xander plays along and takes a lick, too.

XANDER

Mm...Pretty good, actually.

Rickie begins to see the absurdity. She reaches over to the counter and picks up a tub of mustard like the one the vendor gave Rimshot.

RICKIE

Here, you need some more.

She takes the entire container and dumps it on Xander's head. She turns to Marnie and swaps the empty mustard container with a tub of KETCHUP.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

You, too.

She dumps ketchup all over Marnie's blouse. They are all laughing now.

MARNIE

Group hug.

RICKIE AND XANDER

Group hug.

They all embrace, yellow and red liquid squishing hither and yon. Rimshot appears, holding up a baseball.

RIMSHOT

Look what I found!

XANDER AND MARNIE

Mine! Mine!

INT. ST. AGATHA'S - DAY

Xander and Pat are on very long LADDERS, Pat a few feet higher up than Xander, washing the stained glass windows. Each has a bucket and a sponge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER
(to himself)
Don't look down...Don't look
down...

PAT
C'mon, Xander, we gotta get these
top panels. You really are afraid
of falling, aren't you?

XANDER
I'm not afraid of falling. I'm
afraid of landing.

Pat accidentally loses his rag and it lands on Xander's head
with a SPLAT.

PAT
Sorry.

XANDER
You did that on purpose! That's
twice in a week someone's dumped
something on my head.

PAT
That's right - you smelled of
mustard for three days. Which one
did it? The cute one or the smart
one?

XANDER
They're both cute.

PAT
And both smart?

XANDER
...Yeah.

PAT
You hesitated.

XANDER
I did not.

PAT
Yes, you did.

XANDER
(mock anger)
Did not, you arrogant, Irish, piano-
playing know-it-all.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PAT
(shouting)
Oh yeah? C'mon on up here and say
that.

The sound of a haunting Gregorian chant wafts through the church.

XANDER
Did you hear that?

Suddenly a sonorous deep voice is heard resonating beneath the others. Xander and Pat look at each other and scurry down the ladders.

INT. ST. AGATHA'S RECTORY - DAY

They follow the sound to the rectory where they see Father O'Connell leading an all-male CHOIR dressed in monk's robes exquisitely singing the end of a Sanctus prayer.

CHOIR
*...Benedictus qui venit in nomine
Domini. Hosana in excelsis.*

The boys stand respectfully in back until the piece ends, then burst out in wild applause.

FATHER O'CONNELL
(deep rich bass)
I was unaware we had an audience.

XANDER
That was awesome...Father
O'Connell, I presume. Xander Lewin.

Xander shakes his hand.

FATHER O'CONNELL
(smiling)
Ah, Archbishop Lewin's nephew, I
understand. A pleasure.

XANDER
Say, father, do you and your monk
friends-

FATHER O'CONNELL
Seminary students, actually. They
just like the outfits.

The students hold up the robes with satisfaction.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

Do you and your students ever perform other kinds of gigs besides singing prayers in church?

FATHER O'CONNELL

What did you have in mind?

INT. XANDER'S APT./XANDER'S MOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Xander on the phone in his kitchen, his mom in her kitchen, alternating.

XANDER

...Uh huh...

MOM

(drunk again)

...and those *bastards* didn't even have the courtesy to call me back.

XANDER

Yeah, I understand, mom.

MOM

You got the first check, didn't you son? I just made it out to cash 'cause I couldn't find the damn tuition form with all the official stuff on it.

XANDER

Yeah, I got it. Gave it to them already. I'll let them know the balance coming as soon as...as soon we can get it. It'll all work out...somehow. Hey, you didn't get a chance to check out those meetings I told you about did you?

MOM

Xander, those meetings are filled with a bunch of losers and drunks. You don't think I'm like them, do you?

XANDER

No, of course not, mom.

MOM

Xander, you're such a good kid. I love you, you know.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER

I love you, too, mom. G'night.

He hangs up. He looks torn by an internal dilemma. He reaches to pick up the phone. To his surprise, it RINGS.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Hi, Rickie...sure I like camping...All three of us? Why not?...Provincetown? No, I've never been there but I'm sure...

EXT. CAPE COD, RT. 6 - DAY

XANDER (O.S. ON PHONE)

...it's gonna be fun.

Xander is standing, thumb out, as Rickie and Marnie rest on their backpacks by the side of the road beside a telephone pole looking bored. It's clear they've been here awhile. Another car goes by.

RICKIE

(exasperated)

Oh, come on, let me handle this.

She walks in front of him, and takes off her vest, revealing a see-through blouse underneath. She strikes a provocative pose and sticks out her thumb.

XANDER

Oh, the old "It Happened One Night" routine, eh?

RICKIE

What?

XANDER

You know, Clark Gable, Claudette Colbert--

At that moment, a station wagon with three fit, handsome, well-groomed, young men approaches, slows...and drives on. Rickie barely has time to register disappointment when the same thing happens again with an almost identical group of young men.

RICKIE

What the fuck? Am I losing my touch?

Marnie stands, digs in her backpack, and pulls out a magic marker.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARNIE

No they're just not buying what
she's selling....Xander, c'mere.

He goes over to her. In a quick series of motions she unbuttons his shirt, removes it, and writes something on his exposed chest. She stands back to admire her work.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Take off your pants.

XANDER

(sotto voce)

But I don't have any underwear on.

MARNIE

So much the better.

She rips down an out-of-date poster off the telephone pole and writes something on it.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Take 'em off.

He does, not happy about it. She hands him the poster.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Hold this where it counts.

He stands there dumbfounded.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Go on.

Xander walks over to the road, his bare backside exposed, holding the sign over his privates, the writing facing the oncoming traffic.

RICKIE

Hey, that's cheating!

MARNIE

All's fair in love and
transportation.

POV from oncoming traffic. Xander's chest reads

RIDE ME

The strategically placed sign below it says

2 P TOWN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Almost instantly, a van with several young men dressed and groomed almost identically to those before, SLAMS ON ITS BRAKES and stops a few yards beyond them.

MARNIE (CONT'D)
 (motioning to the others)
 Did I mention that P. Town is the
 gay mecca? Let's go!

EXT. PROVINCETOWN - DAY

Marnie and Xander stand in front of a BICYCLE RENTAL SHOP. He has his clothes back on, but the shirt is still unbuttoned.

XANDER
 So you don't think it was at all
 deceptive?

MARNIE
 I just let 'em know where we were
 headed.

XANDER
 Uh-huh. Next time let me make a
 contribution in my own way, ok?

MARNIE
 (poking him)
 Hey, it wouldn't have worked if you
 didn't such a cute little chest.

XANDER
 Cute? Little? I'm not sure whether
 I've just been complimented or
 insulted.

Rickie comes out of the bike rental store, flush with excitement and waving a SCRAP OF PAPER.

RICKIE
 They gave me directions to a
 camping spot that is right beside a
 nude beach!

Rickie is psyched. Xander and Marnie, not so much. Rickie hands them each a plastic TELEPHONE TIE.

RICKIE (CONT'D)
 Put these on - they'll keep your
 pant leg from getting caught.

Rickie attaches the tie to her right legging with an audible ZZZIP!, puts on her backpack, and hops on her bike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Marnie and Xander follow suit less quickly, Marnie carrying the tent and Xander carrying both his and Marnie's backpacks.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

C'mon!

Xander, bringing up the rear, looks down at the words RIDE ME magic marked on his chest. He tries to erase them by licking his thumb and rubbing. No dice.

XANDER

Hey, how do I get this stuff off?

EXT. CAPE COD DIRT ROAD - DAY

The three ride with youthful abandon past the picturesque sand dunes, salt marshes, and freshwater ponds. Rickie comes to a halt at the crest of a small hill. The others stop beside her. In front of them beckons the expanse of the Atlantic Ocean, glistening beneath a blue blue sky flecked with cirrus clouds.

RICKIE

(mesmerized)

Wow...

XANDER

Yeah...

They breathe in for a moment. The beach below them is empty. Rickie pulls the crumpled scrap of paper out of her pocket and looks at it this way and that.

RICKIE

This looks like where those guys who gave us the ride told me the nude beach was.

Marnie turns her bike around.

MARNIE

I'm going to go pitch the tent. I saw a spot just over the ridge that has a perfect windbreak.

XANDER

I'll help you.

MARNIE

No, you kids enjoy. Public nakedness is more Rickie's thing than mine.

EXT. CAPE COD BEACH - DAY

Marnie goes back as Rickie and Xander park their bikes and start to disrobe. Xander manages to get his telephone tie off over his foot, but Rickie's is too tight to slip off. Otherwise completely naked, her jeans are stuck, inside out, over her foot.

RICKIE

Hey, babe, help me with this, ok?

Xander, now naked, pulls her pant leg up and examines the tie. He tries pulling it to no avail.

XANDER

It's stuck pretty good.

RICKIE

Shit, Marnie has the pocketknife.

XANDER

I could try chewing it off.

RICKIE

Are you serious?

XANDER

Yeah, I have pretty sharp teeth. At least that's what my sister always said.

He gnashes melodramatically.

RICKIE

Give it a shot.

Xander kneels and begins chewing. From a distance it looks like some kind of exotic oral sex.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's it, baby. You're gettin' it. Keep doing what you're--

Bright sunlight reflects off Xander's bare bottom, stuck high in the air. Rickie gasps, eyes wide open, looking behind Xander. He turns, the RIDE ME inscription still prominent on his chest.

It's Prof. Choudhury and Erik, fully clothed. Apparently on a walk by the beach, they have now stopped dead in their tracks.

XANDER

Prof. Choudhury. Erik.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Everyone behaves as if *absolutely nothing is amiss*.

PROF. CHOUDHURY
Xander. And...

Xander gestures to Rickie who smiles warmly.

XANDER
This is my friend, Rickie.

RICKIE
Nice to meet you. Xander has often
spoken of you.

Xander gives her a "stuff it" side glance. Prof. Choudhury
looks out at the ocean.

PROF. CHOUDHURY
Gorgeous day, isn't it?

ERIK
Lovely.

XANDER
Beautiful.

The Prof. and Erik look at each other.

PROF. CHOUDHURY
We'll just be mosey-ing along. See
you in September.

XANDER
See you then.

Everyone waves goodbye and they walk on. Marnie comes down
from over the ridge, fully clothed.

MARNIE
Who was that?

Xander and Rickie dress quickly.

XANDER
(embarrassed)
This teacher who's always busting
my chops and his star pupil.
(shakes his head)
I can't wait until Erik starts
telling everybody about running
into me here.
(Bavarian accent)
"He was completely naked and
chewing something on her ankle.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER (CONT'D)

*Doesn't he know that's not where
it's located...?"*

The two figures recede in the distance. But they're not too far away for Marnie to see Prof. Choudhury put his arm around Erik's shoulders.

MARNIE

I don't think they're going to say anything. I'll bet GT has the same non-fraternization rules between faculty and students that most schools have.

XANDER

(shrugs)

One of our more famous faculty members actually *married* a just-former student.

Erik puts his arm around the Prof in response. It's rather sweet.

MARNIE

They're not getting married any time soon. Not until the laws change.

(wistfully)

Someday...

Xander looks at her and gets a glimpse of what it's like to be gay in 1975 and know that doors open to straight people are sealed shut for you.

Rickie pulls the piece of paper with the nude beach directions out of her pocket and looks at it again.

RICKIE

Maybe this wasn't the place after all...

EXT. CAPE COD BEACH - NIGHT

A small TENT is setup on the lee side or the ridge. A crackling CAMPFIRE sends embers up into the air. Xander, sitting cross-legged, plays a happy uptempo tune on the harmonica. Marnie and Rickie dance.

FADE TO:

They sit by the fire and roast marshmallows on sticks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALL
 (singing)
*...ate it anyway, ate it anyway,
 ate it anyway, just now...*

FADE TO:

The fire is low. Rickie has her head on Marnie's lap and her bare feet on Xander's. Marnie tenderly strokes and Xander slowly rubs. Rickie's eyes are closed, in heaven.

MARNIE
 (singing softly)
*Hush-a-bye, don't you cry, Go to
 sleepy little baby...*

FADE TO:

INT. TENT - NIGHT

The three lie side by side, Rickie in the middle, each in his/her own sleeping bag, sleeping blissfully.

FADE TO:

Rickie sleeps. Xander stirs. Through the flap of the tent, he sees Marnie, standing on the ridgeline, her back to him, arms open. He quietly gets up.

EXT. CAPE COD BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Xander sits beside her. The very beginnings of a sunrise are visible on the ocean horizon. The WIND is picking up. Marnie speaks with a strangely garbled voice.

MARNIE
 (garbled)
*...Now when the child of morning,
 rosy-fingered Dawn appeared,
 Telemachus rose and dressed
 himself...*

Rickie, wiping sleepies from her eyes, walks up beside Xander.

RICKIE
 What is she doing?

MARNIE
 (garbled)
*He bound his sandals on his comely
 feet...*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER
Homer's Odyssey...as done by
Demosthenes.

RICKIE
What?

Marnie gives them a dirty look.

MARNIE
(garbled)
*...girded **his sword** about his
shoulder.*

XANDER
Demosthenes was a Greek orator who
honed his skills by shouting
against the roar of the surf--

MARNIE
(garbled)
*...and left his room looking like
an immortal god.*

She turns and spits out a MOUTHFUL OF PEBBLES onto the
ground.

XANDER
...and speaking with pebbles in his
mouth.

RICKIE
Ewww!

MARNIE
Demosthenes didn't have an audience
for his practice sessions. Makes it
a lot harder.

XANDER
That didn't look so hard.

MARNIE
Oh yeah? Let's see you try, Sir
Laurence Olivier.

XANDER
Sure.

He gathers some pebbles.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Granted, Homer is a challenge. But
with a suitable modern text...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He stuffs the pebbles in his mouth. He raises a hand with index finger extended, and speaks in slow grandiloquent tones - as well as he can.

XANDER (CONT'D)
(garbled)
I tot...I taw...a puddy...tat.

Marnie and Rickie laugh and throw pebbles at him. He quickly spits the stones out of his mouth.

XANDER (CONT'D)
Ow! That hurts!

The wind picks up another notch.

RICKIE
Hey guys, check this out.

Rickie is standing on the ridgeline, arms wide, leaning forward. The wind is so strong that it supports her weight, *almost as if she were flying*. Standing to either side of her, Marnie and Xander find that they, too, can lean far into the wind without falling over. Their outstretched fingers brush each other.

Pulling back and up, we see the red light of the rising sun against the purple clouds, the light skittering across the waves; and three insanelly happy young people, who have, for a moment, transcended gravity.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander and Marnie sit at the kitchen table poring over a stage diagram.

MARNIE
So then, Lea goes upstage-left to the platform while Jesse remains mid-downstage right. Kali leads the rest of the chorus across the front of the stage...

She slides her finger on the paper for emphasis.

MARNIE (CONT'D)
And they exit, stage right, singing the reprise, leaving the last light to fade on Lea.

They lean back.

XANDER
That's gonna work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARNIE

You bet it will. Won't be a dry eye in the house.

He stands.

XANDER

I'm making some espresso. Want some?

MARNIE

Sure. What happened to the O-cha?

XANDER

Needed something with a little more zip...

He goes about making the espresso.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Just like *Worlds* did before you directed it "a little". What made you decide to help out with this underfunded and over-stuffed grandiosity?

MARNIE

Well, I love the story. Here is a woman who has everything - a heroic triumph, supernatural gifts, a daughter, true love - and she throws it all away because she's afraid of losing control - which she does anyway. Poor girl needed to take a more existentialist approach.

XANDER

Oh?

MARNIE

Yeah, you know, you can't change your birthday, but you can change your attitude about it? If she had just embraced the change instead of fighting it...well, that's everybody's story, isn't it?

Xander brings the espresso over and pours them each a cup.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Mmm.

He luxuriates in her sensual enjoyment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

XANDER

Or maybe she should have tried phenomenology.

MARNIE

Phenomenology?

XANDER

The idea that there is no independent reality. The world exists only as a construct of consciousness. You make your own universe, anyway. Why not make one you like?

MARNIE

(shaking her head)

That's solipsism...Fuck that!

Xander is a little thrown by her vehemence.

XANDER

No, solipsism is like, "I'm the only thing that exists and everything else is a figment of my imagination"? Phenomenology just says reality is what you make it.

MARNIE

Look, I believe there is such a thing as objective reality. I think that's why your dad cared so much about whether or not you remembered things the way he did.

She drains her cup.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Like, let's always remember that the first cup of espresso you made for me was a damn fine one.

They lift cups and clink.

XANDER

I love this. I can't have this kind of egghead discussion with...you know...

MARNIE

I know. I love it, too.

She looks in his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He leans over and KISSES her. She kisses him back.

He snaps back to reality. She is still sitting back, un-kissed. She looks at her watch.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

I gotta go. See you in church.

XANDER

See you there.

She stands and blows him a kiss. His eyes follow her down the hallway as she goes out the front door.

He gets up and goes to the phone, picks up the receiver and dials. He waits. And waits. Then hangs up.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

SUPER: Monday, Sept. 1, 1975

Xander and Pat are putting up posters for Worlds in Collision. It has a logo of a giant condor in the style of an Egyptian frieze. One holds while the other brushes on glue. Xander looks at the one they just put up, exhaustion beginning to creep into his features for the first time.

XANDER

October 24th is coming on like a freight train. We've got so much to do, and I still have some serious buckaroos to save before then or I lose the hall. I gotta take on another job, or something.

PAT

Xander, you're toast as it is. Why don't we just postpone?

XANDER

(exasperated)

Because you know as well as I do, everybody's booked. We lose Lea and Jesse to that production of Godspell downtown, and half the band has gigs every weekend through Christmas. And then we're into next year and the *real* flakiness begins. No, it's either October 24th or never.

EXT. BOSTON COMMONS - DAY

Xander, violin case slung over his shoulder, walks to his regular spot. He looks at the bench - no Nate. He spies the ice cream vendor who is, as usual, glued to the game on his radio.

XANDER

Hey, have you seen Nate?

ICE CREAM VENDOR

Nate?

XANDER

The old guy who usually sits on the bench when I play.

ICE CREAM VENDOR

No.

Xander looks around, not sure what to do.

XANDER

Look, if you see him, tell him that Xander - that's me - is going to be really busy and won't be here much for awhile. OK?

ICE CREAM VENDOR

OK.

Xander looks around, clearly agitated. He ignores the spill from the radio announcer.

ANNOUNCER

...and the Sox lose 4-2, for their third in a row.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - NIGHT

In the kitchen. Xander is on the phone.

XANDER

Pick up, Rickie...C'mon...Gettin' tired of this crap.

He hangs up. He looks at the wall and see's Marnie's name. He reaches for the phone but decides not to call.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: Thursday, Oct. 16, 1975

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The tumult of the hallway spills through the open door of the office. Xander at his usual place at the desk. The clock reads 12:57.

XANDER

(deepening his voice)

...But you did receive the \$700 check? Yes, I understand the balance was due on the first, but there has been a resources allocation problem in my department and...what?.. Wait, wait, wait, don't do that! Could I please get just one more extension? Please?...Yes, *today*, I promise. Thank you *so much*!

Xander takes a deep breath. He grabs a letter opener and *picks the lock* on Mrs. Filipetti's desk. He pulls out a small metal box. It says LATE TUITION PAYMENTS across the top. He opens it and takes a piece of paper out. It is a check for \$1,000 made out to CASH and signed by Erica Lewin. He glances up at the clock - 12:59. He quickly sticks the check in his pocket. He shuts the lid on the box and closes Mrs. Filipetti's drawer just as she walks in.

MRS. FILIPETTI

Hi, Xander. Any calls?

She goes to hang up her coat.

XANDER

(nervous)

No, not really.

MRS. FILIPETTI

Not really?

XANDER

No. None.

Xander grabs his books and hurries out the door.

MRS. FILIPETTI

Good-b...

He's gone. She shrugs. She turns on the radio.

ANNOUNCER

...lost to Cincinnati 6-2 today in Game 5 of the World Series. Tuesday's game is a must win to keep the fading Red Sox hopes alive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The phone RINGS. She turns down the radio and answers.

MRS. FILIPETTI
Prof. Lewin?

INT. XANDER'S APT. - NIGHT

SUPER: Tuesday Oct. 21, 1975/ Game 6 of the World Series

The kitchen. Xander is heating up the head of a clay pot drum over an open flame while intently listening to the game on the radio. Rimshot sits at the table.

ANNOUNCER
...And that retires the side with the score still tied 6 to 6. So now it's the bottom of the 12th and the leadoff for Boston is Carlton Fisk.

RIMSHOT
Ok, now hold it a little closer. But keep it moving so no one spot gets too hot.

ANNOUNCER
And it's one ball, no strikes. Darcy gets set...he throws...

RIMSHOT
Keep it moving...

ANNOUNCER
...and it's a HIT down the left field line. It's going, going, GONE! Carlton Fisk has just won game 6 of the World Series with a home run in the bottom of the 12th!

XANDER AND RIMSHOT
Yaaaaaaay!!!!!!!!!!!!

The head of the drum catches on fire and POPS explosively. Xander jumps back.

RIMSHOT
(laughing)
You busted your drum, man.

The phone RINGS. Xander answers, Rimshot still laughing like a maniac in the background.

XANDER
Hi!...You've been a hard one to reach...Great, I'll see you then.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He hangs up. Rimshot and Xander dance for joy around the kitchen while screaming like banshees.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

SUPER: Wed. Oct. 22, 1975/ Last Game of the World Series

A cafe with an outdoor section on Landsdowne street, across from Fenway Park. The stadium lights spill into the street and occasional ROARS from the crowd inside can be heard. Hundreds of people are milling about the street, wearing all variety of Red Sox paraphernalia, some carrying radios. Throughout the scene we hear bits and pieces of sports radio announcers giving the play by play.

ANNOUNCER

...bottom of the ninth and the Sox
are down 4-3. Juan Beniquez comes
to bat...

Marnie and Xander approach almost simultaneously and do a double-take.

XANDER

(happily surprised)
I didn't know you were coming.

MARNIE

Me, you, likewise.

XANDER

They're pretty informal at this
place - I think we just take any
open table. This good?

He gestures to an outdoor table for three. The menus are already on the table.

MARNIE

Perfect...Kind of amazing there's a
table free when they're so many
people.

The crowd GROANS.

ANNOUNCER

And Beniquez is out with a fly ball
to right field. Bob Montgomery up
next, pinch hitting for Doyle.

XANDER

Who can eat at a time like this?

He gestures melodramatically toward the stadium.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARNIE

I can.

She picks up a menu. Rickie works her way through the crowd and comes over to the table, still standing.

RICKIE

Wow, you're both here already. I didn't know it would be so crowded. What's going on?

She gestures toward the stadium. Another loud GROAN comes from inside, matched by the crowd in the street.

ANNOUNCER

...and it's two away. Yastrzemski is up. Boston's best - and last hope.

MARNIE

A little thing called the World Series.

XANDER

Take a seat.

RICKIE

No, I'd rather stand.

Marnie and Xander look at each other. This can't be good.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

I really tried to make this work. I did. But...

MARNIE

...it's stressful to have your loyalties divided between two people.

RICKIE

No, not really, it's just that...

XANDER

...it's confusing when you're not sure of your sexual identity.

RICKIE

(getting ticked off)
No, not that, at *all!* Look, the real problem is that neither of you can ever let me finish a sentence without suggesting, improving, or correcting what I say.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RICKIE (CONT'D)

And what's more, I don't give a
shit about Fibonacci, or
Shakespearean proto-feminism, or
the Curse of the Bambuni!

A PASSERBY hears this last bit.

PASSERBY

Bambino.

RICKIE

Fuck you!!!

She collects herself a little.

RICKIE (CONT'D)

I just wanted to let you both know
that I have fallen in love with
someone else and we're moving to
California together.

MARNIE

(dumbfounded)

You're dumping me? Us?

RICKIE

Yes. Come on Adriana. We're going.

Adriana, lurking nearby, appears and puts an arm around
Rickie.

ADRIANA

(nodding)

Marnie.

MARNIE

(quietly)

Fuck you very much, Adriana.

They walk off into the crowd.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

(exploding)

And your acting SUCKS!

ANNOUNCER

...and it's all over. Carl
Yastrzemski is out with a fly ball
to centerfield.

The crowd SCREAMS IN AGONY. People are weeping. A man kicks a
car and its alarm GOES OFF. Two others are POUNDING on trash
cans with baseball bats.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

XANDER
It's getting ugly out here.

MARNIE
Sure is.

They survey the scene of desolation and despair as the hopes of Red Sox fans have been dashed once more.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Xander, depressed, enters and sees Mrs. Filipetti crying at her desk.

XANDER
Mrs. Filipetti, I know you're a Red Sox fan but--

MRS. FILIPETTI
Oh, Xander, Mr. George died.

He takes in the black bunting hung around the plaque on the wall.

XANDER
The President of the school?

He puts a hand on her shoulder.

MRS. FILIPETTI
No, his father. He's the one who founded George Tech. Steven became President when he retired. He was the sweetest man.

Mrs. Filipetti blows her nose into a tissue with a great HONK. The phone RINGS.

MRS. FILIPETTI (CONT'D)
Yes, you've reached George Tech, but this is the Dean's office.

She puts her hand over the phone.

MRS. FILIPETTI (CONT'D)
Xander, do you know anything about a Prof. Lewin?

XANDER
Give it to me.

He takes the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER (CONT'D)
 (not bothering to change
 his voice)
 Yes, this is he...But you received
 the balance...Not endorsed?...No
 problem, I'll be right over...What?
 You did?...Yesterday?...But you
 don't understand - I *have* to have
 that space. But...but...
 (very quietly)
 Thank you.

Xander hangs up, devastated. Mrs. Filipetti, who knows more
 than she's saying, busies herself with something at her desk.

MRS. FILIPETTI
 Xander, I almost forgot, the Dean
 wants to speak to you. Something
 about your tuition.

She looks up. He's gone.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander, depressed, sits at the kitchen table while Rimshot is
 busily stuffing his kit into his bass drum.

XANDER
 How did everything get to be so
 fucked up? My girlfriend dumps me.
 I lose Walden so my show's kaput.
 And on top of it, the Dean wants to
 see me. I'm gonna get expelled, at
 the very least.

RIMSHOT
 Aw, c'mon, Xan. Don't allow your
 negativity to take over. Think
 positive thoughts. Be the change.

XANDER
 (not buying it)
 Unauthorized use of administrative
 phones... impersonating a
 professor...

RIMSHOT
 That's not so bad.

XANDER
 Stealing a \$1,000 check?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RIMSHOT
 (pauses)
 That's bad.

Rimshot lifts his bass drum.

RIMSHOT (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry, I got to go to my gig.
 But I promise, bro, that no matter
 what happens, I'll come visit you
 in prison.

XANDER
 Thanks, man.

Rimshot leaves and the door closes behind him. A few seconds
 pass. There is a KNOCK on the door.

XANDER (CONT'D)
 Forget your keys?

He goes to the door and opens it. It's Marnie. Wordlessly,
 she comes in. They look at each other for a moment. Then she
 puts her arms around him and KISSES him, tenderly.

She takes his hand and leads him to the bedroom.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: Friday, Oct. 24, 1975

Xander sits on the bench, looking like a man awaiting
 execution. Mrs. Filipetti comes out of the Dean's personal
 office to the right.

MRS. FILIPETTI
 He'll see you now, Xander.

Xander stands slowly.

XANDER
 Mrs. Filipetti?

MRS. FILIPETTI
 Yes, Xander.

XANDER
 You know I never meant to hurt
 anyone. I was just trying to get my
 show up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. FILIPETTI

I know, Xander. But whatever our motivations are, sooner or later we have to face the consequences of our actions, don't we?

XANDER

Yes.

She leads him to the Dean's inner office. He stands before the Dean's desk as Mrs. Filipetti leaves.

DEAN GREEN

Take a seat.

Xander takes a chair facing the Dean.

DEAN GREEN (CONT'D)

There are a few items I'd like to discuss with you. As you know--

XANDER

Look, I can make this simple--

DEAN GREEN

I believe I was saying something?

Xander shuts up.

DEAN GREEN (CONT'D)

As you know, our founder, Mr. George, died this week. He was man who stood for integrity, industry, and, especially, *honesty*.

Xander looks about, not terribly interested in learning the specifics of his coming crucifixion. He spies a PHOTO on the wall with black bunting around it. There are two standing figures wearing suits. Something about it attracts his attention. He rises and goes to get a closer look. Dean Green is puzzled by his distracted behavior.

Something is dawning on Xander.

XANDER

Who?...

DEAN GREEN

That's Nate with me on the day we opened this institution, twenty five years ago.

XANDER

Nate?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DEAN GREEN

Yes. Nathaniel George. Father of President Steven George. And my uncle, actually.

ZOOM IN on the picture. It is Nate, the old guy from the park, twenty-five years younger, next to a young Dean Green. Xander stumbles back to his seat, overwhelmed.

XANDER

(realizing)
The family business...

DEAN GREEN

I don't know how he knew about you, but apparently Mr. George was very impressed.

XANDER

I can't believe he's gone.

DEAN GREEN

Yes, a great loss. But mitigated by the instructions he left concerning you.

XANDER

I'm not being expelled?...Or arrested?

DEAN GREEN

(this wacky kid!)
Uh...no. In his will, Mr. George established an award to be given out every year to the student who most exemplifies the spirit the school was founded on: self-reliance, resourcefulness, hard work, and, above all, a unique vision. You are the first recipient of the Nathaniel George Memorial Award. Congratulations!

Dean Green stands and offers a hand to shake. Xander, still reeling from the loss of his friend, is slow to respond.

DEAN GREEN (CONT'D)

There is an honorarium that goes with the award.

XANDER

Honorarium? That means money, doesn't it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DEAN GREEN

Yes, \$3,000. However, we've taken the liberty of deducting your current tuition balance. Mrs. Filipetti tells me your mother's check mysteriously disappeared from our files recently - please tell her to put a stop payment on it. Nate also requested that the facilities and resources of the college be put at your disposal for the performance of your...

He consults a sheet on his desk.

DEAN GREEN (CONT'D)

..."neo-mythic science fiction rock opera inspired by the cosmological theories of Immanuel Velikovsky and the book of Exodus."

Xander shakes his head and speaks quietly.

XANDER

It's a little late for that.

INT. ST. AGATHA'S - DAY

Xander sits in the front row of the church and looks up at the light streaming through the newly-cleaned stained-glass windows. Sister Eileen enters from the back.

SISTER EILEEN

Would you like some company?

XANDER

(not caring)
Whatever you like.

She sits beside him.

SISTER EILEEN

Xander, I heard about your friend. I'm sorry. We're you very close?

Tears well up in his eyes. He wipes them away.

XANDER

No. Yes. You know, I never cried after my dad died. My *dad!* Maybe because it was so long coming and I got to tell him I loved him before the end. I dunno.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER (CONT'D)

Nate was just some funny old guy I knew from the park. He made me laugh and he gave me advice about what music to play. But I never got to say goodbye.

Overcome with emotion, he puts his head in his hands.

SISTER EILEEN

Maybe you should cry a little for both of them, son.

She strokes his back like a child.

XANDER

Sister...I have a confession make.

SISTER EILEEN

Confession is good for the soul.

XANDER

My uncle isn't really an archbishop.

SISTER EILEEN

I know. It's kind of a requirement in my line of work to know who the archbishop is.

His head pops up.

XANDER

Father O'Connell, too?

She looks at him like, whaddyathink?

XANDER (CONT'D)

Yeah...that makes sense.

His thoughts drift off.

SISTER EILEEN

Xander, it's good to grieve, but we have to deal with the here and now as well. Don't you need to hurry to prepare for your premiere tonight?

XANDER

Didn't you get that part of the news? We don't have any place to perform it.

SISTER EILEEN

That's not what I heard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She nods toward the back. Marnie enters, a rolled up poster under her arm, followed by a procession of people carrying theater light-fixtures, sound equipment, risers, and platforms.

MARNIE

(gesturing to the crew)

Take the grid up to the choir loft.
Put those cabinets over there.

XANDER

I thought you said this place was
no kind of theater.

MARNIE

It's not. But would you rather to
try to make it work or have your
head explode?

Pat comes in holding two music stands aloft like prizes followed by a half dozen other students laden down with armfuls of stands.

PAT

Over here, guys.

Rimshot enters carrying his drum kit piled in his bass drum followed by the rest of Xander's band.

RIMSHOT

Have no fear, the band is here. We
gots bangin' beats to move your
feets.

XANDER

Awesome.

Then Xander remembers something.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Jesus, we got 800 posters up around
town saying Worlds in Collision,
Oct. 24th at *Walden*.

MARNIE

Check this out...

She unrolls the poster under her arm and holds it up. It's more or less the same poster as before but now it says, in big letters at the top:

CONCERT FOR NATE

TONIGHT!!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ST. AGATHA'S

MARNIE (CONT'D)

Hope you don't mind.

He examines the poster.

XANDER

No...this is perfect. Every student and faculty member at GT has to come now. You really *do* have a knack for marketing. *If* we can get them up in time.

Father O'Connell enters with his seminary students, still wearing their monk's robes, glue pots at the ready and posters in hand.

FATHER O'CONNELL

Poster committee reporting for duty, captain.

He salutes Marnie who salutes him back. Xander turns to Marnie.

XANDER

I think I love you.

MARNIE

That's nice. But it's time to move your *tuchus*. We gotta a lot of work to do if we're gonna put on a show in...

(looks at her watch)

...nine hours.

INT. ST. AGATHA'S - NIGHT

The church has been transformed. Where there was a sanctuary is now a stage with risers. Twelve music stands with microphones face the audience in front of where the altar normally would be. The entire space between that and the pews is crammed with forty musicians including strings, brass, winds, timpani, a harp and, at the center, Xander's rock band, including Rimshot on drums. At the very front is a conductor's podium. Everything about it has a very slapdash, scotch-tape and glue feel, but effective, nonetheless.

The place is packed. Students, faculty, and the occasional recognizable face like the ice cream vendor, and the hippie hot dog guy from the ball game.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Xander walks out wearing a modified tux and tails with a boho twist. He taps the podium with his baton and the music begins.

Eerie atmospheric sounds and moody lights evolve into hypnotic harp arpeggios. The female lead, LEA, stands front and center with a spot on her.

LEA

*A new world's coming/ Can you see
the sky?...*

The monks sing the chant they sang earlier as the beat picks up under them.

FADE TO:

A musically agitated number with angular rhythms and sudden changes in dynamics.

SINGERS

*And a hail of stones is falling,
Barad!*

Dramatic lights end abruptly as the orchestra smashes down on a dark chord.

FADE TO:

An eerie solo sung by the albino avatar, the actor holding a white mask in front of his microphone as Marnie planned.

Xander looks back at Marnie, sitting in the front row. He nods in acknowledgement.

AVATAR

*Oh Lea, touch my face/Please don't
be afraid...*

FADE TO:

A love song sung to LEA by the male lead, JESSE.

JESSE

*You are an ocean/And I am merely a
boat without sails...*

A graceful mixture of dance and circus arts is in the background, a duet between a man and a woman.

FADE TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The DANCERS from the dance class Xander accompanied, dressed in gossamer outfits, embody a giant condor, carrying Jesse on their back as he sings a song about it.

Marnie smiles, and checks out the cute girls in tights.

FADE TO:

Time Passes, the piece that Doug - the guy who stomped out of rehearsal - couldn't get right. Father O'Connell nails it.

CHORUS

*Time passes much too quickly/Time
passes much too slowly...*

FADE TO:

Lea is up on a platform, separated from Jesse, while the girl playing her daughter, KALI, leads the chorus across the stage, bolstered by the dancers and circus arts people who join them in spectacular and graceful movement.

CHORUS (CONT'D)

*...We're like blind men who've
regained out sight/ and it's time
to start again...*

As Xander puts down his baton, the audience springs to its feet and APPLAUDS, and APPLAUDS, and APPLAUDS.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - NIGHT

Xander lies in the bed, naked, half-asleep. He sees Marnie, also naked, sitting on a chair, staring out the window, smoking a cigarette.

She looks over at him, her face hard to read.

MARNIE

Do you want to make love?

XANDER

Yeah.

She gets in beside him and they snuggle.

XANDER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Make love to me like I was a woman.

She climbs on top of him and they kiss.

INT. XANDER'S APT. - MORNING

Xander wakes up. The sun is high. Marnie's gone.

XANDER

Marnie?

He gets up then sees a handwritten letter by the side of the bed and reads it.

MARNIE (V.O.)

Can't do it anymore, kiddo. Sorry.
It's true, I got bonked on the head
- but I got better. I love you,
Xander. Surprisingly, I really do.
But when the theory doesn't agree
with the observations, you have to
do a Kepler and toss the theory.

There is a heart and the signature, Marnie. The letter drops from his hand. He goes to the window and looks out.

XANDER

(softly)

Marnie...

EXT. HARVARD YARD - DAY

SUPER: Sunday, September 8, 2018

Students mill this way and that, looking oddly a lot like they did in 1975. There are signs for various political causes and an LGBT welcome center.

Xander, 40+ years older and almost as many pounds heavier, crosses the quad followed by several dotting young people. A GUSHY YOUNG WOMAN and an EARNEST YOUNG MAN walk in step with him.

GUSHY YOUNG WOMAN

Prof. Lewin, I want you to know how excited we are that you'll be able to make it back from UCLA to see our revival of your piece this fall.

XANDER

I'm not really a professor, you know. I only guest lecture in between my film scoring gigs.

Her face says she doesn't know what a "gig" is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

XANDER (CONT'D)

Jobs...Had to come anyway - our youngest is a freshman here this fall.

EARNEST YOUNG MAN

People consider *Worlds In Collision* to be an archetypal example of 70s rock neo-classicism. You're recognized as one of the grandfathers of altprog.

XANDER

(amused)
Grandfather, eh?

They have reached the main gate. Xander looks at his watch.

XANDER (CONT'D)

I gotta scoot. It was great to meet you two.

They wave goodbye. He turns to see some jugglers performing on the street.

FLASH IN SLO-MO:

Rickie stepping in and juggling with street performers.

BACK TO SCENE

He smiles and hails a cab, WHISTLING loudly.

EXT. ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM COURTYARD - DAY

A wedding ceremony. POV from the back. The traditional bride in white and groom in a tux.

MINISTER

And now, with the power vested in me by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I pronounce you married.

They turn to face each other, revealing that the "groom" is Marnie, now in her sixties, still looking fit and trim. A close up on the Minister reveals s/he is trans.

MINISTER (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

You may kiss the brides.

The POV is Xander's, standing in the back.

INT. ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM EVENT ROOM - DAY

The reception. Marnie and her bride, REGINA, 50s, in the receiving line, Marnie first. Xander approaches.

MARNIE

Xander!

She hugs him and kisses him on the cheek. He feels a little awkward.

XANDER

Marnie.

MARNIE

I'm so glad you could make it. Have you met Regina?

He shakes hands with Regina.

XANDER

A pleasure. Congratulations!

She isn't sure who he is.

REGINA

Thank you...?

MARNIE

Xander - an old, old friend.

There is a moment of awkward silence.

XANDER

Jennifer is helping Nathan move into his dorm. I need to head back to help out. Our plane leaves tonight.

MARNIE

Next time you're back in town, why don't the four of us get together?

XANDER

That would be really nice.

He turns to Regina.

XANDER (CONT'D)

Well, congratulations again. You married a terrific lady.

REGINA

I think so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She affectionately puts an arm around Marnie. Xander turns to go.

MARNIE

Oh, I almost forgot. I have something for you.

She pulls an letter-size envelope out of her jacket and hands it to him.

MARNIE (CONT'D)

A little reading for the plane.

XANDER

Thanks.

He steps back as other well-wishers come to offer their congratulations.

INT. TAXI - DAY

The Gardner Museum recedes out the rear-view window.

XANDER

Harvard Square.

Sports radio comes from the front.

TAXI RADIO

"...Aviles, Pedroia, and Gonzales for the Red Sox..."

He opens up the envelope and, inside, is an article about the history of Coolidge Corner. A section has been circled in red. He reads aloud.

XANDER

"...As the land became subdivided and crisscrossed with roads, the corner of Harvard and Beacon Street became a logical place to locate a general store; and, in 1857, the Coolidge and Griggs families built one. Managed by the Coolidge family until 1884, the store became a landmark, and the corner became known as *Coolidge's Corner*."

He notices a handwritten addendum at the bottom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARNIE (V.O.)

If you're the only one who remembers something, then it only exists - if it exists at all - in your own tiny universe. But if even one other person remembers, then that universe is infinitely expanded.

He smiles and leans back. As the taxi crosses the Charles at Mass Ave...

EXT. ABOVE THE CHARLES - DAY

TAXI RADIO

(fading)

"...and it's a *hit!*"

Pulling back, up and away, Xander's car like a dot on the Mass. Ave bridge, while all of Boston shines like a jewel.

FADE TO BLACK.