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TITLE

Written by

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THE COURTS

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SUPER- WASHINGTON, D.C., JUNE 1974

INT- COLLINS HOUSE- DAY

ERIC, FOURTEEN, SLENDER AND SMALLISH, AND MRS. SHIRLEY COLLINS, MID-THIRTIES ATTRACTIVE, IN HIS PARENTS' BEDROOM.

ERIC

We've never gone to the Vineyard this early. Now I can play in the basketball league. When are we leaving for Boston? When should I pack?

SHIRLEY

I'm leaving Tuesday, but you're staying here?

ERIC

I am? Why?

SHIRLEY

Summer school. I enrolled you in a typing class at Taft Junior High School.

ERIC

You didn't tell me. For how long?

SHIRLEY

Six weeks. St. Albans didn't invite you to attend the Upper School- you were basically expelled. You need to start thinking more seriously about your education. Plus typing will help you.

ERIC

(MORE)

Six weeks?! I don't know anyone at Taft.

SHIRLEY

You make friends easily

Eric sighs deeply and marches to his room, the walls of which are adorned with sports photos cut out from magazines, and POSTERS of pro basketball players and Muhammad Ali.

EXT- Taft Junior High School, Washington, D.C.- DAY

Hundreds of kids spilling out of doors and down wide stone stairs midday. Eric walks across street, crosses playground diagonally, passes softball field where it meets sidewalk. A PAPERBACK BOOK on the ground catches his eye. The cover reads "Go Up For Glory: By Bill Russell As Told To William McSweeney". Eric looks around. No kids are nearby. He bends to scoop up the small book, and continues.

MONTAGE:

INT- SHAMELESSLY RUNDOWN URBAN JUNIOR HIGH CLASSROOM- DAY
(like, REALLY drab)

-Eric in a typing class of about thirty junior high school kids.

TYPING TEACHER

Hands on home row keys. Relaxing our fingers. Turn to page twenty-seven. Lines ten through thirty.

-The students eye the second hand of the wall clock, and await the teacher's command, as the hand nears "12".

TYPING TEACHER

Begin!

-The students clatter away at their desk typewriters, struggling to type the text without looking at the keyboard. Eric's fingers dance and lightly strike, as he attempts to balance home row memorization with reading the text.

-Night, in his room, Eric devours Bill Russell's autobiography

-Taft typing class, the teacher, the kids and the clatter

-Eric laying back, his head propped on his headboard by a pillow, reading Go Up For Glory

-INT-Summer school class- DAY

-Kids typing

-INT- Eric's room- NIGHT

Eric reading

SUPER- ROXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS, JULY 1974

INT- ROXBURY- Grandma Collins' home- DAY

Eric, his brother JAY, AGED EIGHT, in their grandmother's kitchen over bowls of Special K, eggs, bacon. GRANDMA COLLINS, SIXTY-EIGHT, slices some coffee cake, places it on a plate at the center of the table.

GRANDMA

Here's your coffee cake. You guys are gonna get haircuts before we go down The Cape.

Grandma walks behind Eric and tugs a tuft of his 'fro.

GRANDMA

A GIRL should have this much hair.

Eric frowns over his eggs, pauses.

GRANDMA

I can barely see your faces. Your fatha will take you.

ERIC

Can I just get a trim?

Jay looks at them both, munching away at cereal.

GRANDMA

I want it neat. You have handsome faces. I hardly know who you ah.

INT- BARBER SHOP- DAY-

A Beau Nubian Notion Brummel barber shop. Soulful, artsy posters and calendars fill the walls, the largest of a fist wielding Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Huey Newton and Muhammad Ali.

Eric in barber's chair, Jay waits seated among adults. A burly, gray bearded man in a dashiki, and a slim, younger bespectacled man, also dashiki-clad with goatee, working, the smaller man clipping Eric. Eric winces in regret, his barber shears off inches of his Afro. Jay watches in wonderment, as what was formerly his hair, floats to the floor in black clumps. HAROLD MELVIN & THE BLUE NOTES' "If You Don't Know Me By Now" plays on the shop radio. Eric avoids looking at his mirror image, but sees the clumps on the floor.

SLIM BARBER

You got your fatha's wide shoulders.
Collins always had those broad
shoulders. How old are you?

ERIC

Fourteen

The barber hands Eric a hand mirror. Eric's eyes startle upon seeing a rounded, close cropped Afro that reveals the shape of his head, kind of like the superhero The Submariner. Grimaces. Hands mirror back.

SLIM BARBER

(to Jay, who is staring at his big
brother's severe cut) All set little
brother?

Jay lifts into the chair for his own execution.

EXT- NUBIAN NOTION- Mr. Collins pulls up in front of barber shop to collect the boys. Smiles upon seeing them.

MR. COLLINS

Hah!

He pays the younger barber, soul shakes his hand. Other goodbyes around. Jay bound downstairs, Eric lopes.

INT- Mr. Collins' car- DAY

MR. COLLINS

The younger barber, I can't remember what he calls himself now, we went to Tech together. He was "Popsie" then- Rutherford Washington. The older fella?

The boys nod toward his eyes in the rear view mirror

MR. COLLINS

That's his fatha. He cut Malcolm X's hair. That shop's been there for years. Anyway, Grandma will be pleased.

SUPER- MARTHA'S VINEYARD, JULY 1974

MUSIC- SEASONS IN THE SUN by Terry Jacks

EXT.- OAK BLUFFS DAY, COLLINS COTTAGE

Collins Family- GRANDMA, Mr. and Mrs., boys- Eric, in bellbottom jeans, and Jay, unpack sedan behind cottage. Bikes, luggage, groceries carted into house.

Eric settles into his room, comic books, pulls out a pack of felt tip drawing pens from his suitcase. Takes out SPORTS MAGAZINES, a few bearing image of record breaking Henry Aaron.

INT- COLLINS COTTAGE- DAY

Eric inside his bedroom, desperately trying to pick his hair into a respectable 'fro, but all that results is an uneven 'do- his hair is too short for a pick. Tosses pick onto a dresser in frustration, slumps onto bed. Looks outside bedroom window. Glances around room. His gaze lands on his drawing paper and pencils. He tears off a sheet, and writes atop the page "THE ARCHER". Then to the left of that, top of page, he writes "EC Comics", and "15 cents". He grabs a couple superhero comics from a pile, "Ironman" and The Flash. Turns to a page, spots a pose of Ironman hovering over a city backdrop, poised to punch.

Adapting from it, Eric begins to draw the cover art for an edition of The Archer. Looks up from work, catches glimpse of close cropped self in mirror, exhales, and returns to sketching.

SUPER- THREE DAYS LATER

Eric in bedroom mirror, picking at his natural, same length as before. Exasperated, he tosses his Afro pick into a drawer and tries using a comb. Pulls furiously with it to expand his short 'do. In his mirror he spots an image across the yard. His summer neighbors TOMMY POWELL, FOURTEEN, talkng with his shapely big sister TIA POWELL, SEVENTEEN. Eric watches them in the reflection a few beats- then from his window. Grabs Archer work-in-progress. Eric draws a few scenes and drops the felt-tipped marker. Places the pages before him on the bed, five of them, story framed, three are colored in. Picks a record album from under his lamp table, the Jackson 5's "Dancing Machine". Sets it on his record player and plays the title track. Eric bops his head to the beat.

He tears a sheet off the pad to start page six.

SUPER- ONE WEEK LATER

INT- ERIC'S ROOM-DAY

Eric raking what there is of his hair, attempting a 'fro. Outside the cottage VOICES OF BOYS PLAYING, riding bikes, teasing one another.

On top of his dresser, issue of The Archer, many pages thick, surrounded by colored pens and felt tip markers.

Eric takes the Jackson 5 album Dancing Machine from his lamp table, and removes the record from its sleeve. He places his record player needle on the title song Dancing Machine. He dances to it in his bedroom wall mirror. Still bopping, he shifts his attention from the mirror, to looking outside the window. Kids are out there playing.

SUPER- TWO WEEKS LATER

INT- Collins Cottage-DAY

Eric checks his acceptable 'fro in the mirror, pats it into shape. Leaves his room into small passage behind the sun porch which separates his room from the living room. Glances around admiringly at Grandma's old tennis trophies- large loving cups and smaller bronze women figurines atop stands.

READS: New England Champion WOMEN'S DOUBLES 1936 on a loving cup, FRANCINE COLLINS, WOMENS SINGLES, N.E.T.A 1937 on a shiny bowl, and a stand that says NEW YORK OPEN WOMENS SINGLES 1934.

ERIC (to parents who are O.C.)

I'm going down to The Courts.

SHIRLEY (O.C.)

Okay.

EXT- THE COURTS, SAME DAY

Eric hops off bike, greets kids

ERIC

Hey Matt (to MATT JENNINGS, FOURTEEN).

Matt smiles widely and the boys quickly soul handshake. Basketballs fall around them from varying directions

KT, RICHARD JOHNSON, TROY, PETER CLEMENTS, MARKY MOREIS, DALE ROGERS, GEORGE TANKARD- all aged BETWEEN TWELVE AND FOURTEEN. Richard, Greg and Peter (ONE OF THE ONLY WHITE KIDS) are large for their ages. Marky and Dale are exactly Eric's size. Marky has a soft curly fro, and freckles. All talking non-stop. Kids shoot around

PETER (to Greg, who playfully guards him, as he prepares to launch a jumper)
Take these.

Peter notices Eric dribbling, walks near

PETER

Eric, I heard you guys were heah.
Where've you been?

Eric shrugs, preps to shoot a jumper

MARKY dribbles in place, then makes a move to go around Matt

MARKY

(MORE)

Meet me at the hoop

KENNY LOU (shooting a jumper, misses)

Oh, snap!

Eric picks up a ball. Spins it around in his palms. Dribbles a few. Dale walks near

ERIC (smiling)

Hey Dale

He shoots, seventeen footer, right of the key. All net

ERIC

Face!

A younger kid rebounds the ball, looks Juan in the eye, bounce passes it back to him. George and Dale approach Eric.

DALE

"E", how come you never play in the league?

GEORGE

Yeah, we could use you man. Where you been?

ERIC

We just got here today. How many games have you played?

DALE

We're two and one. I wish you were on our squad- the way you jump. We lost to Richard Johnson and KT's team. Maybe if a kid doesn't show up, or quits, or has to go off island---

Eric looks dejected at the possibilities facing him. Looks around at all the boys- who know each other well because of The Courts. Peter Clements sinks a jay from the opposite side. Bullseye. A boy about ten catches the basketball on the carom. Begins to bounce it.

PETER

Courtesy!

YOUNGER KID returns basketball to Peter

GINA GIMPEL, THIRTEEN roller skates past the The Courts on the parallel street. A couple of the boys shout "Hi Gina", to which she waves as she expertly rides by.

Eric sees COACH SCHO, TWENTY-EIGHT, who is outside the fence. Hustles his way.

ERIC

Mr. Schofield.

COACH SCHO

Yes son

ERIC

Umm, are there openings on any of the teams?

COACH SCHO

Did you register when we opened?
'fraid not.

ERIC

Thank you. We just got here.

COACH SCHO

I see. Check in a week or so. Sometimes a player goes off. Or in the morning, a boy may not show up.

ERIC

Okay.

INT- Collins Cottage- NIGHT, SOUL MUSIC PLAYING

Eric inside his bedroom reading a sports magazine.

Living room full of adults, most in thirties or twenties, talking, some dancing, several hold drinks. Mr. and Mrs. Collins making sure everyone is okay.

A bearded YOUNG WHITE GUEST helps himself to some chip and dip. He spots a gorgeous, TWENTYSOMETHING BLACK WOMAN in a floral dress, stylish sandals, with long shiny hair, bopping her head to the sounds, standing near the kitchen in the packed space. The male guest squeezes through the partygoers. Music stops momentarily.

MALE GUEST

(to people between him and young lady) Excuse me, thank you. How are you? Steven

He offers his hand to a THIRTYISH BLACK MALE GUEST, who shakes it. The young woman slides between the crush of folk and enters the modest kitchen. Steven peeks over heads to gain track of her. Doesn't see her. Half pushes, half polites his way into kitchen. Spots her on other side of an oven, by a counter. Still lots of folk between them.

The woman is speaking to two other women, and a man. Steven tries to get there as inconspicuous as possible, looks around innocently. Sidesteps near their group. Offers his hand to the male.

STEVEN

Steven

MAN

Floyd, what's happenin'?

STEVEN

This is pretty nice. I don't know a lot of people on the Vineyard.

FLOYD

You on vacation?

STEVEN

Actually I'm shooting a movie.

Mrs. Collins places a .45 rpm record on the turntable. NINA SIMONE singing "Young, Gifted And Black". The guests SING ALONG.

FLOYD

That right? You should meet Suzanne (nods toward THE BEAUTY, who is swaying to the Black National Anthem)- she's in entertainment. Suzanne!

SUZANNE looks away from the women. Floyd beckons.

FLOYD

My man here is making a movie. What's your name man- I'm sorry.

STEVEN

Steven- Steven Spielberg. Sorry for shouting.

SUZANNE

It's ok. Suzanne.

STEVEN (walks around Floyd)

You're in entertainment?

SUZANNE (cupping one ear)

I work with The Jackson 5

STEVEN

I've heard of them. You know the hosts here?

INT- ERIC'S ROOM

Eric places the magazine aside. He picks up his Archer comic from beside the Jackson 5 Dancing Machine album.

SUZANNE

I was invited. Mutual friend. You havin' a good time?

STEVEN

(MORE)

On my movie, or here?

SUZANNE

Well, now that you mention it.

STEVEN

I don't wanna bore you, but my production's bogged down by two things- neither of which you'll ever guess.

SUZANNE

Difficult actor and over budget.

STEVEN

Hey, you're good- that's pretty close. Malfunctioning shark, and can't find a boy actor.

SUZANNE

Did the shark maybe eat the boy?

STEVEN

The shark is mechanical- unfortunately it won't eat anything- except that budget you mentioned.

SUZANNE

I can't help you with that, but I do know a little bit about boy actors.

STEVEN

Michael Jackson sang about a rat, do you think he'd want to sing in a disaster picture that's a disaster to make?

SUZANNE

That child can make anything sound good.

STEVEN

It's so loud in here, you wanna walk outside?

(MORE)

SUZANNE

I better not, I'm gonna need to find my friends soon myself. They're not staying. How long are you shooting on the Vineyard?

STEVEN

Depends on the two problems I told you about. I'd like to wrap this month. Is there someplace I can get in touch with you Suzanne?

SUZANNE (Smiling)

I don't think so, but maybe I'll see you around. Excuse me, I'm gonna go re-assemble my gang. Good luck on the picture Steven.
She extends her hand.

STEVEN

My pleasure.

Suzanne turns walks into flock, then spins and asks over her shoulder

SUZANNE

What's your movie called? I'll look for it.

STEVEN

Jaws.

SUZANNE

Wasn't that a book?

STEVEN

Still is. Take care Suzanne, and tell Michael, well, tell Michael and the boys I said hello.

She waves and makes her way through

EXT, THE COURTS- DAY

Eric watching morning league games from outside fence. His look is one of longing- he is an outsider to the game he loves. All his buddies, Peter Clemens, George, Dale, Marky, MONTE, THE REBELLO BROTHERS TODD AND CHRIS are playing in a game, others are waiting to do so. Looks to the tennis court next to The Courts, where Mr. Collins is playing doubles. He watches a rally. His eyes return to the basketball action. Then to the tennis, he sees the rally ended by a sharp return by a THIRTYISH PLAYER wearing a headband. In the pause, Mr. Collins directs his attention to The Courts, where he sees Eric outside. The father and son exchange waves.

EXT- Collins Cottage- DAY

CRAIGIE TANKARD, twelve, walking in town, sees Eric busying inside the Collins' rear screen porch. Walks closer.

CRAIGIE

Hey E

ERIC

Hey

CRAIGIE

Whatcha doin'?

ERIC

Drawing

Craigie goes inside the porch. Eric is working on his own superhero comic, "The Archer". A few finished pages of squared story scenes aside and finished, some colored with the felt tip markers and special pens scattered on a table, or inside a transparent plastic pouch. The current page being drawn is yet uncolored. There are actual comics in sight, including an Ironman.

CRAIGIE

What's this?

ERIC

(prideful) My comic, The Archer.
(MORE)

CRAIGIE

You made him up?

ERIC:

Yup. I finished one issue.

He nods towards a completed paper book, with the hero on the cover, the price twelve cents, the brand "EC Comics").

ERIC

I sell 'em.

CRAIGIE:

You trace 'em?

ERIC

Nope- sell 'em. Sometimes I use other comics to copy the poses from, or the hands, the buildings.

Craigie picks up the finished comic.

CRAIGIE

You're good- I never knew you drew.
Who taught you?

ERIC

Thanks. Nobody.

Craigie watches Eric sketch for a while. He stands up.

CRAIGIE

Well I'll see ya.

ERIC

Alright. Let me know if you want one.
Your brothers too.

CRAIGIE

Twelve cents

INT- COLLINS COTTAGE, DAY

Eric in his bedroom, takes the "Dancing Machine" album out of its sleeve. Places record on his turntable. The TITLE SONG PLAYS, and Eric bops his head to it. Lifts the needle off the album when the song ends Eric walks into living room, flips on the large tv set. PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON is seated at a desk, during a network special report. Nixon delivers the meat of his resignation speech.

Eric stands and watches, dressed for The Courts. CBS' Dan Rather appears on the screen to summarize the bulletin. Juan cuts tv off.

ERIC

(to Grandma and his parents O.C.) I'm goin' down to The Co-courts!

Eric heads outside to his bike. Pedals away. As he nears a woodsy park, he hears in the distance, KOOL & THE GANG's "Rhyme Tyme People". Below the woods, he takes the hill , down into town. As he nears bottom of grassy area of park, he sees, a couple doors to the left of S.S. PIERCE DRY GOODS STORE, something which catches his eye in a driveway. A man in his twenties is crouched there, oblivious to the traffic and the world. Eric sees the man is painting something. It is- a large artificial shark's head.

INT.- REBELLO HOUSEHOLD- DAY

MUSIC- Me And Baby Brother- WAR

MRS. REBELLO, dark, FORTY-TWO, preparing breakfast. Two boys bound downstairs, TODD thirteen, CHRIS eleven, both with the same curly brown hair.

MRS REBELLO

Boys, take a look at this (she holds out the "Vineyard Gazette")

Both boys reach for paper, Todd grabs at it and yanks it away from Chris

TODD

(MORE)

Used cars for sale? Mom, even though
I can drive, you told me I have to
wait unt-

MRS. REBELLO

Not that, see the ad for young boys
wanted to read for a movie part?

Todd shakes paper and looks intently, as Chris crowds him to
also read, Todd gently elbows him

TODD

Ohhh, this.

Both boys' eyes dart over the copy.

MRS. REBELLO

You should both try out for it.

TODD

Chris wouldn't stand a chance.

Chris pops Todd in the ribcage, quickly jumps back

TODD

This is today!

CHRIS

Can we mom?!

MRS. REBELLO

I told you I think you both should
audition. I heard they'll need other
kids

TODD

(MORE)

I can't- the field trip today

CHRIS

You wouldn'ta beaten me anyway.

MRS. REBELLO

It's not a competition between you two. Other kids will try out. But the experience'll be good for ya.

CHRIS

What the heck, I'm gonna do it.

TODD

You're gonna blow it- I wish we didn't have this trip.

MRS. REBELLO

The field trip will be a good experience for YOU

CHRIS

For you to stare at Laurie Kelly on the bus- that's what he'll be experiencin'

TODD

(embarrassed) You must like her- you mentioned it

MRS. REBELLO

Chris, come straight home from school if you wanna go.

CHRIS (grabbing lunch bag)

I will mom. Hel-lo Hollywood.

TODD

Hollywood my foot- they're filming it here Einstein.

EXT-STATE BEACH- DAY

COLLINS FAMILY on blanket near blankets of family friends. Eric notices a circled crowd further down the beach, we follow him in that direction.

PRODUCTION CREW surrounds Chris Rebello, who is in the water by a small sailboat. Eric watches motorized shark's head hover nearby. The crew watch from the beach. Director Steven Spielberg stands on shore.

STEVEN

You're trapped, you're terrified.
When you hear "speed", the shark will
start circling around you.

Chris is shivering in the water. The techs prepare the moving head. It begins to orbit the boy.

STEVEN

(to assistant) God I hope this thing
works today. It's eating more of our
budget, than it is people.

ASSISTANT

Bruce is fixed, finally. Let's try
one, the kid won't last long in that
drink.

STEVEN

And, speed!

The director watches Chris and the shark in the monitor. Chris is atop the sailboat, his eyes widening. His cheeks and shoulders are trembling from the cold.

STEVEN

Good, good, hold that! I like it.
Cut.

A crew member retrieves Chris from the sailboat, and they wade in, where a YOUNG WOMAN PRODUCTION ASSISTANT wraps him in a towel. Some crew applaud. A boom mike operator smiles at the boy.

BOOM MAN

Easiest hundred and thirty eight
bucks a day you ever earned, huh kid?

CHRIS

You sound like my brotha.

Eric smiles. The adults laugh.

EXT.- STATE BEACH- DAY

Eric in tee and denim shorts, standing thirty feet from Steven Spielberg, who sits on a camera dolly, and scans the view of the beach length. Folding chairs and cameras are labeled JAWS. Beach crowded with EXTRAS OF ALL AGES, black and white, most in bathing suits, a few in halter tops, football jerseys, or tee shirts and jeans.

STEVEN

And, speed! (cameras turn and train
on crowd)

The beachgoers scream bloody murder and scamper away from the shore in panic, arms waving, faces in horror. Film crew studies the movement. Seagulls scatter, sand flies.

STEVEN

A-a-and, cut.

Some of the extras relax, some buzz in animated conversation, others walk back to where they were when the scene began. Steven and two men crouch to watch playback on a monitor.

On the beach Eric sees Richard Johnson, Kevin "KT" Taylor, Troy Gaskins in a tank top, wristbands, Marcia McBride from the courts, chatting.

RICHARD (to KT)
(MORE)

You think we'll really be in this thing?

KT

Who knows, man. But ya know Chris Rebello?

RICHARD

Nope, who's he?

KT

Little kid who plays at The Courts in the morning. Guess what? Marcia steps closer to hear, one eye on the directors

RICHARD

What?

KT

I heard he's got a speaking role. He's playing a sheriff's son. Troy looks surprised, cross arms.

RICHARD

No way!

MARCIA

I want a part.

TROY

Fine as you are, you should have a part. (nods toward directors). Go ask them.

KT

Be careful. They might want you to be shark food. They all crack up.

TROY

(MORE)

I'll protect you (extends arm in playful chivalry)- leave the parts where you get eaten alive, to the little kids.
They laugh again

KT:
(seriously)

You know world her revolves around Richard.

TROY

Don't remind me. Besides, you can't blame a guy for trying.

KT

How long you think this is gonna last?

RICHARD
(reading his mind) You're not gonna miss first game. Johnny and Bob are playin' in third game.

MARCIA

Gina's playing tonight.

TROY

I still can't believe they let girls play this summer.

KT

I can. You ever played with Gina?

MARCIA

Gina beat KT one-on-one at School Street.

KT

(MORE)

Once, outta three games!

TROY

Did she dunk on you on the little court?

(Eric smiles and pulls a sandwich from a cooler)

KT

So funny I forgot to laugh.

MARCIA: Some of us are headed to Trish's after third game.

KT

That's a bet!

MARCIA

You're inviting yourself?

KT

You know how tired that would be without me and Richard?

MARCIA

Is that what you think?

STEVEN: Places everyone. Maybe one more! Make it count

Eric walks away from the shore toward his bike, and hops on.

EXT. OAK BLUFFS- DAY

Eric pedals down to The Courts and park. Richard Johnson, Troy Gaskin and Kevin "KT" Taylor are walking with some girls, including KT's sister Karen. George Tankard and Dale Rogers walking, spot Richard and KT. George taps Dale's forearm, points at the other clique. Eric takes it all in.

GEORGE

Y'all better go home and get your rest, 'cause we gon' beat y'all.

Richard, KT laugh with the girls, some wave in a gesture of dismissal.

KT

Ok "Seagulls"!

KT makes a noise like a flock of seagulls. He, Richard and the girls laugh, the boys slap five- and point. They flap their arms like seagulls' wings.

GEORGE

(to Dale) We're gon' beat them.

DALE

They think their stuff don't stink!

GEORGE

It's kind o' funny. I mean, even in the "NBA", they ain't better than us. Yeah, Ken Wingate and them got nice cars, Lance and Lee Lee got big bushes the girls like, but you know what?

DALE: What?

GEORGE:

Your brother Johnny is best player in that league. And Ronnie's second.

DALE

Damn skippy!

They slap five, all the more determined to put Richard and KT in their place. Eric walks inside the fence to The Courts. Lots of teens and tweens playing, shooting around. Eric picks up a ball and joins in. George and Dale are walking in the opposite direction.

ERIC

George! You guys aren't comin' in?
Shoots a jumpshot.

(MORE)

GEORGE

We got a game tonight man.

ERIC: I'll see y'all later.

SUPER- NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, SUMMER 1967

INT- HOUSING PROJECT- NIGHT

TANKARD FAMILY in apartment, TWO GIRLS twelve and ten, and THREE BOYS. from FELIPE, a year old baby, CRAIGIE, six, GEORGE V, eight. SIRENS WAILING, police and ambulance lights streaming across the apartment walls. Kids frightened- the girls huddled together in pajamas, boys Craigie and George on a bed. Gunfire. Indistinguishable commands from a law enforcement megaphone.

GEORGE TANKARD IV (to the kids)

Get on the floor!

Mrs. T enters room in her robe.

MRS. T

The baby is asleep.

GEORGE IV

Carrie, go back in the room, and lay next to his crib.

FOOTAGE OF NEWARK RIOTS of 1967.

SUPER- THE NEXT DAY

INT- TANKARD APARTMENT, family crowded around a floor model tv broadcasting images of the riot torn city and the looting, fire engines.

MRS. T(to her husband)

The kids are so afraid- I've never seen them like this.

GEORGE IV

This city will never be the same. Any news on Beverly?

(MORE)

MRS. T

She died. She was dead on arrival
George. The gunshot was to her neck.
She's my age. Why are the police
shooting into the windows like that?

GEORGE IV

Doggone rumors of snipers. All this
mess about H. Rap Brown being here
inciting people. The t.v. makes---

Mrs. Tankard takes a loaf of bread from the top of the
fridge.

She opens the fridge door and removes a jar of mayonnaise.
George pulls the silverware drawer open and gets a knife
out- hands it to her.

MRS. T

We have to move.

George IV freezes. Looks at the expression on her face.

MUTED TV ANNOUNCER in background, living room.

MRS. T

We could take the children to my
mother's on Martha's Vineyard. This
stuff is not gonna stop, and what
kind of life will that be for them?
Think of the baby.

George IV looks into the living room where the children are
glued to the news reports. One daughter Stephanie, twelve,
is hugging her fearful sister Cynthia, who is nine. Their
father shakes his head.

AUDIO: The curfew is in place until
further notice.

(MORE)

There have been fourteen deaths, and seven hundred and fifty arrests. And now we go to Paul Zachary on Springfield Avenue. Paul.

V.O. (tv reporter): I'm here with Fire Chief John Caulfield. Chief, can you give us a sense of the damages, and where it is concentrated?

MRS. T (to George IV)

It'll break the boys' hearts, the girls probably won't mind as much.

GEORGE IV

But you're right, we gotta do something. Well, if we do move, at least their cousins are there. George and Craigie are very close to Mikey and Fuzzy, and they look up to Ralph. Why not move here in Jersey Carrie? My brother in Rosedale?

MRS. T

The Vineyard is a better place for them now. They'd have room to play. They'd be around all types of children. Barbara is worried sick about us now.

They embrace.

MRS. T

You never know about life. You never know.

EXT. OAK BLUFFS, EARLY EVENING

George Tankard, fourteen, riding bike to The Courts. Can already hear CROWD. Crowd around fence is three deep. People seated atop cars. George parks bike near playground swings. Walks toward fence.

GEORGE

(MORE)

(taps back of onlooker, eases between closely packed bodies) Excuse me, excuse me, I'm playing in this game. Excuse me.

Eric is in crowded stands, seated near George's fourteen year old cousin FUZZY.

FUZZY

Guess what I found in the woods on the way down here?

ERIC

What?

Fuzzy reaches into his rear jeans pocket for a folded up magazine and takes it out to show to Eric. It's an issue of OUI magazine, a nudie. Fuzzy sports a big smile, Eric a polite one.

FUZZY

How come you don't play on a team?

ERIC

I've only been down here a week.

Eric watches as George's team, wearing "The Nets" jerseys, and Richard's team, wearing "Chapparals" on their tee shirts, square off. Jump ball, Richard controls tap, to Troy who races in for layup. George's team turns ball over on next two possessions, which lead to easy scores for Richard's squad. Crowd is clearly behind the favorites. Girls cheer the leaders, including Maria, Tricia and Gina.

Play continues, with Richard muscling for position, but not always scoring, as George, who is giving up seven inches in height, fronts him and defense, and tries to bother his post shots. Scoreboard shows Richard's team leading 18-15. BUZZER for halftime. Scoreboard displays Chaps 30- Nets 27. The teams go to their benches. Fans in the bleachers chat, mingle, cluster.

During the half, the Nets huddle, perspiring and encouraged. Eric can hear them.

GEORGE

Dale, you're doing a good job on Troy. Now drive on him more, try to make him work on "D". Let's take better shots. And I'm gonna call for the ball, try to get Richard in foul trouble.

Teammates nod, check out crowd, wipe foreheads with their jerseys.

After the break, the Chaps miss some easy shots, and take some ill-advised ones. Scoreboard shows Nets up 35-33. Crowd groans, or sits back in disappointment at Chaps' failed efforts. But some throaty Vineyarders urge the Nets on. Dale shadows Troy when Troy doesn't have the ball. Nets turn the ball over a few times- and their FANS MOAN "Ohhh".

Electronic scoreboard shows Nets lead 47-39. George checks the clock- 4:11 to play. He and his mates begin smiling.

Richard backs George up in the post, and braces widely to move him out even further. Waves for ball.

GEORGE

I told you to go get some rest 'cause we was gonna beat y'all.

RICHARD

Game ain't over.

Troy lofts a lookaway pass to Richard, who pins George with a forearm, and spins away to retrieve the pass, but the ball is too high, and George watches it sail out of bounds. Then David takes the ball out, George races for the opposite end, and David throws a baseball pass, which George catches at his chest in the lane, dribbles once, and scores. 49-39, and the crowd is into it. The Chaps then run off six unanswered points, and back on defense, Troy slaps the court with both palms waiting for Dale to bring the ball up. Dale laughs. His brother Johnny, standing outside the fence, gazes proudly. The Nets are on offense. When Richard pump fakes, George slaps the ball away. David recovers, scoops a pass upcourt to Dale, who converts a layin.

Final BUZZER sounds. Scoreboard reads 55-50.

Nets are slapping five and embracing, some exchanging glad hands with crowd.

Marcia and her girls get up. Johnny and Dale rap, laughs, smiles. SEVERAL BOYS surround George, and Eric starts in that direction, but as the group grows, backs off.

MARKY

(to the island guys) Did you see Dale stick Troy?

FUZZY

Like white on rice!

GEORGE

Like stank on doo doo!

FUZZY (to George)

Where's the party?

GEORGE(jerks head in general direction of Richard and KT) Ask the pretty boys. We're never invited

FUZZY

That's never stopped me.(looks up at Marcia's girls)

MARKY (to Fuzzy)

You get in, 'cause you have herb!
The boys bend over in laughter.Dale and Johnny walk over.

VOICE O.C

Fuzzy, where's my herb, n----?!

POODIE

What were you sayin' to Richard, right before Troy threw the ball away?

GEORGE

I dunno.

DALE

(MORE)

He said "I told you we were gonna
beat y'all"

Fuzzy slaps Dale five, Johnny smiles.

Eric rides his bike alone back up the hill.

EXT- Oak Bluffs-DAY

KT and Richard walking near Cozy's Ice Cream.

RICHARD

(nodding toward store) Is Jeff in
there now?

KT

Later I think. He gets off at night.
Takes care of us at the back door.
You're never there at night.

RICHARD

Tonight might be different. What were
you saying about those girls from New
York?

KT

Cutie Lopez has some cousins
visitin'. Bad too. I saw 'em at State
Beach, and some were at the game last
night.

RICHARD

They would come the one time we lose.

KT

You wanna check 'em out?

RICHARD

You think they're at the beach today?

KT

(MORE)

Probably, if they're only here a week. But I can call Cutie and find out. I was thinkin' more like tonight.

RICHARD

Won't your sister tell Marcia?

KT

Karen doesn't know everything I do. And since we're not in the championship game, we gotta do something.

RICHARD

Find out, and come get me after dinner if you're goin' over there? It's two cousins?

KT

Yeah, and there'll probably be other girls. Tell you what- we can meet 'em, talk to 'em at Cutie's, you know, listen to records and stuff, then walk 'em up here for ice cream and donuts when Jeff closes.

RICHARD (smiling)

Bet.

Richard and KT exchange the soul handshake, and head in separate directions on busy Circuit Ave.

EXT- COZY'S ICE CREAM PARLOR- NIGHT

Richard, KT, and Cutie and Sharon Lopez with two boys their age, most enjoying ice cream cups. They all head back toward the Lopez's on the dark street behind the business. Inside, Eric licks a cone and watches Jeffrey Wortham in his work apron, sweeping the messy store. Richard and a girl, TONYA, FOURTEEN lag behind.

TONYA

Sorry about the game last night

RICHARD

(MORE)

So am I. How was the beach?

TONYA

It was cool, until we had to move.

RICHARD

Had to move?

TONYA

Are they making a movie here or somethin'?

RICHARD

So they say.

TONYA

You don't know? Or you don't care?

RICHARD

Good question. They made y'all move?

TONYA

Yup, they wanted us to move way down the beach, but we just left. So you do care?

The others are now well ahead of them and out of earshot. A block over, Circuit is still busy with stragglers and late dinner patrons, barflies.

RICHARD

About a movie? Not if I'm not in it. I know some kids that are.

TONYA

So you care about basketball, an-n-n'd, some girl named Marcia?

RICHARD

Who told you that?

(MORE)

TONYA

You and KT were talking to them after the game.

RICHARD

Well, Karen is KT's sister.

TONYA

Changing the subject, huh? Is Marcia your girl?

RICHARD

For the summer?

TONYA

Answering a question with a question, huh?

Richard looks to see how far ahead the gang is. Backs of their distant bodies.

RICHARD

I'm walking with YOU.

TONYA

Is that all we're doing?

RICHARD

What time you going to the beach tomorrow?

TONYA

Who says we're going to the beach tomorrow?

RICHARD

Everybody who's only here a week goes to the beach every day, unless it rains.

TONYA

(smiling up)

You think I'm everybody.

(MORE)

RICHARD

Nope.

Richard pulls Tonya toward him for a long kiss. They hug for a moment after, then both look up the street.

The gang nears the long Lopez porch, walk there, and are chatting outside.

Eric rides by on his bike, turning to gaze at the girls, unnoticed by them.

EXT- Oak Bluffs- DAY

Marcia, Gina, Karen, GRETCHEN, THIRTEEN, and a few others on the outside rear steps of The Flying Horses. Painting on building roof reads THE OLDEST WORKING CAROUSEL IN AMERICA. From inside THE SOUNDS of the equine merry go-round's music, the ping and bells of pinball machines, and kids' voices as they reach for the prized gold ring that awards them a free second ride.

GINA

Seems like last year, The Cottager's dances were more fun.

KAREN

That's 'cause none of us had boyfriends.

GINA

Every cute boy would ask you to dance.

GRETCHEN

And the ones who weren't so cute.

KAREN

MARCIA

I don't know, this is the best summer.

GINA

(MORE)

Next summer I'll probably work.
Allowance is cool, but, well---

GRETCHEN

Remember Fridays when we were little?

MARCIA

Umm hmm. We'd all rush down to meet
"The Daddy Boat" (laughs). Our
fathers couldn't even get off the
boat good, before we had our hands
out for our allowances.

KAREN

And my brother shoving me to be
first.

They laugh.

GRETCHEN

Speakin' o' first, who's the cutest boy on the island after
Richard?

KAREN

What age are we talkin'? Because Lee-
Lee is fine, Ronnie Brown is fine.

GRETCHEN

Ken Wingate is a honey! (smiles) And
that car

GINA

They don't even know we're alive.
What about guys our age?

GRETCHEN: (to Karen)

You're not gonna like this.

Karen rolls her eyes

GRETCHEN: Sorry, girl, but your brother KT-- Karen playfully covers Gretchen's mouth

GINA

Chops is so cute.

GRETCHEN

Those eyebrows. Mmm, mmm, mmm!

KAREN

Who's better looking, Chops or Thorny.

MARCIA

That's a tough one.

GRETCHEN

You couldn't go wrong either way. Don't forget about Mike Trice. His afro! There's only one place to solve this. First game is pretty soon.

The girls get up, some dust off their jeans or shorts, and they file up Circuit Avenue toward The Courts. Street abuzz. The marquee at The Island Theater they pass, reads CLAUDINE. Posters for the movie outside. They proceed past Murdick's Fudge, and shops for salt water taffy, souvenirs, and the seafood restaurant The Boston House. Eric speeds on his bike on the sidewalk opposite The Boston House headed to The Courts around the corner.

EXT- The Courts- NIGHT

Crowd milling about, players shaking hands, Eric headed for the bike rack, people leaving area or starting their car engines.

Gina, Marcia and Karen get up from their seats on the top bleacher to leave.

A couple of older white boys they don't know walk behind the stands, tee shirts and jeans, shoulder length hair.

BOY ONE

You girls wanna go skinny dippin'
later? Town Beach?

MARCIA (under her breath)

Don't pay any attention to them.

GINA

What's skinny dipping?

KAREN

Somethin' you wouldn't do with them
if they were the last people on
earth.

EXT. THE COURTS- DAY

MUSIC: BILLY DON'T BE A HERO- Bo Donaldson & The Heywoods
Tennis courts, bikes, playground

CLOSE TO- INSIDE COURTS, PICKUP GAME IN PROGRESS, ERIC ON
SIDELINES WITH A BALL ON HIS HIP

L.A. MIKE, high school age, sporting L.A Laker uniform,
surveys action, grabs basketball on sidelines, shows off
fancy ballhandling

L.A. MIKE(to players waiting)

Who's got next?

PLAYER 1

(New England accent, raises hand) I
got next downs

L.A. MIKE

Can I get down wit you? I'm Mike.

PLAYER 1

Tony. I got my four. Where're you
from?

L.A. MIKE

(MORE)

Los Angeles. Where you from?

TONY

Boston.

He offers his hand, L.A. Mike leaves him hanging.

L.A. Mike glares at Tony, makes a smooth move with the ball between his legs, follows with a spin. In the pickup game, Eric watches L.A. Mike dribble through two defenders, displaying confident moves and sharp disdain. Tony observes game, L.A. Mike continues to dominate, talks smack. Sideline crowd comes together and grows.

L.A. Mike catches pass on left side, drives hard right, stops on a dime, rises up to nail a jumper.

L.A. MIKE

Point!

TONY(to L.A. Mike)

You couldn't do that on Bob Jennings.

Eric, seated with MATT JENNINGS sees Bob Jennings approach courts on his ten speed, wearing Steamship Authority jumpsuit uniform, dismounts bike, greets players, including RICHIE.

RICHIE

(whispering, nodding toward L.A. Mike) to Bob Jennings

This kid's been stylin' on brothers.

Bob observes L.A. Mike dribbling

PLAYER TWO

I got Bob.

L.A. Mike looks up in Bob's direction. Sides for next opposing team are chosen, teams face off in fours. Eric and Matt shift on the bleachers.

L.A. MIKE (to Bob)

I'm gonna kill you

(MORE)

BOB

No one has done that.

L.A. MIKE

Oh yeah!

BOB

(matter of factly) I'm very fast.

Game ensues, Bob guarding L.A. Mike, shadowing his every move, even when he doesn't have the ball.

L.A. Mike tries to elude Bob by darting, faking, but the moves he used to shake defenders earlier, are of no use. Bob moves his feet fast enough to neutralize his quickness, and he keeps a forearm on L.A. Mike's waist, steers him away from whoever has the ball. The ball goes to a teammate of L.A. Mike's, and Bob immediately sprints between the ballhandler and L.A. Mike, and positions himself so L.A. Mike can't see the ballhandler. The ballhandler shoots and misses. A teammate of Bob's grabs the rebound, and shovels the ball to Bob near halfcourt. L.A. Mike follows Bob. Bob is faster, and easily blows by L.A. Mike to score. Eric spals a kid five. Bob doesn't look at L.A. Mike. L.A. Mike's team inbound the ball. L.A. Mike scalls for the basketball. His teammates ignore him- he is not open. They miss another shot. L.A. Mike frowns.

L.A. MIKE: Are y'all deaf?

Eric and Matt exchange glances. Eric gets up for a closer look.

L.A. Mike takes his time getting back on defense, which allows Bob to dash under the basket for a pass- layup.

TEAMMATE 1
(to L.A. Mike)
That's your man!

L.A. MIKE

Forget you, you blew the shot!

TEAMMATE TWO: We told you you
couldn't do that stuff to Bob.

L.A. MIKE: Just get me the pill.

The two teammates wave in disgust at L.A. Mike. Eric glances back at Matt. Bob dribbles to the wing, but L.A. Mike doesn't take the bait. Teammate two scoots to pick Bob up, Bob fakes a jumpshot, then glances at L.A. Mike. L.A. Mike isn't covering anyone. Bob jerks his head toward the basket. A teammate cuts inside. Bob feeds him for an easy two.

EXT- OAK BLUFFS- DAY

Eric and Jeffrey walking the dirt road near their houses.

JEFFREY

You ever heard of Count Dante?

ERIC

Umm hmm.

JEFFREY

I wanna learn to fight like him. He's seventh degree black belt, fifth dan. You think you can draw him for me?

ERIC

I dunno.

JEFFREY

He's bad. I told my mother I wanna order that lesson.

ERIC

Let's go get Craigie and Felipe, and race relays. We can run from your house to the end of my yard, and touch hands. I'll show you.

JEFFREY

Okay. I'll find my little brotha.

EXT.- THE COURTS, DAY

BOB JENNINGS pedals to Courts in Steamship Authority orange jumpsuit, older teens shooting for a game. Coach Scho is watching near Eric, with some younger boys and girls.

KID ONE steps to the foul line to shoot.

KID TWO

You already took your shot and missed.

Bob parks his ten speed.

JOHNNY ROGERS(waving)

Bob, come take your shot

Kid Two reluctantly backs from line, dribbles between his legs.

Bob extends his hands for a basketball. Kid Two bounces him a ball. Bob toes the line, squares up, and bullseye.

BOB

I got Johnny

KID THREE

Gimme Chumley

BOB: (waving in "come here" motion)

Ronald

KID THREE

I got Lenny

BOB

(waves) Lance

KID THREE

C'mon man (motions to a FIFTEEN YEAR OLD)

BOB

Odds or evens?

(MORE)

KID THREE

Odds

The boys shake their fistful hands as if holding something, then each thrust a number of fingers Bob points three fingers, the opposing captain two- odds win. Kid Three attempts a shot from the free throw line, but it rims out. Bob spins a ball into shooting position, bends, cocks, and sinks his effort. The game begins. Lenny Adams passes the ball to Chumley, who dribbles hard right, hesitates, then spins left around Lance to drive for a bucket.

COACH SCHO (to younger kids)
Chumley has more moves than a bottle
of Ex-Lax.

Eric and the kids laugh.

EXT- THE COURTS- DAY

Court crowded, bleachers have full. Kids pointing and whispering. Troy, Dale, George, Eric, Peter Clements together in the stands. All focused on an older guys' game about to start. A MUSCULAR TWENTY-FIVE YEAR OLD man stands out from the rest.

TROY

Man that's Ollie Taylor?

ERIC

From the Nets?

TROY

Yeah. He has cousins here.

OLLIE TAYLOR dunks as guys warm up for a pickup run.

Coach Scho gets up from the stands and walks inside the fence. Everyone eyes him, except Taylor.

COACH SCHO

(MORE)

There's no dunking in the park. We need the rims for league play, and we only have these two rims and backboards for the whole summer.

OLLIE TAYLOR

Look, you little sucka, if I want to, I might just jam your little ass through that damned hoop.

Heads turn to see what Coach Scho's move will be.

COACH SCHO

You probably could, but after I dust myself off, I will be calling Chief Williamson, who runs the leagues with me, and he would be here within minutes.

EXT- STATE BEACH, DAY

Beach full of Black Oak Bluffs families. Some white beachgoers scattered here and there.

Eric seated on a blanket with his family, and family friends on beach blankets, including the STONE'S, the father pugnacious CHARLIE, THIRTY-FIVE wife, vivacious, bespectacled JEAN, THIRTY-THREE, FOUR YEAR OLD daughter APRIL in short pigtailed. April is using a toy shovel to drop sand into a plastic pail. Eric's folks wear shades, his mom in a scarf.

APRIL (to Jay Collins)

Do you watch The New Zoo Revue?

JAY

Umm hmm.

APRIL

I like The New Zoo Revue. Do you watch "Pixanne"?

Jay looks puzzled.

MRS. STONE

It's a show that comes on where we live- about a pixie. I don't think they get that show Sweetie.

April looks at Jay for a response.

JAY

We don't get that.

APRIL

You don't have Pixanne? Gyp!

Jay smiles, so does Eric.

MR. STONE

Thanks again for babysitting last night. You sure she was cool?

ERIC(nodding)

She slept the whole time.

Marcia McBride walks by in a bikini, and Mr. Stone notes Eric's reaction.

MR. STONE

That Cal McBride's daughta?

ERIC

Yup.

MR. STONE

You should hit on her (smiles slyly).

Eric looks clueless.

MR. STONE

In our day, when we liked a girl, we'd stick our tongue out at them.

Demonstrates, devilishly.

MRS. STONE

What's that out on the water?

She points to a distant, PLATFORM OR STAGE LOOKING OBJECT barely visible.

SHIRLEY

They're filming a movie out there.

MR. COLLINS

I think it's like a National Geographic thing.

Eric sees Jeffrey coming out of the water. His eyes follow Jeff. He walks toward Jeffrey.

SHIRLEY (to Mrs. Stone)

The director of the movie was at a party we threw. He kept hitting on this pretty Black girl.

MRS. STONE

He get anywhere?

SHIRLEY

I don't think he was her type.

The women chuckle.

EXT- Oak Bluffs- DAY

Eric walking in town with George Tankard and George's cousin Poodie Del Valle, THIRTEEN

GEORGE

You know, all these businesses close down after you guys go back.

ERIC

Oh yeah?

(MORE)

GEORGE

Dead up. No movies, no Flying Horses,
no taffy shops, no ice cream, Nancy's
closes. All this stuff is for you
guys.

POODIE
(with some rancor)

That's right!

ERIC

So whadda you do in the winter?

GEORGE

Not much. We play hockey when the
lagoon freezes over.

George smiles

GEORGE (CONT.)

We make sleds out of cardboard from
refrigerator boxes and slide down
School Street. We shovel the snow off
The Courts and play basketball.

ERIC

Really?

George and Poodie nod.

GEORGE

Sometimes we break into a house- you
know, a boarded up summer house. Take
some girls in there. Smoke herb.

POODIE

And get some box.

ERIC

Huh?

POODIE

(MORE)

Some box. You don't know what a girl's box is?

Eric squints in imagination. Nothing is coming.

ERIC

I never heard it called that.

Poodie laughs, as the boys pass NANCY's. Across the street, "The Exorcist" is playing at THE ISLAND.

ERIC

You know what I wanna do one night?

POODIE

Get some box?

ERIC

Well, yeah, but--- one night, I wanna ride down here, and when The Exorcist lets out, I wanna see the peoples' faces when they leave the theater.

GEORGE

Yeah?

ERIC

Yeah. I think I might do it tonight. And every night while it's there.

POODIE

Have you seen it? They say Linda Blair is stacked.

ERIC

Nope.

POODIE

Are you gonna?

(MORE)

ERIC: Doubt it, but I wanna see how they look on the way out. I gotta come right here after the games.

EXT- The Courts-NIGHT

Fans and players leaving the park on foot, and by bike and car. SCOREBOARD reads a final score of the last game, then is turned off- dark. Eric hops on his bike, rides between and around pedestrians walking toward Circuit. The Ave. is after dinner busy. He turns down the street parallel to Circuit- KENNEBEC. Eric rides left toward NEW YORK AVE. He looks toward The Island Theater, but it's too late. The crowd from The Exorcist has already left. Timed it wrong, shakes his head. Pedals uphill.

EXT- Circuit Ave, NIGHT

Eric speeds down New York Ave. from home, slows near ISLAND THEATER. Waits astride his bike. He walks it to the corner of NEW YORK and CIRCUIT- the main drag. No one exits the theater as time passes. Too late again. Shakes head, gets on bike and rides back up hill.

EXT- STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY TERMINAL- DAY
MUSIC- HUES CORPORATION, "Rock The Boat"

Eric on his bike, pulls up near boardwalk

SEES KIDS diving for coins, including kids from The Courts.

Steamship in harbor, passengers hanging over the decks, some waving.

Boys bob up and down in water, yelling "How 'bout a coin?"

Several passengers oblige by tossing down change. In sync with the coins hitting the water, boys dive for each prize, competing with one another, including Troy Gaskins, Matt Jennings, Dale Rogers.

In sync with the coins hitting the water, boys dive for each prize, competing with one another, including TROY, MATT, Dale Rogers. Eric watches for a few beats, turns to bike away.

DALE

(MORE)

Hey E!

Eric, not hearing starts to pedal

DALE

Eric man!

Eric looks around, and up the street, then behind him, adults, families. Then toward the water. Dale has swum closer to the huge rocks under the sidewalk.

ERIC

Hey

DALE

We only got five guys tomorrow man.
If a kid fouls out or doesn't show
up, it's a forfeit.

ERIC

What time?

DALE

I think it's eleven, but check the
board at The Courts.

ERIC

Cool

Dale flashes Eric a black power fist, Marky sneak swims up behind him and dunks Dale. Eric laughs at their roughhousing. He pedals off.

VOICES O.C.

How 'bout a coy-oin?!

Blaring FOGHORN OF STEAMSHIP, about to leave the harbor. Eric rides by S.S. PIERCE dry goods, glances over. The driveway where the shark's head was being painted is empty.

NEXT DAY, EXT- THE COURTS

Eric coasts up on his bike. SCOREBOARD shows a little kids' game has just ended, so those teams are chatting, or leaving the fence. George and Dale of the Nets sit on the top bleachers row.

ERIC

Hey.

The boys speak.

DALE(to Eric)

Marky's over there

Dale points to water hose at senior's center across the street, where Marky holds hose above his mouth to catch gulps. Eric nods to the boys, walks inside the fence and grabs a ball to bounce. Looks around. Dribbles behind his back, right hand, then left hand. Does a couple reverse dribbles using the younger boys as obstacles.

Dale and George watch him for a beat, then scan the park area. Eric spots Coach Scho, whose back is to him. Dribbles to him.

ERIC

Coach Scho.

The coach turns his head around without moving, little kids at his elbows.

COACH SCHO

Morning Eric. You can shoot around for a bit (checks watch)- next game's in nine minutes.

ERIC

I'm a sub for the Nets.

COACH SCHO

Oh? The captain didn't te... (looks at bleachers)

Eric glances around The Courts and park

COACH SCHO (waving)
(MORE)

Ge-awge!

George stops Dale who is in mid-sentence, with a palm on Dale's forearm, stands, bounds from the bleachers. A beat, and Dale follows.

Eric walks to a basket to shoot short shots. Marky and CHUBBY enter the fence in Jets jerseys.

COACH SCHO (to George)
You know the rules for registering a sub?

Eric half turns to see conversation, then fancy dribbles away

GEORGE (scanning park)
We have thr..., we have four guys

Marky and Chubby scamper to center court to hear discussion

COACH SCHO
A new player has to have parental consent and a jersey.

The Nets slump a little, Eric in view.

DALE

Can we use Eric just this once, and
he get permission and a jersey afta?

Coach Scho checks his watch again. Teen ref JOHNNY ROGERS
walks close to the group, then over to the scorer's table
where a couple of eleven year olds are keeping the book and
working the electronic scoreboard and its clock.

COACH SCHO

Eric, come here please.

Eric drops the basketball as if it had scalded his hands,
sprints over, nearly running over a little kid who isn't
paying close attention. Almost falls, joins circle

COACH SCHO

Here's what I can do, and don't make
this habit. Eric, how far do you
live?

ERIC

By DeBettencourt's Garage

GEORGE

Near me coach

COACH SCHO

Game's in six minutes. I know you
don't wanna forfeit. You live three
minutes away on a bike.

(MORE)

I don't have forms here, but if you can bring me something with a parent's signature and an Island phone number on it, I'll give you a pass today. There isn't much time- I see you wore the same color shirt. If you do get in, it's better you wear one of their jerseys.

Coach Scho goes to the scorebook.

George shoves Eric away, Eric blasts toward his bike, stops.

ERIC

Thanks coach!

DALE

Hurry up man!

Eric scoots uphill at racer speed.

Walking briskly across Niantic Park by the swings, is DAVID,FOURTEEN in a Nets jersey. Chubby notices him, nudges George and points.

INT- COLLINS COTTAGE- MOMENTS LATER

Eric in living room, listening

ERIC

Hello! Mummy?! Grandma?

Looks in parents' bedroom- nobody

ERIC

Jay?!

Into kitchen, he spots a piece of note paper on fridge "GONE TO STOP & SHOP". Shakes his head. Notepad on the dining table, pen on top. Takes pen, glances at MANTLE CLOCK, it's 10:58. scribbles fast "COACH SCH", stops. Tears sheet off, crumbles it. Writes more slowly, "COACH SCHOFIELD, ERIC HAS MY PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SUMMER LEAGUE." He signs it "Shirley Collins"

Darts to back door. Reads paper. Back to get the pen. Adds "508-693-3169". Looks at kitchen wall phone. Doubt clouds his face. Balls up the note, goes out and tosses it in trash can. Hops on bike, then off, reaches into trash can, tears note into small bits.

EXT. COURTS- MOMENTS LATER

A few Nets notice Eric and alert the others.

JOHNNY ROGERS stands with the Pacers, whose hands are on their hips.

ERIC

Nobody was home.

Dale swears under his breath, George kicks at a ball, stopping short.

COACH SCHO

You boys have five. (sighs). Can't allow him to sub without a note. (a beat)

If a player fouls out, I'll issue you a tech for playing with four boys- in fairness to your opponents.

Jets groan. Eric coughs.

COACH SCHO

But if you get down to four, Eric can play.

Eric smiles

(the Nets perk up, Dale pumps a first, Marky gives Chubby five)

COACH SCHO

Eric I'll still need something from your folks to cover the rest of the season. Ask the scorers for some scrap paper for your parents' names and numbah?

(MORE)

Oh- and tell the scorah yaw numbah
is- never mind, you can wear the
jersey of a boy who fouls out.

ERIC

Yes sir

Nets huddle. There are more kids in the bleachers, including
Gina, Marcia and Karen. Eric peeks up at the girls as the
Nets lock palms.

GEORGE

No cheap fouls. Let's go.

Johnny jumps the ball up as Eric sits on the bench. The
Pacers get possession and pass around, but a Pacer misses a
jumpshot, George rebounds and the Nets scurry the other way.
Marky has his layup attempt blocked-Eric notes reaction from
the girls.

A little later, buzzer ends first quarter, Nets lead 13-8.
Eric bounces a ball low and slowly under the bench.

Dale, Marky and George score on three straight possessions,
talking trash and checking out the girls. They lead 26-
14(ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD).

COACH SCHO

Never mind all the chattah fellas.

George rolls his eyes as he gets back on defense. A Pacer slips behind Dale toward the basket and Chubby's man hits him in stride with a pass that results in an easy layup. Marky inboundes the ball, and a Pacer swipes it, and lays it in for a score while most of the Jets run upcourt with their backs to him.

DALE

Marky, pay attention man.

MARKY

You just let your man go backdoor.

GEORGE

Will both o' you shut UP!

The Nets set up their offense. There's a pick on a Pacer- Johnny blows his whistle. The players all look for the call.

JOHNNY

I got sixteen, offense, with a moving screen!

Nets gripe and grovel, Pacers weave offensively, with more precision. Nets hustle to keep up. Eric leans forward, leaves ball still under bench.

A Pacer fakes a pass, then pump fakes a shot, getting David up in the air. David comes down awkwardly on the stationary Pacer, stumbles to a fall on one foot. Eric bolts to his feet in place. A couple girls cover their mouths, as coach and Johnny hover over David, who writhes in agony.

COACH SCHO

Don't move- guys, a little space.

Gusts sweep the park, ruffling the scorebook pages. A scrap of paper drifts from the table, flutters, blown down under the fence onto the grass. Mr. and Mrs. Collins' names, phone number. Scatters with another burst of breeze. Eric studies David.

David grimaces, sits up, rotates the sore ankle in a half circle. Then the other way. Eric is still. Coach Scho bends to place a hand on David's ankle.

COACH SCHO

How does it feel?

DAVID(reaching for coach's hand)

Umm- it seems...

David props himself against coach to upright on one leg. Lowers the hurt ankle. Gingerly tries to place weight on the injured ankle. Eric looks at the girls, then David. Walking normally.

COACH SCHO

(MORE)

(reaching in for his wallet in his shorts)
Brian!

Coach Scho goes to BRIAN, a THIRTEEN YEAR OLD seated by the scorers' table. Eric watches, as Coach Scho hands Brian some bills.

COACH SCHO

Run to McCarthy's and get a bag of ice- don't ride. Thank you- tell 'em what happened.

David runs a several feet with no problem. And again. Eric shuffles his sneakers, catches Marcia's eye, glances down.

JOHNNY

(to David) You okay?

DAVID

Think so.

JOHNNY (points a couple fingers)

Two shots.

Near the swing set behind the first tennis court, LITTLE GIRL, FIVE, stoops to pick up the scrap paper bearing the phone number. She balls it up, looks toward a lady in Bermuda shorts standing behind a swing.

LITTLE GIRL

Mom!

PARK MOTHER

What hon'?

LITTLE GIRL

(opens hand to reveal scrap) Throwing
this in the trash. In the trash. In
the trash. Do-o-on't- LITTE-E-E-'R!

Eric resumes his seat. The Pacer muffs the first free throw. Johnny gives him the ball back- he wishes the second. Nets up 26-17.

The teams play sloppy for a few possessions, David a little gimpy, but game.

BUZZER SOUNDS, Nets 29 Pacers 21 at halftime. Eric joins the huddle, then warmups. He watched David's movements. One last huddle.

GEORGE

We got to get it together. We should
be wiping these suckas.

DALE

Dead up. David, you cool?

DAVID

It's a lot better.

GEORGE

It better be- we can't sub.

BUZZER calls them back on

MONTAGE- the board reads Nets 34 Pacers 23. George overthrows Marky with a long pass that sails out of bounds. David is moving fine on defense. A Pacer misses a jumpshot, but a teammate snares the rebound, goes up and misses, another Pacer taps the carom away from George, a teammate misses a short effort, then a third boy, who is fouled on a miss. The kid sinks both foul shots. 34-25. Eric stands and paces.

MONTAGE- the Nets, ahead 43-27, whip the ball around with 18 seconds remaining on THE CLOCK. Eric's elbows are on his knees. Sits up as the clock runs down and the Pacers swipe at the ball, and the girls stir from their seats. Final BUZZER. Hand slapping among the winners.

GEORGE(to Eric)

Thanks E

Eric nods. Slinks toward his bike. Looks back- George, Dale and Marky are talking to MARCIA, KAREN and GINA. David is icing his ankle.

EXT- Oak Bluffs- NEXT DAY

TROY, CHUMLEY, SIXTEEN, RALPH ROBINSON, SEVENTEEN walking in town, street crowded.

RALPH
(to Troy) You nervous about the game?

TROY

Naw.

RALPH
Speakin' o' nervous, who's your main squeeze?

TROY

I don't have one

CHUMLEY

Man, all these fine sistas on the island, and you a star ballplayer, and you ain't got no GIRL?

RALPH(smiling)

Who do you like?

TROY (dreamily, looks skyward)

KT's sister Karen, Mark Nash's sisters Robin and Carol. Marcia McBride, of course.

(MORE)

CHUM

Of course

RALPH

Talk to 'em, they all come to The Courts.

CHUM

Yeah, man, rap to the ladies. They like you. But you're quiet. I was shy like that. Shoot.

Troy looks surprised. They near Chumley's ride, a big black Lincoln.

RALPH

Troy, man, next time somebody you like comes to the game, wink at 'em after you make a nice move. No one will really notice but her. Just play like you play. It's like- it's like dedicating a song. We all do it

CHUM (opening driver's side)

Yup

Troy and Ralph hop in.

RALPH (seated shotgun)

Then after the game, let things happen naturally. Walk her home. Ask her what she's gonna do tomorrow, ask for her number.

CHUM (steering out of lot)

And when you get to that front door, slob her down. All them girls you named are bad, but they dig you. You out here turnin' it out with older dudes.

RALPH

(MORE)

If I was your age, I'd ask a girl to
one of those Cottager's dances.
Fuzzy's always talkin' about 'em.

TROY (smiling)

Good idea. Thanks fellas.

EXT, The Courts- EVENING

Eric at game on bleachers. Teams warming up, including
players Ronnie Brown, Chumley, Bob Jennings, Lee Lee Pope
wearing his Brighton High School warm up jacket, sporting an
enormous Afro. Bleachers full of teens, younger kids,
adults. Karen Taylor, Marcia McBride, and some younger girls
on top row of stands withing earshot of Eric.

YOUNG GIRL ONE (to KAREN)

You know what separates a man from a
boy?

KAREN (smiling and nodding)

Muscles!

The girls watch Ronnie in the layup lines.

YOUNG GIRL ONE (nods)

Yup. Ronnie is a man.

MARCIA

Only a week 'til the last Cottager's
dance.

KAREN

Oh wow, that's right. Wanna go
shopping tomorrow?

MARCIA

I saved an outfit, but I'll go with
you.

BUZZER sounds, and teams position themselves for the opening
jump ball.

EXT- Oak Bluffs- DAY

Eric pedals past Nancy's, then the Oak Bluffs Marina. Wheels right up by SS PIERCE store. Glances to see the man in the driveway painting the big shark's head. Eric rides up dirt road. Spots a FAMILY on porch of the corner cottage, a mom and dad, young boy and two girls. The youngest and eldest sibling have reddish hair, the middle child, who is seated. has jet black, wavy hair. Eric bikes home.

Eric bikes downhill from Collins Cottage, sees the FAMILY from the corner house on their porch- all but the dad. He slows in front.

MRS. COLE (the mother, THIRTY-SIX)

Hello

ERIC

Hi

MRS. COLE

Do you live nearby?

ERIC (points uphill and back)

I live right there?

MRS. COLE

You come here every summer?

ERIC

Yes ma'am.

MRS. COLE

Where do you live- I mean during the year?

ERIC

Washington, D.C?

KEN

Have you ever seen the president?

ERIC

(MORE)

No, but I've been inside the White House. It was a class trip.
Ken's face drops.

MRS. COLE

Well, this is our first time. We live in Delaware, Ohio.

ERIC

What's that near?

KEN

It's close to Columbus.

MRS. COLE

This is Andrea (motions to eldest, who wears wire rim glasses and has reddish brown, loosely curled afro), Krista, and Kenneth.

Eric nods greeting, eyes Krista an extra beat

MRS. COLE

Well, don't be a stranger Eric.

ERIC

I'll see you.

He rides down their road.

EXT- Oak Bluffs- DAY

The Coles' front porch. Ken, ten, Krista, who is twelve, Andrea, fourteen, and Mrs. Cole talking
Eric Collins bikes the short distance between his cottage and theirs, pulls up. Tries to avoid staring at Krista. He sneaks looks. Greets them all.

ERIC

You guys wanna go in town?

MRS COLE

(MORE)

Krista has a spinal condition, a curvature like an "S", so she can't walk with you all.

Eric looks dumbstruck, but doesn't stare at Krista. They all stay and chat. Eric sneaks admiring looks at Krista.

MUSIC- CHARLIE RICH- The Most Beautiful Girl In The World

EXT- Circuit Ave- DAY

Oak Bluffs' main drag is crowded with shoppers, tourists, families. Eric walking near upper end of the Ave, accompanied by Andrea and Ken Cole- not too far from The Courts.

Richard Johnson and another boy cross the street ahead of them, Richard towering, his thick sweatsocks red, black and green.

ANDREA

I have a friend coming tomorrow.

ERIC

Oh yeah?

KEN

Yup, Yvonne!

ERIC

From Ohio?

ANDREA

Yeah, we're picking her up from the boat.
Andrea looks away from them.

ANDREA

Who is that?

ERIC

Who?

ANDREA(looking toward Richard)

That.

ERIC
(as if describing a fatal plague)

Richard Johnson.

ANDREA

Richard, huh?
Her eyes follow Richard. Eric watches
her with surprise.

EXT.- OAK BLUFFS HIGHLANDS- EVENING

MUSIC- SPELL, by Blue Magic

Eric walks the short distance from the Collins cottage to the corner dirt road house where the Cole's are staying. The porch is empty, everyone inside, lights on. As he rounds to the corner, he notices a curvy figure in the kitchen window, YVONNE MITCHELL, a fourteen-year-old.

She has a reddish afro, mature shape, and is in flattering denim shorts. Yvonne is drying the dishes, alone there. Eric approaches the screen window. He admires her form, then worries she may turn and see him, or someone else enter the kitchen. Time to make a move.

ERIC
(assertive, but not loud enough to
alert others)

Yvonne!

Yvonne turns, waves and smiles. Puts a dish down, walks to window.

YVONNE

Wait, I'll come outside when I'm
finished.

Eric smiles and waits, checking the road for passersby, but it's empty.

Eric and Yvonne speaking in front of the house

ERIC

Let's go for a walk. We can go in town to the basketball courts and watch the games. There's a league.

YVONNE

Okay. Let me go get Andrea.
Eric looks joyless, as Yvonne heads for the screen door.

EXT.- THE COURTS- EVENING

Six seated kids aged ten to fourteen, two of them boys Eric Collins and Ken Cole, the girls Andrea Cole and her friend Yvonne Mitchell. On the next bleacher, a small group of kids, animated, loud, aged eleven to fifteen. Teens and pre-teens crowd wooden bleachers, as two teams of players high school are and older shoot around and warm up. In the stands, boys and girls with 'fro's, some in denims or shorts, divided into clusters, chatting or whispering.

MUSIC- DANCING MACHINE, Jackson 5

Jump ball starts game. Ball tipped by a center towards a willowy boy of fifteen, Thorny. Thorny takes the ball, weaves effortlessly between the bigger, older players with his dribble, fast breaking to a basket.

Montage

-Thorny drives for the basket for a layup

-Thorny dribbles behind his back between two older defenders

- Thorny dribbles near the foul line, flips the ball to a teammate without facing him, the teammate hits a jumpshot

On a turnover of the ball, a college aged player streaks for the basket, but blows the layup

TEEN GIRL (from rowdy group)

He jocked.
She and her friends laugh.

TEEN BOY

Thorny's gonna turn it out.

An older opponent of Thorny's misses an easy followup shot off the backboard. Eric looks at the rough group.

TEEN BOY

He sold out.

The rough group give each other "five". Thorny takes the ball from end to end, makes a twisting layup as a defender reaches in vain to block it. The rough group claps.

TEEN GIRL

That's how we do it in Camden.

YVONNE

(Dreamily) I wanna meet Thorny!

Eric stares at his feet, then peeks at Yvonne from the corner of his eyes. Then back at his feet.

ANDREA (pointing to Thorny)

Where's he from?

ERIC (monotone)

New Jersey.

An older player makes a pretty spin move that results in a basket, and outside The Courts, car horns honk in approval. The Jersey kids boo.

EXT- OAK BLUFFS- NIGHT

Eric and the Cole's walking back up the incline of New York Ave. from The Courts. Eric is not walking next to Yvonne, but to the much younger, and gabby Kenneth. Andrea and Yvonne chat, a few steps behind. Ken yakking, Eric nodding.

The Cole's and Yvonne walk inside their cottage. Eric walks the short distance to his house. Opens the back screen. In the living room Grandma Collins is engaged in a lively pinochle game with THREE WOMEN HER AGE, two wearing white "Gilligan" style beach hats.

ERIC

(MORE)

Hello Mrs. Jackson. Hi Aunt Thelma,
hi Aunt Bernie.
Mrs. Jackson, a round, sixty year-old
fair skinned lady in glasses and a
beach hat, returns his greeting.

MRS. JACKSON

Hi darlin'.

GRANDMA COLLINS (to Mrs. Jackson)

Your bid Jack.

Eric enters his room, plops onto his bed, and lays back.

EXT- Collins Cottage- DAY

Ken Cole walking by himself, spots Eric inside screen porch.
Eric is drawing a comic book. Doesn't see the younger boy.

KEN

Eric.

E looks up.

ERIC

Hi Kenneth.

Ken enters the screen door.

KEN

Hi. What's that'?

ERIC

My comic.

Ken looks at finished comic pages, the superhero strip The
Archer, in colored story frames.

KEN

Cool!

ERIC

I finished two this summer.

(MORE)

KEN

You're good.

ERIC

What'chu gonna do today?

KEN

I dunno yet. Can I watch

ERIC

Sure.

KEN

I don't mean all day

Kenneth sits in a yard chair, observing. Eric draws for a bit, stops. Looks down at the Cole's place. Krista is on the porch with Andrea. He puts the tools of his trade away.

KEN

What's wrong? Am I bothering you?

ERIC

Nope, it's okay. I'll walk you back to your house.

KEN (shrugging)

Okay.

EXT. THE COLE'S COTTAGE

ERIC

Hey Andrea, hi Krista.

The sisters greet him.

KEN

Ya know Eric draws comic books.

ANDREA

Oh yeah.

(MORE)

KEN

Yeah, they're really good too! You should show them!
Eric sneaks a peek at Krista when she is looking elsewhere.

ANDREA

Can we see 'em?

KEN

They're for boys.

Andrea rolls her eyes

Krista looks at Eric. His eyes dart away.

ERIC

I'll go get 'em.

He marches home, collects the two finished comics, and walks back. He hands one book to Andrea, then gives Krista an ARCHER. The sisters flip the pages, Kenneth peering over Andrea's edition.

KRISTA

This is good.

ERIC

Thank you.

KEN

How long does it take you to do 'em?

ERIC

It's like a few days to do one. A page might take a day, but I don't do it all at the same time. I come back to it.

His eyes are still on Ken.
Krista smiles, and hands the comic back to Eric. Andrea keeps reading. Eric gives the book Krista gave back, to Ken.
Mrs. Cole comes outside.

KEN

Mom, Eric drew these comic books,
look!
The boy hands his mother the book.

MRS. COLE

He did? Eric these are very nice.

ERIC

Thank you.

Krista smiles her sunny smile.

ERIC

I better get back.

Mrs. Cole looks up from The Archer, Eric glances at Andrea,
then Ken. She gives him the comic and a half smile.

MRS. COLE

Bye.

ERIC

Bye everybody

EXT- The Courts- DAY

Eric shooting around with mostly older teens on court. The
boys choosing up sides for a full court game.

Boys respond by walking toward the captain who selects them.
A high school aged boy points to and selects Eric, who looks
surprised, then shakes it off and joins his three teammates.

The game begins, fast paced, lots of long passes, layups.
Eric is playing pretty good defense on the older
competition, blocks a shot. Backpedals on defense,
intercepts a pass, then passes forward to an open mate for
an easy layup.

On offense, his ballhandling is a bit tentative, and rather than handle the ball on fast breaks, he passes ahead. Gets back on "D" again. An opponent loops a long, but not high pass upcourt aimed for RORY MOREIS, SIXTEEN. Eric anticipates the pass and deflects it, but the ball grazes his outstretched right thumb, which he withdraws in pain. It's jammed. Wincing, he shakes the hand rapidly in the air, but then recovers into the flow of play. He pulls at the thumb with his left fingers. Looks around, checks sidelines. He remains in the game, but can't contribute much except foot coverage, even on defense.

Eric rides his ten speed from the courts, gripping right handlebar with only four fingers. Takes New York Ave uphill. The roads to his house. Jumps off bike. Marches inside, hears HIS PARENTS in their room.

ERIC

Hi.

PARENTS (OC)

Hey.

Eric takes out ice tray from the freezer. Gets a bowl from china cabinet. Extracts cubes with left hand. Ices right. He carries the bowl to dining room. Peeks at BOSTON GLOBE on dining room table. August 23, 1974. Couple weeks left in summer, but maybe no more basketball.

INT- Collins Cottage- DAY

Eric gazes at his swollen thumb. Shakes his head at an unfinished ARCHER COMIC he now can't work on. He takes the Jackson 5 album out of its cover, and with his good hand, places the needle on the song Dancing Machine. While record plays, Eric goes to the freezer for some ice.

EXT- Collins Cottage- DAY

George Tankard raps on screen door.

INT- Eric's bedroom- DAY

Eric peeks outside and spots his buddy.

ERIC
What's happenin'?

GEORGE

(MORE)

Haven't seen you. You know we can add
a couple players for playoffs

ERIC
I sprained my thumb a couple days
ago.

GEORGE
Bad?

ERIC
I haven't played since (shows
swelling)

GEORGE

GEORGE (CONT.)
You might not even get in, just sub.
See how it is tonight and come down

ERIC
I don't know. How many you got?

GEORGE
Our five. We play Chops and them.

ERIC
I'll see, but I doubt it (looks at an
unfinished ARCHER COMIC)

The boys reach for a soul handshake, Eric protects his thumb
as they clasp

EXT- Collins Cottage- DAY

INT- Collins Cottage, Eric's room-DAY. Eric gingerly drawing the superhero comic book The Archer in his room, thumb loosely holding a colored pencil. On his night stand, a Sports Illustrated cover about the upcoming Ali-Foreman fight.

Hear HISSING SOUND outside. Peeks out his screen window

TIA POWELL, curvy, seventeen, medium 'fro, black bikini, is hosing herself from a day at the beach. Eric discreetly checks her out, then back to his artwork. But the spraying continues. Eric positions himself such that he can see and not be seen, and he admires this Vineyard Venus, Tommy's big sister. The black bathing suit accents her beige skin. She appears not to have a care. She cleans her legs. Eric is in heaven. Tia finishes, and heads inside. Eric looks down at his comics, then outside again. Just looks at the Powell house, lost, but not lost- in thought.

EXT- The Courts- DAY

Johnny, Bob Jennings, and HIGH SCHOOLERS, brothers LEE-LEE and LANCE POPE, RONNIE BROWN, RORY all on the court. Shooting around before picking sides. Eric and KIDS HIS AGE AND YOUNGER play on the other half court, a three-on-three until the older guys take over the whole court with their daily four-on-fours. Eric shakes his sore thumb as he walks to the sideline.

RONNIE (to Lee-Lee and Lance)

Good luck this year. I'll check you out in the "Globe".

LEE LEE

You know we have to transfer.

JOHNNY

Why?

LANCE

Busing. We're gonna be goin' to Brighton. Lee-Lee's goin' to play quarterback.

LEE LEE

Matter of fact, practice starts in two days.

(MORE)

BOB

You're not gonna be around for playoffs?

LEE LEE

Nope.

JOHNNY (dribbling behind his back)

What's with this busing?

LEE LEE

All the Boston public schools that are more than half white, gotta be balanced by law. Me and Lance found out we're goin' to Brighton High. They're okay in sports, but we don't know anybody. I hope they let me play quarterback. If they do, I'm gonna turn it out.

JOHNNY

Wow.

LANCE

Some kids from Roxbury and Dorchester are gonna be bused to South Boston, Hyde Park, and Charlestown. Not in a million years, bro'.

RONNIE

Southie?! That's crazy!

LEE LEE

It will be. There's gonna be trouble. And dig, they're sending kids from Southie and Charlestown and Hyde Park, to Roxbury schools.

JOHNNY

No way! (flips ball to Ronnie)

LEE LEE

(MORE)

If I'm lyin' I'm flyin'. I'd move in
with my relatives in Malden first.

BOB

Let's shoot for captains.

Bob takes his place on the foul line, and drains his shot.
Outside the fence, big ALBIE CLEMENTS arrives at The Courts.
The guys inside the fence smile. Johnny sinks a shot to be
opposing captain.

BOB

I got Lee Lee.

JOHNNY

Gimme Ronnie

BOB (waving towards himself)

Albie.

JOHNNY

I got Lance.

EXT- NANCY'S wooden outdoor snack stand, by Oak Bluffs
Marina-DAY

Folks munching on fried clams, franks, cones or fries.

Karen, Marcia, Trish, Gina have snacks. Gina is wearing a
scarf, Marcia staring at motorboats in harbor.

KAREN

Marcia what's wrong? You haven't
touched yours.

MARCIA

Nothing.

KAREN

Yeah, right. What is it?

MARCIA

(MORE)

Is it even worth it?

TRISH

The clams?

MARIA

(laughs) Dating a boy for the summer. Is it worth it? I mean, Richard is nice enough, but I can't expect him to be faithful. And then the summer will be over.

KAREN

You like other guys?

MARCIA

Most of the other guys I really like are a couple of years older.

GINA

She means "experienced"

MARCIA

Well, one might not be

They sigh in unison: Ronnie.

MARCIA

I just don't know. At the parties, people dance with diff---

TRISH

Richard walks you home. Lots of girls would die for that.

MARCIA

Last year, I would have (laughs). But he walked her home too.

GINA

It's just a summer. I gotta run. See you at The Courts.

EXT- Cottagers' Corner, large Oak Bluffs cabin- NIGHT

MUSIC- "Start All Over Again", DELFONICS

INT- COTTAGERS' CORNER

TEEN BOYS slow dance with GIRLS they are with, others scan floor for a crush to drag with.

Marcia McBride shakes her head to an offer. Trish is dancing, eyes closed. A tall older boy extends his hand to Karen Taylor, who joins him on the floor, as they squeeze between hugged up couples who ignore their steps to position. Troy leads ROBIN NASH, FOURTEEN through a maze of dancers.

Richard leans against a wall. Sees Marcia turn down another boy. Richard walks around, not through the pack of dancers. He gets to Marcia

RICHARD

I mean every word.

(Marcia smiles, but recovers her pride)

MARCIA

Actions speak louder.

RICHARD

I'm taking one now.

(He cocks his head toward the floor, turns a little. Marcia looks at his back, pauses, but follows.

Not easy to find a space, but they wrap arms, closed in by kids)

RICHARD

We couldn't end a good summer on a bad note.

MARCIA

Don't talk, dance.

Richard pecks her on the cheek. Looking on, Karen smiles over her partner's shoulder, Maria can't see this.

Save for a few kids, the floor is full, and swooning.

EXT- Oak Bluffs, DAY

Eric rides his bike to School Street BASKETBALL COURT. A younger boy is shooting alone there, eleven year old MILTON WILLIAMS

ERIC

Hi. Can I shoot around?
Milton tosses Eric the ball. The boys
shoot around for a bit

ERIC

What's your name?

MILTON

Milton Williams

ERIC

Where are you from?

MILTON

I live in Queens. You wanna play one-
on-one?

ERIC (sensing an easy younger mark)

Okay.

They shoot for takeout, and Eric makes his free throws. He tries to work around the younger boy to score on a drive to his right, but misses. Milton takes the ball back to the key, head fakes, dribbles easier between his leg and flashes in for a layup. Eric is surprised. He checks Milton the ball, and Milton changes directions between his legs, fakes a step, switches again, and eludes Eric for another scoring drive. Milton smiles a lot, but not at Erric, within himself and his joy for the game he loves. He scores with fancy ballhandling, jumping to a big lead.

MILTON (waiting for Eric to check him
the ball)

10-2.

Milton uses a behind-the-back move to score

MILTON 11-2.

Wanna play again?

ERIC

No. How old are you?

MILTON

Eleven

ERIC

When do you go back?

MILTON

Monday.

ERIC

Me too. I'll see ya.

INT- Collins Cottage, Eric's room- DAY

Eric picks up Jeffrey's Jackson 5 "Dancing Machine" album. Slides the record out to play it again, hesitates. He takes the album outside. Walks the dirt road, a few doors up to the Simmons'. Raps on the screen door. Mrs. Wortham steps up.

MRS. WORTHAM

Hi Eric.

ERIC:

Hi. Is Jeffrey in?

MRS. WORTHAM

He is, I'll get him.

She disappears inside. Momentarily Jeffrey comes to the door. Eric extends the album in his hand.

ERIC

Here you go.

JEFFREY

Thanks.

ERIC

See ya next year.

JEFFREY

See ya. Next year I want you to draw
Count Dante.

EXT- SCHOOL STREET- DAY

Eric working out by riding up the hill, clad in a Budweiser logo tee shirt and homemade cutoff denim shorts- his pace slower as the street climbs to the tougher crest, but he is steady. Determined. He sees the basketball court behind the Oak Bluffs Elementary School is empty. His pedal strokes are far apart. He hangs a right at the front of the cemetery, coasts, crosses New York Ave. Then the right up the road where the Cole's and he stay. The Cole's are outside. He brakes his bike.

MRS. COLE

Hi Eric.

ERIC

Hi. Hey Andrea, hey Ken, Krista.

The kids speak.

ANDREA

We just took Yvonne to the airport.

ERIC (feigning nonchalance)

Oh.

(MORE)

MRS. COLE

Eric, do you play a sport?

ERIC

I want to play football this year.
I'm working on my legs.

MRS. COLE

Oh, that's why you ride so much. What
position do you play?

Ken jerks to attention at this. Krista smiles as she
listens, but is much tougher to read than her kid brother.

ERIC

Safety.
(He shoots a furtive glance at
Krista)

MRS. COLE

I think I've heard of that.

Mr. Cole opens door to porch, in plaid short sleeved shirt.

MR. COLE

Eric. How are you?

ERIC

Fine sir.

KEN

My dad gets tickets to Ohio State. He
works for Pittsburgh Paint and Glass.
I met Archie Griffin.
Eric smiles politely

ERIC

I'll see you (to all).

KEN

See you tomorrow!

SUPER- ONE MONTH LATER, Washington, D.C.

INT- TAFT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM- DAY
Crowded with students and some parents, in front of
auditorium, academic counselors and staffers meet with the
attendees. Mrs. Collins and Eric step up at their turn in
line.

COUNSELOR

(reaching to Mrs. Collins) His junior
high school transcripts.
Mrs. Collins hands her a tabled
document. The counselor looks it
over, as Eric looks at all the kids.

COUNSELOR

Ninth grade English, ninth grade
algebra, ninth grade French (looks at
Mrs. Collins)
He's had all his requirements. He
shouldn't be here.

SHIRLEY

What should we do?

COUNSELOR

You should register him at McKinley
Tech- the high school for your
district. He'll be in tenth grade.

Eric's head snaps around in surprise. Half smiles. Looks
again at the mass of teens his age.

SHIRLEY

Thank you. Come on.

They leave, we see the hundreds around them, we lose them in
the auditorium.

EXT- Collins D.C. house, DAY

INT- Eric's bedroom, a spacious attic decorated with large posters of athletes, and photos cut out from magazines and newspapers, or mag covers- Ali, Franco Harris, Earl Monroe, Joe Namath.

Eric handles a large envelope addressed to him, inscribed in youthful handwriting. The return address reads "Kenneth Cole...Delaware, Ohio". Opens it. Newspaper inside. And a letter on notebook paper. Newspaper is clippings about Ohio State football games. From Ken Cole.

Eric shakes his head and smiles. He reads (V.O)"Hey Juan, how are you. I am fine. What's going on in Washington, D.C? I just started school. I am sending you some news stories about the Buckeyes, and our quarterback Corny Greene. He is great. I will send you some more. Stay in touch- Your Friend, Kenneth Cole"

Eric places the letter back inside the envelope.

Grabs paper and pencil. Writes (V.O) "Dear Ken, Thanks for the letter and the articles. I'm doing okay. Cornelius Greene is from D.C. His nickname is 'Flam', for 'Flamboyant'. I saw him score 36 points in a high school basketball game. He also played baseball.

Tell Andrea and Krista I said hi, and if you see Andrea's friend Yvonne, give her my address. Sincerely, Eric".

Eric looks up from his notebook pad and around his room- all the sports posters and magazine covers on the attic walls. A stack of EBONY magazines. A small pile of his comic book "The Archer". Gets up and walks to the superhero stack, bends down, picks up one stapled issue. Gives a measured smile. He places the comic atop the letter to Ken.