

SCRIPT TITLE

Written by

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"SODA FOUNTAIN: December 7, 1942"

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FADE IN:

INT. DRUG STORE - SODA FOUNTAIN - DAY

A typical American soda fountain.

Six customers sit at the counter.

A soda jerk is about to make a fountain drink.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Two squirts of cherry syrup go into a fountain glass.

Soda water fills the glass.

A spoon stirs the glass.

A hand affixes a wedge of lime to the rim of the glass.

BACK TO SCENE

JIMMY COLLINS, soda jerk, a gangly junior, sets the drink in front of BENJAMIN "BENNIE" BEAN, a sophomore, short, bright, with glasses.

JIMMY

One cherry phosphate.

BENNIE

You're fast, Jimmy.

JIMMY

Y'make fifty of these a day you'll
be fast too.

Down the counter four juniors sprawl on stools in various postures of teen impudence and persiflage.

CHARLENE MARSH, intelligent and overweight, slowly takes down a banana split.

LINDA LEE, pretty, and JENNY BLACK, with eyes only for Jimmy, have just sat down at the counter and wait for Jimmy to finish with Bennie.

Further down STEVE EVERT slowly eats a single scoop of chocolate ice cream in small bites.

At the opposite end of the counter a SOLDIER, 25, in uniform works on a malt.

INT. DRUG STORE - DOOR - DAY

Seniors JEFF BENNETT, thin and a bit odd, and BRUCE SMITH, big and gruff, enter the drug store.

INT. SODA FOUNTAIN - DAY

They come over to the three girls.

BRUCE
Hi-di-ho, girls.

JEFF
What's buzzin', cousin?

Bruce gets close with Linda.

BRUCE
Hi, sugar, are you rationed?

The junior girls enjoy the attention from the senior boys.

The boys go to join Steve.

Charlene puts a spoonful of ice cream into her mouth.

CHARLENE
Mr. Potz give you a percentage of what the fountain brings in beside your forty cents an hour?

JIMMY
Would have a car if he did.

BRUCE
Won't get far on three gallons a week.

LINDA
Make me a Suicide, Jimmy.

JIMMY
Can only make a large on accounta all the syrups.

LINDA
You drink it with me, Jenny?

Jenny's not hearing her because she's following Jimmy's every move behind the counter.

LINDA (CONT'D)
(whispering to Jenny)
You're so much in love you make me
sick!

JENNY
I'll drink it with you.
(pause)
Will you drink it with us, Jimmy?

JIMMY
Mr. Potz gets sore if I eat or
drink anything when I'm working.

SERIES OF SHOTS

A squirt from each of the syrup dispensers goes into a large
fountain glass.

Soda water fills the glass.

A spoon stirs the drink.

BACK TO SCENE

Jimmy sets the glass in front of the two girls.

He leans on the counter.

Linda sips the drink and nods her head in approval.

JENNY
Are you going to the game Friday?

JIMMY
I reckon.

LINDA
We don't stand a chance against
Fall River.

JIMMY
Depends on Bobby Billings.

CHARLENE
Fat chance. He was still on
crutches today.

JENNY
Would you sit with me at the game?

Linda is surprised by Jenny's forwardness.

JIMMY
I guess I could. If you want.

JENNY
Oh, I do want you to, Jimmy!

INT. DRUG STORE - DOOR - DAY

GINGER BAXTER, a pretty red-headed senior, comes into the drug store.

The way Steve, Jeff, and Bruce react when they see her makes clear that she is the class hottie.

STEVE
(Bogart in Casablanca)
Of all the soda fountains in the world, she had to walk into mine.

Jeff stands and gestures in the direction of Ginger.

JEFF
(Cagney in Yankee Doodle Dandy)
Our mothers thank you, our fathers thank you, our sisters thank you, and we thank you.

INT. SODA FOUNTAIN - DAY

Ginger slips onto a stool, ignoring her admirers.

Jenny goggles Jimmy.

She sees his Adam's apple move and his body tense up.

BACK TO SCENE

She looks down the counter derisively at Ginger.

GINGER
Hi, Jimmy. Gimme a chocolate Coke more chocolate this time.

JIMMY (V.O.)
Smooth and easy, Jimmy. Smooth and easy when Ginger's in the area, because there's an air raid going on in your chest. If only you could save Ginger during an air raid.
(MORE)

JIMMY (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Then she would kiss you, embrace
 you, ask if she could be your girl.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Two squirts of chocolate syrup go into a fountain glass.

Followed by a squirt of Coca-Cola syrup.

Soda water fills the glass.

BACK TO SCENE

Jimmy stirs the glass and, his hand shaking slightly, sets it
 in front of Ginger.

She takes a sip and nods her head.

JIMMY
 You want I put a slice of lime or
 lemon in it.

GINGER
 It's fine the way it is.

Charlene doesn't mean to embarrass Jimmy in front of Ginger.

CHARLENE
 (tsk, tsk)
 Your hand was shaking.

Charlene has almost finished her banana split.

JIMMY (V.O.)
 That overly perceptive Charlene and
 her straight A's. Hit any note on
 the piano she'll tell you what it
 is with her eyes closed.

INT. DRUG STORE - DOOR

Mr. Potz, 65, the store owner, slick bald, comes into the
 store, his mouth set.

He passes the kids annoyed but at the same time thankful for
 their nickels and dimes.

He stoops to pick up an errant paper napkin.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Mr. Potz... Doesn't know the names of anyone here and never listens to what any of them says. Even if he did he wouldn't understand what they were talking about. They might as well be speaking Pig Latin.

He stops and comes over to Jimmy.

MR. POTZ

Jimmy, make sure no straws get on the floor. They're sticky.

He heads for the rear of the store.

Ginger looks after Mr. Potz then at Jimmy.

Mr. Potz's admonition to Jimmie has mortified him in front of Ginger.

Steve, Jeff, and Bruce lift their straws from their drinks in unison and drop them onto the floor as if in a dance routine.

STEVE

Chrome dome.

BRUCE

What a fuddy-duddy.

INT. SODA FOUNTAIN - DAY

Jeff puts two new straws in his Coke and tugs on them.

JEFF

Jap come in here you poison him if you could?

JIMMY

With carbonated water?

BRUCE

Hey, Bean, you gettin' shorter or do my eyes need testin'?

Bennie looks uneasily in Bruce's direction.

STEVE

You two going to join up after graduation?

JEFF

I'm enrolling at State.

BRUCE
 It's the Marines for me.
 (pause)
 Because of Guadalcanal.

STEVE
 Guadalcanal was rough.

Bennie antes a remark he hope will get him in the game with the older guys.

BENNIE
 Twelve-hundred killed and forty-two hundred wounded.

The soldier listens to what Bennie is saying.

LINDA
 And will it snow by Christmas?

BENNIE
 Actually snow flurries are forecast for Friday.

Linda turns to Jenny and shakes her head.

BRUCE
 So, Mr. Know-It-All, what else do you know about the war?

BENNIE
 American forces are now abroad. Some landed on the Atlantic shore of French Morocco near Casablanca. British and American forces are in Algiers.

LINDA
 Where's Algiers?

BRUCE
 Northern Europe.

CHARLENE
 You must have taken Mr. Frumm's geography class.

BRUCE
 How's that?

BENNIE
 Algiers is in North Africa.

Bruce goes back to his soda.

BRUCE

Says you.

Ginger rarely converses with Jimmy.

GINGER

Jimmy, could you shoot a German soldier?

She has nailed Jimmy onto a spot.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Is she playing with you? Trying to draw attention to you? Answer her, you idiot.

JIMMY

(tentatively)

I guess so...

BRUCE

(eager)

I wouldn't hesitate to kill a hun.

GINGER

Now there's a man who knows his mind.

CHARLENE

Senior girl scores over junior soda jerk.

Jimmy is terribly embarrassed.

Ginger takes something from her purse and places it on the counter.

It's a Slinky.

GINGER

Look what I got at the five and dime. For my kid brother Ricky.

LINDA

It's the first one I've seen!

GINGER

They just got 'em in.

BRUCE

Guess what Santa's puttin' in your stockin', Bean.

Ginger gives the Slinky a push and it takes a step.

JIMMY

They can climb down stairs.

JENNY

Ginger lives in a mansion. So there'll be plenty of stairs for her slinky.

Jenny's insulting tone brings the conversation to a sudden halt.

Then,

STEVE

Old Bill Williams got a 24% on his algebra exam.

JEFF

Isn't he afraid he won't graduate?

BRUCE

Do I worry about the sun coming up tomorrow?

STEVE

Old Bill said he didn't think there'd ever be a situation on the farm where he'd have to solve for the value of "y".

The soldier at the end of the counter stands up and abruptly shoves his empty malt glass and doily toward the counter's edge.

He erupts in anger.

SOLDIER

I sit here and listen to you all talk like jibbering birds. Chocolate Cokes, Suicides, basketball games, Slinkies... Don't you have someplace to go, something to do?

(pause)

Do any of you know what day this is?

BRUCE

Monday.

SOLDIER

Monday?

(leaning over counter)

It's the seventh of December.

The soldier starts to leave the store.

He stops and turns to Bennie.

SOLDIER (CONT'D)
What's your name again, son?

BENNIE
Benjamin Bean, sir.

SOLDIER
You're okay, Bean. You're okay.

The soldier leaves the store.

Looking at the others, Bennie can hardly contain himself after the soldier's compliment.

Linda hunches down.

LINDA
So what's eatin' him?

Ginger looks toward the front door.

GINGER
Probably got shot in the war.

BRUCE
Maybe can't find a girl.

Jenny, eyes saucering, looks up at Jimmie.

Suddenly proprietary, Jimmy removes the malt glass and paper doily from the counter.

He runs a damp cloth over the section of counter where the soldier had been sitting.

He turns to Ginger.

JIMMY
Yeah, why'd that G.I. snap his cap?

Ginger's face registers "I have no idea."

THE END