

THE STORY OF PRIVATE BRUNO

Written by

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FADE IN

EXT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The autumn leaves are on full display, as if the trees - especially the maples surrounding the property - are on fire when a car pulls in front of the building's sliding doors.

ERIC, a fit 22 year old, steps out of the car. The UBER DRIVER is out and he opens the trunk. He hands Eric his backpack. Eric stands in front of the building a moment before entering.

INT. LOBBY - GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Eric goes to the front desk where a GREETER smiles warmly.

GREETER

Could you sign in for me, please.

Eric takes a pen from the desk and signs his name and date into a book. It's October 20th.

INT. VISITING ROOM - GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

There are a number of elderly in the large room. Several LADIES chat on a sofa in one corner. A very OLD MAN sleeps in his wheelchair close to the fireplace. A NURSE approaches GRAMPA JACK, 85, who sits in an armchair, using an iPad.

NURSE

John, you have a visitor.

GRAMPA JACK

My grandson.

NURSE

That's right.

Eric walks into the room and sets down his backpack.

Grampa Jack turns to look at his grandson.

GRAMPA JACK

Hey there, Eric!

ERIC

Hi Grampa.

Grampa Jack sets the tablet down and struggles to get up.

GRAMPA JACK

Oh, my knee.

ERIC

It's okay, you don't have to...

GRAMPA JACK

Don't be ridiculous. Let me give my grandson a hug.

Eric and Grampa share a quick, awkward hug.

GRAMPA JACK (CONT'D)

Wow, it's been a while. You're even taller than the last time I saw you.

ERIC

I guess I'm still growing. How have you been?

GRAMPA JACK

Oh, I can complain, but I won't. How are you doing?

ERIC

Alright.

GRAMPA JACK

Have you been in town long?

ERIC

I was home visiting Mom for two weeks, then I came into town to visit friends from high school. We went out last night.

GRAMPA JACK

A little hungover are you?

ERIC

Not too bad, Grampa. I don't drink much. But it was a good time.

GRAMPA JACK

When are you going to get a haircut?

ERIC

Just as soon as I get back out west.

GRAMPA JACK

Good to hear. And how's your mother?

ERIC

She's well. You know Mom.

GRAMPA JACK

She's a strong woman.

ERIC

She says hi and that she'll be in town to visit you next week.

Eric removes his windbreaker. In front of a large fireplace, they sit in a pair of armchairs with a small coffee table between them. Grampa Jack takes care not to sit on his iPad.

ERIC (CONT'D)

She's thinking about selling the house to go travel the world.

GRAMPA JACK

The house on the lake? Oh, shit. I hope she doesn't do that.

ERIC

Well, since Dad's been gone I think she's lost interest in the place.

GRAMPA JACK

(fighting back tears)

It's a shame, your Dad. I miss him.

ERIC

Yeah...

Grampa turns on the iPad.

GRAMPA JACK

I was showing some of these people the pictures you've sent me from out west.

ERIC

Oh yeah.

GRAMPA JACK

You managed to take some amazing shots.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP IPAD SCREEN

Grampa Jack opens the PHOTO APP to see an image of the Rocky Mountains. He swipes right and there's Eric in a SKI PATROLLER'S JACKET.

ERIC

Thanks, Grampa. I bought a pretty good camera last year.

Another swipe of the iPad and there's a picture of a giant MOOSE. The next picture is of Eric with an attractive blonde WOMAN around his age. The next is a picture of an ELK overlooking a cliff. The next few pictures are of BEARS, both Black and Grizzly.

INT. VISITING ROOM - GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME

Grampa shows Eric a picture of a Grizzly.

GRAMPA JACK

You took this.

ERIC

I sure did, Grampa Jack.

GRAMPA JACK

You got that close.

ERIC

Pretty close. That was at the base of the ski hill when I was working off season.

GRAMPA JACK

Magnificent. You be careful with the bears, now.

ERIC

I will.

Grampa Jack thumbs the iPad screen. There's an image of a BLACK BEAR. Grampa Jack stares at it a long moment.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I see lots of Black Bears out there too.

Under his GLASSES, Grampa Jack's eyes water and a tear escapes down the corner of one eye.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Are you okay, Grampa?

GRAMPA JACK

I was just remembering...I don't know if I've already told you this story, but we used to have a pet bear at the farm.

ERIC

A pet bear? No, I haven't heard.

GRAMPA JACK

Yeah, a Black Bear, much like this one.

ERIC

You're kidding, right?

GRAMPA JACK

How much time have you got?

ERIC

Oh, a couple hours, I guess.

GRAMPA JACK

That's plenty of time. Unless, you've heard it before from me or your father...

ERIC

I haven't heard your story about a pet bear, Grampa.

GRAMPA JACK

Well, put up your feet and I'll tell you about it.

ERIC

Okay. What was its name?

GRAMPA JACK

It's a long story. And his name was Bruno.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - BANGOR, MAINE - NIGHT

Under a bright moon, a large BLACK BEAR emerges from the trees and approaches a country home.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

Now, I wasn't around for some of this story, so I'll tell you like I heard it.

The Bear stops, sniffs at the air, then turns back while waiting for her small BEAR CUB to catch up to her from out of the darkness of the woods.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

The bear came from just outside  
Bangor, Maine.

The Bear Cub reaches its mother. They touch noses and she licks her cub's face before leading them both to the clearing of the property. Mother and Baby approach the shed, which sits across the lane from the home. Her Cub watches as Mother Bear uses her nose to open the latched shed door.

INT. SHED - ADJACENT TO A COUNTRY HOME - BANGOR - NIGHT

The door bursts open and both bears enter to find a closed tin garbage can. Mother bear expertly removes the lid, but drops it with a CLANG! The can is full of waste food, including remnants of freshly-cleaned trout.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - COUNTRY HOME - NIGHT

RANDAL, a man in his sixties sits listening to a news report playing out from a G.E. RADIO that rests on a table against a wall of the room. His wife, ARLENE, knits from her rocking chair. The RADIO ANNOUNCER *describes the events in Poland as the German army rounds up Jews under order from Himmler.*

ARLENE

Dear, dear. That's an awful bit of  
business going on over there.

They are both startled by the SOUND of a CLANG from outside. Randal looks at Arlene, who stops knitting and rocking.

ARLENE (CONT'D)

I heard it too.

RANDAL

Those damn raccoons are back.

Randal reaches for the RIFLE above the fireplace mantle. He checks to find it already loaded. Quietly, he slips out the door of his home and...

EXT. COUNTRY HOME - NIGHT

...steps across the threshold into the dark. He lights a LANTERN from a table on the porch and takes it. He approaches the nearby shed, with its open door.

There's the SOUNDS of RUSTLING and OF COMMOTION from within. Randal reaches the dark shed and lifts the lantern.

RANDAL

Hello!

There's silence.

RANDAL (CONT'D)

I've got a loaded Remington here.

No response. Randal leans into the open doorway, lighting the shed's interior. Before he knows it, he's face-to-face with Mother Bear. She stands taller than him and GROWLS. Randal falls back on his ass, dropping the lantern and accidentally firing the rifle with a huge BANG. The bears push past him and run down the dark tree-lined laneway.

INT. DELIVERY TRUCK (MOVING) - NIGHT

A sleepy-looking TRUCKER is behind the wheel of his 1942 Mac, rolling along the dark two lane highway. He reacts as a Black Bear and her Cub run onto the road in front of him.

TRUCKER

What in tarnation?

His foot lifts from the gas pedal and depresses the brake.

EXT. MAINE HIGHWAY - BANGOR - NIGHT

Mother Bear is in the headlights of the quickly approaching truck. She is struck, taking out a headlight. The truck's bumper and fender are torn off the Mac and go dragging and scraping down against the asphalt.

Her tiny Cub stops in its tracks, just shy of the rolling tires. The truck's tail lights come on, glowing red over the dark road. The Cub approaches and licks Mother Bear, SNIFFING and WHIMPERING. The little Bear is clearly in distress as it tries to awaken its Mother.

A Flashlight is lit as the Trucker gets out from the truck. He aims the light to examine the front of his vehicle.

TRUCKER

Dammit!

He starts back along the truck, lighting it with the flashlight for inspection before aiming it back behind the truck. The light catches both bears in the road. The large one is evidently dead while the small Cub watches over her.



TRUCKER (CONT'D)

Hey! Hey bear! Get outta here!

The Cub hesitates. But as the Trucker nears, the young bear becomes more upset and flees into the dark woods.

EXT. FOREST - BANGOR, MAINE

The Bear Cub runs beneath the trees under moonlight for some ways before stopping and looking back, waiting with fading hope for his Mother. Catching his breath, the Bear Cub seems to SIGH and WHIMPER as he waits alone in the dark.

EXT. RIVER - OUTSIDE BANGOR, MAINE

MIKE ROCHE and SEAN ANGUS, both 18 stand in their hip waders in a fast-flowing stream. Each of them carry a canvas sack over their shoulder while they cast with FLY-FISHING rods and reels. Mike casts his line back and forth before launching the fly. The fly lands in the rushing water downstream.

SEAN

Nice cast.

MIKE

Right where I wanted it.

A fish strikes at the lure with a SPLASH. Mike yanks the rod, hooks the trout and works at bringing in his line.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I told you they're in that pocket.

Mike fights the RAINBOW TROUT and reels it in. He admires his catch before he unhooks and places it in the sack.

The two young men take their focus from the river and turn toward the shoreline a little ways upstream behind them. They both look SURPRISED when they see a tiny Bear Cub on shore, eating away at a sandwich, with a torn paper bag at its paws. An open rests on the grass near two BICYCLES leaning against a tree.

SEAN

What?

MIKE

A bear.

SEAN

Holy shit.

MIKE

Hey! Hey! Bear! Get out of here!

The Bear Cub pauses from eating the sandwich to look at them. Then returns its attention to the food. Mike approaches the Bear Cub. It doesn't move away.

SEAN

Hey, Mike. Maybe you should keep your distance. Mama bear's probably close by.

Mike and the Bear Cub look at each other as the bear chews away at Sean's sandwich.

MIKE

So much for your lunch, Sean.

SEAN

Well, that's no good. Dad was saying last week that someone hit a bear on the road up near your place.

MIKE

Oh yeah?

SEAN

I'm thinking maybe that's her cub.

MIKE

Yeah, maybe.

The Bear Cub watches as Mike continues closer to shore.

SEAN

Not too close, Mike.

MIKE

He's too small to be dangerous, Sean.

SEAN

It's not him I'm worried about.

MIKE

(to the Bear Cub)

Hi little one. Are you lost? Where's your Mama?

Curious, the Bear Cub gets up on its fours, but doesn't run.

SEAN

Mike.

MIKE  
Aren't you cute.

Mike steps one foot from the stream and reaches out. The Bear Cub hesitates a moment, then SNIFFS at Mike's hand. The Cub steps closer, licking at Mike's fingers and palm.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
He likes me.

SEAN  
He smells the trout from your hands. Careful he doesn't chew off a finger.

Mike reaches for the empty canvas sack on the grass.

MIKE  
(to the Bear Cub)  
Where's your mother?

Sean is now beside Mike.

SEAN  
I'm getting nervous. Let's go.

Sean moves past Mike and the Bear Cub and takes his bicycle by the handle bars. He starts to walk away with it. Mike hesitates before leaving the bear and grabbing his bike too.

MIKE  
Look after yourself, bear.

Mike follows Sean along the narrow grassy path but only manages a few steps before looking back to see the Bear Cub is following closely behind the rear wheel.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Sean.

Sean turns.

SEAN  
Oh. Oh.

MIKE  
Stay here, bear.

They continue walking. The Bear Cub follows along at Mike's heels. Mike pulls the canvas sack from his shoulder and reaches for the Cub, grabbing it by the scruff and dropping it into the bag. The Cub makes SOUNDS of DISTRESS.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Shush! It's okay, bear. It's okay.

SEAN  
What are you doing?

MIKE  
I bet your right about his mother being hit. He's probably an orphan. He's coming home with me.

SEAN  
Mike. Don't be -

MIKE  
I'm taking him home, Sean.

EXT. ROCHE FARMHOUSE - DAY (WEEKS LATER)

Beside a tree, not far from the farmhouse, a MILK CAN lies on its side. Nearby, there's a steel peg in the ground with a short light chain attached.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Of course, this was back around the middle of World War II.

Closer to the house, MIKE'S MOTHER hangs clothing from a line when Mike (clutching an open manila envelope and letter in one hand) comes running along the laneway with the now slightly larger Bear Cub running freely beside him.

MIKE  
Mom! I got in!

MIKE'S MOTHER  
What's that?

MIKE  
I got in! I'm going to be in the air force! Mom, I'm going to be a fighter pilot!

MIKE'S MOTHER  
Oh, my. That's...I don't know what to say, Michael.

MIKE  
Sean and I both start training next week!

Mike's Mother struggles to hide her deep worry.

MIKE'S MOTHER

That's...that's exciting news.

The Bear Cub sniffs around the lawn before approaching the turned over milk can, which is stuffed with hay and a blanket. The Bear Cub steps one paw inside and gently removes a TEDDY BEAR from the can.

MIKE

Where's Pop? I've gotta tell him.

MIKE'S MOTHER

I believe he's in the tractor barn.

Mike starts in the direction of one of the barns.

MIKE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

I suppose you'll be going away for some time.

MIKE

Yes, Mom.

MIKE'S MOTHER

Then what are we to do with Bruno?

Mike stops. He looks at BRUNO, the Bear Cub, who plays by gently gnawing and slapping the Teddy Bear on the lawn. Bruno stops his frolicking and looks at Mike and his mother. Mike looks at Bruno, pondering their dilemma.

EXT. U.S. AIR FORCE/R.C.A.F. BASE - SUMMERSIDE - PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - DAY

A CARD reads: UNITED STATES AIR FORCE BASE, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (CANADA) 1943

The airfield (shared between the American and Canadian forces) has large hangars alongside the tarmac and two busy runways. Various military aircraft are parked all around the tarmac and fill the hangars as well. Several Boeing-Stearman Model 75 bi planes are grouped together, but otherwise the Avro Ansons are the most dominant.

Mike and Sean, along with two other young CADETS climb out of the de Havilland prop plane and begin to pass their bags and belongings out onto the tarmac near a hangar.

DE HAVILLAND PILOT

Welcome to your new home, fellas.  
This is the American side of the base. Say, I never saw someone bring so much baggage as you two.

SEAN

We're both playing in the marching band. I've got a trombone and Mike, here, plays saxophone.

The De Havilland Pilot looks skeptically over their gear, including the heavy milk can with a folded blanket over it.

DE HAVILLAND PILOT

What's with the big can of moo juice?

MIKE

Fragile stuff.

DE HAVILLAND PILOT

If you say so.

INT. U.S.A.F. BARRACKS - SUMMERSIDE - NIGHT

Lying mostly under the covers in a lower bunk bed with Mike, Bruno drinks milk from a bottle, which Mike holds discreetly. A CADET on the upper bunk is bothered by the NOISE.

CADET

What's going on down there?

MIKE

(whispering to Bruno)  
This isn't going to work is it, Bruno.

EXT. BASE COMMANDER'S OFFICE - MORNING

It's dawn and the base is coming alive as Mike and Sean carry the milk can to the administrative building.

INT. BASE COMMANDER'S OFFICE

The Base Commander is beyond perplexed by the two new recruits standing with an open milk can between them. Mike lays the can on its side and removes the top. Bruno crawls out of the can. Mike picks up Bruno and holds him. The Base Commander is out of his seat.

BASE COMMANDER

I must admit I'm beyond perplexed, gentlemen. I'd say this is highly unusual.

MIKE

Yes, Sir.

SEAN

Yes, Sir.

MIKE

Sir, I apologize. I don't know what I was thinking. I just couldn't leave him behind.

BASE COMMANDER

Ah. I see. This bear. You've named him, I imagine.

MIKE

Yes, Sir. This is Bruno, Sir.

BASE COMMANDER

Bruno, you say.

MIKE

Yes, Sir. He's orphaned. We rescued him back in Bangor.

SEAN

(whispering to Mike)

You rescued him.

MIKE

He's very tame.

BASE COMMANDER

And so is my family beagle, but he's not here on the base, is he.

MIKE

I suppose not, Sir.

The Base Commander turns back to his desk, rifles through some files and then finds a copy of LIFE MAGAZINE.

BASE COMMANDER

It so happens I was reading an article about a bear...

The Base Commander turns a few pages to find the article.

BASE COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Yes, here it is. Wojtek is his name.

(MORE)

BASE COMMANDER (CONT'D)

The Polish Army adopted this brown bear and he's currently with the 22nd Transport Company in Italy, carrying spent munitions from the front. They say the bear has proven to be great for morale.

The Base Commander approaches Bruno, then reaches out to pet it behind the ears. Bruno reacts with pleasure.

BASE COMMANDER (CONT'D)

He does have a nice disposition about him, doesn't he.

MIKE

Yes, Bruno's as gentle as a lamb, Sir. Again, I apologize...

BASE COMMANDER

Well, we could have it put down and solve this problem immediately.

Mike and Sean try not to react.

BASE COMMANDER (CONT'D)

That said, I believe this base will benefit from having Bruno around. I like to think of our shared base as home to our large, slightly insane but highly functional family. Bruno would make a fine mascot. A symbol of our united strength in the fight for freedom.

Mike and Sean bite their tongues.

BASE COMMANDER (CONT'D)

I'll make some calls. Bruno is going to need his own barracks. There's a spot on the north side of hangar 2 where a shed would fit nicely.

MIKE

Sir, that would be -

BASE COMMANDER

You both are in charge of looking after Bruno. That is, on top of your other duties. That means taking responsibility for his well-being and for the safety of our personnel.

(MORE)



MIKE (CONT'D)

If there's any muckety-muck, he'll  
be put down toute suites. Do you  
both understand me?

MIKE AND SEAN

Yes, Sir.

The Base Commander comes around from his side of the desk.

BASE COMMANDER

As for you, young bear. You'll be  
enlisted as Private Bruno.

BEGIN MONTAGE

U.S.A.F./R.C.A.F. SUMMERSIDE BASE

Mike and Sean work with lumber, setting up and constructing a  
shed with the help of several others. Bruno's shed is built  
tight against the shady side of a hangar's exterior wall.

Mike feeds the bear with a bottle as other CADETS watch.

Sean is at the controls of a bi-plane. Several other yellow-  
painted training biplanes fly beside him in formation. Mike  
flies one of the other aircraft.

The shed is finished. Sean lays down some blankets and  
spreads hay throughout the 8' X 10' space. There are steps  
up to the shed's flat roof so that Bruno has a look-out.

Bruno is introduced to his new home. Mike places Bruno's  
teddy bear inside.

Bruno watches from the upper deck of his shed as the military  
band parades past. Marching along with the other band  
members, Sean plays a TROMBONE and Mike plays TENOR  
SAXOPHONE. The bear's head moves in rhythm to the beat of  
"Liberty Bell March."

Mike brings Bruno a bucket of left-over food, which is a mix  
of vegetables, fish and lobster tails.

Bruno learns to catch a ball in his mouth and fetch.

Bruno has grown. He wrestles gently with some of the AIRMEN.

From the shed's rooftop, Bruno watches as one Avro Anson  
after another line up on the tarmac. An overloaded Avro  
roars along the runway before sluggishly lifting off.

END MONTAGE

INT. OFFICER'S MESS - NIGHT

The marching band members play GLENN MILLER'S music and the dance floor is hopping. Both Sean and Mike play their instruments with the other musicians at one end of the hall.

DONALD DAVIDSON, mid twenties, is against the bar with a half glass of beer, talking to a young woman, ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH

So you've pulled me away from my girlfriends to chat me up but you're not going to ask me to dance?

DONALD

I didn't say that. I'm just mustering up some courage. Besides, I'm a bit of a dead hooper when it comes to dancing.

Donald finishes his beer.

ELIZABETH

I see. Then perhaps you'll buy me a drink first.

DONALD

Uh. Yes, sure. Of course. What will you have?

ELIZABETH

I'll let you decide.

Donald turns to the BARTENDER.

DONALD

Two Molsons, Carl.

BARTENDER

In a jiffy, Donald.

Elizabeth smiles.

ELIZABETH

You take me as a beer drinker?

DONALD

Not necessarily.

ELIZABETH

Why not a Gin Fizz or a Mai Tai?

DONALD  
Because you let me choose.

The bartender returns with two chilled mugs of freshly poured beer. Donald slaps his cash onto the bar.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Carl.

Donald grabs both mugs from the bar and hands one of them to Elizabeth. She's amused.

ELIZABETH  
You're on a first name basis with  
the bartender.

DONALD  
Sure. Why not? He's an important  
man around here.

ELIZABETH  
Seems everyone knows your name too.

DONALD  
I didn't notice.

ELIZABETH  
What makes you so popular around  
here, Donald?

DONALD  
They tell me I'm good at spinning a  
yarn and telling a joke or two.  
But I work on all the refrigeration  
units on the base. I'm responsible  
for keeping the beer cold.

Elizabeth takes a dainty sip from her mug.

ELIZABETH  
Good job, Donald. It's very cold.

DONALD  
They don't serve it like that in  
England.

ELIZABETH  
No, apparently not. But I'll only  
be there a short while. I'll be  
nursing in France or Italy before  
long.

DONALD

Then you'll have all the wine you could want.

ELIZABETH

I always dreamed of seeing France. Now, if only I could see it without this awful war.

DONALD

Somehow I have a feeling you'll be okay. Hey, can I show you something, Elizabeth?

Elizabeth looks intrigued.

EXT. SUMMERSIDE AIRFORCE BASE - NIGHT

Donald holds a FLASHLIGHT in one hand and Elizabeth's hand in the other as they walk across the tarmac toward Hangar 2.

ELIZABETH

I should have brought a coat. The evenings are still quite cool.

DONALD

I won't keep you outside for long.

ELIZABETH

Maybe I shouldn't have agreed to this. Where are you taking me?

DONALD

Oh, not far at all. You can trust me, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH

If you say so.

They arrive at Bruno's shed where Donald flicks a switch and a light bulb illuminates the exterior. Donald slides a panel, creating an opening at about chest height at the front side. He aims his flashlight inside the opening.

DONALD

Elizabeth, meet Bruno.

Bruno is groggy but gets up and approaches the opening.

ELIZABETH

Oh my! A bear?

DONALD  
Bruno, this is Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH  
(laughing)  
Hello, Bruno.

DONALD  
He's friendly. You can pet him.

Donald reaches for the bear and pets his neck.

ELIZABETH  
You must be joking.

DONALD  
Go ahead. He loves it.

ELIZABETH  
Oh. Alright.

With a little hesitation, Elizabeth pets Bruno.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)  
Oh. He's a sweetheart.

Bruno stands up and places his paws at the frame of the opening. Donald scratches Bruno behind the ears.

DONALD  
Sorry to wake you, Bruno. I just wanted you to meet the gal I'm going to one day marry.

ELIZABETH  
(laughing)  
Donald, that was the smoothest, most ridiculous line I've ever heard.

DONALD  
(to Bruno)  
That is, once she gets back from France.

ELIZABETH  
Not bad, Donald...

They turn their attention from the bear to each other, embrace and kiss.

DONALD  
Now what do you say we get back to the party and cut ourselves a rug.

ELIZABETH

I thought you couldn't dance.

DONALD

I can't. But Bruno's really good at it.

INT. OFFICER'S MESS - NIGHT

The party is ROARING as only a military's big band party can during wartime. Military personnel dance on the center floor while the band plays one of Tommy Dorsey's songs. Mike and Sean look on proudly while they play their instruments with the dozen or so MUSICIANS. A passing corporal trips and spills his beer on another. They're too happy and drunk to start a fight.

Donald holds a short leash and dances (on his two left feet) with Elizabeth and Bruno, who's loving the action. Bruno stands almost to Donald's shoulder.

INT. OFFICER'S MESS (AN HOUR OR TWO LATER)

The band has packed it in, but a juke box continues to supply the music. Sean is in the background on the dance floor with Bruno and several men and women. Mike sits at the corner of the bar, nursing a scotch and water with Donald, Elizabeth and JANE, and another newly formed COUPLE.

MIKE

Sean's heading over to the front.

DONALD

Yeah. I think I heard that.

MIKE

At least he's finally going to get into some real flying.

JANE

Oh. I'm worried for him.

MIKE

I should be joining him.

ELIZABETH

Don't be a cracked egg. You don't need that danger.

MIKE

What? Even you're going.

ELIZABETH

That's different. I'm there to help mend people, not fight.

MIKE

I just want to fly the Mustang and take down some Krauts.

DONALD

Stop your belly-aching. We're all doing our part, Mike. Besides, flying cargo across the pond is dangerous enough.

Behind them, Sean hands his bottle of beer to Bruno, who drinks it down thirstily to the delight of the companions around them.

BARTENDER

Last call.

DONALD

More of the same for everyone, Carl. On me. And don't forget another for Sean and Bruno.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. AVRO ANSON (FLYING) - EVENING

With a red sun disappearing behind them, a fleet of aircraft soar through the darkening sky above the Atlantic.

INT. AVRO ANSON COCKPIT (FLYING)

Mike, as part of a crew of three, flies his fully fueled and overloaded aircraft as his CO-PILOT looks over a map.

CO-PILOT

Maintain altitude.

MIKE

Maintaining altitude. That took a while. I was beginning to wonder.

CO-PILOT

We're overloaded by far.

MIKE

Wing and a prayer.

CO-PILOT

You said it.

Mike looks at the black and white PHOTO taped to the dash of his control panel. The picture is of his parents and him with Bruno as a cub, outside the farmhouse. A second photo is of JANE with XOXO written on it.

EXT. U.S.A.F. BASE - SUMMERSIDE - PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - DAY

With engines ROARING, a Douglas B-18 BOMBER lifts off from the runway and passes overhead.

A card reads:

SEPTEMBER, 1945

Dozens of American and Canadian MILITARY PERSONNEL circulate around the airfield's tarmac, which is covered with AIRCRAFT. Various types of planes are on the ground. Notably, several Douglas DC-3 aircraft and many Avro Ansons but the yellow-painted Boeing-Stearman Model 75 biplane training AIRCRAFT are dominant. Sprawling wooden HANGARS house more planes.

In the distance, a military band plays military MUSIC while American SOLDIERS perform their marching exercises.

INT. HANGAR - DAY

Three AMERICAN officers stroll inside, casually inspecting a DC-3 from the ground while a AIRCRAFT MECHANIC is up on the wing, working on engine number 1. CAPTAIN BANKS walks between his two colleagues.

CAPTAIN BANKS

...like I said, she's never ever had it like the way she's gonna get it from me when I get back to Knoxville tomorrow night!

His two colleagues LAUGH.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1

I don't know, Banks. Lots of college boys back home.

CAPTAIN BANKS

Hey! You obviously don't know my girl.

Banks shoves him in a friendly manner.



CAPTAIN BANKS (CONT'D)  
 And that's Captain Banks to you,  
 Airman.

They skirmish lightly, LAUGHING before Captain Banks looks up at the mechanic who's leaning into the propeller plane's engine.

CAPTAIN BANKS (CONT'D)  
 How's she coming along?

AIRCRAFT MECHANIC  
 Just putting on the finishing  
 touches, Captain.

CAPTAIN BANKS  
 As long as she's ready to fly at 0  
 seven hundred hours tomorrow  
 morning.

AIRCRAFT MECHANIC  
 She'll be more than ready, Captain.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1 lightly elbows Captain Banks.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1  
 Just like your girl, Captain Banks,  
 Sir.

Again they LAUGH as the three friends continue their stroll across the hangar while the MUSIC from the military band echoes quietly from somewhere outside the giant building.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #2  
 Now that's a tune I could do  
 without hearing again for a long,  
 long time.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1  
 What? Where's your patriotism,  
 soldier? And don't say that too  
 loud. I hear that's one of Bruno's  
 favorites.

CAPTAIN BANKS  
 I took Bruno more for a Glenn  
 Miller fan.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #2  
 Tommy Dorsey! That's what gets him  
 up and dancing.

(MORE)

## AMERICAN AIRMAN #2 (CONT'D)

When they played Opus One at the recreational hall last week, I swear Bruno was doing the boogie-woogie.

## CAPTAIN BANKS

Say. Where's he going to go now that the war is won?

## AMERICAN AIRMAN #2

I was wondering the same thing.

In the corner of the hangar is a giant REFRIGERATION UNIT. R.C.A.F. Officer Donald Davidson gathers his tools as he exits the unit. The Americans notice him and approach.

## AMERICAN AIRMAN #1

Donald! Donald, you old Canuck! Who was that lovely lady you were with the other night?

## DONALD

That would be Elizabeth.

## AMERICAN AIRMAN #1

Oh yeah? Elizabeth. Where have you been hiding her?

## DONALD

She's been overseas. I hadn't seen her in quite a while.

## AMERICAN AIRMAN #1

She must have seen some shit. I'm glad she made it back. (BEAT) Say, before you lock up could you do us a favor and grab us a couple Powerhouse bars?

## DONALD

You betcha, fellas.

## AMERICAN AIRMAN #1

Great.

## AMERICAN AIRMAN #2

Thanks, Donald.

## CAPTAIN BANKS

I'll take a Skybar, if there's any.

From outside the hangar, the MUSIC ends as Donald disappears into the refrigeration unit.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1

I mean, we can't just leave Bruno behind.

CAPTAIN BANKS

That might be the best solution.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1

Maybe there's space enough you could fly him back to the States tomorrow.

Donald returns from the refrigerator, hands full of chocolate bars. He gives them to the three Americans.

CAPTAIN BANKS

Oh! Glad to see you've still got my favorite candy bar.

DONALD

I'd say there's at least three hundred of those left.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #2

What's going to happen to all that candy?

DONALD

I just look after the refrigeration unit, gentlemen. What's inside, that's property of the United States Airforce.

CAPTAIN BANKS

Maybe I could sneak a few boxes aboard.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #2

I'll bet you're looking forward to us Yankees getting the hell out of your homeland, Donald.

Captain Banks grins at American Airman #2.

CAPTAIN BANKS

Yankees? Not all of us come from North of the Mason-Dixon.

DONALD

Ah, you lads are alright. Besides, I've got a ways to get home, myself.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1  
Yeah? Whereabouts you from?

DONALD  
Oh, a little farming community in  
Eastern Ontario. A thousand miles  
from here.

CAPTAIN BANKS  
We were just talking about Bruno.  
Have you heard anybody discussing  
what's to be done with him?

DONALD  
I'm afraid not. I guess there's no  
sense in sending him back to Maine.

From outside, the marching band plays yet another military  
marching tune. The music gradually grows louder as the  
unseen military band approaches.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #2  
He could stay with me.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #1  
You live in Brooklyn.

AMERICAN AIRMAN #2  
Bruno's pretty sophisticated. He'd  
appreciate taking a bite out of the  
Big Apple.

As the marching band passes by the hangar doors, the music  
SOARS louder. The men watch from a distance as the rows of  
BRASS, WOODWINDS and PERCUSSION follow the band leader.

CAPTAIN BANKS  
Ah! There's our boy Bruno now.

Trailing behind the marching band is Bruno, who's become a  
very large full-grown black bear. He walks alongside a  
soldier, who holds a loose leash. Halfway along the hangar's  
opening, the bear stands up on its hind legs and appears to  
dance in time to the music for a few bars before dropping to  
all fours. The bear glances inside the hangar but doesn't  
break stride.

DONALD  
I'm sure gonna miss that bear.

CAPTAIN BANKS  
We're all going to miss Bruno.  
He's going to have to go to a farm  
or something.

Donald watches pensively as Bruno disappears with the band.

INT. BASE COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Donald sits across from the Base Commander.

BASE COMMANDER

...I tend to agree with you, corporal. It seems the natural population of black bears was killed off this island years ago, so it's fair to say Bruno would not be safe here alone. Now, as far as compensation goes, we can offer you five-hundred dollars and a panel truck for Bruno's transport. You may keep the vehicle as your own. You can collect the paper work when you're back at CFB Ottawa.

DONALD

Uh...Thank you, Sir.

BASE COMMANDER

Will that do?

DONALD

Yes, Sir. Just one more thing. I've been busy dismantling the refrigeration unit. There are hundreds of candy bars still inside. I know Bruno's got a sweet tooth...

BASE COMMANDER

Plus all the chocolate bars and non-perishables. Consider them yours.

DONALD

Thank you, Sir.

EXT. GAS STATION AND DINER - SOMEWHERE IN NEW BRUNSWICK - DAY

Donald is at a phone booth just outside the main building while an SERVER fills the tank with fuel.

DONALD

...Yes. I'll be back in Fallowfield by late afternoon tomorrow. (PAUSE) Bruno's doing swell. Not a complaint out of him. (PAUSE) Ha! Ha!

(MORE)

DONALD (CONT'D)

How could I forget? That was one of the greatest nights of my life, Elizabeth. (PAUSE) Yes...uh...yes. You..you don't say. Really? Wow. That's one hell of a surprise, Elizabeth. (PAUSE) Yes. Yes, of course...No. It's wonderful news. (PAUSE) Don't cry...no. I'm okay! (PAUSE) So, you can come by train? When? (PAUSE) Then, let's do that. Don't worry. We'll make plans when we're together.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NEW BRUNSWICK - DAY

A card reads: SOMEWHERE IN NEW BRUNSWICK

Donald pulls the 1943 Dodge panel truck over to the shoulder of the lonesome country road. He climbs out and stretches a bit as he goes to open the back door of the vehicle. Bruno stands up inside as Donald unwraps the chain leash from where it's attached to the inside of the small truck.

DONALD

Time for a pee break, Bruno.

The bear leaps down from the truck and Donald walks the bear along the side of the road. Bruno stops and sniffs the air.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Come on, now. It's going to be a long ways before our next stop.

The bear YAWNS, then looks at Donald, who's unbuckling his belt and opening the fly of his pants.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Well, I've gotta pee like a race horse. I'm sure you do too.

Donald urinates into the grassy ditch. Bruno follows suit.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Good boy, Bruno. That's got to feel better.

When they're both done relieving themselves, Donald walks the bear along the desolate road, away from the panel truck.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Beautiful woods here, Bruno. Would you like to live in such a pretty place?

Bruno walks beside Donald, watching him as if listening intently. Donald stops, looking at the endless wall of trees. He pets the bear on the head before unbuckling the collar from around Bruno's neck.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
 Maybe you're better off in a place  
 like this. Here's your chance,  
 Bruno.

Donald wraps the chain around his wrist and clenches the leather collar. Bruno looks at the dense forest, at the road, then at Donald.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
 I'm going to miss you, bear.

Bruno doesn't leave Donald's side.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
 Go on, now. Go be a bear.

Bruno leans affectionately into Donald's hip. Donald wraps the collar back on the bear and wipes a tear from his cheek.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
 Alright, then. Back to plan A.  
 You're coming home with me.

Donald heads back to the open doors at the rear of the Dodge. Bruno climbs in and makes himself comfortable by lying down on the blanket and straw. Donald secures the other end of the chain, then closes the rear doors.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
 What the hell are you doing,  
 Donald?

EXT. FALLOWFIELD SCHOOLYARD - DAY

6 year old JACK DAVIDSON leaves the tiny school house behind as children gather and play in small groups.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
 Now, that's how things went, I'm  
 told, before I finally met Bruno.

Shouldering a canvas bag, he cuts through a forested trail as another boy of the same age, BARRY, runs to catch up to him.

BARRY  
 Jack! Wait up!

Jack stops and waits for his friend.

BARRY (CONT'D)  
You're in a rush.

Jack shrugs.

JACK  
It's a long walk home, Barry.

They march through the woods together.

BARRY  
Did you get home okay yesterday?

JACK  
I'm hear, aren't I? And all in one  
piece.

Barry trips over a root but bounces up quickly and catches up to Jack who's still walking with speed.

BARRY  
Those god-damn Dogans!

JACK  
Yeah. I wanna get home before I  
run into them again.

BARRY  
Dogans! Bunch of Catholic  
hooligans if you ask me.

JACK  
That's why I'm hurrying.

Jack and Barry approach a clearing in the woods, at a gravel road. Jack turns right on the road as Barry stops.

JACK (CONT'D)  
See ya, Barry. I've gotta keep  
moving.

Barry watches Jack march down the dirt road.

BARRY  
Good luck, Jack! We'll see ya  
tomorrow. That is if they don't  
catch you.

Barry heads in the opposite direction.



EXT. GRAVEL RICHMOND ROAD - DAY

Jack continues his march and even breaks into a little jog when he can. To his left, farm fields spread for hundreds of acres. The woods to his right are briefly broken by a clearing for a gas station.

Jack eyes the station wearily but slows to a brisk walk with a look of relief as he passes it. TOM, a young gas station server fuels a gleaming black Lincoln Continental. The man behind the wheel, Mr. MOODIE, in his fifties (1945 fifties) gets out of the car, removing the short remnants of a well-smoked CIGAR from his jacket's breast pocket. Moodie eyes Jack before he lights the cigar.

Jack waves.

JACK  
Hello, Mister Moodie.

Moodie ignores him and begins to puff at his cigar.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Moodie was reeve of the township and, in the end, a lifelong member of the Orange Order of Canada. He was respected and admired by most but he was feared and loathed by others who knew him better. At the time, I didn't have an opinion of him.

Tom tends to the Lincoln's windshield when he notices Moodie is smoking. A look of concern washes over him as he looks at the flowing gas hose attached to the Lincoln.

TOM  
Um. I'm so sorry Mister Moodie. But there's a strict no smoking policy around the pumps.

Moodie just stares at him for a moment.

MOODIE  
What's your name, son?

TOM  
Um. Tom.

MOODIE  
Tom Muldoon? I know your Daddy, Tommy. Don't have me get him to give you a swift kick in the ass.

Tom the Server bites his tongue.

Jack continues his walk. Behind him, Moodie tosses the remainder of his cigar to the concrete and squashes it underfoot before climbing back into his car.

TOM

It will be swell now that they're finally going to pave this road.

MOODIE

The paving? Your daddy must have told you that's pretty much all my doing.

TOM

Really? No, I never heard anything about that.

Moodie's GRUMBLING response is barely heard.

Jack continues the long walk, admiring the crows flying over the corn fields. There's a farmhouse with several barns behind it at about his ten o'clock, five or six hundred yards away.

He keeps his pace as Moodie's giant black Lincoln approaches from behind with dust clouds billowing. Jack is pulled out of his slight daze as the car ROARS past with its trailing choking wall of dust.

Jack stops, COUGHS, then covers his hand over his mouth and nose. As the dust settles, Jack's eyes widen in fear.

About a hundred feet in front of him across the narrow gravel road, three BOYS and a GIRL in Catholic School uniforms stare with almost evil smirks at Jack.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

I did, however, have an opinion about the Quinn family - and most Catholic kids at the time - that they were born evil.

All the boys are a little older and bigger than Jack. The Girl, six year old MARY with green eyes and red hair, shares their expression.

MARY

(pointing at Jack)

There he is!

Jack bursts from his freeze and breaks into a run. The four Catholic children respond by throwing gravel stones from the road at Jack before running at him. Jack is narrowly missed by a stone as he leaps from the road, down and across the ditch before running into the corn field.

Jack sprints in the direction of the now seemingly distant farmhouse as the four others enter the field behind him in order of age and size - ALEC 10, GORDY 8, ANDY 7. Six-year-old MARY trails but seems just as determined to catch Jack.

Jack WHEEZES from his exertion as he veers direction among the corn stalks, then turns again, stops and lies still, panting and wheezing.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Wait! Wait up! Alec, help me.

The chasing boys are momentarily distracted by their younger sister and now they can't see where Jack has hidden.

ALEC  
Come on, Mary! Where are you?

Alec's younger brothers catch up to him among the corn rows.

GORDY  
Yeah! Hurry up, Mary!

Andy slows for his younger sister.

ANDY  
Where did he go?

GORDY  
Probably going toward the house.

ALEC  
Gordy, you go that way then. Andy, you and me will go left and right of...

ANDY  
Maybe we should forget him just for now.

ALEC  
Shut up, Andy. We can get him.

GORDY  
Yeah, Andy. Shut up. We can get him.

ANDY

If Pop hears we're running through Davidson's crop, you know it's a whoopin'.

MARY

Probably best we don't get spotted.

Alec and GORDY pause for a moment.

ALEC

(yelling at unseen Jack)  
Guess what, Jacky boy! It's yer lucky day. Catch ya next time.

GORDY

Yeah, catch you next time, Davidson!

The four bullies tread back from the direction they came.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Grampa Jack looks around the room at the ELDERLY PATRONS of the retirement home. The OLD MAN in the wheelchair SNORES himself awake for a moment.

GRAMPA JACK

So those Quinn kids used to bully me.

ERIC

That sucks, Grampa.

GRAMPA JACK

I bring it up because I remember the day so well. The day my eldest brother, Donald, brought the bear back to Fallowfield with him.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Jack crawls among the corn stalks until he comes out of the field. He stands up on the lawn along the south side of the red-bricked farmhouse. He looks back, relieved that he hasn't been followed and brushes the dirt from his knees before going toward the house. Then Jack freezes.

A giant BLACK BEAR lies on the lawn. It looks over at Jack and then rises to all fours. Jack SCREAMS as he bolts across the lawn, over the drive and up the porch steps.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
And that's when I met Bruno.

His book bag falls from his shoulder as he fights the screened storm door before it opens for him.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Jack runs into the kitchen where his MOTHER, mid-forties, is at the kitchen sink, preparing potatoes for dinner, alongside the maid KATE, who's in her late twenties and speaks with a thick Irish accent. The Maid turns just in time to catch Jack in her arms.

KATE  
Jack.

JACK  
Mother! Kate! There's a bear!  
There's a bear on the grass!

KATE  
Now what's that, Jack?

JACK  
A bear! A huge black bear!

KATE  
Why, that can't be! You're not  
telling a fib are you, Jack?

Mother turns, drying her hands on her apron.

MOTHER  
I didn't see you pass the kitchen  
window. I was going to tell you...

Jack takes Kate's hand and pulls at Mother's apron.

JACK  
Come see! It's a bear! It's right  
outside the house. Look!

Jack gets to the storm door with Mother and Kate in tow. He jumps back in surprise to see the bear is not only still there but is approaching the house.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Jeepers! It's still there.

Jack ducks down.

KATE  
It's alright, Jack.

JACK  
Look out, Kate. It sees you!

MOTHER  
Yes, Jack. Your brother came home with it not long after you left for school this morning.

JACK  
What?! Kenny brought that thing?

MOTHER  
No. Donald is back from his duty.

JACK  
But it's a bear!

MOTHER  
Now, don't go bothering the bear, young one.

JACK  
No kidding, Mother.

Jack peaks out the screened door and sees the bear is on a leash with a light chain attached to the clothes line.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Donald's home?

MOTHER  
Donald went into Richmond to run some errands. You remember your brother Donald?.

JACK  
Maybe a bit. (BEAT) We have a bear.

INT. GENERAL STORE - RICHMOND - DAY

Donald's wearing his R.C.A.F uniform. He's handed a paper bag full of things he's bought from a middle-aged CASHIER.

CASHIER  
Welcome back. And thanks for your service, young man.

(MORE)

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Will you be returning to farming  
with your father?

DONALD

I'll help out some now and then,  
but I'm starting my own business in  
refrigeration.

CASHIER

There's going to be a lot of work  
in that field. Hey, I threw in  
some palm-aid, an extra pack of  
Players and a box of Jimmy Hats for  
you.

Donald doesn't know what to say.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Sheep skin.

DONALD

Sheep skin. Well, uh...thanks. I  
wish I had a spare on me a few  
weeks ago.

CASHIER

Oh. I see.

DONALD

It's okay. Things are just moving  
a lot faster than I figured.  
We're to be married.

CASHIER

Then congratulations.

Donald is half out the door when he turns.

DONALD

Thank you. I better get shopping  
for that ring now.

Donald steps out and onto the sidewalk.

EXT. MAIN STREET - RICHMOND - DAY

The store door closes behind Donald. He checks his wrist  
watch as a car's HORN sounds. Two WOMEN in a Ford  
CONVERTIBLE pass slowly.

WOMAN 1

Hi de ho, Soldier! Looking good.

WOMAN 2

Welcome back, Donald.

WOMAN 1

Glad you're home. Hope we'll see you for a drink at The Den sometime.

Donald waves.

DONALD

I look forward to it, ladies.

WOMAN 2

Great to see you, Donald!

The car rolls off and Donald goes to his military truck.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

KEITH DAVIDSON, close to being twelve, runs ahead of his sister HELEN, who's 15, down the long gravel laneway from Richmond Road to the family home. Keith turns around to watch Helen slow to a walk.

KEITH

I win, Helen.

HELEN

That's a first, Keith.

Keith passes the kitchen window, sees Jack grinning back.

KEITH

What are you looking at, squirt?

Jack quickly drops below the window frame as if he's jumped from the kitchen counter. Keith rounds the lean-to garage attached to the west side of the home. He stops in his tracks.

KEITH (CONT'D)

Jesus H. Fucking Christ!

The startled bear stands to its full height. Bruno stares at Keith. A wet patch grows at the front of Keith's pants and runs down his leg. Keith backs against the sliding garage door. Helen comes around the house and her jaw drops.

HELEN

Oh my God!



Jack pokes his head out the storm door, then dares himself out onto the porch. He holds a OH HENRY! BAR in his hand.

JACK  
Don't be afraid, Helen. This is  
our new pet Bruno!

HELEN  
What?

KEITH  
Huh!

JACK  
He's really smart and can do a  
whole bunch of tricks. But I've  
already trained him to eat Keith.

KEITH  
Shut up, Jack.

JACK  
You peed your pants, Keith.

KEITH  
No I didn't. I said shut up!

JACK  
Watch what he can do already!

Jack tosses the wrapped chocolate bar from the porch and Bruno snatches it up with his mouth. Helen watches with amazement as Bruno holds the candy between his giant front paws, cleanly unwraps and then nibbles away at the Oh Henry!

JACK (CONT'D)  
It's okay, Keith. He's tied. And  
seems really friendly too.

HELEN  
Where did he come from?

JACK  
He came home with Donald.

HELEN  
Donald's home?

JACK  
Yeah, but he's been in town since I  
got back from school.

Mother is now out of the kitchen and on the porch.

HELEN  
What's his name?

JACK  
Bruno.

HELEN  
Doesn't Bruno mean Brown? But he's  
clearly black.

KEITH  
Mother! What the hell is going on?

MOTHER  
We're going to take good care of  
him for a while, Keith.

KEITH  
Why don't we just shoot it?

MOTHER  
Now, Keith...

JACK  
Mother! Keith peed his pants  
again.

MOTHER  
Oh, Keith.

KEITH  
You're going to get it, Jack!

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - EVENING

JOAN DAVIDSON at age 9 is Jack's next oldest sibling. She plays Matilda's Waltz on a Bluthner upright PIANO in the far corner of the room.

MOTHER  
Five more minutes, Joan and then  
it's ready for bed.

JOAN  
Awe! But Jack is still up.

MOTHER  
He'll be in soon. He's helping  
Donald and Dad fix a spot in the  
shed for Bruno.

Joan presses extra hard on the piano keys as she finishes the last bars of the song.

JOAN  
 (to herself)  
 Stupid bear.

INT. CATTLE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM - EVENING

There are forty cows in the barn. Lit by lanterns, Keith and yet another brother KENNY (who's 18) both sit at stools, squeezing the teets of engorged cow utters.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
 We had forty head of dairy cattle.  
 Before it became my responsibility  
 to milk them twice a day, your  
 great uncles Keith and Kenny had  
 that task.

ERIC (V.O.)  
 Every day?

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
 Before school and before bed.  
 Every day.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN ROOM - RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Eric sits beside Grampa Jack. Nearby, a NURSE tends to one the more feeble occupants.

ERIC  
 I only met Kenny a couple times,  
 before he...

GRAMPA JACK  
 Yeah. He was quite the character.

ERIC  
 Funny guy. I remember he spoke  
 with a strong valley accent and had  
 half a finger missing.

CUT TO:

INT. CATTLE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM - EVENING

On a stool, Kenny stops milking the cows, looks at his cramping hands.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
 Oh, yeah. He lost that in a  
 tractor accident...

Kenny's got all his fingers. He cracks his knuckles and  
 returns to milking.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
 ...a little while later.

Milk sprays rhythmically into stainless steel pales as they  
 talk with an almost comically strong Ottawa Valley twang.

KEITH  
 So Gerald Muldoon says I can take a  
 ride in their airplane soon.  
 Probably for my birthday.

KENNY  
 By crypes! You don't say!

KEITH  
 Says his dad will do a loop de  
 loop.

KENNY  
 You won't ever catch me up in one  
 of them contraptions.

KEITH  
 I don't see why not. Looks fun.

Keith moves on to milk the next cow.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
 Hey! This Donald character...

KENNY  
 (laughing)  
 You mean your oldest brother. He's  
 got to be out of his god damned  
 mind bringing that thing here.

KEITH  
 He's not staying with us, is he?

KENNY  
 You mean the bear?

KEITH  
 No. Donald.

KENNY  
 I think just for a short while.

KEITH

Phew! There ain't a lot of room  
for us all.

KENNY

Could be worse. Hazel, Audrey,  
Eldon and Gordy at least are all  
married off. And if Anne were  
still alive, that would be eleven  
children under one roof. Jesus  
Christ. You'd think we were just a  
bunch of Dogans.

KEITH

I don't want to share my room.

KENNY

There'll be more room in the house  
if that bear turns on us.

The thought has Keith take pause.

EXT. TOOL SHED - DAVIDSON'S FARM - EVENING

The shed is one of the smaller barns on the property, down  
and to the right, west of the house where HUGH DAVIDSON, late  
forties, leans against the shed's half door with a lantern in  
his grip. Donald holds Jack on his shoulders as Jack clasps  
to Bruno's worn out TEDDY BEAR.

They gaze at Bruno, who's growing accustomed to his new home.

HUGH

I don't know what to think about  
all this.

DONALD

Dad, you're going to love Bruno.  
He's incredibly gentle.

HUGH

Hmm. It's still a bear, Donald.

JACK

I love him already. Can I give  
this to him now?

DONALD

Sure. Toss it in, Jack. He won't  
sleep without it.

Jack heaves the teddy bear into the straw-filled pen. Bruno takes the toy gently in his mouth, considers where to lie the teddy bear, then places it in the chosen spot before settling down and cuddling with it.

HUGH  
Bedtime, Jack.

JACK  
Good night, Dad.

Donald sets his youngest brother down.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Good night, Donald. Glad to finally meet you again.

DONALD  
Don't let the bear bugs bite.

JACK  
Does Bruno have bear bugs?

DONALD  
No, Jack. I don't think he does.

JACK  
Good night, Bruno.

Jack heads toward the house. Meanwhile, Keith and Kenny exit the large cattle barn and close the sliding door behind them.

KEITH  
Come over here for your ass kicking, Jacky boy!

Jack runs for the house while Keith chases him.

EXT. PORCH - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Donald and Kenny sit with their father Hugh, enjoying the bright yellow moon. The younger men drink from stubby beer bottles while Hugh lights up his TOBACCO PIPE.

DONALD  
So the next thing I know, the god damned rooster, which I thought was dead, pokes his head up from out of the ground where I buried him and starts to cock-a-doodle doo!

They break out in LAUGHTER.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
Sorry, Dad. I never told you about  
what happened to that rooster.

INT. JOAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In the moonlight, Jack and Joan lean against the windowsill  
listening to the conversation on the porch below.

EXT. PORCH - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Hugh draws from his pipe.

HUGH  
Good thing I didn't know about  
that.

KENNY  
You weren't meant to be a farmer,  
Donald.

DONALD  
No. I suppose not.

KENNY  
Like Dad.

Hugh CHUCKLES.

KENNY (CONT'D)  
Dad's more of a politician now.

DONALD  
Oh yeah? Still in the Orangeman's  
Club are you, Dad?

Hugh takes a puff from his tobacco pipe.

HUGH  
You bet I am.

KENNY  
And now he's deputy reeve for the  
township.

DONALD  
No shit! Since when?

HUGH  
Oh. It's been a few months now.

ERIC (V.O.)

Wait. Your Dad was a politician too?

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

Your great grandfather was quite involved in the community, and was thought of highly. But, anything to keep him away from the farm I think.

DONALD

Dad, I thought...

HUGH

I had to have some news for you when you returned.

DONALD

Then, cheers to that.

Hugh nods. The brothers CLINK beer bottles before taking a swig.

HUGH

The bear just showed up?

DONALD

He was snuck across the border from Maine by two American pilots. Friends of mine. Farmers from Bangor.

KENNY

An American bear. Maybe Bruno should be back in Maine.

DONALD

Well, Sean was shot down about a year ago over France.

KENNY

Ugh. Sorry to hear.

DONALD

And Mike didn't fair much better.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY

A FOG HORN BLOWS and a CHUGGING DIESEL slows as a CARGO SHIP cuts throttle and emerges from a dense fog.



DONALD (V.O.)  
Mike and his crew...well, they were  
found somewhere off Newfoundland in  
their life raft days later. But  
they didn't make it.

The ship approaches the eerie sight of three lifeless men in  
the raft.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. U.S.A.F. - SUMMERSIDE - PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - DAY

Just outside of HANGAR 2, in sight of Bruno, who's watching  
the planes take off, fly and land from the roof of his  
shelter, Donald and several others stand around the Base  
Commander, who shares their look of grief.

DONALD (V.O.)  
You know, you could see that Bruno  
sensed the loss.

INT. BRUNO'S SHELTER - SUMMERSIDE - DAY

Bruno appears sullen, lying quietly beside his teddy bear.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. PORCH - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

HUGH  
I'm sorry to hear about your  
friends, Donald. And Bruno, he's a  
beautiful bear.

Hugh stands while making sure his pipe is no longer lit. He  
takes the handle of the storm door.

INT. JOAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hearing Hugh open the porch door, Jack runs to his bedroom  
and Joan dives into her bed.

EXT. PORCH - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Hugh steps one foot into the house.

HUGH

Don't you lads be up drinking all night. Kenny, I'll need your help with that Case engine tomorrow.

KENNY

Alright, Dad.

DONALD

Good night, Dad.

The brothers sit quietly in the moonlight for a moment.

DONALD (CONT'D)

You better pass me another bottled sunshine, Kenny.

Kenny grabs one from under his chair and pops the cap. He hands it to Donald, who reads the label: Carling Black Label.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Say, Kenny. Don't go telling anybody about this, but, uh I'm getting married next week.

Kenny almost spits out his beer.

DONALD (CONT'D)

And I'm going to be a father.

KENNY

Jesus Christ, Donald. That's a lot of shit to be dropping on us in one day. Who's the lucky lady?

DONALD

Her name's Elizabeth. She's coming up from Hamilton next week and then she and I are going to elope.

KENNY

I'll keep it under my hat, Donny boy.

INT. FALLOWFIELD SCHOOL HOUSE - DAY

Jack sits at his desk with an excited look on his face.

ERIC (V.O.)

I bet your friends thought it was pretty cool you had a bear at home.

At the desk beside Jack, Barry shakes his head in disbelief.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Oh, I don't know about that.

BARRY  
(whispering)  
You're full of horse shit, Jack.

JACK  
(whispering)  
It's true, Barry.

BARRY  
Well, how big is this bear?

JACK  
Huge. Taller than Dad when it  
stands up.

CINDY, the girl sitting behind Jack rolls her eyes.

BARRY  
Really? Your dad's pretty tall.

JACK  
And Bruno opens candy wrappers  
better than I can.

CINDY  
No way! You're such a liar, Jack.

JACK  
I'm not lying, Cindy.

CINDY  
Then why are your pants on fire?

JACK  
They are not on fire.

BARRY  
Jack never lied to me before,  
Cindy.

CINDY  
(whispering)  
You're lying, Jack.

JACK  
I'm not lying!

The TEACHER, writing grammar rules on the chalkboard at the front of the class, turns from the board.

TEACHER

Jack Davidson! Why do you insist on yelling out in class?

JACK

I'm sorry Miss -

CINDY

Jack's telling fibs, teacher.

JACK

Am not, Cindy!

TEACHER

Jack! You're interrupting the class.

JACK

I'm sorry, but...

CINDY

Jack says he has a pet bear, Teacher.

The STUDENTS (many of them older as the schoolhouse has students from grade 1 through grade 5) LAUGH out loud.

TEACHER

Quiet, children! Now, Jack, it's highly inappropriate to be telling fibs, especially in class.

JACK

But it's true. And he can do all sorts of tricks too.

More LAUGHTER from the class visibly irritates the Teacher.

TEACHER

Joan?

Joan, sitting further back in the room with the grade 4 students, lifts her embarrassed gaze.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Joan, is this true? You and your brother have a pet bear at home?

Joan looks around the school room then focuses on Jack.

JOAN

No, teacher. I don't know what he's talking about.

JACK  
What?! Joan, that's...

TEACHER  
Jack, that's enough. You can stay  
the extra half hour after school  
and walk home with your sister when  
the older students finish class  
today.

JACK  
But it's...

TEACHER  
I don't care if it's true or not,  
Jack. You get detention for  
interrupting your classmates from  
their studies.

Jack SIGHS and his eyes water. Cindy looks proud of herself  
while Joan looks like she just shot herself in the foot.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - DAY

With her bicycle between them, Jack and Joan walk home along  
Richmond Road with their school bags.

JOAN  
I'm not happy that you told  
everyone about that stupid bear.

JACK  
Bruno's not stupid at all.

JOAN  
If you can't see that, then maybe  
he's smarter than you, Jack.

JACK  
He's smarter than Keith, for sure.

JOAN  
Agreed.

They walk past the gas station. Jack looks around.

JACK  
Good, they're not here.

JOAN  
Who?

JACK  
The kids from the Catholic School.

JOAN  
What are you talking about?

JACK  
The Quinn family especially.

JOAN  
So?

JACK  
They're being bullies. They haven't caught me yet but last few times they threw rocks at me.

JOAN  
The Quinns? Damned Dogans.

JACK  
What's a Dogan?

JOAN  
What we call the Irish Catholics. But don't let Mother or Dad hear you use that word.

JACK  
Isn't our hired hand Catholic?

JOAN  
Alain is French Catholic.

JACK  
Well, what's worse?

JOAN  
Irish Catholic, obviously.

JACK  
They're really mean. Maybe I should stay after school until you're finished class every day.

JOAN  
I'm not protecting you, Jack.

JACK  
Awe. Please. You're the only one that comes home this way from school. I don't mind waiting the extra half hour. I don't want them beating me up every day.

JOAN

It probably won't be every day,  
Jack. They'll get bored of you.  
Besides, I have my bike and I would  
rather be riding it.

They notice PAVING EQUIPMENT in the distance, perhaps a  
kilometer past the laneway to the farmhouse.

JOAN (CONT'D)

What's that going on?

JACK

I heard Mister Moodie say they're  
paving Richmond Road.

JOAN

Wow. Then one last ride on this  
gravel for me.

Joan leaps onto her bicycle and races north in the direction  
of the Davidson's laneway, several hundred yards away.

JOAN (CONT'D)

Later, Jack!

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Donald and Jack walk with a leashed Bruno from his den toward  
the farmhouse. The bear sits on the lawn when Donald hooks  
the chain to the clothesline.

DONALD

You see, if you ask Bruno to do a  
trick, and he does it, then you  
reward him with a candy bar.

JACK

How many tricks can he do?

DONALD

Oh, I don't know. Quite a few, I  
suppose. And you can always teach  
him something new.

JACK

Can he speak?

DONALD

As a matter of fact he can.

JACK

Wow! Let's see him talk.

DONALD  
Just like this, Jack.

Donald turns his attention to Bruno.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
Bruno.

Bruno looks at Donald.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
Bruno, speak.

Bruno GRUMBLES and GROWLS. Jack LAUGHS.

JACK  
Can I try?

DONALD  
Sure, Jack. Ready?

JACK  
Yeah.

DONALD  
Jack, speak.

JACK  
Hey!

DONALD  
Good boy, Jack.

JACK  
That's not funny.

DONALD  
Yes it is.

Donald hands Jack a Skybar in its cardboard box.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
You know the command.

JACK  
Bruno. Bruno!

Jack has Bruno's attention.

DONALD  
Go ahead, Jack.

JACK  
Bruno, speak. Speak, Bruno!



Bruno makes some more expressive mouth NOISES. Jack and Donald share a LAUGH.

DONALD

Now, throw him the Skybar, Jack.

Jack tosses the boxed candy and Bruno snatches it from the air with his mouth before delicately opening the box, and nibbling away.

JACK

He eats funny. What else can he do?

DONALD

Uh...let's see. He'll do a somersault.

Kenny approaches from the big barn.

JACK

Do a somersault, Bruno!

The bear rolls over its shoulder and then does it again before sitting up.

JACK (CONT'D)

Wow! Neato! What else can he do?

DONALD

Well, let's see. He can fetch.

JACK

Like a dog?

KENNY

That's a fine little doggy you brought us, Donny.

DONALD

(ignoring Kenny)

Better than a dog. He can also sit in a chair like you and me. He can play dead. He loves music and can dance. I even saw him play a bugle sometimes back at the base.

JACK

No way! For true?

DONALD

For true.

JACK  
What songs can he play?

DONALD  
Oh. He's not very good at it.

A DC-3 climbs from the not-too-distant airport. Bruno watches the plane intently. So does Kenny.

KENNY  
Look at that. Where are they off to?

DONALD  
Looks like it's turning towards Toronto.

JACK  
Bruno likes planes. He's always watching them.

DONALD  
He lived beside a runway and his first owner was a pilot.

JACK  
I want to fly around the whole world.

KENNY  
Not me.

Kenny leans closer in to face Bruno.

KENNY (CONT'D)  
What do you think, Bruno?

Bruno GRUMBLES.

KENNY (CONT'D)  
You don't say! What else can you do?

DONALD  
He can wrestle pretty good.

KENNY  
Oh yeah? How do you get him to do that.

DONALD  
Tell him "put up your Dukes."

Kenny gets closer to Bruno, raising his fists.

KENNY

Okay, Bruno. Put up your Dukes.

Bruno is up and raising his front legs like a boxer.

DONALD

Go ahead, Kenny. Take a shot.

Kenny swings his fist, which Bruno blocks. Then Bruno wraps a paw over Kenny's shoulder and pulls him around, pinning him to the ground.

KENNY

Hey! What the...Jesus Christ!

Jack LAUGHS.

DONALD

Get him by the boots, Bruno.

Bruno manipulates Kenny until he has both Kenny's mud-caked boots between his paws, then places the toe in his mouth. Bruno lifts Kenny upside down, off the ground by his boot.

KENNY

Let go of me, bear. Donald!

DONALD

Drop him, Bruno.

Bruno drops Kenny on the lawn.

JACK

This is way better than having a dog.

EXT. ORANGE ORDER CLUB BUILDING - EVENING

Hugh's Dodge pulls into a space in front of the building.

INT. HUGH'S DODGE - EVENING

Hugh shuts off the engine. Jack is in the seat beside him, inspecting a cotton ball taped to his arm.

JACK

What's polio, Dad?

HUGH

It's a terrible disease, Jack. Why do you ask?

JACK

I heard the doctor say it. And a kid at school said his older brother has it and that he lives in a...in a iron lung.

HUGH

That's awful.

Hugh opens his door.

JACK

How do you catch polio?

HUGH

You catch it from dirty water.

JACK

Dirty water?

HUGH

I'll only be a few minutes, Jack.

JACK

Okay, Dad.

HUGH

Then we'll get you an ice cream.

Hugh is out of the car and Jack watches him enter the Lodge as he sits patiently in the car. He can't see much while sitting, so he stands up on the seat and looks around the parking lot and at traffic and pedestrians. Jack is stunned as he locks eyes with the ten year old BOY sitting in the back seat of the next car over. Jack ducks below the window.

JACK

Whoa.

Jack gathers himself and stands to look again. The boy's head is gigantic due to hydrocephalus. There's a pause as he gets over his shock. Jack finally waves timidly. The boy in the car waves back. They both smile.

INT. ORANGE ORDER CLUB BUILDING

A table is set up in front of the stage with a ballot box sitting on it. Several dozen mostly older MEN fraternize in groups in the hall. Most of them have a drink in hand. Moodie is engaged in conversation with a circle of several men when he sees Hugh enter. Moodie slaps one of them, FRANK ARMSTRONG, on the shoulder.

MOODIE  
(to the group)  
Excuse me for a moment, Frank.

FRANK  
Sure thing, Mister Moodie.

Moodie approaches Hugh.

MOODIE  
Speak of the devil. You're finally  
here to cast your vote, Hugh.

HUGH  
I had to take my son for his  
booster shot.

MOODIE  
(joking smugly)  
Which son is that, Hugh? You've  
got so many.

HUGH  
Jack, my youngest.

MOODIE  
Jack...okay. You know, I've been  
hearing things, Hugh. It's true  
you've got a pet bear living at  
your place?

HUGH  
That's Donald's bear.

MOODIE  
Donald? No kidding. What's his  
plans for it?

HUGH  
You'll have to ask him.

MOODIE  
Tell him I could throw a few bucks  
his way and take it off his hands.

HUGH  
Oh? And what are you going to do  
with it?

MOODIE  
I've got a few ideas. But I know  
the chef at the American Embassy  
downtown. He's got a cottage on  
our lake.

(MORE)

MOODIE (CONT'D)

Last year, I got him a moose for the Embassy's New Year's Dinner party. A roast bear could top it.

HUGH

I don't see Donald agreeing to that.

MOODIE

It would be a great move for both of us, Hugh. Dinner donated by Hugh Davidson and myself...

HUGH

Jack's waiting in the car so I'll cast my ballot and be gone.

MOODIE

You know you shouldn't have an animal like that with young children around, Hugh. A farm is dangerous enough without that.

HUGH

I'll have a chat with Donald.

MOODIE

That's all I ask, Hugh. Now, I don't have to tell you what way to vote this evening. Have a safe ride home with your boy.

Hugh heads to the table with the ballots.

INT. HUGH'S DODGE (MOVING) - EVENING (TWENTY MINUTES LATER)

Hugh is behind the wheel, traveling Richmond Road while Jack sits beside him, finishing an ice cream cone.

JACK

Why did that boy have such a huge head?

HUGH

Oh. That's Frank Armstrong's boy. He's got water on the brain.

JACK

Water on the brain?

HUGH

They have a small farm on the other side of Richmond.

(MORE)

HUGH (CONT'D)

Sad story, really. His mother passed away shortly after giving birth.

JACK

That is so sad. What's his name?

HUGH

Um, I can't think of it right now.

JACK

What's water on the brain?

HUGH

It's another disease, Jack. He suffers from hydrocephalus.

JACK

Hydro...

HUGH

Hydrocephalus.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - EVENING

Mother serves prepared dishes with help from Kate, the maid. The table is crowded with only part of the Davidson clan around it - Hugh, Donald, Kenny, Helen, Keith, Joan and Jack are joined by ALAIN, (a French Canadian in his thirties) the hired hand.

Kate's at the sink, looking out the window as an old Chevy rolls by.

KATE

I see my man has arrived to collect me.

MOTHER

Oh! Thanks so much for staying late. Run along, now, Kate.

KATE

Good night, Davidson's. Good night, Alain.

ALAIN

A demain, Kate.

Kate heads to the door. Jack is out of his seat and runs to hug her. She squeezes him with a kiss to the forehead.

JACK  
Good night, Kate.

KATE  
Good night, Jack. I'll be thinking  
of you.

Jack blushes, smiling to himself as Kate exits to meet the old Chevy that's arrived for her. Jack sits himself back down at the kitchen table where Keith kicks him in the shin.

JACK  
Ouch!

KEITH  
I think Jack's in love with Kate.

JACK  
I am not!

HELEN  
Boys...

KEITH  
Yes you are.

JOAN  
Kissy kissy kiss kiss, Jacky boy.

JACK  
Stop!

HUGH  
Joan! Enough!

Keith swings his foot again but Jack has moved his leg. Keith's ankle slams the chair's leg. He winces in pain.

KEITH  
Ouch! You're gonna pay for that.

JACK  
Pay for what?

MOTHER  
Now, Keith. Leave your brother be.  
(BEAT) Kate's leaving us after next  
week. I don't know what I'll do  
without her help.

JACK  
What did you say?



MOTHER

But it will be such a wonderful trip for her.

JACK

What? Where's Kate going?

JOAN

Don't you know anything?

JACK

No. Where's she going?

JOAN

Back to Scotland, where's she's from, dummy...

HUGH

She's going back to Ireland, Joan. Kate's Irish.

JACK

Um...does that mean she's a Dogan?

Alain chuckles and Helen gives him a look. Hugh SLAMS his giant hand to the table, rattling the cutlery, glassware, dishes and plates.

HUGH

Who's using that word, Jack?

JACK

Um. Joan said...

JOAN

Jack says he's getting teased and bullied by the Quinn's just about every day after school.

Mother presents a tray of sliced beef on the table's center before sitting. Kenny digs in before passing the tray.

HUGH

Is that true, Jack?

JACK

Kinda...

KENNY

What did you do to piss them off?

HUGH

Kenny...

JACK

Nothing. They just hate me.  
Probably because Keith used to beat  
up on them.

KEITH

Keep me out of this, Jack.

HUGH

Keith! (BEAT) You're saying I'm  
going to have to have a talk with  
Mr. Quinn, Jack?

JACK

I can handle them, Dad.

MOTHER

Please take another slice of beef,  
Alain. There's plenty.

ALAIN

Thank you, Mrs. Davidson.  
Everything is merveilleux.

HELEN

Merveilleux. I like that word.  
(BEAT) Kate is Irish Catholic,  
Jack. But you're not to...

JACK

Why is she going to Ireland?

JOAN

Because she's tired of cleaning  
your dirty undies, Jack.

JACK

She is not, Joan. You and Keith  
cause her most of the work...

HUGH

That's enough.

JACK

Then why is she going away?

MOTHER

She's going back to see her family  
for the first time since not-long-  
after the war began.

JACK

Oh no. Will she come back?

MOTHER  
Maybe in the spring.

Jack is almost in tears.

JACK  
But I don't want her to go.

MOTHER  
She's always been such a great  
help.

HUGH  
Donald, what is it you need me to  
do tomorrow? You want to be at the  
train station...

DONALD  
Yes, Hugh.

HUGH  
Back from the war effort and now  
you're calling me Hugh?

DONALD  
Uh...I'm sorry, Dad. Yes,  
Elizabeth's train arrives at ten -  
thirty tomorrow morning. I'm going  
to jump onboard with her.

HUGH  
To Montreal.

DONALD  
To Montreal. Just for a week.

HUGH  
Then we better be out of here a  
little after nine.

DONALD  
Great. Thanks, Dad.

JACK  
Don't worry about Bruno, Donald.  
I'll look after him while you're  
away.

DONALD  
Why thank you, Jack. I know he'll  
be in good hands.

MOTHER

Now don't you be coming home a married man, Donald.

Kenny stops chewing his food and flashes a look at Donald.

DONALD

You don't want me to run off and elope like you and Dad, Mother?

Mother LAUGHS to herself.

JACK

What's eloped?

KEITH

Did you get her pregnant, Donald?

MOTHER

Now, Keith!

Helen turns to Donald.

HELEN

Elizabeth is lovely in that picture, Donald.

DONALD

Yes. She certainly is.

HUGH

Keith, you and Kenny can milk the cattle this evening.

KEITH

Awe! But I've got homework.

HUGH

Why didn't you do it earlier?

Hugh gives Keith a stern look. Keith cowers.

DONALD

Anyway, when I get back I'll be ready to set up my refrigeration business. I'm getting the panel truck repainted and everything.

MOTHER

Oh my! Let me fill this up with more mashed potatoes.

Mother is up with the bowl, taking it to the counter.

JACK  
Can I get a bike, Dad?

HUGH  
What happened to yours?

JACK  
I only have a tricycle and I'm way too big for it now.

HUGH  
Is that right? Well, I'm sorry we didn't see you grow up so fast.

JOAN  
Jack wants a bike so he can race home from school before the Quinn's catch him.

HUGH  
Tell you what, Jack. I'll pick up a new bicycle for you tomorrow while I'm in the city.

DONALD  
Dad, I was given a bonus for taking Bruno. Let me give you some money for the bike.

HUGH  
Keep your money, Donald.

KENNY  
I'll take the money, Dad.

JOAN  
Hey! I want a new bike.

KEITH  
Me too.

HUGH  
Both of you already have bikes.

JOAN  
Yeah, but mine wasn't new. It used to be Helen's.

HELEN  
So what? It was Audrey's bike before it belonged to me.

KEITH  
My handle bars are bent.

EXT. OTTAWA TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Hugh stands with Donald on the platform as the train rolls in with steam and smoke, a CLANGING BELL and blowing WHISTLE. Donald has a suitcase beside him. Hugh opens his wallet and hands Donald several tens and twenties.

DONALD

That's okay. I've got money, Dad.

HUGH

Go on. Take it. I want you both to have a good time, Donald.

Donald pockets the cash as the train comes to a stop.

DONALD

Gee. Thanks.

HUGH

Now, stay out of mischief.

People disembark while others wait to board.

DONALD

About that...

HUGH

I know what you're up to, Donald.

DONALD

Uh...well...um.

HUGH

I wish you both well.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

Donald! Donald!

Elizabeth is at the open door to a nearby train car.

DONALD

There she is.

Elizabeth steps down to the platform and approaches.

ELIZABETH

There you are, my love.

DONALD

Elizabeth, this is my father, Hugh.

Elizabeth leans in, kissing Hugh on the cheek.

ELIZABETH  
I see where you get your good  
looks, Donald.

HUGH  
I like her already, son.

DONALD  
Me too, Dad.

ELIZABETH  
So happy to finally meet you, Hugh.  
I've heard so many wonderful  
things.

HUGH  
Oh, I doubt that.

ELIZABETH  
Donald's told me so many stories.

They LAUGH.

HUGH  
Alright, you two. Have a nice  
time.

ELIZABETH  
Thank you, Hugh.

DONALD  
Thanks again, Dad.

HUGH  
We'll see you both next week.

Donald grabs his bag and puts an arm around Elizabeth. They board the train as Hugh walks from the platform.

INT. TRAIN CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Donald and Elizabeth watch the world roll past the window.

ELIZABETH  
Your father seems very nice.

DONALD  
He has his moments.

ELIZABETH  
You know, I was shocked to see how  
my parents aged noticeably in the  
time I was away.

DONALD

My parents have aged too. But I think it has more to do with the loss of their youngest.

ELIZABETH

Anne?

DONALD

They, I mean especially Mother, just isn't her old self. That's been, oh, two and a half years ago, now.

ELIZABETH

Awe. So tragic. You can't blame her.

DONALD

She's still strong. She feeds and looks after a small army everyday.

ELIZABETH

You don't want your own giant family?

DONALD

I think one child is enough.

ELIZABETH

I agree with you, Donald. And if it's a boy, we'll name him after your father.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - EVENING

Hugh stands beside Jack, who covers his eyes with his hands.

HUGH

Okay, son. You can open your eyes.

Gleaming red, the new BICYCLE leans against the garage wall.

JACK

Wow! It's a beauty!

Joan comes around the corner.

JOAN

You actually bought him one?

HUGH

Now, Joan...



JACK  
I love it! I'll take good care of  
it. I promise.

JOAN  
But you don't even know how to ride  
a bike, Jack.

JACK  
Yes I do. I ride yours when you  
play the piano sometimes.

JOAN  
Dad! That's not fair.

Hugh starts to walk away.

HUGH  
Enjoy the bicycle, Jack.

JOAN  
Why do you get a new one?

JACK  
I dunno. Let's go for a ride.

JOAN  
Ugh...okay.

EXT. LANEWAY - DAVIDSON'S FARM - EVENING

Jack and Joan bike the 200 yards to the end of the lane. PAVING MACHINERY and TRUCKS have recently passed as they slowly progress toward the town of Richmond, leaving a flat asphalt surface behind them.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
There was lots of change back home  
after the war. With all the  
soldiers back from overseas, new  
construction was everywhere.  
Neighborhoods started sprawling,  
there were new businesses going up  
and infrastructure was either built  
or upgraded to support the influx.

JOAN  
Wow! Look at that!

Jack sets down his bicycle and steps onto the new pavement.  
He kneels to inspect it.

JACK  
We're going to be able to bike so  
much faster on this.

JOAN  
Let's have a race.

JACK  
To where?

JOAN  
Hope side road and back.

JACK  
Okay, but make sure...

Joan is already peddling and turns left on the smooth black  
surface of Richmond Road.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Hey!

JOAN  
Better hurry up, slow poke!

Jack leaps onto his bike and peddles after his sister.

INT. COURTHOUSE - MONTREAL - DAY

Donald slides a ring on Elizabeth's finger before a JUDGE.

JUDGE  
With this ring, I thee wed.

DONALD  
With this ring...

EXT. COURTHOUSE - MONTREAL - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

Donald holds the door for Elizabeth as they exit.

DONALD  
After you, Mrs. Davidson.

ELIZABETH  
Mrs. Davidson! When we first met,  
you did say you were going to marry  
me.

DONALD  
I like to keep my promises.

ELIZABETH

I can't believe how warm it is for this time of year. What a beautiful day.

DONALD

I did that for you too. And you deserve it. How about some lunch in the old part of town?

ELIZABETH

That sounds fabulous.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAWN

Hugh steps out onto his porch, pulling on his jacket. He hears Bruno GROWLING, WHIMPERING and HUFFING and shaking at the gate to his shed.

EXT. BRUNO'S SHED - DAWN

Hugh arrives outside the shed. The latch and hinges are almost torn from the gate as Bruno pushes to get out.

HUGH

What the hell is bothering you, Bruno?

The gate latch SNAPS off and Bruno is out. He stands on his hind legs, facing Hugh, then looks up the laneway, SNIFFING.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Whoa, now. What is it?

The bear looks back to Hugh and returns to all fours. He WHIMPERS before running up the lane.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Bruno. Wait!

Hugh looks up the lane to see black plumes of smoke and orange fire in the windows of farmhouse across Richmond Road.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S FARMHOUSE - DAWN

Hugh arrives in his car while Bruno is already outside the home. Hugh goes to the door, pounds on it.

HUGH  
Hey! Hey! Fire! Get out! Fire!

Bruno moves like he's worried. Hugh runs to his car and pulls an axe from his trunk. He returns to the front door, swinging. The axe digs deep into the wooden door.

HUGH (CONT'D)  
Wake up! Fire!

The door breaks open, smoke billows. Hugh runs into the burning farmhouse. Bruno runs to the entrance, but turns away from the heat. He paces in front of the home until Hugh comes out, carrying an unconscious WOMAN. Hugh sets her on the lawn and returns to the house.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S FARMHOUSE - MORNING

The Woman wakes on her lawn with Bruno licking away anxiously at her face. Her eyes widen in shock as she comes to, then SCREAMS. Hugh returns with her unconscious husband over his shoulder. Hugh sets him down beside the Woman.

EXT. BRUNO'S SHED - EVENING

Jack pushes a wheelbarrow full of garden waste to the shed. He throws the vegetables in over the half door.

Jack watches Bruno eat.

JACK  
You sure are hungry.

Bruno seems to listen as he eats.

JACK (CONT'D)  
They're calling you a hero, Bruno.

EXT. QUINN'S RESIDENCE - DAY

Hugh gets out of his car in front of the humble (if not somewhat decrepit) country home with a crucifix over the door. Mrs. Quinn, 50, opens up as Hugh reaches the steps.

HUGH  
G'day, Mrs. Quinn.

MRS. QUINN  
Hugh. It's been quite some time.  
What brings you here?

HUGH

Oh, I was just checking in on you both. Uh, say...is Bill around?

MRS. QUINN

Yes, he is. But he's resting now.

HUGH

I hear he's not been well.

MRS. QUINN

It's not good, Hugh.

HUGH

I'm sorry. Is there anything I can do?

MRS. QUINN

No. Not really. He's not up to seeing anybody and, honestly, I don't think he ever will be again.

HUGH

Are you managing?

MRS. QUINN

We're managing.

HUGH

Say, if you'd like to send your children over to our place sometime, we've got a trained bear with us now...

MRS. QUINN

So I've been told.

HUGH

Maybe the kids would like to see it.

MRS. QUINN

Thank you, Hugh. We'll consider that.

HUGH

Then I won't keep you. All the best to you and your family, Mrs. Quinn.

Hugh turns to go.

MRS. QUINN

Hugh...

He stops.

MRS. QUINN (CONT'D)  
Thank you for stopping by.

Hugh tips his hat as he leaves.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - FALLOWFIELD - DAY

On bicycles, Jack and Barry follow the path along the river to a stone bridge where a group of kids - all a few years older - throw a football around.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
It was warm that fall. Even in October, I remember swimming in the river. That was the time I almost drowned.

Three more BOYS are on the bridge. One of them jumps with a YELL to the water below.

BARRY  
Wow, just about everybody's here.

Barry and Jack set there bikes against a tree, while before them, EDDIE who's nine, jumps from the bridge...

EDDIE  
Bombs away!

...with a SPLASH!

BARRY  
Neato!

Eddie resurfaces.

EDDIE  
Woohoo! That's freezing! Hey, Barry. Hey, Jack! Let's see you guys jump.

The Third Boy on the bridge, who's a little older still, back-flips into the water.

JACK  
Uh. I dunno.

The Third Boy resurfaces to join his friends who tread water.

EDDIE  
Probably last chance this year.

JACK  
I'll go swimming, but...

BARRY  
Let's jump off the bridge.

JACK  
It's pretty high, Barry.

EXT. BRIDGE - RIVERSIDE - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

Wearing cut-offs for shorts and looks of dread and doubt on their faces, Jack and Barry peer down at the light current flowing below as the swimming boys make their way back to the shoreline. Eddie is to his knees, almost out of the river.

EDDIE  
We're getting out of the water.  
Hurry up and jump, would ya! We'll  
get warmed up playing hide and  
seek.

BARRY  
Jack! Let's jump. You first.

JACK  
No way.

BARRY  
Okay. At the same time then.

JACK  
I can't do it. I'll walk around.

BARRY  
Please, Jack! Please!

JACK  
It's too high for me.

BARRY  
Ok! I'm going.

Barry jumps from the bridge with an enthusiastic SCREAM as Jack watches in disbelief. The boys on shore are impressed.

EDDIE  
Hey! He did it.

There's a PAUSE as Jack watches the river from the bridge. Barry has not resurfaced.

JACK  
 (to himself)  
 Come on, Barry.

The other's aren't really paying all that much attention.

JACK (CONT'D)  
 He's still under water!

Eddie and company, who are pulling on their shirts, react.

EDDIE  
 Are you gonna jump or not, Jack?

JACK  
 It's Barry! He didn't come up yet.

EDDIE  
 What? Where is he?

JACK  
 Under water!

EDDIE  
 Don't be joking.

JACK  
 I'm not.

EDDIE  
 Find him!

Jack takes a breath and jumps from the bridge.

EXT. RIVER (UNDERWATER)

In the green murk, enveloped in bubbles, Jack opens his eyes, gathers himself and looks left and right. He swims and searches the weedy bottom, more and more frantically before ascending to the surface...

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Jack comes up with a giant INHALE. He looks around the surface, to the shore and even up at the bridge.

EDDIE  
 Where is he?

JACK  
 I dunno! Come help!



Jack dives down again as the other boys start back (somewhat hesitantly) toward the river.

EXT. RIVER (UNDERWATER)

Jack finds Barry unconscious and partially entangled in the thick weeds. He grabs Barry's arm and tries to pull him up but isn't strong enough and is out of breath. He lets go and rockets back to the surface.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Jack catches his breath, panting. His lungs WHISTLE with every breath.

JACK  
Help! Help! I found him.

Eddie and company wade back into the river.

EXT. RIVER (UNDERWATER)

Jack reaches Barry's limp body and tugs. His leg becomes wrapped in weeds. Jack struggles to lift his friend before realizing he's also become entangled. He kicks and pulls, creating clouds of silt. Bubbles escape him with a COUGH. Jack panics and he thrashes as Eddie and the other boys dive in and grab them both.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Jack's in bed reading Treasure Island when Kate enters.

JACK  
Kate! What are you doing here?

KATE  
I came to check on you. I heard you had a traumatic day, Jack.

JACK  
I'm okay.

KATE  
You're such a brave boy. I heard you rescued Barry.

JACK  
Uh, sorta, I guess.

KATE

You'll be glad to know he's already home from the hospital. His mother just called when I got here.

JACK

Oh good. I was scared when he coughed up all that water.

KATE

He's going to be fine, Jack. Thanks to you.

JACK

As long as we don't both get polio.

KATE

Polio? From the river?

JACK

Yeah.

KATE

You'll both be just fine, I promise. (BEAT) Treasure Island? That's a great book.

JACK

It's alright.

KATE

Pirates and such!

JACK

Yeah.

KATE

Listen, Jack. I'll be going away to my family home in Dublin.

JACK

Ireland. Yeah, I know.

KATE

I just wanted to come say goodbye to my favorite boy.

JACK

But I don't want you to go.

KATE

I understand, Jack. But it's been years since I've seen my family, and it seems my mother has been having difficulties lately.

JACK

Difficulties?

KATE

She's getting old. I need to return home and see her before...well, I'm long overdue for a visit.

JACK

Yeah, I understand.

KATE

I'm going to miss you very much.

Kate kisses Jack on the forehead and squeezes his hand.

JACK

I'm going to miss you too, Kate. Thanks for looking after us.

KATE

When I return to Canada, the first thing I'll do is come check in on you, Jack. I promise.

JACK

Hurry back, Kate.

They're both on the verge of tears when they hug tightly.

EXT. LARGE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM - MORNING

Helen strolls across the lawn toward the barn as Alain leads two HORSES in reigns. They follow Alain as he intercepts Helen.

ALAIN

Bonjour, ma belle Helen.

HELEN

Good morning, Alain. Are you going for a ride?

They stand closely as Helen strokes both horses.

ALAIN

Only if you'll join me. I just gave these two some new shoes.

Helen catches his look, and smiles.

HELEN

Dad hasn't got you too busy with chores?

ALAIN

That he has.

HELEN

I've got to feed the chickens.

ALAIN

I see. Well, Hugh asked me to spread some manure today.

HELEN

Maybe we could take the horses for a run when you're done spreading shit.

ALAIN

I would enjoy that, Helen.

Alain gives her a wink and leads to pair of horses toward the tractor barn. She watches him go before she turns toward the large barn.

INT. CHICKEN COUPE - LARGE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM - MORNING

Helen throws chicken feed into trays and spreads some around the barn floor. As she leaves the barn, a CHICKEN escapes through the door with her.

EXT. LARGE BARN - MORNING

HELEN

Dammit. Get back here, bird.

Helen chases after it. The chicken runs in the direction of the farmhouse, where Bruno sits in the sun on the lawn. With Helen close behind, the chicken runs within Bruno's reach. He takes a swipe at it with one paw. There's a partial SQUAWK and then just floating feathers. Helen stops.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

INT. CHEVY PICKUP TRUCK (MOVING) - NIGHT

Kenny and his two friends Tom Muldoon (the gas station server) and BRUCE are in the cab. Bruce drives.

BRUCE

As long as the Hefty Man said it's okay.

TOM

Yeah. Don't worry. He thinks it's a great idea. Says it will help promote the place.

BRUCE

This is going to be hilarious.

Kenny takes a sip from his BEER BOTTLE.

TOM

He should be paying us to show up.

KENNY

You'll get a free burger out of it, Tom.

EXT. TOWN OF RICHMOND - NIGHT

The CHEVY PICKUP TRUCK rolls along the small town's Main Street with Bruno in the back. Bruce turns the vehicle into a parking space at a busy Restaurant/Bar called The Den.

EXT. THE DEN RESTAURANT/BAR - RICHMOND - NIGHT

The three young men get out of the truck in front of what SOUNDS like a busy night at the bar.

BRUCE

Kenny, maybe you better handle Bruno.

KENNY

I've got him, lads.

Kenny goes to the back of the pick up, unties Bruno's leash and gives a tug.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Come on down, Bruno Boy.

Bruno climbs down onto the pavement.

TOM

He says to bring him 'round to the back.

They walk Bruno along the side alley to the back door. Tom knocks...then knocks again before A HEFTY MAN in his fifties opens the door. He sees the bear and a look of surprise becomes one of delight. He takes a puff of his cigar.

TOM (CONT'D)

May we present Bruno!

HEFTY MAN

Wow. You weren't kidding. He's huge. Alright. You're sure he's not dangerous. I can't afford to have any of my patrons or employees on the menu.

KENNY

He's no worry. Say hello, Bruno.

Bruno growls gently and raises a paw.

HEFTY MAN

Well, ain't that something. Alright. Bring him in. But keep him on that leash.

INT. THE DEN RESTAURANT/BAR - NIGHT

A JUKE BOX plays "Rum and Coca Cola" by the Andrews Sisters when Kenny, Tom and Bruce enter. A few dozen young people in their late teens to mid twenties eat and drink, dance and mingle. Everyone stops what they're doing when they spot Bruno. There's silence before a GIRL SCREAMS.

DEN PATRON #1

Oh my God! It's a bear.

DEN PATRON #2

No shit, dumbass.

Someone LAUGHS.

DEN PATRON #3

Wow! Look!

The Patrons clear a path across the room as Kenny and his two friends walk the floor before sliding into a corner booth. Kenny holds the leash while Bruno sits beside the table with his back to the wall, watching the crowd.

A WAITRESS approaches.

WAITRESS  
Am I safe over here, boys?

BRUCE  
From the bear, you are.

WAITRESS  
(ignoring the flirt)  
Nice bear. What's his name?

KENNY  
This is Bruno.

WAITRESS  
I'm told Bruno gets a burger plate  
on the house. What will you have,  
Darling?

KENNY  
I'll have the same with a beer.

WAITRESS  
Would Bruno like anything to drink?

KENNY  
Make that two beers.

WAITRESS  
Great. And you boys?

TOM  
Beer and a hot dog.

The Waitress looks to Bruce.

WAITRESS  
(to Bruce)  
And for you, Darling?

BRUCE  
(flirting)  
Rum and Coke with your burger,  
sweetheart.

WAITRESS  
It's not my burger, Darling. Okay,  
coming right up.

INT. THE DEN RESTAURANT/BAR (AN HOUR LATER)

Music plays as Kenny leans up against the bar, a few beers into the evening. He's talking up BEVERLY, a girl around the same age. She sips from an icy glass of Coke.

BEVERLY

Well, I graduated from Richmond High last year.

KENNY

Oh yeah? And what are you doing these days?

BEVERLY

Clerical work for the government.

KENNY

You're a secretary.

BEVERLY

It's a job.

Beverly takes a sip of her drink through a straw.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

You're still on your father's farm?

KENNY

I'm kinda running the show there now that my older brothers and sisters have moved on.

BEVERLY

You want to be a farmer?

KENNY

For now. But I'm thinking about opening my own garage...

Across the room, Tom and Bruce have two YOUNG LADIES sharing their booth while Bruno sits calmly on the floor nearby. Tom feeds Bruno a French fry as the Waitress returns with a tray of drinks. She has an extra bottle of beer and hands it to Bruno. He clasps it between his paws before tilting it upside down and chugging away. When the bottle is empty, Bruno hands it back to the Waitress.

WAITRESS

Why, thank you, Bruno.

Back at the bar...



KENNY

You'll have to excuse me, Beverly.  
I've got to go see a man about a  
horse.

BEVERLY

A horse, you say!

KENNY

I'll be right back.

Kenny heads off in the direction of the washroom as Glen Miller's "American Patrol" starts to play on the juke box. Bruno rocks his head to the beat then stands in the center of the floor and dances in perfect sync. Everyone CHEERS.

Before long, a visibly drunk YOUNG WOMAN approaches the dance floor. She's mesmerized by Bruno's dancing and soon joins him. She dances with him for much of the song while others join in, encircling the Young Woman and the bear. As the song comes to an end, Patrons APPLAUD and WHISTLE.

A slow song begins to play. The Young Woman opens her arms and approaches Bruno, wrapping her arms around him in a loving hug.

YOUNG WOMAN

I love you, Bruno! You're a great  
dancer.

Bruno seems to enjoy the affection. His front legs are over her shoulders and he leans his head in against hers.

KENNY (O.S.)

Bruno, no!

Bruno's ears drop back. Kenny yanks the leash and Bruno backs away, dropping to all fours.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ! You're out of your  
God-damned mind, lady.

Bruno is scared by the yelling. He recoils some.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Tom, Bruce. What the hell, lads?

His friends climb out of the restaurant booth.

TOM

Sorry about that, Kenny...

Distressed, Bruno haunches over into a squat and takes a huge scat on the center of the dance floor. The Patrons react. Some look revolted while others LAUGH.

KENNY

Time to go, Bruno.

Bruno follows Kenny past the bar as they rush by Beverly and her friends.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Can I call you sometime, Beverly?

BEVERLY

Anytime, Kenny.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE (DAY)

Down by the large barn, Kenny and Alain have both HORSES attached to the fully loaded wagon-like MANURE SPREADER.

KENNY

...and then Bruno took a big crap right there on the floor.

ALAIN

Oh mon Dieu! That's terrible.

KENNY

Yeah. But Bruno's a good lad.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Come up for lunch, boys.

ALAIN

Yes, Mrs. Davidson.

KENNY

Be right there, Mother.

Kenny ties a reign through a loop in the barn door's handle.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Be right back, girls. Then we've got some shit to spread.

Kenny and Alain run up to the house. From his favorite tree branch, Bruno watches Kenny and Alain cross the yard and wipe their boots on a mat outside the door. Bruno SNIFFS the air.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE (DAY)

Hugh and Mother are joined by Kenny and Alain at the table.

ALAIN

The manure spreader is fixed and ready to go, Hugh.

HUGH

Thank you, Alain. You'll get more than a few acres covered by the end of the day.

KENNY

Pass the fixins, Mother?

Mother passes a tray of fresh-cut vegetables closer to Kenny, who starts to make himself a sandwich.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE

Bruno climbs down from his branch, SNIFFING. The bear pulls at his chain and it rips one end of the clothesline from the tree. Bruno is free to explore his surroundings. He sees the horses down by the barn.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Lunch food is passed around the table.

HUGH

Donald says he's got his panel truck painted. He calls his company DeeDee's Refrigeration.

ALAIN

You don't say.

MOTHER

DeeDee's? When Keith was just a baby, he used to call Donald Deedee.

KENNY

DeeDees? Oh, I get it. And he and what's her name...

HUGH

Elizabeth. His wife, Kenny. She's your latest sister-in-law.

MOTHER

Elizabeth. I can't believe another one of my children is married off. Everyone's leaving us, Hugh.

HUGH

Now, Mother...

MOTHER

I suppose it's best they grow up.

HUGH

Anyway, Donald said they got themselves moved into that new development in the city off Island Park. Nice little home.

KENNY

Donald's gonna be a city boy. Now that's Donald, Eldon, Hazel, Gordy and Audrey all in the city now. You're going to need to hire more hands like Alain, here.

HUGH

I've still got you, don't I, Kenny?

KENNY

I'm thinking of being a mechanic. I'm gonna look into a course. But I might need some money for it.

HUGH

Is that right?

ALAIN

There's lots of work around here, but I can manage, Hugh.

KENNY

You paid for Donald's school.

HUGH

Donald listened to me and enrolled in that course. It kept him from going to fight overseas. It was you that quit school after eighth grade and said you just want to work the farm.

KENNY

Eldon says he could use me over at the Case dealership.

HUGH

Eldon? Working with your brother,  
that might be a good...

Suddenly, there's commotion outside as both horses gallop past the kitchen windows along the roadway, with the manure spreader in tow.

KENNY

What in the hell...

Kenny and Alain are on their feet and they peer out the window for an instant before running to the door.

MOTHER

Oh my! What was that?

HUGH

The damn horses, Ina!

Hugh gets up and goes to the door.

EXT. LANEWAY - DAVIDSON'S FARM

The galloping team drags the manure spreader at full speed in the direction of Richmond Road. Manure flies everywhere. Kenny and Alain sprint after the panicked horses, which run off to the right of the lane so that the wheels of the spreader are on the lawn. One wheel hits the side of a waist-high stone fence, and is knocked off the contraption. This only slows the horses a little.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Hugh backs his car from the garage.

INT. UPSTAIRS - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Mother is up the stairs and down the hall where she enters Jack's room.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - DAY

She watches from the window toward the Road, where it appears the men have caught up with and have control over the horses.

EXT. LANEWAY - DAVIDSON'S FARM - DAY

Where the lane meets Richmond Road, Kenny and Alain have the horses by the reigns. The broken manure spreader is caught on a hydro pole.

ALAIN  
Easy, girls. Easy.

Hugh's car arrives and he gets out to inspect the damage.

HUGH  
How in the hell did that happen?

KENNY  
The horses where tied, Dad. I swear.

HUGH  
You're sure about that? Are the horses okay?

ALAIN  
It seems so, Mister Davidson.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mother turns from the window, exits the room and starts along the hallway. From downstairs there's some CLANGING and THUMPING. She heads back downstairs.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Mother is through the family room and around the corner to the kitchen when she freezes. The table is void of food and the lower cabinets are open with every pot and pan out on the floor. Bruno sits in the middle of the room, chewing away.

MOTHER  
You! Get out of my kitchen!

Bruno's look of delight becomes one of shame.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Bruno! Out! Out of my house, you mischievous boy! Go!

Mother pulls at the chain and takes Bruno by an ear with her free hand. The bear doesn't resist.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Still holding Bruno's ear, Mother hurries the bear to the clothesline only to find that one end has been torn with its screw from the oak tree.

MOTHER

And you ate all the lunch. That's a naughty, naughty boy.

Mother quickly wraps the bear's light chain around the tree.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Now stay outside, Bruno. I don't want any more trouble from you.

Mother heads back inside...

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE

...where she looks over the mess of plates, pots and pans.

MOTHER

My, my. Oh dear.

In shock, she collapses on a seat at the table, catching her breath. Her hands begin to tremble. So does her lip. Mother LAUGHS briefly before tears roll down her cheeks.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Dear, oh dear.

She cries.

EXT. PORCH - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Mother knits a sweater, enjoying the sunshine and unusual warmth for the time of year when Jack rounds the house, home from school. Mother is pulled from her trance. For a moment she appears to look at Jack as if for the first time.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

You know, Eric. It's a shame to say it, but I think that was the first time I remember Mother paying any sort of attention to me. It was as if she had just snapped out of something that had haunted her for years and now she realized she had another child to raise.

MOTHER

Well hello. Now, who might you be?

Jack looks confused.

JACK

It's me, Jack.

MOTHER

Jack?

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Eric quickly checks his iPhone for the time.

ERIC

Really, Grampa? How can that be?

GRAMPA JACK

Maybe she was just kidding with me, but I think that was the day she finally overcame her depression.

ERIC

Like a post-partem thing?

GRAMPA JACK

Oh, she probably had been suffering some of that too. But it was like someone flicked a switch. When I think of it, I was her tenth of eleven children. That was a lot of mouths to feed, even without the hired hands. And, you know, things weren't easy. Don't forget, for the previous five years, the world was at war and before that was years of hardship with the Great Depression.

The NURSE approaches Grampa Jack and Eric.

NURSE

Excuse me for interrupting, John. Do you mind if I take your blood pressure?

GRAMPA JACK

Oh, I suppose.



NURSE

Thank you, John.

GRAMPA JACK

This is one of my grand children,  
Eric.

NURSE

Hello, Eric.

GRAMPA JACK

He's back for a visit from out  
west.

The nurse wraps the blood pressure machine's band around  
Grampa Jack's upper arm and presses a button. It BEEPS.

NURSE

Very nice. Where are you living,  
Eric?

ERIC

British Columbia. I work for a ski  
resort in the interior.

NURSE

It must be a beautiful place to  
live.

GRAMPA JACK

He gets paid to ski. Imagine that!

NURSE

Lucky you, Eric.

The nurse jots down the numbers indicated from the blood  
pressure machine.

GRAMPA JACK

How's my numbers? I'm not going to  
explode, am I?

NURSE

No, John. In fact, it's the best  
numbers I've seen with you, ever.  
Obviously, it does your health good  
to be with your grandson.

GRAMPA JACK

That makes sense.

NURSE

Of course it does.

GRAMPA JACK

I was telling Eric about the bear we had living at the farm back in the day.

NURSE

Oh, yes. I've heard this one, Eric. It's unbelievable.

GRAMPA JACK

Unbelievable?

NURSE

I mean truly remarkable.

GRAMPA JACK

But it's true.

NURSE

I'm sure it is, John.

The Nurse takes her blood pressure machine as she leaves.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Very nice to meet you, Eric.

She goes to the next occupant, sitting alone in an armchair.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Mother looks with new eyes at her son.

MOTHER

Jack! Of course. How's my sweet boy?

JACK

I got a B-plus in spelling and an A in math today.

MOTHER

Is that right? What grade are you in now?

JACK

Grade one.

MOTHER

Already. Where does the time go?

JACK

I dunno. I should be in grade two  
but you kept me home a year.

MOTHER

I did, didn't I! Come up here and  
let me give you a hug, Jack.

Jack climbs the three steps onto the porch where Mother hugs  
him tightly. She inhales his hair then kisses his head and  
his forehead and cheeks.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Aren't you precious!

Jack smiles, enjoying the affection for a long moment.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

An A in math, you say?

JACK

And B plus in spelling.

MOTHER

Such a smart, smart boy.

JACK

How come there's shit all the way  
up the lane? I got it all over my  
tires.

MOTHER

Oh, the horses got away with the  
manure spreader while we were at  
lunch.

Jack looks to the oak where the bear is often resting.

JACK

Where's Bruno?

MOTHER

He's down in his shed. He was in a  
bit of mischief earlier.

JACK

Oh. Is he in trouble?

MOTHER

Just a bit. What's your favorite  
dessert, Jack?

JACK

Um...upside down peach cake.

MOTHER

Upside down peach cake! Well, it happens there's still a few peaches in the cold cellar. Run down and get them for me, Jack. I'll make that for you right away. We must celebrate your good grades.

JACK

Yay!

INT. HUGH'S DODGE (MOVING) - DAY

Hugh is behind the wheel on Richmond road, approaching the laneway to his home. As he slows, a car pulls out from his property with a second car is close behind it.

HUGH

(to himself)

Who's that now?

The second car pulls out and heads away before Hugh turns onto the gravel laneway. Three more cars are down past the house, near the barns. Hugh parks in front of his garage.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

With the news that we had a bear living on our farm, it didn't take too long before people - complete strangers - would show up on our property to take a look for themselves.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE

Hugh climbs out of the car and heads toward Bruno's shed where several ADULTS and CHILDREN are in front of the open half-door, admiring and feeding Bruno.

HUGH

What the hell is going on here?

A MAN in a green hat turns.

MAN

Oh, hello there. We're just admiring your bear.

HUGH

Oh yeah?

MAN  
He's incredibly friendly...

HUGH  
Now, get the hell off my property  
before you get a swift kick in the  
ass.

FAT WOMAN  
Excuse me?

HUGH  
That goes for you too, Big Lady.

FAT WOMAN  
How dare you...

HUGH  
Get out of here, now. You're  
trespassing.

MAN  
You're not a very polite man...

HUGH  
I'll show you polite, with my foot  
up your ass!

A YOUNG GIRL stares at Hugh, frightened. Hugh checks the  
door on Bruno's shed.

YOUNG GIRL  
What's his name?

HUGH  
I'm sorry, but you've got to leave.  
The bear's dangerous.

The car engines start and the vehicles begin to pull away.

EXT. LANEWAY - DAVIDSON'S FARM - DAY

Hugh jumps down from his idling tractor with a homemade sign  
on attached to a piece of 1" x 3" spruce: NO TRESPASSING. He  
hammers the sign into the ground.

EXT. RICHMOND ROAD - DAY

Leaves have turned the forest to yellow, orange, tangerine  
and red with only traces of green remaining in the canopy.  
The color is a welcome contrast to the grey afternoon.

Barry and Jack step out from the forested trail to the edge of the recently paved road.

BARRY  
I should have brought a sweater.

JACK  
Here, you can borrow mine.

BARRY  
Yeah?

Jack removes his button-up jacket, hands it to his friend.

JACK  
It's only going to take me a few minutes to get home, anyway.

BARRY  
So, how's your buddy Bruno doing?

JACK  
He's good. But he sleeps more, lately.

BARRY  
He wants to hibernate.

JACK  
Already?

BARRY  
Probably.

JACK  
You could ride on my handle bars if you wanna come visit him.

BARRY  
Mom wants me home straight after school now. I'm kinda grounded.

JACK  
We could feed Bruno some candy, and have some for ourselves too.

BARRY  
Mom says I can't.

JACK  
No? I'm sure you could stay over. It's Friday, after all.

BARRY

Mom and Dad say to stay away as long as you've got Bruno at your place.

JACK

What? Not fair.

BARRY

Sorry. I want to go. Really, Jack.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

But because of the bear most of the neighbors stayed away. I'm sure they thought we were crazy.

BARRY

They just say it's too dangerous.

JACK

Darn it all.

BARRY

Maybe you can bike over to my place tomorrow, or Sunday after I'm back from church.

JACK

Okay.

BARRY

Later, alligator.

JACK

In a while, crocodile.

Jack puts his foot over the bike frame and pedals north, while Barry walks south.

EXT. RICHMOND ROAD (MINUTES LATER)

Jack passes the gas station, spotting Moodie's giant black sedan being fueled while Tom the server wipes down the windshield. As Jack pedals past, he hears Moodie GRUMBLING.

TOM

Right away, Mr. Moodie.

Behind Jack, Moodie BARKS a response.

EXT. RICHMOND ROAD (MINUTES LATER)

Jack pedals his bike into the north breeze. He ducks low for aerodynamics down a dip in the road. He raises his head in time to see the faces inside an oncoming car. There's a family of four inside, all of them with wide eyes and open mouths before the car is behind him and over the incline.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

I remember their faces in that oncoming car. The whole family, their eyes wide and jaws dropped.

WHAM!

INT. BRUNO'S SHED - DAY

Meanwhile, Bruno, who lies with his teddy bear, reacts to the SOUND of IMPACT from Richmond Road, several hundred yards away. Bruno's attention is focused and he appears concerned. He goes to the half-door and stands up. From here there is nothing to see. He HUFFS and SNIFFS at the air.

EXT. RICHMOND ROAD - DAY

In SLOW MOTION Jack is thrown, along with his bicycle, up and over the hood and roof of the black Lincoln Continental.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

I remember being up as high as the telephone wires. I remember thinking I could reach over and grab them.

He is head-over-heals in a dance with the bike, at nearly the height of the phone and power lines.

INT. BRUNO'S SHED - DAY

Bruno's nose is in the air as he looks out from his shed. He pushes at the door, rocking it on its hinges. He stands tall, SNIFFING. Then he SIGHS and WHIMPERS with worry.

EXT. RICHMOND ROAD (MINUTES LATER)

Jack lies still on the shoulder of the road a moment before opening his dazed eyes. His arms and face are scratched and bleeding.



GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

I guess I was knocked out. When I came to, old Moodie is stopped at least a hundred yards, probably more, up the road. No skid marks. The bastard made sure not to slam his brakes.

ERIC (V.O.)

So he was that kind of guy.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

The son of a bitch. I'm lying in the road and he's checking his car for dents and scratches.

At least a hundred yards up the road, the Lincoln is pulled over. Moodie inspects the front of his IDLING car for damage.

Jack blacks out.

INT. MOODIE'S CAR - RICHMOND ROAD - DAY

Moodie is behind the wheel. He puts the car in gear but checks his mirror. A car approaches. It's the same one he just met.

MOODIE

Ah, shit.

He puts the car's transmission back in "Park."

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Moodie's car is parked beside the home. The smashed bicycle stands against the side of the lean-to garage.

HUGH

What the hell are you saying?

MOODIE

Now Hugh, I only think it's fare that I'm compensated for this damage. It only stands to reason. Take another good look at the dent on my fender. And that awful scuff on the grill!

HUGH

But you hit him.

MOODIE

Your boy was being reckless.

In the background, Kenny drives a Case TRACTOR, which RUMBLES closer from up the back lane between the silo and the shed that is home to Bruno.

HUGH

He's not seven years old. We should be taking him to the hospital.

MOODIE

He's young and malleable, Hugh. The boy will be just fine.

Hugh points to the bike, with the rear tire exploded, the missing spokes, the wheel frame bent dramatically, the handle bars bent and red paint scratched off its frame.

HUGH

This is a brand new bike.

MOODIE

And this is a brand new car, Hugh. Now, no need to bring insurance or the law into this. I'm thinking it's best we look after this ourselves. I'll go and get an estimate first thing Monday...

Kenny is on the tractor. He turns it into an open sliding doorway of the big barn and shuts down the engine.

HUGH

You had to be going pretty fast to throw him over the top of your car.

MOODIE

Good thing I was or he'd be under the front wheels and I'd have lots more damage.

Kenny, unaware of the conversation, walks to Bruno's shed.

KENNY

(in the background)

Well hello there, Bruno my boy!  
What's wrong? You want out. Time I let you out for a pee?

MOODIE

Listen, Hugh. I'll get a quote or two and we'll go from there.

HUGH

You've got a hell of a lot of nerve  
asking to be paid...

Behind them, Kenny approaches with Bruno, who's unleashed.

MOODIE

I'm not asking, Hugh. Think about  
our positions in the community.

Moodie is suddenly distracted by Bruno, who now stands to his  
full height SNIFFING the air and glaring at Moodie.

MOODIE (CONT'D)

What in the...oh, that's your bear.  
Wow, he's really big, isn't he.  
Did you tell Donald about my offer?

HUGH

I haven't.

The bear drops to all fours and continues his walk from the  
barn with Kenny, who smiles and waves as they approach.

KENNY

G'day, g'day, Mr. Moodie. How in  
hell's it hanging, lad?

Moodie looks displeased.

MOODIE

(to Hugh)

Lad? Who's your lad calling lad?  
Has Kenny got no damn manners?

HUGH

Oh, he's just that way.

Fixed on Moodie, Bruno HUFFS and stands, then GROWLS.

KENNY

Settle down, Bruno.

Bruno is reluctant to back down. He HUFFS and the hair  
stands up on his neck.

MOODIE

Keep that thing away from me.

KENNY

Down, Bruno. Down, boy.

Bruno is down but pushes closer toward Moodie, SNIFFING as he  
takes the first steps of a bluff charge.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Bruno! No!

Moodie jumps behind the wheel of his Lincoln, slamming the door while Bruno leaps, with his paws against the window.

MOODIE

You Davidson's are out of your god damned minds. All of you!

Moodie backs the car away then roars up the laneway with stones flying and dust billowing. Kenny approaches Hugh, looking at the smashed bike. Bruno inspects it closely.

KENNY

What the hell happened? Is Jack alright?

HUGH

Just a bump on the head, I suppose. He'll be fine.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

A SERVER approaches with a cart carrying tea cups and a pot among other things.

SERVER

Would either of you gentlemen like to have a tea?

GRAMPA JACK

Oh, I guess so.

ERIC

Sure.

SERVER

Great. What do you take in it?

The Server pours the tea.

ERIC

Nothing for me, thanks.

GRAMPA JACK

Give me a dab of milk and a teaspoon of sugar.

SERVER

I'm sorry, John. No sugar for you.  
But I can put in a little honey.

GRAMPA JACK

That will be fine.

SERVER

Is your grandfather telling you  
some of his stories?

ERIC

Yeah.

SERVER

He's got so many! He keeps us  
entertained with them all day.

The Server hands over the cups of tea.

ERIC

Thank you.

Eric takes a sip from his cup as the Server goes.

GRAMPA JACK

I like her. From the Philippines,  
I think. You got yourself a  
girlfriend, Eric?

ERIC

Oh yeah. She's back visiting her  
family in New Zealand.

GRAMPA JACK

New Zealand?

ERIC

I'm going to work there next  
summer.

GRAMPA JACK

Summer?

ERIC

It will be their winter. I'm  
applying for a couple ski patrol  
jobs in the Remarkables.

GRAMPA JACK

You don't say. That's a hell of a  
flight. Your Dad went backpacking  
there and Australia after college.

Grampa Jack drinks from his tea cup.

GRAMPA JACK (CONT'D)  
Now, where was I? Oh yeah. It was  
Keith's twelfth birthday.

EXT. MULDOON'S FARM - DAY

The Muldoon's family farm is about a mile north of the Davidson's on the Richmond Road, four farms away.

BRIAN MULDOON, forties, is at the controls in the cockpit while Keith sits in the open-air compartment ahead of him.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Brian Muldoon was just a few farms  
over. He was trained by the Air  
Force but the war ended before he  
was ever sent into battle. He came  
back and got himself a Pratt Boeing-  
Stearman for crop dusting. So, he  
started a business spraying  
farmland.

The 450 HP Pratt Boeing-Stearman Model 75 BIPLANE engine  
COUGHS and SNORTS to life as son Tom (the gas station server)  
jumps out of the way. Youngest son, GERALD - who's Keith's  
age - stands back, waving.

GERALD  
Hang on tight, Keith! My Dad's a  
crazy pilot!

The aircraft accelerates along the bumpy lane for about two  
football fields before lifting off from the dirt road behind  
Muldoon's barn.

KEITH  
Woohoo!

The biplane climbs above the farm fields, which spread out  
nearly to the horizon. The plane levels off fairly low and  
banks hard left. The ground beneath rotates as Keith grins  
ear to ear.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Jack is with Mother and the four Quinn children feeding Bruno  
candy bars at the clothesline.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

At the same time, Mother had the Quinn children over to meet Bruno, and to get to know me too, I suppose.

ERIC (V.O.)

You mean the bullies?

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

Well, they stopped being bullies after that.

Mary tosses the bear a SKYBAR. Bruno gently peels open the wrap, nibbles more hungrily than he used to nibble. The Quinn's are enraptured.

MARY

Wow. Oh my God! He's so cute. I love him. I love him! I love him!

GORDY

What else do you feed him?

JACK

Oh mostly left over garden vegetables. He eats more than the pigs. But he loves Skybars the most.

ALEC

Can I feed him next?

ANDY

No. Me first.

MOTHER

Maybe you kids would all like a candy bar.

They all CHEER for a candy bar.

JACK

Huh? But you said not to eat them because they have worms.

MOTHER

Oh, yes. I did say that. Well, I happen to have some without worms.

She pulls a mix of five bars out from her apron.

MARY

Jack, you're so lucky.

JACK  
 You're ready for another one,  
 Bruno?

The bear finishes the Skybar and nods like he wants another.

JACK (CONT'D)  
 Okay, Andy. Your turn.

ANDY  
 Bruno! Bruno, show me a roll.

Without hesitation, Bruno somersaults end over end, sitting up right beside the kids. Andy holds out the Oh Henry! Bruno gently takes it with his mouth, then sits back and peels the wrapper as of an ENGINE roars closer from overhead.

The bear sees the aircraft. He finishes the bar quickly, stands and waves at the biplane, which circles over the property. Keith waves from the plane.

MOTHER  
 (to herself)  
 Oh dear.

MARY  
 He's waving at the plane!

ANDY  
 Neat!

MARY  
 I didn't know he could do that.

JACK  
 Neither did I.

EXT. MULDOON'S BIPLANE (FLYING) - DAY

Brian Muldoon puts the plane through its paces. He pulls it straight up and over in a loop over the Davidson's farm. Keith hangs onto his glasses as the plane rotates upside down before gaining speed as it dives.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE

Mother, the children and Bruno watch the plane loop and dive before disappearing behind the big barn. Everyone GASPS.

MOTHER  
 Oh dear. My boy! My Keith!



The biplane shoots out from behind the barn and climbs again as it heads south over the fields.

EXT. MULDOON'S BIPLANE (FLYING) - DAY

Keith looks both scared and excited by the aerobatics.

MULDOON  
Ready for a barrel roll?

KEITH  
What?

MULDOON  
A barrel roll.

KEITH  
A what?

MULDOON  
Hang on!

The plane ROARS low overhead when Muldoon puts it into a roll as they cross over Davidson's back field, barn and farmhouse. Even the cattle in the fenced area behind the barn, can't ignore it. Jack and the Quinn children SCREAM in delight.

INT. MULDOON'S BIPLANE

The horizon spins and spins as the plane rolls.

KEITH  
(laughing)  
Whoa! Whoa!

Keith's glasses are suddenly gone.

EXT. RICHMOND HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

To the delight of the young FOOTBALL PLAYERS and the PARENTS and FRIENDS on the bleachers, the approaching biplane maneuvers through some tight aerobatics as it crosses low over the high school's field before the plane climbs again.

EXT. MULDOON'S BIPLANE (FLYING) - DAY

Below, a giant STEAM ENGINE billows smoke and steam as it pulls the long cargo train at tremendous speed. Muldoon curls the plane down to the left, chasing after it.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - RICHMOND OUTSKIRTS - DAY

The biplane descends and lines up over the track as it catches up to the train. The plane is barely over the caboose as it hovers.

EXT. MULDOON'S BIPLANE (FLYING) - DAY

Keith wears a thrilled grin as the plane makes its way just above the hitched train cars.

KEITH

Wow!

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

The aircraft remains directly above as it races the train, gaining on the big Engine. The plane is over the train's Engine when it passes through the plumes of steam and smoke. The biplane SPUTTERS and COUGHS, then stalls. With the loss of power, the slowing plane barely gets out in front of the train before it drops lower. The train ENGINE SOUNDS the HORN as the plane hovers just in front of it, several feet above the tracks.

EXT. MULDOON'S BIPLANE (FLYING) - DAY

Muldoon works the controls.

MULDOON

Oh oh! Hold tight, Keith!

KEITH

What?

One tire taps the rail before the engine fires back up.

Muldoon hits the throttle and pulls back on the stick. The bi-plane skips and bounces several times just feet ahead of the engine before it lifts up and away.

ERIC (V.O.)

That's the story you told me.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

Crazy shit, eh?

ERIC (V.O.)

You'd think he would be arrested or lose his pilot's license...

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
 What can I say, Eric? It was a  
 different time.

KEITH  
 That was fun!

MULDOON  
 Don't tell your Dad about that one,  
 Keith.

Keith turns around to face Mr. Muldoon.

KEITH  
 What?

MULDOON  
 Where's your glasses, Keith?

KEITH  
 What?

MULDOON  
 Your glasses?

KEITH  
 I dunno!

EXT. LANEWAY - DAVIDSON'S FARM - DAY

The Quinn boys all eat candy bars, walking toward the road  
 ahead of Mary and Jack. Mary takes Jack's hand. He flushes.

MARY  
 Thanks so much for letting us come  
 see Bruno. That was a lot of fun.

JACK  
 Uh, You're welcome, Mary.

MARY  
 And seeing the airplane was amazing  
 too. I hope Keith didn't puke.

JACK  
 I kind of hope he did.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
 That's when I got my first kiss.

They both LAUGH. Mary sneaks a kiss on Jack's cheek. Jack  
 smiles to himself.

MARY

See you soon, Jack.

Jack can only vaguely wave his hand.

EXT. AMERICAN EMBASSY - WELLINGTON STREET - OTTAWA - DAY

Moodie is in front of the building, directly across the street from Parliament Hill. He speaks with several well-dressed MEN. One of them, though, wears a CHEF'S uniform.

MOODIE

I know there's lots of important folks going to be there. So we'd appreciate being seated at a table near the front this time. Tell the Ambassador I've got just what he needs for his New Year's dinner. He'll love it. It will even top last year's roast moose.

CHEF

(French Canadian accent)

That's exciting news, Mr. Moodie. I'm thinking of several recipes as we speak.

MOODIE

Well, the Ambassador's business is appreciated. I'm happy to be of...

Muldoon's airplane, still carrying Keith, buzzes low overhead and banks to circle the Peace Tower as the bell rings noon.

MOODIE (CONT'D)

What in the hell?

There's the SOUND of an old man COUGHING.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME

The Old Man in the wheelchair COUGHS some more before making a big SNORT and falling back to sleep.

GRAMPA JACK

Hey, Eric. What time do you need to get out of here?

ERIC

I've still got some time, Grampa.

GRAMPA JACK  
Don't be late for your flight.

ERIC  
I'm good.

GRAMPA JACK  
Alright. Now, where was I?

EXT. BRUNO'S SHED - DAY

Hugh wheelbarrow's a bail of hay to the smaller barn. He checks over the half door. The bear seems agitated.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Oh yeah. Now, we had an unusually warm autumn in '45, but once the days started to cool off, Bruno wanted to hibernate. The bear started to get restless and grumpy.

HUGH  
You alright, Bruno? Looks as though you could use some fresh hay in your den.

Bruno GRUNTS as Hugh unlatches the half-door.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

As Mother collects the SHEETS from the clothesline, she is startled by Hugh's YELLING from Bruno's shed.

MOTHER  
Oh dear me.

Hugh runs up from the bear's shed with only one boot. He crosses the lawn grasping his shredded underwear.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Are you alright, Hugh?

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
But somehow Bruno never put a mark on Dad.

HUGH  
Stay away from that bear, Ina.

Still CURSING, Hugh disappears into the house.

INT. KITCHEN TABLE - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

All very drunk, Kenny plays poker with Bruce, Tom and CHARLY, in his early twenties. A vast majority of the POKER CHIPS are in front of him. Another friend - FRED - is passed out on the nearby couch.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

So, I know there was talk of what to do with Bruno. And one night, he was nearly sent on his way.

TOM

I'll see your bet and...wait a minute. I fold.

BRUCE

Oh no! Tom!

CHARLY

Kenny?

KENNY

I'm in.

ERIC (V.O.)

What happened?

CHARLY

Call.

KENNY

Three Jacks.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

Kenny lost Bruno in a card game.

Charly shows his cards.

CHARLY

One giant full house.

KENNY

That's horse shit. Say, Bruce. Why in the hell did you bring this son of a bitch to play?

BRUCE

We're tired of you always winning.

CHARLY

That's a small fortune you owe, Kenny.

KENNY

Yeah. We're gonna have to...

CHARLY

Tell ya what. I'll spot you two hundred for the bear.

KENNY

Now, What are you saying to me?

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE (MINUTES LATER) - NIGHT

Kenny is on the phone with Donald.

KENNY

This guy, Charly...his family has four-hundred acres down towards Iroquois. Says a good chunk of it is forested.

INT. BEDROOM - DONALD'S HOME - NIGHT

Donald sits in his PJ's on the side of the bed with a phone to his ear as Elizabeth reads a book beside him.

DONALD

This is a tough decision, Kenny.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Kenny hears a "CLICK" on the line. He SIGHS.

KENNY

Who's on the line?

DONALD

(over phone)  
I didn't hear anything.

KENNY

Is that you Mrs. Parks?

DONALD

Kenny?

KENNY

Get off the line, Mrs. Parks or I'll give you something to talk about, you old fart.

There's another CLICK.

DONALD

Kenny?

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

Of course, we were all on party lines back then.

KENNY

Yeah, Donald. This guy says you can drop in any time to check in on Bruno. Maybe it's best we get rid of him. You know, before he hurts someone.

DONALD

Yeah...um...well...

KENNY

You know, Dad was ready to shoot him after Bruno tore off his pants the other day.

INT. BEDROOM - DONALD'S HOME - NIGHT

Donald SIGHS.

DONALD

Dammit. I suppose it's better for everyone.

KENNY

(over phone)

I think so too, Donald.

DONALD

Hmmm. It's really too bad. I feel like I've failed Bruno..and failed Mike too.

KENNY

(over phone)

I hear ya, Donald. But, maybe this is the best option.

DONALD

Okay, tell him he can take Bruno.  
(PAUSE) Yes. He can take that with him too. (PAUSE) Alright.  
'Night Kenny.

Donald hangs up the phone with a SIGH.



ELIZABETH  
What is it, Donald?

DONALD  
We're getting rid of Bruno.

ELIZABETH  
Oh, no. I'm so sorry, Donald.

DONALD  
Me too.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Under moonlight, Kenny and friends walk a sleepy, grumpy Bruno across frost-covered lawn to the cars parked on it. Charly's car, a '44 Chev Fleetline Deluxe has the trunk open.

FRED  
(slurring)  
I'm out of it a few minutes and  
this happens?

KENNY  
Up, up Bruno.

With some hesitation, Bruno climbs into the trunk of the car. Kenny tosses the teddy bear in with him.

KENNY (CONT'D)  
That a boy, Bruno.

The bear HUFFS nervously.

TOM  
Pretty cold tonight.

BRUCE  
Yeah. Let's let the cars warm up  
and gather our shit.

KENNY  
Lie down, Bruno. It's okay. Lie  
down. We'll warm up the car for  
you. Now, back to sleep.

Bruno looks unsure, but reluctantly obeys.

KENNY (CONT'D)  
Good boy.

Kenny closes the lid. From inside there's only one WHIMPER.

BRUCE  
You sure he's okay in there?

KENNY  
Sure.

CHARLY  
He'll be fine.

KENNY  
I'll get you guys some coffee.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE (MINUTES LATER) - NIGHT

Beer bottles have been replaced with coffee cups. The men stand along the kitchen counter, except Fred who's passed out again on the couch.

CHARLY  
I'm telling ya, Kenny. There's no way the Ford can beat the new Buick.

KENNY  
I've seen it with my own eyes.

CHARLY  
Well, if you say so.

BRUCE  
Tom, I'll drop you off. Ready?

TOM  
I'm ready.

CHARLY  
Fred. Fred!

CHARLY (CONT'D)  
Let's get rolling.

Fred stirs awake and struggles back to his feet.

CHARLY (CONT'D)  
Don't worry about the bear, Kenny.

KENNY  
I'm sure he's in good hands.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE (MINUTES LATER) - NIGHT

The outside light comes on and the men step down from the porch and go toward their idling vehicles. Charly's car is rocking on its suspension under the moonlight.

FRED

What the hell is going on with your car, Charly?

CHARLY

What do you mean? Hey!

Charly rushes to his car and the others follow. Bruno is in what's left of the front seat while he gnaws away at the steering wheel. He stops his chewing when he spots the men looking at him through the driver's side window.

CHARLY (CONT'D)

Shit, Kenny. He's eating my car!

KENNY

Jesus H. Christ.

BRUCE

How did he get in the front seat?

Charly looks inside the car.

CHARLY

He ate his way right through the back seats! Shit. If I wasn't so drunk I'd be crying. This was a bad idea. Come take your bear, Kenny, before I shoot him.

Kenny looks in at the car's destroyed interior, opens the door. Bruno jumps out and runs toward his shed.

KENNY

Bruno! You son of a...

CHARLY

Let's forget it. Bad idea.

KENNY

Well, at least you've won some money to reupholster.

CHARLY

Come on, Fred. Let's get out of here.

Fred and Charly climb inside the torn out car.

CHARLY (CONT'D)  
What's that smell?

Fred looks back at what's left of the ripped rear seats.

FRED  
There's bear shit in the back seat.

CHARLY  
That's just fuckin' great. Thanks  
a lot, Kenny.

EXT. CREEK - BACK LANE - DAVIDSON'S FARM - DAY

After the laneway reaches the house from Richmond Road, it continues west between the barns and runs all the way to Eagles Road, splitting the two-hundred acre farm in half.

Most of the way down this lane is a small wooden bridge where Jack sits with his legs hanging over the shallow creek.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Now and then I'd head down to the creek that ran through our farm to do some fishing. There were always big pike in there. At least in those days.

ERIC (V.O.)  
Nice.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
One time I took Bruno down there with me.

Jack's got his FISHING POLE, which is just a MAPLE STICK with a heavy green night line on it. He hooks a WORM as Bruno approaches and sits almost affectionately beside him.

JACK  
Do you know how to fish, Bruno?

Bruno looks attentively at Jack and the hooked wiggling worm.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Probably not.

Jack twists the stick around and around, giving himself several yards of line.

JACK (CONT'D)  
It's okay. I'll show you.

Jack tosses the line with hook, worm and sinker into the creek.

EXT. CATTLE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM

Along the south side of the barn, the cattle graze in a field while Alain and Helen drop several bails of hay in the enclosed area. A pair of cows stroll over to the trough, then shy away from it.

HELEN  
That's strange.

ALAIN  
What's that, Helen?

HELEN  
The cattle. They've been avoiding the trough the last couple of days.

ALAIN  
I was wondering about that too.

Alain is right up beside Helen.

HELEN  
You think maybe Bruno has them nervous?

ALAIN  
I would think so. He makes me nervous.

HELEN  
You make me nervous.

ALAIN  
I do?

HELEN  
Yeah. But in a good way...

Alain and Helen embrace, then kiss.

HELEN (CONT'D)  
But the cows...

ALAIN  
They'll be fine.

They continue to kiss.

EXT. CREEK - DAVIDSON'S FARM - DAY

Jack's fishing pole starts to twitch before the line goes tight and the maple bends.

JACK  
We got a bite, Bruno!

Jack wrestles with the weight of the fish as it yanks on the line. He fights to twist the slack (when he gets some) back around the pole. Bruno, who's been lying beside Jack is suddenly curious.

JACK (CONT'D)  
It's a big one.

A SPLASH douses Jack's legs and Bruno's nose. Jack gets to his feet as he struggles with the big NORTHERN PIKE. The bear watches excitedly when there's more SPLASHING.

JACK (CONT'D)  
Ugh! I don't think I can hold on.

Bruno is up. He strolls off the bridge and down through the thick grass along the embankment, never taking his eyes from the fighting fish.

Jack is tiring and losing his grip when Bruno jumps into the creek. The bear searches the stirring water then plunges his head beneath the surface. The fishing line goes slack when Bruno lifts his head from the water with the giant pike locked in his jaw.

JACK (CONT'D)  
You can fish! Good catch, Bruno!

Bruno is back up on the bridge where he drops the dying fish.

JACK (CONT'D)  
You can eat that one if you want,  
Bruno.

Bruno SNIFFS at the fish before opening his huge jaw to eat.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - EVENING

Mother prepares dinner with Helen while Joan plays piano from the other room.

HELEN  
Where are the boys?

MOTHER

Kenny is mending a fence and Keith is out getting new glasses with your father.

HELEN

I haven't seen Jack.

MOTHER

Oh my! Jack. Where's Jack?

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - EVENING

Mother leans in. Helen is right behind her.

MOTHER

Joan?

The piano stops playing.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Joan. Have you seen Jack?

JOAN

He went fishing at the creek.

HELEN

Jack's not with the bear!

JOAN

I don't know, Helen! I'm supposed to be practicing here.

HELEN

Excuse me. What did you just say?

MOTHER

Where's Jack?

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - EVENING

Mother looks worried as she walks around the property.

MOTHER

Jack! Jack!

Mother sees Alain with the horses on the manure spreader in the south field. Kenny is even further out with the tractor. She heads down the lane between the barns.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Jack?

She peers into Bruno's empty den and panics.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Jack, where are you? Jack!

EXT. BACK LANE - DAVIDSON'S FARM - EVENING

With the sun setting behind them, Jack and Bruno walk back from the creek. Jack's fishing pole is over one shoulder and a pike, smaller than his first catch, hangs from a string.

JACK  
You sure like eating fish, Bruno.  
We'll have to do that again  
tomorrow.

Bruno watches with interest as a flock of CANADA GEESE flies overhead, HONKING.

JACK (CONT'D)  
They're flying south, Bruno. That  
means winter's coming soon.

MOTHER (O.S.)  
Jack!

Ahead, Jack sees Mother is on the laneway beside the silo.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Dear God, Jack. What in heavens  
are you doing with that bear?

JACK  
(to Bruno)  
I think Mother's angry, Bruno.

MOTHER  
Get here now!

JACK  
Look, I caught a pike. Actually, I  
caught three but Bruno ate the  
others...

Mother reaches Jack, grabs his arm and drags him back.

MOTHER  
Don't you know how dangerous this  
is?

JACK  
What? I didn't go in the water.



Bruno shies away from Mother as they continue home. They reach the barns and Bruno's shed. Mother opens the door.

MOTHER

Inside, Bruno. In your Den. Now!

Bruno scampers inside and mother slams the door behind him.

JACK

Mother...

MOTHER

Give me that fish.

Jack hands the stringed Pike to his mother.

JACK

Can you fry that for my breakfast tomorrow?

MOTHER

I'm finishing up with dinner now. I want you to go to the willow tree and pick yourself a switch.

JACK

What?

MOTHER

Take a branch from the willow tree and be on the porch in five minutes.

JACK

What did I do?

MOTHER

You are to never ever be alone with the bear, Jack.

Mother lets go of Jack's arm and she goes to the house. Jack reluctantly heads across the yard to the large willow tree and looks over the branches. Tears swell as he chooses a small branch and snaps it from the tree.

EXT. PORCH - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE (MINUTES LATER)

Jack stands at the foot of the porch steps with a willow branch. Mother comes out of the house and down the steps.

MOTHER

Give me that switch, Jack.

Jack hands it over to Mother.

MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Now, turn around.

Jack slowly turns. Mother whips Jack with the willow branch twice.

JACK  
Ouch! Ouch!

The third whipping hits Jack on the flesh just below his shorts and he SCREAMS in pain.

MOTHER  
Up to your room until dinner, Jack.  
I want you to think about the  
danger you put yourself in.

Jack runs into the house in tears.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
I don't know what was worse. The  
pain of being whipped or just the  
anticipation of it. Maybe the  
worst part of it was my shame and  
confusion. I had just turned seven  
at the time. You know?  
Apparently, Mother cried over that,  
too.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Eric takes a moment to stretch.

ERIC  
That's rough. But at least she was  
paying more attention to you.

GRAMPA JACK  
I suppose she was frightened of  
losing me. I mean, there were  
already a few close calls by then.

CUT TO:

EXT. DRIVE IN THEATRE - NIGHT

The lot is full as the movie "Spellbound" plays.

INT. HUGH'S DODGE - NIGHT

Kenny and Beverly sit with popcorn and sodas. There's some commotion in a nearby Buick Century sedan ahead of them where four TEENS - two couples - are in and out of the car, throwing popcorn at each other, LAUGHING and YELLING.

BEVERLY

They're quite a distraction.

KENNY

Want me to go and pound some sense into them?

BEVERLY

That's not a good idea, Kenny.

A beer bottle falls from the Buick's back seat when a GIRL in a blue skirt opens the door to change places with her friend.

KENNY

Suit yerself.

BEVERLY

That girl there is my friend Michelle's younger sister. She's always in some trouble, that one.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Mother, Helen and Elizabeth sit at the kitchen table.

HELEN

Wonderful news. Your due in May?

ELIZABETH

Yes.

HELEN

Mother, you're going to be a grandmother!

Mother LAUGHS warmly. Meanwhile...

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE

Hugh lights his pipe as Moodie smokes from a new cigar. Donald has a cigarette lit.

MOODIE

I'm sorry to be interrupting such a special occasion...but here's to Donald and Elizabeth and their future child.

DONALD

Oh, that's alright, Mr. Moodie. I'm sure you're always welcome.

Hugh nods, as if to himself.

MOODIE

Well, I just wanted to catch you and your father together. I've expressed interest in taking the bear off your hands.

DONALD

Dad was saying. We're looking for a good home for him.

MOODIE

Yes. Well, as I said, I'd like to help you out.

INT. HUGH'S DODGE (MOVING) - NIGHT

Kenny and Beverly ride along Richmond Road. Behind, at a distance, headlights follow and are gaining quickly.

BEVERLY

Eleven children! You're sure you're not Catholic?

KENNY

Dad's just an old horn dog. Too many nights I'd wake up to their bed springs squeaking away.

BEVERLY

Your parents are in love!

KENNY

Sometimes I think he was just breeding his own farm hands for cheap labor.

The speeding Buick Century races past them, tapping its HORN.

BEVERLY

Wow. They're in a hurry.

KENNY

That's the same car from the drive-in. They're moving.

Kenny accelerates.

BEVERLY

What are you doing?

KENNY

Maybe they want to race.

BEVERLY

Kenny, if you race after them this date is over.

Kenny eases off the gas.

KENNY

Sure thing, Bev.

BEVERLY

The road is so much smoother now that it's paved. But the cars are driving so much faster.

KENNY

I guess that's progress.

BEVERLY

Speaking of progress. Have you seen all the homes going up on the edge of the city. Suburbia they're calling it.

KENNY

I haven't been to the city lately.

BEVERLY

Well, it seems the city is coming out to the country. A whole bunch of new streets are spreading out with little houses that all look the same. They're building as far out as Bayshore.

KENNY

You don't say.

BEVERLY

Because of everyone coming back from the war.

KENNY

Donald and his wife just moved into one of those. They can have it. I prefer the country.

BEVERLY

Oh! Wait. What's that up there in the field?

They reach a sharp curve that bends to the left where headlights shine low to the ground from a field on the right.

BEVERLY (CONT'D)

Why are there lights...

KENNY

I don't know.

Kenny pulls the car over onto the dark shoulder.

KENNY (CONT'D)

Stay here, Beverly.

BEVERLY

Is that a car?

Kenny jumps down the ditch and stumbles over a downed wire fence before getting to the turned over Buick Century. He looks inside to see three obviously dead Teens.

KENNY

Ah no.

He steps back and trips, landing in the grass on his back as Beverly opens her door to step out.

BEVERLY

Is everything alright?

Kenny gets to his knee when he sees that he's fallen over the body of a young woman. She's wearing a blue skirt. He grabs her by the hair, lifting her face into the headlight.

KENNY

Jesus Christ. Stay there, Bev.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

For years after that, they called that turn in the road "Dead Man's Curve." It was a sharp turn when the road was gravel.

(MORE)

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 After it was paved, a number of cars crashed there. Eventually, they moved the road to make it less dangerous.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Eric and Grampa Jack sit.

ERIC  
 That's really sad, Grampa.

GRAMPA JACK  
 You know who was driving was Moodie's nephew.

ERIC  
 You're kidding.

GRAMPA JACK  
 And, meanwhile, Moodie is at our place just down the road, visiting. Trying to make a deal to take the bear. Shit hit the fan that night.

ERIC  
 That's rough.

GRAMPA JACK  
 That's life, sometimes.

CUT TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

A CARD reads: JUNE, 1943

Numerous cars are parked on the property where, under an oppressive and threatening sky, Jack (who's even smaller at only 4 years of age) kicks a ball around on the lawn between the house and the large barn with sister Joan, who's six.

JOAN  
 You can't stop this one!

Joan kicks as hard as she can and the ball hits the fender of a Studebaker, marking it. Jack runs over to the car, noting the shallow dent, then looks back at his sister.

JACK  
You put a dent in it.

JOAN  
No I didn't.

JACK  
Yes you did.

JOAN  
That mark was already there, Jack.

JACK  
I'm telling.

Lightning strikes on the horizon.

JOAN  
You better not, Jack. I'll say it was you.

JACK  
But...

JOAN  
I'm dead serious, Jack.

Large droplets of rain start to fall.

JACK  
Okay, okay. Ugh! We better go inside.

He picks up the ball as the rain quickly intensifies.

JOAN  
But I don't want to go inside.

JACK  
Neither do I.

Helen is on the porch.

HELEN  
Get out of the rain, you two!

Joan heads back to the house. Jack follows hesitantly. The door closes after Joan, who's gone inside. Helen is still on the porch with Keith and an older sister Audrey, who's 21.

AUDREY  
You got your nice dress shirt soaked, Jack. Maybe you should get changed before Mother sees you.



JACK  
Okay, Audrey.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE

Wet with rain, Jack enters to the MURMUR of numerous speaking ADULTS (dressed in mostly dark clothes.) Some give Jack a sympathetic glance. Brother GORDON, 22, talks with a FAMILY FRIEND in his forties.

FAMILY FRIEND  
So, where is it you're working now?

GORDON  
I'm in sales at Ogilvie's.

FAMILY FRIEND  
Oh yeah? That's a good outfit.  
How do you like it?

Gordon spots Jack passing.

GORDON  
Well, there's my youngest brother.  
How are you doing, Jack?

JACK  
I'm okay, Gordon.

FAMILY FRIEND  
Hello, Jack. Look at you. You're definitely bigger than last time I saw you.

FAMILY FRIEND (CONT'D)  
So, he'd be the youngest now.

GORDON  
Uh, yeah. Jack's now the youngest.

JACK  
I better change my shirt.

FAMILY FRIEND  
Fine boy. So, Ogilvie's. The commission is really pretty great, I hear...

Jack continues into...

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

...the crowd where at least a dozen people stand while a grieving Mother and Dad sit on a couch together.

Jack looks around the room, then towards the TINY COFFIN sitting on the table in the adjacent dining room. Jack stares for a long moment. On the table are several framed PHOTOGRAPHS of a two-year old girl. The photo beside it is one taken in front of the house with the entire family, when the girl was an infant in Mother's arms. Mother stands beside Hugh. Jack, only about two years old in the photo, stands front and center. Donald, Gordon, Eldon, Audrey, Hazel, Kenny, Helen, Keith and Joan are also in the photo.

Jack returns his stare to the coffin.

END FLASHBACK

CUT TO:

INT. RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Grampa Jack sits quietly in his chair, tears on his cheek.

ERIC (O.S.)

Grampa?

Eric taps Grampa Jack on his arm.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Grampa? You alright?

Grampa Jack comes out of his stupor.

GRAMPA JACK

Oh. Sorry. I was just thinking I barely knew half my siblings. Four of them were already married and gone before I was five years old.

ERIC

I can't relate.

GRAMPA JACK

Nothing wrong being a only child, Eric. Despite all my brothers and sisters, I often felt all alone. Everything is okay, Eric. But sometimes in life, bad things happen.

ERIC  
I know, Grampa.

GRAMPA JACK  
Of course you do.

CUT TO:

EXT. ORANGE ORDER CLUB BUILDING - NIGHT

Hugh arrives in his car. He's dressed for the cold rain as he enters the building.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
That boy who was sick with  
hydrocephalus died in his sleep a  
couple weeks later.

INT. ORANGE ORDER CLUB BUILDING - NIGHT

Moodie spots Hugh as soon as he walks into the crowded hall.

MOODIE  
Tragic, tragic news, isn't it,  
Hugh.

HUGH  
Bill Armstrong?

MOODIE  
I meant my nephew.

HUGH  
Oh.

MOODIE  
The law is hounding him over that  
crash.

HUGH  
Sorry to hear.

MOODIE  
Yeah. Well, I've been pulling some  
strings with the commission and,  
uh...yeah, it's a shame about Bill  
too. Muldoon found him in the  
barn. Hanged himself. Just days  
after he lost his boy.

HUGH  
I'm just sick about it.

MOODIE

Terrible. Terrible. God damn shame. But you know, with a son as ill as his boy was, you'd think it would have lessened the burden on Bill. You'd think he would be relieved. I don't understand it. And then those kids in the car. Now there's even talk of a lawsuit against the township because of that curve in the road.

HUGH

Save that for the next council meeting. I don't want to think about that right now.

MOODIE

Well, at least, I suppose the Armstrong property will be up for sale before long. Fifty acres of land and a...

HUGH

Not now.

Hugh goes to step away from Moodie toward a group of ORANGEMEN who await to greet him.

MOODIE

Yes, I suppose. Say, Hugh. What was the name of that disease Bill's son had?

HUGH

Hydrocephalus.

MOODIE

Hydrocephalus...yes. Poor boy.

HUGH

And his name was Jack.

MOODIE

Of course. Same as your boy.  
(BEAT) Before we call the meeting, Hugh. Has Donald given any more thought about that bear?

HUGH

The bear worries me. Frankly, I don't care what you do with it.

(MORE)

HUGH (CONT'D)

But, if you've got a good place for it, Donald will be happy to let it go too.

MOODIE

Well, then that's some good news at least.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

With a Scotch and water in hand, Hugh sits listening to the news on the RADIO when Jack comes downstairs in his PJ's.

HUGH

What are you still doing up?

JACK

I had a bad dream.

HUGH

Oh? What about?

JACK

I can't remember now. Why are you sad?

HUGH

Sad? What makes you say that?

JACK

Are you crying, Dad?

Hugh wipes his face with one hand.

HUGH

Me? No. I'm just tired, Jack. Are you ready for school in the morning?

JACK

I think so.

HUGH

Alright. Then off to bed.

EXT. CATTLE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM - MORNING

Hugh opens the gate and enters the field where the cattle graze. He goes to the aluminum trough, puts his hand in the cold water, then takes a sip and a sniff from his palm. He pumps the well and several gallons flow into the trough as a curious cow approaches him.

HUGH  
What do you think, Suzie?

The cow, of course, only stands there. Hugh pets the side of her face.

HUGH (CONT'D)  
Why are you girls not drinking  
from...

Hugh looks down into the trough. At the bottom near the far end, are a pair of dark-framed GLASSES with tape on one arm. Hugh reaches in and grabs the glasses. He recognizes them.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Hugh approaches Mother, who HUMS and SINGS quietly to herself as she sits at a "Raymond M'F'G' Co. Limited" sewing machine table, mending a skirt not far from the roaring fireplace.

HUGH  
It's been too long since I've heard  
you singing like that.

MOTHER  
(laughing)  
Oh, was I?

HUGH  
I've missed that.

MOTHER  
I guess I might be feeling more  
like my old self.

HUGH  
I've noticed.

MOTHER  
I don't know how Helen tore her  
skirt this way.

HUGH  
Our children sure know how to keep  
you busy, Mother.

MOTHER  
And I love all of them for that.

HUGH  
Maybe it's time for a break. What  
do you say we go to dinner tonight?  
Just the two of us.

MOTHER  
But the kids...

HUGH  
There's a new restaurant in the city I've been hearing about from some of the guys at the Lodge.

MOTHER  
I've got lots of leftovers to get through.

HUGH  
Then Helen will have something to cook for the boys.

Hugh sets Keith's old pair of glasses on the sewing table.

HUGH (CONT'D)  
Can you mend these?

MOTHER  
Keith's glasses. Where did you find them?

HUGH  
You'll never guess. So, dinner tonight?

Hugh bends over and kisses Mother on the cheek. She turns, taking his face between her hands and kissing Hugh several times, LAUGHING in between.

EXT. RICHMOND ROAD - DAY

A light dusting of snow covers the ground. Kenny takes the tractor down the road, towing a wagon full of hay bails. Several cars pass him. He sips from a HIP FLASK and winces. Where Richmond Road comes very close to the river, the tractor hits a patch of ice.

KENNY  
Oh shit. No you don't!

Kenny drops the flask as he struggles with the steering and the brakes. The weight of the wagon pushes the tractor forward as it dog-legs then slides off the road's shoulder, down the slope into the freezing water. The tractor and wagon crack through the ice and tip as they submerge. Kenny goes under water before coming up with a SCREAM of pain.

KENNY (CONT'D)  
Jesus Fucking Christ!

Among the chunks of ice, Kenny pulls himself toward shore. Dripping blood, his right index finger hangs by the skin.

ERIC (V.O.)  
So that's what happened to Kenny's  
finger.

Kenny fights his way up the icy bank as a car approaches.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Kenny was lucky he was able to get  
out. It happened that a neighbor  
came along by the time he got back  
on the road. But he nearly froze.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - MORNING

Kenny is laid up on the couch with a cast on his right arm and his hand bandaged when Beverly enters.

KENNY  
There she is!

BEVERLY  
Kenny. Are you alright?

KENNY  
Besides the broken arm and one  
missing finger, right as rain.

BEVERLY  
You lost a finger?

KENNY  
Most of it.

He raises his bandaged hand for her.

BEVERLY  
Oh, Kenny. That's awful.

KENNY  
I'll be in good enough shape to  
take you out next Saturday.

BEVERLY  
Yeah, um...about that...

KENNY  
About what?

BEVERLY  
Were you drinking, Kenny?



KENNY

No. I was taking a load of hay  
over to the Smith's place.

BEVERLY

It's just that I heard...

KENNY

Just a swig of rye to keep warm.

BEVERLY

If you want to keep dating me,  
Kenny, then you'll have to do it  
completely sober. After what  
happened, there's no way I could  
ever face Cindy or her family with  
a drink in my hand.

KENNY

Well, I don't think there's a...

BEVERLY

I'm serious, Kenny. And just look  
what's happened to you.

KENNY

Let me just...uh...

BEVERLY

I'm going into work now.

KENNY

Okay...

BEVERLY

I'll let you think about it, Kenny.

Beverly exits. Kenny looks over the place on his hand where  
his finger is missing.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

You know, that was the last time my  
brother Kenny ever took a drink.

KENNY

Shit.

INT. CATTLE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM - NIGHT

With a lantern, Keith comes down the steps of the cattle barn  
where the cows wait to be milked. There's some commotion in  
the shadows at the far end.

KEITH  
Who's there?

Some RUSTLING in the dark.

KEITH (CONT'D)  
Hello.

HELEN (O.S.)  
It's okay, Keith. Stay over  
there...

Keith lifts his lantern and approaches to find Helen and Alain frantically pulling on their sweaters. Keith, wearing his new glasses (which already have tape on the brim) stares angrily at Alain for a long moment.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
It was about that time when Alain,  
our hired hand, left suddenly.

INT. BRUNO'S SHED - DAY

Donald arrives and opens the door as Bruno wakes from his slumber. The bear watches Donald wearily before recognizing him. Suddenly, he's up, looking happy and excited.

DONALD  
Bruno, I've missed you.

Bruno exits the shed, stands, wraps his "arm" over Donald's shoulder like good buddies.

DONALD (CONT'D)  
We're going for a ride, Bruno.

EXT. DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Donald loads Bruno into his panel truck, now painted with a logo "DeeDee's Refrigeration and Cooling."

EXT. MOODIE'S HOUSE - RICHMOND - DAY

Donald's panel truck is parked in the driveway in front of the large home. Donald lets Bruno out from the back of the truck. Moodie exits from his front door. Bruno immediately takes a scat on the lawn.

DONALD  
Bruno!

MOODIE  
Bears will be bears, Donald.

DONALD  
Sorry about that, Mr. Moodie.

MOODIE  
Better on the lawn than in my garage.

DONALD  
Is that where you'll...

MOODIE  
That's where he'll be sleeping tonight.

DONALD  
I can take the bear back to Dad's until tomorrow if it...

MOODIE  
Nonsense. My partners will pick him up before first light tomorrow. They've got a beautiful property up near Algonquin Park. It's quite the sanctuary. You'll have to go up that way for a visit, once he's settled in.

DONALD  
Sounds great.

MOODIE  
He'll be just fine here tonight, Donald. Besides, I know how busy you are with your new business and wife. How's married life treating you, by the way?

DONALD  
Just fine, thanks. My wife's starting to show.

MOODIE  
Congratulations.

Donald reaches into the truck, grabs Bruno's Teddy Bear.

DONALD  
This will help settle him down.

MOODIE  
You've got to be kidding.

He sees that Donald is not kidding.

MOODIE (CONT'D)

(amused)

Well, what do you know? The bear has a teddy bear. (BEAT) I have some money for you, Donald my boy. Now, I know we agreed on a price but your father owes me for some car damage, so I was thinking...

DONALD

I'll let you figure that out with Dad. I don't need any money. Just as long as Bruno's got a happy home.

MOODIE

It's a real bear heaven. Now, let's get Bruno off my front lawn before the neighbors get startled.

Donald pulls on Bruno's chain.

DONALD

Let's go, Bruno.

Bruno seems apprehensive and pulls back. Donald grabs an Oh Henry! from his pocket.

DONALD (CONT'D)

It's okay, boy. You'll get a treat.

Bruno follows wearily, if not anxiously.

INT. KITCHEN - DAVIDSON'S FARMHOUSE - DAY

Jack enters, dropping his schoolbag at the door.

JACK

Mother!

MOTHER

Yes, Jack.

JACK

Where? Where's Bruno?

MOTHER

Donald took him away this morning.

JACK  
Took him away? What do you mean?

MOTHER  
Mr. Moodie bought him.

JACK  
No! But why?

MOTHER  
He didn't say. Look, Jack. It's far too dangerous to have a bear living here with us...

JACK  
But I love Bruno. He's only been very gentle with...

MOTHER  
I'm sorry, Jack. Bruno was as sweet as any bear could be.

JACK  
Then why is he gone?

Jack is in tears as he runs up to his room.

INT. MOODIE'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Obviously upset, Bruno WHIMPERS and GROWLS as he moves about the dark, confined space. He scratches at the back entrance door. Pushes at it. He paces back and forth before lying on the blanket that is meant to be his bed.

INT. MOODIE'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Moodie sits across the large table from his wife, BEATRICE. They both can hear the SOUNDS of Bruno's protest from the garage. Moodie ignores it, reading at his paper as he spoons from a bowl of soup.

BEATRICE  
That poor bear.

MOODIE  
Now, Beatrice. It's just a wild animal.

BEATRICE  
I wonder if he's hungry or if it's warm enough in the...

MOODIE

Now, don't be getting all sentimental on me. What does any of that matter now?

Moodie points to a hanging plaque, a gift from the Embassy.

MOODIE (CONT'D)

That bear gets us a table for New Years Dinner with the American Embassy. You remember who was there last year.

BEATRICE

Yes, dear. The moose did go over well. (BEAT) Do we really have to keep that poor bear here tonight? Could Mr. Davidson not have delivered it to the butcher himself?

MOODIE

Last year's moose got me a plaque of recognition, but more importantly it got me rubbing elbows with some of the more powerful folk downtown. So, drop it about that bear.

Beatrice returns to her soup.

EXT. BACK VERANDA - MOODIE'S HOME - NIGHT

Hearing the SOUNDS of the DISTRESSED BEAR, Moodie exits through a sliding patio door (not closing it fully behind him) into the dark. He marches over to the back of the home's garage.

INT. MOODIE'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Moodie opens the back door to the garage and hits the light. Bruno stops his destruction and sits with a nervous YAWN before PANTING heavily. Garbage is all over the floor.

MOODIE

You son of a bitch!

Moodie spots a baseball bat. He grips it and slams the bat against the wall with a BOOM!

Bruno flinches.

MOODIE (CONT'D)

Look at the damn mess you've made.

Moodie swings the bat harder against the wall. Bruno panics and looks desperately for an escape. He goes to the far side of the garage, then scampers to a corner behind a work bench.

MOODIE (CONT'D)

I should shoot you myself!

Moodie goes toward Bruno, who crouches in the corner. He gives the bear a hit in the ass with the bat. Suddenly, Bruno is up on his hind legs and GROWLING with anger and pain. He pushes past Moodie, knocking him to the ground...

MOODIE (CONT'D)

Hey! You god damned bear...

...and running out into the cool night.

EXT. BACK VERANDA - MOODIE'S HOME

Bruno scampers along the side of the house. He reacts to warmth from the slightly open patio door. He stops and sticks his nose in through the crack while Moodie YELLS from the garage. Bruno bursts through the door, into the home.

INT. MAIN FLOOR - MOODIE'S HOME

Bruno runs through the house, past a stone fireplace where a MOOSEHEAD hangs. Chairs get knocked over. He's up and over a sofa, tipping it as Moodie enters.

Moodie spots his RIFLE on the gunrack hanging from a wall. He drops his bat and reaches for the gun. Moodie chases after Bruno through every room on the floor before Moodie hits the bear in his paw with the butt of the rifle. Bruno YELPS then rips along the hardwood floors and is up the stairs to the second floor. Moodie gives chase.

INT. MOODIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bruno charges into the room. Beatrice SCREAMS as Bruno dives under the bed. The bed frame lifts and CLUNKS against the wall and floor as he digs himself deeper underneath. Moodie enters as the mattress is thrust upwards, tossing Beatrice up and off, onto the floor.

BEATRICE

(screaming)

Oh my God! Help me! Help!

Beatrice crawls out of the way as Moodie takes aim.

An iPhone ALARM sounds.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME

Eric reaches for his phone, silencing the alarm.

GRAMPA JACK

You got to go.

ERIC

Yeah. Pretty soon, Grampa. Let me just order a ride.

Eric texts into his phone.

GRAMPA JACK

How long have you got?

ERIC

Uh...it says five minutes.

GRAMPA JACK

Okay.

ERIC

That's quite the story, Grampa. Did he shoot the bear?

GRAMPA JACK

Well...I'll cut it short.

ERIC

What happened?

GRAMPA JACK

I didn't hear for years how some of that played out.

EXT. HIGHWAY - ALONG THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER - DAY

Donald and Elizabeth ride in the front seat of Donald's '55 Convertible with their son HUGHIE, who's ten, between them.



GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
Every year after that, on Mother's  
Day weekend, Donald and Elizabeth  
would take me down to the Ganonoque  
Zoo. They had a son, and named him  
after my father.

Jack and Mary, now 18, ride in the back seat, holding hands.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)  
By then, I was dating your  
Grandmother Mary.

ERIC (V.O.)  
The same Mary?

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Eric pulls on his windbreaker.

GRAMPA JACK  
If it hadn't been for that bear,  
well...I guess you wouldn't be here  
now.

Eric PAUSES to reflect.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - GANANOQUE ZOO - DAY

Parked, the five climb out of the car.

EXT. BEAR ENCLOSURE - ZOO - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

Donald, Elizabeth, Jack, Mary and young Hugh stop in front of  
the Bear enclosure.

HUGHIE  
Is that him, Dad? Is that Bruno?

Hughie points to an obviously very old bear, which pays them  
no attention.

DONALD  
Uh...no, Hughie. I don't think  
that's him.

Several smaller cubs play about in the yard, up on logs, climbing a tree, chasing and jumping on each other. A full-grown bear at the far end of the enclosure lifts its head and SNIFFS. He gets up, saunters toward the fence.

JACK

Bruno?

DONALD

There he is.

Bruno moves faster as he approaches.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

We'd go see that bear every year  
and I swear he'd recognize me each  
time we visited.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Eric offers a hand to his Grampa Jack who takes it to help pull himself out of the armchair. Grampa Jack reaches into his back pocket, producing his wallet. He fumbles through it and pulls out several twenties.

ERIC

Grampa, I don't need any...

GRAMPA JACK

Here. Take this.

Grampa tucks the cash into the breast pocket of Eric's windbreaker.

ERIC

Thanks Grampa.

Eric pics up his backpack, and they walk to the lobby door. They reach the doors as a Toyota rolls up to the front.

ERIC (CONT'D)

That's my ride, Grampa.

GRAMPA JACK

Safe flight, Eric. And all the  
best to you. Be careful up in the  
mountains.

ERIC

Thanks. I love you, Grampa.

Eric sets down his backpack and throws his arms around Grampa Jack. Grampa awkwardly hugs him back.

EXT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

A light rain falls as Eric climbs into the Toyota's back seat. He waves once more at Grampa Jack, who's just inside the lobby doors.

INT. TOYOTA (MOVING) - DAY

Eric sits in the back seat of the Uber as it rolls down the lane of the Grandview Retirement Home.

ERIC  
To the airport, please.

Eric fights his tears and forces a smile.

EXT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The Toyota rolls past a remnant of an old stone fence at the edge of the property. There's a plaque on the fence. The car turns onto the street.

TRACKING CLOSER TO THE PLAQUE

It reads: Grandview Retirement Home

INT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

Grampa Jack appears sullen as he hobbles through the main room of the building where he meets the Nurse.

NURSE  
How are you doing, John?

GRAMPA JACK  
I just said goodbye to my grandson.  
Maybe I better get back to my room  
for a short nap.

NURSE  
I'll walk you to your room.

INT. HALLWAY - GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME (MOMENTS LATER)

They slowly make their way toward Grampa Jack's room.

GRAMPA JACK

You know my wife was a nurse for  
forty-two years.

NURSE

Yes, you've said. That's amazing.  
I bet she'd be so proud to see her  
grandson now.

GRAMPA JACK

And so would his Dad.

NURSE

Yes. Eric is a lovely young man.

GRAMPA JACK

You know, I couldn't bring myself  
to tell him the end of the story of  
Bruno.

NURSE

The bear? How did that end, John?

INT. MOODIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bruno is under the bed, facing Moodie. They stare at each  
other before Moodie squeezes the trigger...

GRAMPA JACK

Oh, it's not a very happy ending  
for Bruno.

EXT. AMERICAN EMBASSY - WELLINGTON STREET - OTTAWA - NIGHT

A Card Reads:

NEW YEAR'S DAY DINNER 1946

A light snow falls on the city as people walk the sidewalks  
across from Parliament Hill. A number of well-dressed people  
arrive at the doors of the embassy. A PASSERBY pulls her  
HUSBAND closer to whisper in his ear.

PASSERBY

Isn't that the Governor General?

PASSERBY'S HUSBAND

Yes, Darling. Looks like I see our  
member of parliament as well.

INT. DINNER HALL - AMERICAN EMBASSY - OTTAWA - NIGHT

At least a hundred POLITICIANS and various high ranking GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS and their SPOUSES gather at the formal event in a room with SERVANTS circulating with trays of drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Each with a glass of champagne, Moodie stands alongside Beatrice (who's got a cast on her arm) as he makes small talk with a MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

MOODIE

Like I said, as Reeve I can really be of help getting the community behind that.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Mister Moodie, that would be excellent. I'll have someone send over my proposal later this week.

MOODIE

That a boy!

The Member of Parliament is a little taken aback.

MOODIE (CONT'D)

I mean, great news. Because I want to talk to you more about bringing in a sewage system and...

The American AMBASSADOR To Canada is at one end of the room, tapping his champagne glass with a knife.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

That all sounds very interesting. Let's keep business to business hours, shall we?

MOODIE

Uh, yes. Of course.

The crowd turns to face their host.

AMBASSADOR

Your attention, everyone....Welcome to 1946 everyone.

There's some APPLAUSE and CHEERS.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

Thank you for coming out to our annual dinner party.

Some polite LAUGHTER.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

This year is extra special. Our two nations have much to celebrate, with the end of war and the acknowledgement of the tremendous sacrifices and accomplishments both countries endured and undertook.

Some APPLAUSE.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

You'll be pleased, I'm sure, to hear that dinner has once again been donated by one of Ottawa's most engaged and effective local politicians. And, I'm told, he hunted it himself.

Some eyes turn towards Moodie.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

And not to be outdone by last year's dinner, which was cooked so expertly by our chef Luc Giroux...

The crowd MURMURS with some excitement.

AMBASSADOR (CONT'D)

For any of you that can recall last year's roast moose, I'm sure you're as excited as I am about what has been prepared for you tonight. Now, before I ask you to proceed into the dining hall, please join me in a toast...

INT. DINING HALL - AMERICAN EMBASSY - NIGHT (HALF HOUR LATER)

Waiters bring wine and deliver plates of red meat served with potatoes and other vegetables.

INT. KITCHEN - AMERICAN EMBASSY - NIGHT

The chef grimaces, looking upset if not completely angry and embarrassed as he argues with his KITCHEN STAFF.

INT. DINING HALL - AMERICAN EMBASSY - NIGHT

Many of the Diners appear to be having trouble enjoying their meals. The meat, in particular.

GRAMPA JACK (V.O.)

That was the last time old Moodie was invited to dinner at the American Embassy. The bear tasted terrible and the meat was far too fatty, what the chef could use of it. It seems Bruno didn't taste all that good on account of all the candy bars he'd been eating over the years.

CUT TO:

INT. CATTLE BARN - DAVIDSON'S FARM - DAY

Jack enters to see Hugh and Donald arguing. Donald is on the verge of tears. Unseen, he watches from a distance.

DONALD

You son of a bitch, Hugh! You knew Moodie would destroy that bear.

HUGH

Donald, I'm sorry. Please forgive me.

DONALD

Jesus Christ. I can't believe you knew.

HUGH

Bruno was just too dangerous to have here on the farm, Donald. We've already had a couple close calls with him. Dammit, we already lost Anne. What if it was Joan or Jack next?

Jack approaches.

JACK

What happened to Bruno?

DONALD

I failed him, again.

INT. HALLWAY - GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - PRESENT DAY

Grampa Jack and the Nurse stop outside his room.

NURSE

That's fucked up, John.

GRAMPA JACK

You said it. Like a lot of important souls in my life, I never got to say goodbye to Bruno.

CUT TO:

EXT. GANANOQUE ZOO - DAY

Jack and Mary stand close together, watching the bears in their enclosure. They focus on the largest adult, which they've decided is Bruno. Donald approaches.

DONALD

I'd recognize that bear anywhere.

Young Hugh runs excitedly around the enclosure's perimeter. Jack and Mary hold hands.

MARY

That's definitely Bruno.

The bear is close, but has stopped paying much attention.

JACK

Bruno!

FADE OUT

CUT TO:

INT. GRAMPA JACK'S ROOM - GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME

Grampa Jack sits on the edge of his bed. He looks at PHOTOS on the shelves and on the walls of his room, where there are a dozen framed images of his family.

CUT TO:

CLOSE UP ON PHOTOGRAPHS

There's a small black and white picture of Jack as a kid, posing with his eldest brother Donald by the stone fence in the yard at Fallowfield.

A larger black and white is of John and Mary slicing a cake at their wedding, 1962.

A color photo of John and Mary with their TODDLER in front of a Christmas tree at their home, 1969.



A photo of the family, now with two BOYS that look five and three, standing in front of a new 1975 Glastron Bowrider, which sits on a trailer beside a lake.

Two separate graduation photos of two eighteen year old boys.

A photo of Grampa Jack with Gramma Mary, their two grown sons and their wives and three Grandchildren. Two Boys and a Girl at a cottage. A beagle and an Australian Sheppard beside.

CUT TO:

INT. GRAMPA JACK'S ROOM

A picture of Eric as a Toddler sitting in a on Muskoka Chair on his Father's lap. Grampa Jack lifts this picture from the shelf and stares at it for a long time. He SIGHS.

FADE OUT

EXT. GRANDVIEW RETIREMENT HOME - DAY

The rain stops outside the building where the old stone fence rests with its plaque, dedicated to the Davidson Family.

CUT TO:

CLIMBING/WIDENING SHOT

As we slowly climb high above the property, over the trees and the roof of the retirement home, time begins to roll backward. The building disappears. Some of the trees disappear, while others shrink. Side streets evaporate and surrounding buildings are gone. Time rolls back and Richmond road is once again gravel.

The lone stone fence runs perpendicular to a gravel laneway to a farmhouse and barns. Again, it appears to be the autumn of 1945.

END