

**The Guys From The Avenue**  
**a screenplay by Roberto Padow**

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**EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-BROOKLYN, NEW  
YORK-NIGHT**

Avenue J is a big, well-lit avenue and East 16 Street is narrower and gets dark as it becomes residential, just a bit from the corner. Cooky's Restaurant, a large place with a glass door, huge glass windows and a neon sign is on one side of East 16 Street. A wooden Chinese laundry is on the other.

It is mid-August of 1958. Hanging out in front of Cooky's are HANK BARASCH, JEFF ROTHSTEIN, and VINNY SANTORIO. Hank is tall with broad shoulders and a square face. He sits on a car fender but occasionally gets up to walk around. Jess has average-length blond hair with a pompadour and is very slightly over-weight. He stays seated on the fender and buffs a cigarette. Vinny is short and baby-faced. His thick black hair is combed back in a D.A. He is on his feet and moves around in place and is carrying a portable radio which plays "DO YOU WANNA DANCE?" by BOBBY FREEMAN. Everyone snaps his fingers when the song goes "hey", then settles back into the usual patters. They have been making ordinary talk. Vinny turns down the volume just a little.

**HANK**

So he bought that jalopy, put a fifty-eight motor in and now she's as good as new.

VINNY

We made it to the Island and back like he had a souped-up Caddy.

JEFF

Outside, it looks like the car was just made. Greenberg sure was lucky for only a few hundred dollars.

HANK

He's lucky he bought the thing when he did, just before his old man found out how he drives. He wouldn't have let him use the family car.

VINNY

Donny's a level-headed guy too, till ya put him behind a set of wheels. But it's better like this anyway. That car's not drab like his old man's was. He can get the girls in real easy. Fancy looking stuff's what they like.

HANK

(smiling good-naturedly)

You didn't do too bad with that Blond Myrna in Esposito's beaten up old Buick if I saw what I think I saw passing by me the other night.

VINNY

(eyes lighting up with surprise)

Blond Myrna; who don't know about Blond Myrna? That's right, I did pick her up two days ago and Richie picked up her friend, Harriet. She hopped in right next to me. And let me tell you something first-hand. She's every bit as blond between her legs as she is on top of her head.

Hank and Jeff laugh heartily.

JEFF

The way you talk, Vinny, you make me wish we had a car so we wouldn't have to be hanging around here---

VINNY

Then you go buy one! We'll call it "Jeff Rothstein's Limousine". All the chicks are yours in "Jeff Rothstein's Limousine"!

HANK

We can try that in "Hank Barasch's Limousine" soon. My car comes out of the shop tomorrow.

(picking his head up of a sudden)  
And that reminds me; something esle comes out tomorrow,  
Kosher from the army

JEFF  
Kosher, he just dropped out of sight three years ago.

HANK  
Three years ago, August eighteenth, and that's tomorrow. A  
hitch in the army's three years. And he wrote me saying he'd  
show up at Tony's pizza place.

JEFF  
There was something really weird about the way he took off.  
Now that much I remember---

HANK  
It seems his old man left him the family money when he died  
and Kosher went and blew it all in Cuba so his mother  
wouldn't let him back.

(chuckling)  
It was the service or starve to death.

VINNY  
He signed up and went right off. What the hell did he do,  
speed up his enlistment?

HANK  
What would you do if you didn't have a place to stay? Kosher  
never did like work, but he sure don't like sleeping on an  
Avenue L park bench either.

VINNY

A lot it'll end up helping him. He probably didn't re-enlist 'cause they put him digging ditches. So he gets out of the army and now what's he gonna do? Wherever ya go, ya gotta work at somethin'.

HANK

Who knows?

### **INTERIOR-TONY'S PIZZERIA-DAY**

The restaurant has a narrow middle isle with tables and benches on each side and a door leading to the kitchen in back.

Seated at a table on the left are Hank, Jeff, Vinny and SAL MICELI. Sal is of medium height and stocky with black hair and a fairly expressionless face. Tony, the middle-aged owner, stands idly by the kitchen door. ROCK AND ROLL MUSIC plays from the jukebox as they laugh it up and go over the neighborhood topics. The door is thrust open and KOSHER enters. Kosher is six feet one inch and very much over-weight, which shows especially on his chest and huge stomach. His black, unkempt hair comes over his head like a mop and his round puffy features display a permanent mirth as if anything in sight were a potential butt of ridicule. He is wearing baggy dungarees and a white T-shirt which accentuates a generally unclean look about him.

HANK

(springing to his feet)

Kosher! I figured they sent you to the stockade by now!

Kosher makes haste to the table, pats Hank's shoulder and shakes everybody's hand.

KOSHER

(His voice is deep and bellowing)

The army; easy as pie! Ya sneak behind the barracks while  
you're on duty and ya shoot crap!

Kosher squeezes onto the bench with Hank and Vinny, his arms  
covering almost all the table. Hank sits down again.

Kosher

(continuing)

The sergeants get some of the take so they don't bother ya.  
Fulla nigger, almost nothin' but niggers, the black market.

The others laugh mildly.

Kosher

(continuing)

And it's simple ta put something over on them stupid shvugs.  
They wouldn't know loaded dice from the real thing if ya stuck  
it right in front a them. I bought a car just from what I could  
fleece out a those assholes.

Hank, Jeff, Vinny and Sal burst into laughter.

HANK

Where there's something shady, there's Kosher.



KOSHER  
(continuing)

But it's good to be back in New York. I almost forgot what the city looks like.

VINNY  
Same place it always was.

KOSHER  
Vinny Santorio, you were only a little kid, fourteen, the last time I saw ya. I'll bet you're still in school.

VINNY  
No. Quit last year and got a job working the scooters in Coney Island.

KOSHER  
(looking toward the back of the store)  
Hey, Tony! Get me a Coke, will ya?

HANK  
They just opened the new Cooky's on Sixteenth Street. That's where we hang out now instead of the custard stand.

Tony brings Kosher his Coke. Kosher starts gulping it down.

KOSHER  
Who cares about this damned neighborhood? We got wheels! Let's take off somewhere.

HANK  
We can use mine. It's a convertible and I just had it fixed up.

KOSHER

I got an idea! We'll got for a spin to Harlem tonight, just like we used to!

VINNY

How about that?

KOSHER

Harlem it is! We's rid'n a Harlem!

Kosher and the others get up to leave. With a devilish twinkle in his eyes, Kosher slaps right hands with each one respectively as anticipation beams from their faces.

EXTERIOR-LENOX AVENUE-HARLEM-NIGHT

The street is wide and lined with tenements. Clusters of black humanity are everywhere.

Hank's blue Chevrolet convertible moves along toward West 125 Street.

Hank drives and Sal sits next to him. Kosher, Jeff and Vinny are in the back. KANSAS CITY by WILBUR HARRISON blasts from the radio. Sal taps the dashboard and Jeff and Vinny bango n the front SEAT to the rhythm. Kosher contemptuously turns his head in every direction.

KOSHER

Look at all a' them out there.

(He breaks into a mischievous grin and stands up completely.)

Attention, everybody! The following is a paid political announcement! Please get that black trash off the street. Thank you.

Vinny and Jeff hastily grab Kosher's legs and throw him down.

JEFF

Kosher, are you crazy? What're you trying ta do, get us all killed?

Kosher impatiently elbows Jeff and Vinny out of the way.

KOSHER

You guys, ya don't know how ta have fun!

(He stands up and circles his hands around his mouth like a megaphone)

Niggers! Niggers! Niggers! Niggers! Niggers! Niggers!

The car is approaching a red Light. It is in the second lane right from the sidewalk while a row of traffic is stopped in front and more cars are coming from the rear. Hank and the others are visible stunned.

HANK

(simultaneously with Kosher)

Kosher's off his rocker.

VINNY

(simultaneously with Kosher)

Well, don't just sit there and talk about it. Let's get the hell out of Harlem!

Hank suddenly backs the car up before two others can wedge him in. The tires SCREECH loudly and Kosher falls down as they make a quick U turn and go the wrong way up the one way street. Hank brings them onto the sidewalk to avoid a head-on crash. Kosher rises from the floor and stands again.

KOSHER  
(hands circled like a megaphone)  
Niggers! Niggers! Niggers! Niggers!

Five soda bottles hit the doors and trunk very hard. Somebody runs at them with a knife but fails to reach them as the car bounces off the sidewalk and makes a sharp turn up West 124 Street. Kosher falls again.

EXTERIOR-WEST 124 STREET-HARLEM-NIGHT

It is a narrow street with tenements.

The car is speeding along.

Kosher takes about five seconds to get up.

KOSHER  
(hands circled like a megaphone again)  
Niggers! Niggers! Niggers!

Four more bottles hit the car. Hank crouches as he steps on the gas peddle harder while Sal, Jeff and Vinny duck to the floor. Their faces are tense as in a war as they race through.

KOSHER  
(continuing)  
Niggers! Niggers! Niggers!

The car rapidly turns the corner and Kosher loses his balance another time.

EXTERIOR-BROADWAY-HARLEM-NIGHT

The street is wider.

Hank's car is moving quickly through.

Jeff and Vinny grab Kosher so he can't get up.

KOSHER  
(voice muffled from the bottom of the car)  
Niggers! Niggers! Niggers!

The car picks up more momentum and they pass from view.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-DAY

On the corner and Hank, Jeff, Vinny, Sal, DON GREENBERG and RICHIE ESPOSITO. Don is thin and tough-looking with curly black hair and a slightly extended forehead. Richie is heavy-set and on the muscular side with a tatoo on each bicep. Hank, Jeff, Vinny and Sal still appear shaken from the incidents of the night before.

JEFF

---and Kosher screamed out the “niggers” on Lenox and a hundred and twenty fifth, right in the heart of Harlem!

Richie doubles up and bursts into hysterical laughter.

DON

That’s what he did? He must be crazy! Don’t he know those guys carry knives...?

RICHIE

Kosher went and screamed “niggers” in the middle of Harlem! There’s a screw loose in his head! You guys are all lucky ta be here talking about it---

VINNY

About a hundred of them came at us, all ready ta cut us ta shit. I thought we’d und up in pieces. Who the hell knows how we got away from there?

RICHIE

(regaining some control)

Yelling “nigger” in Harlem; now why would anyone do that?

JEFF

He wants to get us killed. That’s all I can figure out. I think there were more than a hundred. All you could see was knives and teeth. They glowed in the dark.

RICHIE

Niggers, they don't just fight with knives. They use guns and razors and bottles----

HANK

Bottles, Richie, did you say bottles? So help me the whole neighborhood must've been throwing them! I had broken glass all over my fender. Everyone came out to try and smash our heads in, right Sal?

SAL

That's right, or my name ain't Sal Miceli.

DON

(shaking his head in disbelief)

Messing with a bunch of niggers in their own territory; that's the nuttiest thing I ever heard of. Niggers, their mothers gave them whiskey the way ours gave us milk. They don't live to be thirty but while they're alive, they're mean as hell.

RICHIE

Niggers have thicker skulls and smaller brains. A friend of mine worked in City Hospital and he saw that on the X-rays. They're animals! They'll jump on ya and kill ya in a few seconds.

HANK

(turning toward Don)

Ya see, Donnie? Now you wonder why we look like we saw ghosts? I always know Kosher was a little crazy but I didn't think he was that bad.

VINNY

(looking hard at Hank)

And you, you don't get off so easy either. We're in the middle of a colored section, Kosher's screaming "niggers" and you start telling everyone Kosher's off his rocker. We know that already. He's carrying on that way, ya point ya steering Wheel, ya hit ya gas and ya get our asses the hell out of there.

Hank tries to reply but Vinny cuts him off.

VINNY

(continuing)

I can't do it 'cause I'm not driving the car and you are.

HANK

(half apologetically)

I'm going through Harlem and all of a sudden "niggers, niggers, niggers, niggers, niggers!"

(getting more aggressive and pointing at Vinny)

Would you do a thing like that?

Vinny, looking absolutely horrified, shakes his head "no".

HANK

(continuing and pointing at the others respectively)

Would you? Would you? Would you? Would you?

Each one shakes his head "no".



HANK

(continuing)

So that's the first thing I think of. The fuckin' guy's nuts. He's off his rocker and that's what I say!

EXTERIOR-EAST 17 STREET NEAR AVENUE L-DAY

A six-story red-brick box type apartment house is in the background.

Kosher, Hank and Jeff are walking up the street.

KOSHER

I got money coming in now without even having ta collect unemployment.

HANK

How'd you work that out?

KOSHER

Some shmucky high school kids, about five or six of 'em, I tell them I know what horse'll win at the track and they give me ten bucks each time. Two weeks they're handing it to me and they don't even suspect a thing.

They turn a corner and Hank laughs mildly.

EXTERIOR-ELM AVENUE-DAY

It is a narrow, short dirt road. On the left side is a small wooden structure with a sign "Hero Sandwiches."

Kosher, Hank and Jeff walk through the street.

JEFF

Ya know what happens if one of the horses wins, don't you?  
You'll have to pay out of your own pocket.

KOSHER

Those kids're so dumb they don't even read the papers.

Hank opens the restaurant door and they walk in.

INTERIOR-HERO SANDWICH PLACE-DAY

Wooden chairs and tables occupy the unpainted floor. A small counter with a waiter behind it is on the left side by the wall.

Kosher, Hank and Jeff take their seats at one table.

KOSHER, HANK AND JEFF  
(in broken chorus)

Hero sandwich!

The waiter promptly brings out three prepared sandwiched. Kosher opens his first and gobbles it rapidly.

KOSHER

Ya got a smart way ta make a back, ya can always do what  
ya want.

JEFF

(smirking first)

And when they don't relieve you anymore, then what?

KOSHER

You figure I'm that stupid as ta think I can take them in forever?

JEFF

So what'll ya do, rob banks?

KOSHER

Rob banks. You know how ta rob a bank and get away with it?

JEFF

You can't.

KOSHER

That's right. Ya can't. And ya can steal from someone till his stuff's yours and make him think ya sold him a good item.

(turning to the waiter)

Another hero sandwich!

(back to his friends)

Ya can live off what ta make hustling and not have ta lick anyone's ass.

The waiter brings Kosher his sandwich and Kosher takes it, putting it beside the partly finished one.

HANK

My father once sued some store for opening a door on his shoulder. Not a scratch on him but the insurance company settled.

KOSHER

That's not what I mean at all! It's chicken feed from plain luck. When it's over, the store owner hates ya and, if ya make a habit of it, they match onto ya game.

(beckoning everybody closer)

Now listen to what goes on in the army and you'll see my point. Those sergeants got somethin' regular going for them. The colonel leaves them in charge of buying the uniforms. And they report the stuff worn out before it really is. So the guy who makes them overcharges the army and slips them some of the profits. Then they sell the used stuff to the army-navy store and pocket all the cash. Sergeant comes up to me and says, "This uniform's not fit for the army anymore." I know just what he had up his sleeve.

Hank and Jeff erupt into laughter.

HANK

Get some broken glass from the street, fix it up like a diamond and sell it to some guy for a few grand. He doesn't suspect a thing.

JEFF

And he thinks he made a good deal.

KOSHER  
(eyes lighting up with satisfaction)  
That's it! Now ya know what I'm getting at!

They guffaw and raucously slam the table.

KOSHER  
(to the waiter)  
Another hero sandwich!

HANK AND JEFF  
(in broken chorus)  
Me too.

The waiter brings the sandwiches.

KOSHER  
But now I'll put the hardest thing to ya. Try and get your  
hands on some real gold.

(He signals them to listen closer.)

Here's what ya do. Pay off some guy who works in Fort Knox.  
Then get your own uniforms and armored truck made up.  
Come in like it's your job to ship the gold out and ask for just  
a little bit. That little bit'll make ya rich as hell. Next ya fly to  
Switzerland where ya can deposit it. And ya got enough to  
live off fa who knows how many years without a worry in the  
world!

JEFF

(after gasping for a short while)

Great work, if ya can only pull the whole thing off!

KOSHER

After that, your next hustle'll really seem simple.

HANK

(flabbergasted)

Next hustle? Who'd need a next hustle? With that money, you can set yourself up in a luxury business for life!

KOSHER

(slouching further back into his chair)

What in the hell would ya wanna open up a business for? So ya can sit behind a snack fulla papers every stinking day you're alive? My old man tried ta make me over into some asshole in a suit 'n' tie. He left me his whole operation worth a hundred grand when he kicked off from a heart attack. Ha ha, they say I caused it. I went and sold the business fa thirty grand and flew right down ta Cuba.

(He sits up straight and looks at them more directly)

I'd rather be hangin' out with you guys than sitt'n' in some stuffy office. What's the use of all this planning fa life? The Russians're gonna bomb us out anyway. Came back from Cuba without no money, but I really had a ball; the roulette wheels, the dice tables and the spic whorehouse. Ya wanna enjoy yaself, ya gotta make up ya mind ya just don't give a fuck. That's the only way to live.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE L NEAR OCEAN PARKWAY-DAY

Two-story, one-family houses are in the background.

Kosher, Hank Jeff, Vinny, Sal, Don, Richie and eight others are walking along the street. Kosher is in front with a gleeful look about him.

KOSHER

So Harry the Drunk still stays on the parkway. I figured that filthy old coon kicked off by now.

HANK

Sits on that bench every day like he's glued down to it.

KOSHER

We're gonna have some fun with Harry the Drunk.

One by one, they turn onto Ocean Parkway.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY BICYCLE MALL-DAY

Ocean Parkway is a wide boulevard with a bicycle path on both sides. Each path is spaced out with benches and has a service road to its right. Opposite the service roads are rows of apartment houses.

The group walks along the bicycle path.

HARRY THE DRUNK is slouched on one of the benches with his left leg strewn about haphazardly. Harry's clothes are torn and his front teeth are yellow and obviously rotting. His hands have a slight tremble, showing years of alcohol abuse.

Kosher runs over in advance of the others.

KOSHER

Hey, Harry!

Harry lifts his head lethargically and emits a faint smile.

HARRY

Main, what you got?

KOSHER

Beer for ya, Harry, some nahs wohm beer!

The others display mocking laughter as Kosher gets closer and smirks smugly.

KOSHER

(continuing)

How ya like wohm beer, Harry?

HARRY

Oh, Ah sho lahks wohm beer.

Kosher's arms wave about and an evil mirth is all over him.

KOSHER

Ya lahks wohm beer and we's gon give you wohm beer! Lots and lots a wohm beer!

The others burst into louder laughter, some slapping their knees as Kosher signals Jeff, Richie and four more to quickly cross the service road.



KOSHER

You's gon drink so much beer you's gon done get tired of it,  
Harry. Ya know that?

HARRY

You says it. Ah knows it.

KOSHER  
(continuing)

That wohm beer really gon make you feel good!

Harry grins childishly.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY FACING APARTMENT BUILDING-  
DAY

A hand is shown holding a jar. Five urines are squirting into it.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY ON BICYCLE MALL-DAY

KOSHER

That's gon be the best beer you ever drunk, de best evuh!  
Right, Vinny?

VINNY

It sure as hell will be!

Kosher glances toward the other side of the service road, then turns  
to Harry.

KOSHER

Just a little wahl and we'll have it for ya, Harry. Ya sho ya wants wohm beer?

HARRY

Ah sho does.

Two can't contain themselves anymore and drop to the ground hysterically.

KOSHER

Ya's sho ya's sho, Harry?

HARRY

Ah's really sho

KOSHER

Well, it's comin' up, raht now!

They bring Kosher the jar. Kosher takes it and puts it out to Harry.

KOSHER

Here it is, Harry, ya wohm beer!

Harry rises to his feet with great difficulty. He shakes as he takes the jar and slowly brings it to his mouth. He cautiously sips it, then of a sudden spits it away violently.

HARRY

Phew! Main, that taste lahk pee!

KOSHER

(struggling to keep a straight face)

What you mean, pee? Dat's beer, Harry. Dat's wohm beer!

Kosher gives Harry a derisive slap on the back and doubles over in wild laughter. All the others as well are completely out of control, especially Vinny, who is rolling on his back and sides, kicking and pounding away blindly and haphazardly.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND CONEY ISLAND AVENUE-DAY

Kosher is driving his 1943 Buick jalopy.

Kosher has a happy-go-lucky look about him as he glances out of the open side window and notices BARRY ROSENBERG walking by. Kosher SQUEELS his brake and conspicuously puts his head through the window space.

KOSHER

Hey, Barry Rosenberg!

Barry Rosenberg turns around looking somewhat surprised. He is of medium height with a fair complexion. His slightly unmanageable hair waves about as he moves.

KOSHER

(continuing)

Hop in, Barry Rosenberg. Don't ya wanna take a ride?

Barry half-trots over to the car and gets in.

Kosher's car starts moving again.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

KOSHER

I got in a month ago.

BARRY

I know that but I didn't get a chance to look you up.

KOSHER

How ya like this car?

BARRY

Not bad.

KOSHER

(smiling with perverse satisfaction)

I got it cheat'n' niggers at dice.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND OCEAN PARKWAY-DAY

The car TURNS LOUDLY around the corner.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

KOSHER

I still didn't see Long Island since I left for the army, so I figured I'd go out there now.

EXTERIOR-CAR-DAY

Ocean Parkway has light traffic. Kosher accelerates to a higher than normal speed.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

The radio is playing CHARLEY BROWN by THE COASTERS.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY-ENTRANCE TO BELT PARKWAY-DAY

The car circulates around the ramp. It slows down just before the merging point, then picks up speed as best a jalopy can as it goes onto the main road.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

Kosher has a rambunctious twinkle in his eyes. He, of a sudden, hits down on the accelerator and the car lurches forward.

KOSHER

There's Sid's Gamble running the first race at Belmont!

Barry quickly turns Kosher's way.

KOSHER

(continuing)

He's behind Tin Tam, Cornishman, Leelah and Translucent!

The speedometer reads seventy and Barry is getting nervous.

KOSHER

(continuing)

Sid's Gamble really goes now in the stretch.

EXTERIOR-CAR-DAY

Kosher gets into the left lane and rapidly passes two other vehicles.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

KOSHER  
(continuing)

He runs ahead of Tim Tam and Cornishman and he's ready to beat out the others but he can't because a the Murk!

EXERIOR-CAR-DAY

Kosher's car is right on the back of a maroon Mercury and he has to slow down. He honks several times and sticks his head and shoulders out of the window.

KOSHER  
Hey, Murk! Get out a the way!

The Mercury goes to the right lane when it can and Kosher speeds up again.

KOSHER  
Sid's Gamble passes Tim Tam another time! He's ahead of Cornishman! He passes Leelah! He passes Translucent!

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

The speedometer marks eighty-five miles an tour and Barry is wringing his hands.

EXTERIOR-CAR-DAY

KOSHER  
(continuing)

Sid's Gamble's out in front now! He goes clear ahead of all the others to the finish line! Sid's Gamble wins the race!

A police car is following with his red light flashing.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

KOSHER

Ya want me ta stop now so I can show ya something really funny!

BARRY

Yes! I sure do!

Kosher slows the car down. Barry's bearing slowly returns to normal as he smiles and breathes an enormous sigh of relief.

EXTERIOR-CAR-DAY

Kosher pulls over to the shoulder. The police car parks behind him, its red light still signaling. A middle-aged POLICEMAN gets out and goes to Kosher's window.

POLICEMAN

License and registration, please.

Kosher smirks as he produces them.

POLICEMAN

You know what the speed limit is on this parkway?

KOSHER

Yeah! But I don't give a shit!

POLICEMAN

(bristling)

Well, I got something you'll give a shit about; the ticket I'm gonna write out for ya!

The policeman goes to his car and Kosher snickers while he sits and waits. The policeman returns in a short time and thrusts the summons and documents into Kosher's hands.

POLICEMAN

Here! And ya sure will give a shit about this!

The policeman testily walks to his car and drives off. Kosher waits until he is safely out of sight, then proceeds to rip the summons into shreds, nonchalantly tossing the debris onto the road.

KOSHER

Whado I care? I'm never gonna pay it anyway.

EXTERIOR-GREEN ACRES SHOPPING CENTER-VALLEY  
STREAM, LONG ISLAND-DAY

Green Acres has a spacious parking lot, a department store complex, and a bowling alley.

The car pulls into the lot and parks.

Kosher and Barry get out and walk toward the stores.



KOSHER

Sammy's Burgers; they were the most delicious when I left three years ago. Now where the hell can the joint be?

INTERIOR-HALLWAY OF THE STORE COMPOUND-DAY

Kosher and Barry walk through, then stop midway in the hall.

KOSHER

(pointing to the right side)

I could swear it was over there.

Kosher stops a well-dressed thirty-year-old WOMAN.

KOSHER

Excuse me. Could you tell me where I can find Sammy's Burgers?

WOMAN

Over around that right corner to the second store, sonny.

KOSHER

(glaring and waving his arms violently)

Sonny? What the fuck you mean sonny, you fuckin' no good whore!

Many eyes turn Kosher's way. Barry discreetly walks several steps ahead of him.

EXTERIOR-PLATFORM OF AVENUE J SUBWAY STATION-DAY

It is morning rush hour. Hank and Jeff are dressed in suits and ties as they wait for the train to come.

JEFF

Did I tell you last week I was promoted on my job?

HANK

No, I don't think you did.

JEFF

Starts today. My own desk, Mr. Rotherstein on it.

HANK

(matter of factly)

On a desk there's a sign with your name, right?

JEFF

(registering disbelief)

Me being called Mister, the whole thing seems funny. Two years ago, some teacher told me I was "the most brazen child" she ever came across. And now I'm Mr. Rotherstein.

HANK

That's life, growing up. See your old man, the way he comes in tired from work and does nothing but read the paper and watch television?

Jeff nods.

HANK

(continuing)

Well, that'll be you one day. And that'll be me and that'll be every one of us. All this stuff, the cars, the girls, it's gotta end sometime.

JEFF

I'm not saying I wanna be a kid forever. But what you're talking about, I don't like it.

HANK

Like it or not, it's gotta happen. Nothing we can do about it.

The train comes roaring into the station. It stops and its doors open. Hank and Jeff are swallowed up by the crowd as they get on.

EXTERIOR-PLAYGROUND ON AVENUE L AND EAST 17 STREET-NIGHT

The playground extends half a square block. It has benches near the East 17 Street fence and swings, basketball hoops and handball courts in the background.

Kosher, Hank, Jeff and Vinny are seated on a bench.

KOSHER

---and I finally had to go to unemployment.

The others have snickers on their faces.

KOSHER

(continuing)

Well, I know they'd stop believing me about the horses some time. But I got something else besides.

VINNY

Wha'd you think of now?

KOSHER

(motioning toward the gate)

Come'n, I'll show ya my merchandise.

They walk toward the fence opening and leave the park.

EXTERIOR-EAST 17 STREET-ADJACENT TO THE PLAYGROUND-  
NIGHT

Kosher opens up the trunk of his car. It sounds a slightly metallic rattle and assorted hub-caps and lugs appear inside.

HANK

(almost bursting into laughter)

Where'd you steal these, you Thief?

KOSHER

I didn't. Some kids did. I buy 'em from them for a quarter and sell them a buck a piece.

Kosher reaches into his pocket and takes out a document.

KOSHER

(continuing)

Here's my peddler's license. It's all on the up an' up. Small stuff; ya don't need a bill of sale.

All demonstrate various degrees of amusement.

JEFF

If the cops arrest those kids, they might squeal.

KOSHER

So, I'll deny it all! Who ya think they'll believe?

(He looks assuredly at Jeff.)

I'm an army veteran. I served my country and they're nothing but a bunch of fifteen-year-old punks.

Kosher closes the trunk. They go and lean on the rear fender.

VINNY

You better watch out for Cerello and make sure to sell all your things where he don't patrol. That cop's out for our asses.

KOSHER

I told ya I got my peddler's license!

HANK

The bastard's got a real hard-on for all of us from way back. If he can't prove anything, he'll take the stuff and bust your head in. And I mean really bust it in.

Jeff and Vinny give Kosher a knowing glance.

A short, middle-aged BLACK WOMAN wearing hand-me-down clothing passes twenty yards from them and Kosher immediately turns his attention her way like a wolf who's just spotted a sheep. She walks past them and silence uneasily reigns for several seconds.

KOSHER

Hey, nigger mama!

The woman quickens her pace. Jeff grabs Kosher's arm.

JEFF

Now not this business again. One of these days we're gonna get the crap knocked out of us---

KOSHER

(turning toward Jeff and staring dumbfoundedly at him)  
You're scared of a stinking maid!

(looking back to the woman)

Hey, nigger mama! How ya like jerkin' ya boss off when ya finish making his bed?

The woman moves more hurriedly away from them.

KOSHER

(continuing)

Every day ya take his prick in ya hands 'cause his wife won't!

EXTERIOR-CORNER OF AVENUE L AND EAST 17 STREET-NIGHT

The woman anxiously turns around the block.

EXTERIOR-EAST 17 STREET ADJACENT TO THE PLAYGROUND-NIGHT

Kosher explodes into boisterous laughter. Hank, Vinny, and Jeff look at each other, smiles on their faces, and one by one, they burst out laughing as well, though in milder form.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-NIGHT

Standing or leaning on a parked car are Hank, Jeff, Vinny, Richie and Don.

HANK

Today's Sunday, Columbus Day. Tomorrow, no work.

VINNY

(good naturedly)

We got you the holiday, you know. You're here because we got here first.

DON

You can say you got us the holiday because we own the places you take off from. What's your boss?

VINNY

Jewish.

DON

See what I mean?

Everybody laughs.

RICHIE

You own the stores 'cause our Mafia guys run the gambling joints and then the winners buy from you.

HANK

(putting up his hands)

Let me tell you this one. This priest points a kid out to a rabbi and says, "See this kid? He's gonna be a priest one day." The rabbi says, "eh". He says, "But this kid's gonna be a bishop some day." The rabbi says, "eh". He says, "This kid's gonna be an archbishop." The rabbi says, "eh". The priest says, "This kid's gonna be the Pope and that's the highest anyone can be." The rabbi says, "eh". He says, "Well, what do you want him to be, God?" The rabbi says, "Well, one of our boys made it."

They all burst into a roar.

RICHIE

This Jewish kid gets bad marks, so his mother puts him in a Catholic school. All of a sudden, pure nineties. His mother says, "Why'd ya get such good marks over there?" The kid says, "When I opened the door and saw that guy nailed to the cross, I knew they meant business."

General laughter follows.

DON

I got a better one. This Jewish guy works in a Catholic Church and the Mother Superior fires him. He says, "Why?" She says, "Well, that water you spit in every day; you can't spit in that. That's Holy Water." He says, "I didn't know. I didn't know. Why didn't you explain me?" She says, "And that thing you hand your coat on; that's no coat-rack. That's our Cross." He says, "I didn't know. You should've explained it to me." She says, "And when ya call me 'Mother Shapiro'..."



All respond with near hysterics.

VINNY

This guy goes up to a rabbi and says, "Rabbi, ya got a fuckin' good shool." The rabbi says, "Go away. Go away. No coising in mine synagogue." The guy says, "But, rabbi, ya got a fuckin' good shool." The rabbi says, "No! No coising in mine synagogue." The guy says, "But, rabbi. There's no questions about it. You have got a fuckin' good shool." The rabbi says, "No! No coising in mine synagogue!" The guy says, "Rabbi, I'm donating twenty-thousand dollars to your synagogue." The rabbi says, "No shit."

They erupt into laughter, but everything is at once interrupted by a fearful turning of heads.

JEFF

Uh, oh, Cerello.

CERELLO approaches agitatedly. He is thin and fortyish, with fierce black eyes which distinguish him clearly, even in uniform. He is barely controlling himself as he gets to them.

CERELLO

So you're back on this corner again, after I told ya a million times not to come. How often do I have to get it through? You guys know what "unlawful assembly" is.

They keep silent and that irks Cerello more.

CERELLO  
(continuing)

It means no more than three on the same corner! I don't wanna see any of you here again! Ya can't make the streets unsafe for the rest of us 'cause I won't let ya.

(He points his stick at them.)

Move!

They very slowly begin walking from the corner. Cerello winces and squirms with impatience, then suddenly runs over and, with no warning, randomly swings his club low. Vinny is lying on the sidewalk, his legs doubled at the knees as he yells and writhes in pain.

JEFF  
(turning around)

Shit.

CERELLO  
I said, "move", not "crawl"!

Cerello slowly and deliberately puts his stick into its holster and struts away. Jeff and Hank turn back and pick Vinny up as they all leave together.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN AVENUE NEAR AVENUE J-DAY

Ocean Avenue is a large thoroughfare with apartment houses on each side.

Don is driving his freshly painted red car and Hank is in the front passenger seat. Kosher and Jeff are in back.

The car SPEEDS through the street, but is forced to a quick stop for the light at the corner of Avenue J.

Two BLACK MEN are listlessly leaning on a lamp-post.

KOSHER  
(pointing)

What da they plan on now, moving in here?

(to Don)

Make a U turn your first chance.

Kosher is demonstratively eager for something as he waits for the light to change.

EXTERIOR-CAR-DAY

The light turns green. Don rapidly drives halfway down the next block and SQUEELS around the other way.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

They slowly move toward the corner.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

Kosher opens the window and then rolls up a newspaper. They cross Avenue J and inconspicuously pull up alongside the black men who are obviously a little drunk. Kosher sneaks up and flings the newspaper at one of them, quickly pulling his arm back inside.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN AVENUE AND AVENUE J-DAY

BLACK MAN  
(to the one next to him)  
Hey! What you hit me for?

SECOND BLACK MAN  
Ah didn't do nothin'

They start fighting and haplessly flail away at each other.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

All burst into laughter. Kosher sticks his head out of the window.

EXTERIOR-CAR-DAY

KOSHER  
Niggers!

HANK, JEFF, DON  
(simultaneously)  
Niggers!

The black men turn around glassy-eyes and stunned.

The car BURNS RUBBER and takes off, driver and passengers alike carried away with their own mirth.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE L PARK-DAY

Winter weather has obviously set in. The trees are bare and all are bundled up in heavy coats.

Kosher, accompanied by Vinny and Jeff, is at the rear of his car sorting out hub-caps and other odds and ends. He starts to close the trunk, but is abruptly detained by a surprise appearance of Cerello, whose police car had quietly pulled up behind them. Jeff and Vinny all but freeze in their tracks.

CERELLO

Okay, what's this stuff ya got here?

KOSHER

(smirking)

Things I sell to people.

CERELLO

Where'd ya get it?

Kosher slowly pulls out his peddler's license and tauntingly exhibits it. Cerello snatches it and rips it up.

CERELLO

You can get another one now! I know who you are. You're the biggest turd in the cesspool here. You might've gotten out of the service four months back, but you'll be wearing another kind of uniform by the time I'm through with you.

Cerello glares at Kosher before getting back into his car. He starts it up, racing the motor somewhat more than he has to and goes away little by little. Kosher gazes at Cerello until he stops for the sign half a block down at the Avenue L corner.

KOSHER

(so Cerello won't hear but others will)

You can't prove shit on me! This is the United States, not Russia and I know my rights.

#### INTERIOR-ARTIE'S POOL ROOM-NIGHT

Artie's Pool Room is in a basement coming off the corner of East 14 Street and Avenue J. Pool tables occupy most of the space. There are benches by the walls and a counter is at the far right corner.

A hum of happy chatter and the clanking of pool balls are heard throughout as Kosher shoots with Don, Sal with Barry and Hank with Richie. Vinny is seated with some others on a bench.

Jeff enters through the door at the end of the stairwell coming down from the street.

JEFF

(eyes beaming)

Hey, whoever's interested, go and look at something I got outside!

KOSHER

(stopping his game and visibly annoyed)

Somethin' fa' niggers, maybe.

JEFF

No, none a that stuff. Come on up and see it for yourself.

HANK

Let us play fuckin' pool, will ya?

JEFF

Okay, hang out here the rest of your lives. I don't care.

Vinny starts getting up from the bench.

JEFF

(to Vinny)

You seem to be the only one around here with some sense.

Vinny puts on his jacket and walks over to Jeff. Jeff pushes the door open and they both leave.

EXTERIOR-EAST 14 STREET AND AVENUE J-NIGHT

They half trot up the stairs under the illuminated ARTIE'S POOL ROOM sign and go out into the street. Jeff points to a 1949 two-door maroon Plymouth and they stop right by it. On its left side are painted in large white lettering the words, "JEFF ROTHSTEIN'S LIMOUSINE".

JEFF

I went and did it. Didn't I?

VINNY

(looking it over)

Could be worse.

Jeff puts the key in the door and turns it open. Vinny goes rapidly to the other side.

VINNY

Let's leave those other shmucks down there.. We have better things on our minds, don't we?

Jeff closes his door and opens the other for Vinny, who gets in and quickly slams it shut.

The car starts and they SQUEEL out and race down East 14 Street.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY-NIGHT

The car moves slowly along the main road going toward Coney Island with rock 'n' roll play in low volume. They stop completely when they notice a group of girls occupying two benches.

The girls are dressed in heavy clothing but look overtly seductive nevertheless.

INTERIOR-CAR-NIGHT

VINNY

They're out during all seasons.

JEFF

(laughing)

You think I couldn't figure out why you were bringing me here?

VINNY

(pointing anxiously)

Look over there!



Jeff turns his attention, but obviously doesn't understand what Vinny is trying to tell him.

VINNY

It's Myrna and Harriet! Why do ya think I'm pointing?

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY BICYCLE MALL-NIGHT

BLONDE MYRNA and HARRIET are on the second bench to the left. Myrna is short. Harriet is a little taller with fluffy brown hair.

INTERIOR-CAR-NIGHT

Vinny opens the window wide.

VINNY

Myrna!

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY BICYCLE MALL-NIGHT

Myrna runs to the car. Harriet follows.

INTERIOR-CAR-NIGHT

VINNY

(to Jeff)

Those girls gotta think they're being loved up so go easy at the beginning.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY BICYCLE MALL-NIGHT

Myrna and Harriet are by the car. Vinny opens the door, gets out and with a hilariously noble bow in her direction, motions Myrna to go in

the back. He follows and they sit together. Harriet gets in front with Jeff and closes the car.

#### INTERIOR-CAR-NIGHT

VINNY

How about a ride to Rockaway. We didn't see the place for a while.

JEFF

Maybe it's a little warmer there.

The girls giggle loudly. The raio is playing "SUGARTIME" by the MC'GUIRE SISTERS. Myrna snuggles up to Vinny. Harriet gets a little closer to Jeff, who races the motor and drives off again.

#### EXTERIOR OCEAN PARKWAY-NIGHT

The car SPEEDS through the street.

#### EXTERIOR-PARKING LOT OVERLOOKING JAMAICA BAY-NIGHT

The lot comes off the road a short distance from the Marine Parkway Bridge. A few cars with couples are scattered throughout.

Jeff's car pulls in and stops.

#### INTERIOR-CAR-NIGHT

Jeff turns off the motor. Myrna and Vinny are cuddled up in back. Jeff turns to Harriet.

JEFF

You been waiting on the parkway long?

HARRIET

Always.

JEFF

And I've always been driving around looking for you.

Jeff caresses her hair as they smile and embrace. Their mouths meet and they tongue-kiss heavily.

VINNY

(to Myrna)

I haven't seen you anywhere lately.

MYRNA

My old man saw to that.

VINNY

He been keeping you in.

MYRNA

(shaking her head negatively)

He didn't have to. He just beat my face in so bad I was ashamed to go out. I wouldn't even go to school for a while but they came and told me they'd lock me up if I didn't.

Myrna shows him a big discoloration covering her right cheek and chin. Vinny fixes his eyes on it for a good, long moment. He slowly moves his hand to touch it and ends up stroking her gently. Then he pulls back and his features start to tremble.

VINNY

That bastard!

Myrna laughs heartily and puts his hands on her buttocks. Vinny's demeanor suddenly changes and he presses her with lust.

MYRNA

You know what my old man would do if he knew what I'm up to now? He'd break my ass.

Myrna swivels and her breasts rub up against Vinny as he lifts her dress up, then she flings her arms tightly around his neck when he unbuttons her blouse from the back. The radio plays "TIMIN". \*\*\*\*\* Both couples bundle up in one anothers' thick winter coats. They are soon breathing heavily, the girls especially screaming out in uncontrolled frenzy. And afterward, they serenely cling to each other, limply stretched out together as their lips and cheeks alternately touch.

EXTERIOR-KING'S HIGHWAY AND EAST 17 STREET-OUTSIDE A RECORD STORE-NIGHT

King's Highway is a wide, busy, well-lit and mainly commercial avenue. It is near Christmas and decorations are conspicuously seen all over. Snow is falling and the store phonograph plays "JOY TO THE WORLD" by PERRY COMO.

Kosher and Hank are by the display window.

KOSHER

(pointing his finger everywhere)

Look at all this shit. What's it for anyway?

HANK

Someone's gotta do business some way.

A PRIEST walks past them and immediately draws Kosher's attention. Kosher aggressively turns his head the priest's way.

KOSHER

Hey, father, you suck dicky in the confession booth!

HANK

Kosher, he's a priest.

KOSHER

(deliberately ignoring him)

After Mass, ya sneak under the altar where ya lap up the nuns' cunt!

HANK

(grabbing Kosher's arm)

Kosher, if any of his guys see us, they'll knock the shit out of us and we'll deserve it.

Kosher contemptuously wrenches himself free.

KOSHER

(continuing)

Fuck you, father prick! The only reason ya wear that robe's so no one can see ya hard-on!

The priest keeps walking and passes from view.

EXTERIOR-DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN-LAFAYETTE STREET-DAY

Lafayette Street is a business center with tall buildings and much hustle and activity. It is still winter and heavy clothing is worn.

Kosher is displaying his auto-wares on a small, wooden table when Jeff hurriedly approaches him, accompanied by Barry. Kosher is pleasantly surprised, but Jeff looks alarmed.

JEFF

The custard stand owner spoke to me today. Cerello plans on bagging you for your unpaid tickets.

KOSHER

What's Cerello got to do with my unpaid tickets?

JEFF

He has everything to do with anything you have to do with.

Kosher stares ahead into the space before shaking his head over and over in complete disbelief. He then faces them both, his countenance showing deep disgust.

KOSHER

Cerello can go lay a flying fart for all I care! He makes his living and I make mine. And I did such good business I can stay in a hotel instead of my car. That's something even if I do have ta live with niggers.-----

A black man walks over from a far distance and stops to gaze at Kosher's display. Kosher looks toward him, acting as politely as he can. The man pays, picks up a hubcap and goes his way.

KOSHER

(turning quickly back to Jeff and Barry)

I know what you're thinking. Their money's as good as anybody's.

JEFF

Kosher, you better stay away from the avenue.

KOSHER

(looking right at Jeff)

I watch him, too. I know when he's working and when he's not. And I'll make sure not to be there when he's there.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET OUTSIDE  
COOKY'S-NIGHT

Parked near the corner are Kosher's, Hank's, and Richie's cars. On that corner and in rapid movement are the cars' owners plus Sal, Jeff and fifteen others. Warmer weather has begun as demonstrated by their light cotton jackets. They are in a festive mood as if the entire city were theirs for the taking.

KOSHER

Spring's here and its "I don't give a fuck" night!

Kosher, Hank and Richie open their cars, Hank taking down the convertible top and seven pile into each one. Kosher turns toward the others before getting in himself.

KOSHER

Let's go get Donny Greenberg. I think I know where he is.

Kosher's car is in front. He SQUEELS out and Hank and Richie follow.

EXTERIOR-EAST 24 STREET BETWEEN QUENTIN ROAD AND AVENUE P-NIGHT

It is a quiet, tree-lined street with lawned, two-story houses.

Kosher comes to a noisy stop in front of a residence on the right side. The others brake slowly behind him, Hank in front of Richie. Kosher gets out of his car and points to the house in front.

KOSHER

(announcing to the group)

His girlfriend lives here and she got an empty house. He'll be in.

Assorted snickers break out.

JEFF

(from Hank's car)

Don't bother the guy now.

KOSHER

Wait. Just leave it ta me.

Kosher rapidly approaches the house, stomping over the grass.

KOSHER

Hey, Greenberg!



THE OTHERS  
(in chorus)

Greenberg!

No response.

KOSHER

Hey Donny!

Kosher runs onto the front garden and grabs a fistful of dirt. He flings it up to a second-story window and it lands with a bang. After a short wait, the window slowly opens and Don appears, hair disheveled and looking extremely irritated.

DON

Get the hell away from me, will ya? I'm with my girlfriend.

Don closes the window a lot more quickly than he opened it. Kosher gallops to his car and thrusts himself in. He starts it up again and SQUEELS around in the other direction, going the wrong way up the one way street. Hank and Richie are obviously amazed and remain parked as Kosher goes past them. Everybody else turns around and stares.

EXTERIOR-CORNER OF QUENTIN ROAD AND EAST 24 STREET-  
NIGHT

Kosher make a LOUD left turn, hugging the left side of Quentin Road.

EXTERIOR-EAST 24 STREET IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE-NIGHT

HANK

Wait a little while. He'll be back.

RICHIE

(head jutting out the window)

Let's go the fuck off without him.

HANK

No. He'll be back.

A short period passes and a squeaky sound is heard from the other corner, drawing immediate attention.

EXTERIOR-CORNER OF EAST 24 STREET AND AVENUE P-NIGHT

Kosher's car turns sharply and speeds the wrong way in their direction.

HANK

(bursting into hysterics)

He's coming back! What did I tell ya? He's coming back!

Everyone in both cars all but rolls over in his seat. Kosher approaches, grinning from ear to ear. He slows down and stops right by them.

KOSHER

(opening the window)

Let's go through the park and over to the Village.

Kosher SQUEELS his tires again as he turns around and takes off. The others follow behind him.

## EXTERIOR-ROAD THROUGH PROSPECT PARK-NIGHT

Kosher's, Hank's and Richie's cars are SPEEDING through. Kosher gleefully aims his car at Richie's and get two yards from the side door before SWERVING away. Kosher's passengers SHOUT as if in a roller-coaster. Richie takes aim at Hank's car. Richie and passengers LAUGH it up as his car turns quickly and narrowly misses. Hank aims at Richie's car and he and his passengers ROAR boisterously as he avoids Richie at the last moment. Kosher goes at Hank's car with mischievous smile and TURNS AWAY in the nick of time. The drivers and passengers are carried away with WILD LAUGHTER.

## EXTERIOR-AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS-GREENWICH VILLAGE-MANHATTAN-NIGHT

The avenue is very wide with news stands, restaurants and other commercial enterprises.

All three cars park on the right side and everybody gets out like cattle ready for a stampede. Hank closes the top and the last ones out slam the doors shut before the drivers lock up.

They proceed along the street, clumped together in a large conglomeration.

RICHIE

Now that we're in Greenwich Village, what're we gonna do?

Kosher notices a group of beatniks with a fair number of blacks. His eyes flash as it to answer Richie.

KOSHER  
(pointing in the beatniks' direction)  
The black boogies are in town!

The whole group roars. They walk half a block and spot a lone black man.

HANK, JEFF, RICHIE, SAL  
(in broken chorus)  
Hey, nigger!

THE OTHERS  
(in broken chorus)  
Hey, nigger!

KOSHER  
(shouting out loudly)  
Hey, nigger! Whose pussy was better last night, ya mother's  
or yer aunt's?

All laugh hysterically. They turn the corner on Bleeker Street.

EXTERIOR-BLEEKER STREET-GREENWICH VILLAGE –NIGHT

The atmosphere is obviously bohemian. Coffee shops and beatnick bars line the street.

They are moving along as before.

Another black man is seen.

EVERYBODY  
(in broken chorus)

Hey, coon!

KOSHER  
(at the top of his lungs)

Hey, coon! How's ya sister's bare ass feel while ya sucking  
huh tits?

Everybody bursts into raucous laughter. Kosher sees a black man  
holding hands with a young, white woman.

KOSHER  
Hey, lady. What's a matter? Ya like ta have a great big nigger  
cock up ya cunt?

The group's hysterical mirth is nearly out of control as they turn right  
on M'cDougal Street.

EXTERIOR-M'CDOUGAL STREET-GREENWICH VILLAGE-NIGHT

Black and white beatnicks are out in great numbers.

The group is still walking along in a bunch.

Kosher all but sticks out his neck into the crowd of bohemians.

KOSHER  
Greenwich Village? What the hell a they mean, "Greenwich  
Village"?  
It ain't "Greenwich Village". It's "Nigger Village". Get the  
coons all outa here and back ta the jungle!

(he turns to Hank)  
Ain't that fun, rankin' niggers?

HANK  
Yeah!

EXTERIOR-SURF AVENUE-CONEY ISLAND-OUTSIDE  
SCOOTERS-DAY

Coney Island is the rides and amusement district and Surf Avenue its main thoroughfare. It is busy during spring.

Vinny is right by the gate, talking with Hank and Jeff. Vinny is evidently under some pressure to get back in and work.

VINNY  
(looking hard at Hank)  
Remember what you missed that time you wouldn't go with us?

Hank nods and Jeff smiles.

VINNY  
(continuing)  
Some girls I met here from Amityville, Long Island; Indians and very friendly; tonight!

JEFF  
In my car.

All look at each other in agreement. Hank and Jeff walk off and Vinny goes back to his job.

INTERIOR-SCOOTERS-DAY

Vinny gets onto the back of a moving scooter to help a young, black girl. Organ music plays SOBRE LAS OLAS DEL MAR (LOVELIEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR).

EXTERIOR-JERICO TURNPIKE SERVICE ROAD-AMITYVILLE,  
LONG ISLAND-NIGHT

Trees and manicured grass are just off the road's shoulder. Well-kept, one-story wooden houses are seen in the distance.

Jeff pulls his car over to the side and stops. Hank and Vinny are seated in front, Vinny by the window. Jeff turns off the motor and all get out. They look around the girls and shortly after hearing VERA'S voice.

VERA

Vinny!

Vera, MARGIE and JOAN come toward them from fairly far off. Vera is dark-skinned, short and thin. Her hair is fluffy and seems to compliment her smooth, gentle-looking face which obviously draws Vinny to her. Margie and Joan are a little taller. They are more lacking in expression as they approach. Vinny's eyes light up upon seeing Vera. She starts running to him and they hug enthusiastically as they meet. Hank's features contort with disgust when the other girls come nearer.

HANK  
(to JEFF)

What kind of Indians? Niggers.

VERA  
(still in Vinny's arms)  
I didn't think you'd really come.

VINNY  
(whispering)  
I never thought I'd find the place.

They laugh with complete abandon, her head resating on Vinny's chest. She looks over Jeff's and Hank's way and points to the other girls, who are catching up.

VERA  
These are my friends, Margie and Joan.

Hank and Jeff frown and the girls respond by cautiously slowing their steps. Vinny kisses Vera's lips and opens Jeff's car so they can get in back. Hank tries to put his hand on Margie's buttocks and Margie draws back.

HANK  
Oh, shit!

Hank walks off in a huff and lights a cigarette. Jeff looks daggers at the car.

INTERIOR-BACK OF JEFF'S CAR-NIGHT

Vinny and Vera are in a prone embrace.

VINNY  
Vera, you're colored, aren't you?



VERA

Yes.

VINNY

Why did you tell me you were Indian?

VERA

I thought you'd stop seeing me if you knew.

(She holds his face and points it down at hers)  
Would you?

Vinny slowly shakes his head in the negative.

VINNY

We're all equal. The Supreme Court says so.

Contentment comes over Vera. She hugs and kisses him again.

VERA

I'm so glad I couldn't move the scooter that time or I wouldn't have known you! I start college next year and when I finish, we'll be free! We can go wherever we want just like that walk we took through town last Tuesday afternoon.

VINNY

We'll take lots more walks, lots of times.

The radio is playing YOUNG LOVE by SONNY JAMES. Their eyes meet. Vinny touches Vera's cheek and looks at her intensely a good while.

VINNY

I never thought. I just never thought---

VERA

What was that?

VINNY

(smiling)

Nothing.

Vinny kisses her passionately and she for him the same. He removes her blouse and she removes his shirt. They giggle, rub their foreheads together and cuddle in each others' arms again. He removes her brassiere and caresses her all over her back, kissing her neck and shoulders as her arms circle around him. He removes her dress and panties and she removes the rest of his clothing. Their cheeks meet gently and both sigh with tenderness up to the final moment. The music has stopped and the disc-jockey is announcing dedications. Vinny's lips are on hers and his right hand lies limply in her hair. Above them, Jeff's face can be seen peering through the window, sneering with resentment and contempt.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-OUTSIDE COOKY'S RESTAURANT-NIGHT

Vinny, Jeff, Hank, Kosher, Don and Richie are hanging out at the corner. Vinny is playing his portable radio loudly.

HANK

Turn that damned music down!

VINNY

(obeying but obviously surprised)

What're you sore at?

HANK

What am I sore at, he asks. Why do you think no one talked to you on the way back last night, because we were happy?

Vinny's mouth goes slightly ajar.

JEFF

We should thank you because your nigger put out and ours didn't.

Vinny bristles, trying vainly to control himself.

JEFF

(continuing)

And you put me out of my own car for it!

DON

C'mon, she put out for him, didn't she? You'd do the same---

JEFF

(interrupting)

That's not all. This guy's in love with black meat.

Kosher's, Don's and Richie's faces go completely blank with disbelief.

HANK

He's not shitt'n' you either.

(looking directly at Vinny with scorn)  
He went and kissed her on the lips!

Kosher bursts into wild laughter. Don and Richie contort as they buckle at the knees, turning sickly pale.

RICHIE  
(gagging out the words)  
You kissed a nigger on the lips. How could ya get past the smell?

DON  
And the greasy skin, ooch!

VINNY  
(to Richie)  
There was no smell.

(to Don)  
No greasy skin either.

(to everybody in general)  
She was like any other girl.

Kosher cackles shrilly. He mockingly hums THE WEDDING MARCH.

KOSHER  
Vinny walks down the street with his woolly headed mulatto kids, and his wahf, Jo Jo Brown!

VINNY

(fists clenching)

She's not Jo Jo Brown! She's Vera Gardner!

Richie's and Kosher's eyes meet instantly and smile break out on their faces. Hank, Don and Jeff stop dead in their tracks.

RICHIE

She ain't Jo Jo Brown! She's Vera Gardner!

Richie explodes into hysterics and the four others follow suit. Kosher and Richie are rolling on the sidewalk. Hank and Don are holding themselves up on cars. Jeff, irritable up to that moment, is doubled over with noiseless laughter.

KOSHER

She ain't Jo Jo Brown! She's Vera Gardner! Did you hear that one?

JEFF

Not Jo Jo Brown. Vera Gardner.

Vinny looks around frantically at each one of them, bewildered as if to say "This can't be happening to me". Richie is kicking the sidewalk just as Vinny had with "Harry, the Drunk" and the effect isn't lost on Vinny, who stares at him a good deal longer. Finally, Hank begins to come back to normal. He notices Vinny's confusion and approaches him with some sympathy.

HANK

(his laughter slowly abating)

You say she's like any other girl, Vinny.

(turning straight-faced)

Would you take her home and introduce her to your mother?

Vinny's attention goes from friend to friend. He hesitates many seconds before deciding on his reply.

VINNY

No.

HANK

(patting Vinny on the back)

Fine. That's the first logical thing you've said in the past two days. Now, don't you think the colored act differently from whites?

VINNY

I don't know. I never really knew one before.

HANK

(evidently annoyed again)

Well, who do you wanna know; them or us?

JEFF

He wants to know them. Listen to what else he did. He walked holding hands with her through Amityville in broad daylight, last Tuesday afternoon.

HANK

(eyes nearly bolting out of their sockets)

You walked holding hands with a nigger! I'm sure glad I wasn't with you! You must've really made a spectacle of yourself! Anyone who does that's sick!

(pointing to his head)  
He shows he's not right here!

(looking sternly at Vinny as his neck muscles tense)  
Those Village people we ranked two weeks ago, go out with  
niggers. Those Village characters are sick! You know that?  
They gotta have their heads examined! And I don't hang out  
with any sick people! So, get rid of that girl or don't come  
back here anymore!

VINNY  
(suddenly getting aggressive)  
What're you threatening me, you Jew bastard?

HANK  
No, you stupid guinea, stay on the avenue! Stay and get  
laughed off! You'll be called the "nigger marrier". And you'll be  
the butt of every joke in the whole damned neighborhood.

Hank makes a conspicuous point of walking to the other side of the  
street. Kosher follows, smirking back at Vinny. Jeff, Don and Richie  
likewise cross over in rapid succession.

HANK  
(looking over his shoulder at Vinny)  
The girl or us; make up your mind. And be thankful we're  
giving you this chance.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-OUTSIDE THE  
CHINESE LAUNDRY-NIGHT

Kosher, Hank, Don, Jeff and Richie are making small conversation.

EXTERIOR-AVNUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-OUTSIDE COOKY'S  
RESTAURANT-NIGHT

Vinny is leaning on a car alone. He turns up his portable radio, which is playing "RAINDROPS" by DEE CLARKE.

INTERIOR-DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM-DAY

A young receptionist is at the desk. Some patients are seated on chairs which line two adjacent walls.

Kosher looks impatient as the RECEPTIONIST is contacting the doctor on the intra-office phone.

RECEPTIONIST

Doctor, someone wants to see you.

Kosher fidgets while the receptionist waits. She is obviously listening to what is said at the other end.

RECEPTIONIST

(continuing)

He says it's important. It can't wait.

Several seconds elapse.

RECEPTIONIST

(to Kosher)

He'll be right over.

A slight interval passes before DR. ELLIOT ISAACSON walks through the office door in his white cloak. He is blond-haired and



well-proportioned. The doctor's countenance freezes at the sight of Kosher and he all but halts.

ELLIOT

What the hell are you doing here?

KOSHER

Please let me have some money. My unemployment ran out.

ELLIOT

(Shouting)

Nothing!

KOSHER

I've been doing my best to find work, Elliot.

ELLIOT

After what you did, I'll give you nothing! You killed Dad! And you broke Mother's heart. So, go sleep in your jalopy. Scrounge through the street like a common thief. But don't contaminate my office by setting foot in here again.

#### INTERIOR-HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE WAITING ROOM-DAY

It is a small space on the second story of a walk-up with stairs over by the end. A door bears the doctor's insignia.

Kosher is coming out of his brother's office. He closes the door, grins and shrugs as if to say, "Well, that was a nice try," then nonchalantly half-trots over to the stairs.

#### INTERIOR-STRAICASE-DAY

The staircase is narrow and on the dark side. It leads to the street.

Kosher goes rapidly down. He reaches the foyer when a HUGE FIGURE dressed in a rigidly pressed suit springs out of the shadows. Kosher stops abruptly and the huge figure pulls something from his vest pocket which Kosher evidently fears is a weapon, but turns out to be a credential.

HUGE FIGURE

(credential in front of him)

You're Private Stanley Isaacson, Fourth Regiment, Twenty-third Division, B Company, Fort Hood, Texas! Is that right?

KOSHER

I was, but I'm out of the army.

HUGE FIGURE

(shoving his identification in Kosher's face)

Lieutenant Goldstein of Army Intelligence!

(He retires the credential)

You're separated from the service, not discharges. You're supposed to go to reserve meetings every week and you haven't gone in eight months.

KOSHER

Oh, I never got around to it---

LIEUTENANT GOLDSTEIN

You know you can be court-martialed for AWOL?

KOSHER

But, but I planned to go. It's just---

LIEUTENANT GOLDSTEIN

(smiling broadly as his demeanor becomes more relaxed)

Don't worry. We're gonna give you a break.

EXTERIOR-ARMY BASE-DAY

The yard is surrounded by barracks on each side. Soldiers are in movement round about.

Background bugle music plays "YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW".

Kosher is wearing shabby civilian clothing. He reads his written instructions and looks around helter-skelter, trying to figure out where to go. After re-reading the orders, he turns toward one place and darts over.

INTERIOR-BARRACKS-DAY

Bunks are lined up on each side. Kosher's space is in mid-barracks.

Kosher is quickly changing into uniform. He makes a point of ignoring the BLACK SOLDIER to his right and turns to a WHITE SOLDIER by the other cot.

KOSHER

Missed too many reserve meetings, so they took me back for forty-five days.

The soldier displays a lack of interest and continues about his own things.

KOSHER

How much more time till assembly?

SOLDIER

Not much.

First call sounds.

EXTERIOR-ARMY BASE-DAY

Soldiers are preparing to go into formation. Kosher is hurriedly scampering about. The bugle calls assembly and everybody falls into line. Kosher runs in clumsily and just about makes it. His shirt is untucked on the left side. LIEUTENANT TURNER is in the center ready to give commands. He is twenty-three years old. His uniform is stiffly pressed and his thin, pointy face almost seems the same.

LIEUTENANT TURNER

Okay, attention!

Everybody snaps. Lieutenant Turner slowly and deliberately struts in front of everyone on the line.

LIEUTENANT TURNER

This'll be a regiment some day instead of a rag-tag mob.

(He turns to one soldier)

You're at attention!

The SOLDIER stiffens.

LIEUTENANT TURNER

At ease.

Everybody stands at ease.

LIEUTENANT TURNER

Attention!

Everybody snaps to attention again. The lieutenant gets to Kosher. He comes to a stop and looks him over with apparent scorn. He then eyes him directly.

LIEUTENANT TURNER

What's this sloppy dress, Private?

KOSHER

Fuck you, ya son of a---!

(His hand rises rapidly in front of his mouth)

Ooh, I forgot.

Lieutenant Turner's faces whitens and his eyes fly out blankly as he staggers back like someone hit by a tremendous blow. His hat falls, revealing shiny blond hair. He trembles and it is several seconds before he can even get out his words.

LIEUTENANT TURNER

(pointing a shaky finger at Kosher)

Soldier, you're confined to quarters immediately!

EXTERIOR-YARD OUTSIDE THE GUARD HOUSE-DAY

It is a relatively small space with tables on the right side; side of which leads to the court building.

Kosher is at a table, talking with CAPTAIN WILLIAMS, a hatless, balding, fortyish man who will be representing him.

KOSHER

Captain Williams, you won't believe this. I forgot I was in the army. They took me back for missing reserve meetings and I was only there fifteen minutes.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

(in fatherly fashion)

I already know about your case, and I'll do all I can for you. Just put everything in my hands.

The COLONEL comes over, flanked by a military policeman. The colonel is in his late fifties and is graying around the temples.

COLONEL

Private Isaacson, your time with your lawyer is up.

Kosher rises and follows the colonel. The colonel gestures toward the military policeman.

COLONEL

Sergeant Jackson will be standing guard over you. You're to obey all his orders while you're in his custody.

SERGEANT JACKSON is black. He is very dark complexioned, over six feet tall and muscular. His bearing has been serene up to that moment. Kosher's every facial line reflexively contorts in extreme disgust. He squints as if unable to bear such an ugly sight. His

nostrils open wide as if trying to escape foul air. Then he immediately tries to correct himself with an innocent, far-off look, but it's too late. The sergeant has already noticed. He stiffens. His facial muscles tense and his eyes shoot fire. Kosher then stares forlornly into space. A white, sandy-haired PRISONER moseys over to him, followed by his own GUARD.

PRISONER

(to Kosher)

Ah knows your troubles, friend. Ah knows 'cause Ah got 'em mahself. They gon' send you to Leavenworth. Now mah brother; they done send him to Leavenworth. He was the fahtnest guy in town before. Now he's the drunkenest guy. Oh, he don't tohk 'bout what happened.

(shaking his head in despair)

Two fahn sons out mammy got to be proud of; two fahn sons.

SERGEANT JACKSON

(pointing sharply)

Get over to that door and prepare to go to the court!

KOSHER

(gulping down the words as he follows the order)

Yes, sir.

SERGEANT JACKSON

I ain't a commissioned officer!

KOSHER

Uh, yes, Sergeant Jackson.

INTERIOR-MILITARY COURT-DAY

The room is not very spacious. There is a high bench in front with a witness stand adjacent to it, tables for each counsel and a small spectators section. A MILITARY JUDGE is seated at the bench and each counsel is at his appropriate table. The BAILIFF is standing near the left hand entrance.

Sergeant Jackson escorts Kosher into court as he all but pushes him. He directs him to Captain Williams' table and leaves in a huff. The bailiff has a page-long paper in his hand and reads from it.

BAILIFF

Private Stanley Isaacson; insubordination!

Captain Williams turns Kosher so he faces the judge.

BAILIFF

(continuing)

This charge states that on the morning of April 16, 1959, Private Stanley Isaacson was at assembly and, when reprimanded by Lieutenant Arthur Turner for sloppy dress, did shout at Lieutenant Turner using profane language. How does the defendant plead, guilty or not guilty?

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

My client pleads guilty.

Kosher's frightened face turns flush at Captain Williams. Captain Williams nods as if to assure Kosher he knows what he's doing. Kosher relaxes somewhat and Captain Williams motions for him to sit down. Captain Williams turns his attention to the judge.



CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

Sir, I wish to present to you the very special circumstances surrounding this case. My client was called back from the reserves without the benefit of basic and actually forgot he was in the army. Yes, he'd been delinquent in his reserve duty. He'd admitted it and come willingly to do his make-up active and in this unfortunate incident, his tongue slipped. My client then made every attempt to correct himself with the lieutenant, who was completely unresponsive.

PROSECUTOR

Sir, if I may get a word in here, I would like to call Lieutenant Turner to testify about yesterday's events.

JUDGE

Lieutenant Tuerner, you may come to the witness stand.

Lieutenant Turner walks up to the stand. The bailiff puts a Bible in his hand.

JUDGE

Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

LIEUTENANT TURNER

(stiffly)

I do.

PROSECUTOR

Lieutenant Turner, please tell us what transpired at yesterday's assembly.

LIEUTENANT TURNER

I was addressing my troops at line-up, when I saw this soldier atrociously dressed. I called it to his attention and, instead of squaring the matter away, he answered me back brazenly and used foul language.

PROSECUTOR

How did you respond to this provocation?

LIEUTENANT TURNER

I turned him in and charged him, of course.

The prosecutor walks back to his table, leaving the witness to Captain Williams. Captain Williams strolls up to begin cross-examination.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

Lieutenant Turner, after my client addressed you as you describe, did he or did he not immediately utter the words, "I forgot"?

LIEUTENANT TURNER

That didn't matter! He committed insubordination and I turned him in anyway.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

I see. No further questions.

Lieutenant Turner leaves the stand.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

I would like to call my client as a witness.

Kosher slowly walks up to the stand and takes his place there. The bailiff puts the Bible to his hand.

JUDGE

Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

KOSHER

I do.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

Private Isaacson, please state in your own words, what happened yesterday and everything that led up to it.

Kosher smiles nervously.

KOSHER

Well, like my lawyer says; like the captain says, they told me I didn't do my reserve duty and I gotta go back. I says, "Okay, you're right. I gotta go back." And I was there fifteen minutes and I forgot. I tried to explain that to the lieutenant, but he just wouldn't listen.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

Would you return to your company and do your duty correctly now if you could?

KOSHER

(pleadingly)

Yes, if they'd only let me.

Captain Williams goes back to his table. The prosecutor goes out to question Kosher.

PROSECUTOR

Is that the way you talk to people in civilian life?

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

(leaping to his feet)

Objection, sir! We are not concerned here with what my client does or doesn't do in civilian life. Our only interest is what he did in the army.

JUDGE

Objection sustained.

PROSECUTOR

No more questions.

The judge motions Kosher off the stand and Kosher walks back to the table like a doomed man. Captain Williams faces the bench, obviously prepared for something special.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

Sir, I would like to call Lieutenant Turner back as a defense witness.

The judge nods toward Lieutenant Turner. Lieutenant Turner goes to the stand and the bailiff puts the Bible to his hand.

JUDGE

Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

LIEUTENANT TURNER

I do.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

Lieutenant Turner, the Armed Forces Training Manual calls for an officer to reason with an enlisted man who refuses to obey an order. Why wasn't that procedure followed in this case?

LIEUTENANT TURNER

(bristling)

I have never been spoken to so insolently in all my life! Something has to be done about those upstarts and punks before they run wild through the country, trying to take it over!

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

No further questions, Lieutenant. You may step down.

Lieutenant Turner leaves the stand.

CAPTAIN WILLIAMS

(to the judge)

Sir, this reasoning speaks for itself, I feel. I ask that my client be dealt with leniently in view of the circumstances presented to this court and the fact that he pleaded guilty, saving the army the expense of a trial.

PROSECUTOR

(standing up)

Sir, this defendant committed flagrant insubordination and some example has to be made.

The prosecutor and defense attorney sit down and everybody awaits the judge's decision. Kosher is in a cold sweat as he fidgets tensely.

KOSHER

Taking into account everything that's been shown here, I see no need to send this soldier to the disciplinary barracks.

Kosher breaks out into a joyous smile.

JUDGE

(continuing)

But---

Kosher tenses up and stares apprehensively again.

JUDGE

(continuing and looking straight at Kosher)

---at the end of this proceeding, you're to report to the colonel's office where you're going to be dishonorably discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States of America and forfeit all pay and allowances.

Kosher bursts into euphoristic joy once more.

KOSHER

(shouting)

Discharge me! Discharge me any way you want! Just don't send me to Leavenworth!

INTERIOR-TONY'S PIZZERIA-DAY

Four tables, two in the middle of each aisle, are occupied. On the right side, coming in from the door are Hank, Jeff, Sal and Don. At

the table to their read are four others. On the left, are Barry, Vinny, Richie and one other. Four more are seated in the space behind them.

The juke box is playing PHILADELPHIA, U.S.A., when Kosher appears at the door.

HANK

Hey, look what the wind just blew in!

KOSHER

I'm outa the army!

(He half sprints over to the occupied spaces.)

The first thing I did; I ran up ta my lieutenant and I told him, "Fuck you, ya son of a bitch!"

Laughter springs forth from every quarter.

KOSHER

(continuing and facing the right hand tables)

Ya shoulda heard him in the courtroom.

(mockingly)

"I have never been spoken to so insolently in all my life."

(turning to the left tables)

The judge said, "You are going to be dishonorably discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States of America." I told him, "Discharge me any way ya feel like! I don't need yer army anyhow!"

The guffaws get really strong as a few of them throw their hands and faces down on the table. Kosher takes a paper out of his pocket, unfolds it and puts it in front of them.

KOSHER

(continuing)

And here it is; my dishonorable discharge!

(circling around)

C'mon and take a look at it. I told ya I don't give a fuck, didn't I?

More roar and cackle. Kosher turns to Tony at the back counter.

KOSHER

Cokes for everyone on me, Tony!

Kosher goes toward Hank and Jeff to get into the seat with them. The music stops and Kosher detains himself in mid-move.

KOSHER

Uh oh! And one other thing; they put this nigger sergeant stand'n' guard over me. I said, "I don't want no niggers guard'n' me!

Everybody explodes into utter hysterics. Some are rolling on the floor.

JEFF

(to Hank)

I believe Kosher, too. Ya know, he'd do it. He's crazy enough.

Hank nods in agreement.



KOSHER  
(continuing)

They took him off me real quick and put him on some coon prisoner where he belonged.

Tony brings out the sodas.

KOSHER  
(squeezing into the seat)

And now here comes the cokes. Let's drink 'em down good 'cause we got somethina celebrate. No more shmucks in uniform!

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-NIGHT

Kosher, Hank, Jeff, Vinny, Sal, Don, Richie and eight others are on the corner.

Background music plays ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN by CHUCK BERRY.

Everybody is in a jovial mood. Kosher bellows something and they burst out laughing.

EXTERIOR-BELT PARKWAY-DAY

Background music continues playing ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN by CHUCK BERRY.

Kosher is driving his car at high speed as Hank, Jeff, Vinny, Sal, Don and Richie laugh it up inside.

EXTERIOR-BOWERY-MANHATTAN-DAY

Background music still plays ROLL OVER BEETHOVEN by CHUCK BERRY.

Kosher, Hank, Jeff, Sal, Don and Richie walk by a group of derelicts. Kosher screams something at them and they jump in their ragged clothing. Everyone roars hysterically.

EXTERIOR-MERMAID AVENUE-CONEY ISLAND-DAY

It is a fairly wide street with tenement and apartment buildings, one block from the Coney Island rides.

Kosher is driving his car.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

In front with Kosher are Hank and Vinny. In back are Jeff, Richie, Don and Sal.

EXTERIOR-MERMAID AVENUE-DAY

Kosher stops near a group of YOUNG BLACKS on a corner. Mischief is in his eyes.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

HANK

Oh, shit, I forgot.

VINNY

None of this “nigger racing in Coney Island.”

KOSHER

(contemptuously)

Don't be scared of your own shadows.

EXTERIOR-MERMAID AVENUE-DAY

Kosher leans out of the window and conspicuously displays himself.

KOSHER

Hey! There's too many niggers here! Why the hell don't ya all go back to Harlem?

Kosher gets all the way in again as the blacks of an instant stop what they're doing and run agitatedly toward the car. Kosher squeals the tires and jerks forward half a short block. He shows himself out the window once more and smirks back at them.

INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

JEFF

Kosher, you're out of your fuckin' mind.

EXTERIOR-MERMAID AVENUE-DAY

Eight blacks with rage on their faces get into their own car and start it up.

Kosher burns rubber a second time and a chase begins. He turns the corner on West 16 Street.

#### EXTERIOR-WEST16 STREET-DAY

The street is narrower than Mermaid Avenue.

Kosher's car speeds through and the blacks SQUEAL around after them. Kosher TURNS LOUDLY onto Surf Avenue.

#### EXTERIOR-SURF AVENUE-DAY

Kosher goes at high speed and the blacks' car turns in frenzied pursuit.

#### INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

KOSHER  
(mirthfully)

The cops see us; niggers are after us.

#### EXTERIOR-SURF AVENUE-DAY

They run rapidly, going through many red lights until Surf Avenue curves around and takes them under the elevated subway to become Ocean Parkway.

#### EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY-DAY

Kosher continues but diminishes speed as they near Avenue U and he sees that the blacks are no longer behind him. He turns the corner at Avenue S.

#### EXTERIOR-AVENUE S-DAY

Kosher slowly brings the car to a stop, hardly able to keep a straight face.

#### INTERIOR-CAR-DAY

Kosher puts his elbows on the steering wheel and roars with hoarse laughter, nearly falling over from sheer hysterics but obviously, no one else is amused.

#### EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-DAY

Vinny, Jeff, Richie and Don are on the corner outside Cooky's, obviously talking about something unpleasant. Kosher is coming toward them.

JEFF  
(pointing)

There he is.

VINNY  
Someone's gotta tell him.

Kosher arrives but is stopped in his tracks by Don's aggressive approach.

DON

Now, listen here! We've had enough of this "nigger racing in Coney Island." For one thing, Vinny works there and you can screw him up bad. And besides, how the hell da you know what'll happen when you're getting us outta there? Maybe your car'll stall. Or maybe they got a faster set of wheels than we do. Niggers are strong, if ya ever saw them fight on television. And one of these days, we're gonna get the crap knocked out of us; I mean the living crap, like ya never saw before. So knock it off! Or go ta Coney Island your fuckin' self.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE L NEAR EAST 15 STREET-DAY

Kosher's car is parked and he is standing on the sidewalk with two FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLDS, one of whom is carrying a huge, new muffler and exhaust pipe. Kosher looks flabbergasted.

KOSHER

How the hell'd you get this?

FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD

I did a nice job getting it off, didn't I?

KOSHER

You know, they'll pull me in just for selling this without papers?

Both look speechless at him.

KOSHER  
(continuing)

Get the hell away from me and come back next week with small stuff like always.

Kosher gets quickly into his car and starts it up, leaving in a huff.

The fifteen-year-olds go their way and reach the corner.

Someone gets out of an old brown Ford in front of the two youths. In an instant, they notice it's Cerello in civilian clothes. He grabs the one with the muffler by his collar, forcing him to drop it, and pushes him into the other, knocking him completely over.

CERELLO  
Okay, you wise punks, ya didn't think I work overtime, did ya?

Cerello throws down the one he'd grabbed, then pulls them both up roughly by the backs of their shirts.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN AVENUE NEAR KING'S HIGHWAY-NIGHT

Hank is driving his convertible with the top down.

With Hank in front are Vinny and Jeff. In back are Don, Richie and Sal. They are in a festive mood as they reach King's Highway and makes a LOUD TURN onto it.

EXTERIOR-KING'S HIGHWAY-NIGHT

They are driving through in Hank's convertible.

JEFF

(turning more somber)

You ever hear of Big Red Goldberg?

DON

Who didn't? Why?

JEFF

He said he and his friends would beat the shit out of us if he ever saw us here again.

VINNY

How the hell can he notice if we're here?

JEFF

He spotted us other times, didn't he?

HANK

This highway's his territory and he don't like us hanging out anywhere near it. But he can't see who's on wheels.

JEFF

I sure hope he can't. You know this guy. He's six feet tall and he's built like a tank. His muscles are where his bones aren't. I heard of him knocking the crap out of three guys at once. It's not even punk to punk out with him.

DON

So what's that have to do with now? This street's big. Take a look at it.



(He points around)  
And we'll be turning on Coney Island Avenue soon.

They are under the subway station. A middle-aged BLACK MAN is walking along. Vinny leaps to his feet.

VINNY  
Hey! There's a nigger!

Hank slows down.

VINNY  
Nigger!

THE OTHERS  
Nigger!

The man jumps forward and moves more rapidly.

VINNY  
(completely carried away)  
We just don't give a fuck!

A big figure hanging out with others by the corner turns half-way around to watch the commotion. He picks his head up. It is BIG RED GOLDBERG. He's everything that had been described. He scowls as they ride away, evidently noticing who they are.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET OUTSIDE  
COOKY'S-NIGHT

Hanging around casually are Don, Hank, Sal, Jeff, Richie, Vinny, Barry and eight others. Some are sipping sodas. Others are chatting

in groups of two or three about nothing in particular. For the moment, nobody notices a four-door, light blue Ford that pulls up alongside them at East 16 Street by the curb. A BLOND PASSENGER in front sticks his head out of the window.

BLOND PASSENGER

Hey!

Faces turn, one by one.

BLOND PASSENGER

(continuing)

Avenue J punks! We're from the Highway and we'll knock the shit outta ya!

Many more look their way, some aggressively. Richie, Don, Vinny and three others turn and lunge at them in helter-skelter fashion. Richie gets to them first, glaring with fire in his eyes. He takes his by now empty bottle and flings it in their direction. It hits the car and ten vicious looking types come pouring out. One of them is Big Red Goldberg. They charge at all those in their way. The DRIVER jerks his door open, running furiously around the car and grabbing the first one he can find. Shock waves are sent through the Avenue J group. Richie, Don and Vinny swing back savagely. Hank spots Big Red Goldberg and immediately throws a bottle at his head. It hits its target with a thud and bounces off. Red goes straight for Hank.

HANK

(eyes spinning in orbit)

Fuckin' son of a bitch!

Red Goldberg heists Hank up by the scruff of his collar before Hank can make a move and Hank looks light as a feather. He turns him

around and throws him onto a car, then winds up and punches him so hard he bounces off like a rubber ball and falls helplessly onto the sidewalk. Two others start kicking Hank and Richie runs over to help him. Red Goldberg turns to Richie and kicks him in the groin. Richie keels over. Red then looks toward Vinny and Don, who are scrapping aggressively and getting the better of two of his friends. He steps hurriedly toward them and smashes Vinny solidly, high on the nose. Vinny hits the pavement with blood squirting out. Red Goldberg gets a hold of Don, heaves him to the sidewalk and stomps him on his groin and stomach as Don shrieks in pain. Red's friends have spread out and are randomly punching and kicking anyone they can find. Barry tries to defend himself, but is overwhelmed and easily knocked to the ground and pummeled. Sal is beating up his attacker, but three others set on him and he falls as well. Jeff has been on the side of the battle, swinging his belt buckle in every direction, but hitting almost nobody and landing softly when he does. Red Goldberg goes to get him and Jeff quickly drops his front and takes flight, but at that moment, sirens are heard. Red and the others from King's Highway make a hasty run for their car, start it up and speed away. The police car SCREECHES to a halt and Cerello gets out. He notices Hank's convertible parked nearby, runs to it and hits it with his club, then turns toward the few still on their feet.

#### CERELLO

(brandishing his night-stick in front of him)

You fuckin' wise guys, I'll show ya.

Cerello wades in and swings his club at everyone in sight. A few get out of the way. Others are hit on their legs and backs and one on his ribs, who contorts in agony and falls. Cerello spots Jeff and breathes hotly as he runs after him.

CERELLO

(to Jeff)

Now you're really gonna get it!

Jeff is unable to get away. Cerello crashes his club on Jeff's head. Jeff staggers to the pavement and bleeds profusely from the huge wound opened. A paddy-wagon with more policemen arrives and re-enforcements come in other speeding police cars with sirens howling and lights flashing. The area is in pandemonium and Cerello grabs nearly everyone who's fallen and roughly shoves them into the wagon. Richie is thrown in. Vinny is grabbed off the sidewalk and tossed in too, still holding his upped features in pain as a camera snaps his picture. Cerello pulls Jeff off the ground and jerks him forward repeatedly on the way to the wagon. His picture is also taken. Don and Sal are picked up by other POLICEMEN and put inside the van. The huge vehicle goes off, preceded by Cerello's car. Hank has been left semi-conscious on the sidewalk. An ambulance comes. Three attendants put him on a stretcher and carry him in.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE L PARK-DAY

Huddled on a bench are Jeff, Richie, Hank, Vinny and Barry. The sun is out in full force, but a drabness pervades. Vinny's nose is thickly bandaged. Welts are all over Hank's face and he is perpetually wincing. A jagged cut clearly appears on top of Jeff's head.

HANK

(voice more high-pitched than usual as he speaks with difficulty)  
Unbelievable; like in the Frankenstein pictures. I threw the bottle. But he just kept coming.

VINNY

(exhibiting a copy of the Daily News)

Look at this paper from two days ago. We're celebrities.

Vinny unfolds the newspaper to their story and Hank gets up and limps over to take a look. He stares numbly at it.

JEFF

Such celebrities I'm out of a job. My supervisor called me down yesterday and fired me. No young hoodlums work in his office, he says. I explained, I never got in trouble before. I was just hanging out there when it all happened. His old Irish face gives me this look of "I know you're lying."

(His eyes wander to the surroundings)

Everything's gone; my promotion, all I worked for.

Hank hobbles expressionlessly back to his place.

VINNY

My boss was a nicer guy. He said he raised hell too when he was young so forget it.

RICHIE

(signaling for Vinny to pass the paper)

I was even luckier. None of the newspapers took down my address and anyone can have my name.

JEFF

(wryly)

Anyone can have mine too. But not everyone looks like me.

The paper gets to him. He is sitting next to Vinny. His picture is spread over half a page, with Cerello lifting him. Vinny's is to the right on the other half, complete with all the dripping blood.

VINNY

(taking the paper again and reading the article)

Get a load of this bullshit" They say we all jumped Cerello when he came to question us about stolen auto parts.

Everybody except Hank chuckles. Richie reaches over and snatched the paper from Vinny.

RICHIE

(pointing to the caption)

"Hero cop single-handedly tackles gang of thugs."

(looking at the print)

"Patrolman Anthony Cerello's devotion to duty combined with his agility enabled him to subdue and arrest the teen-age hoodlums who pounced on him with intent to murder after he---", oh fuck this!

Richie throws down the paper in disgust. It lands near Vinny and Vinny retrieves it. He looks a good while at his own picture, running his index finger over it.

VINNY

(smiling)

I sure look bad.

Mild laughs follow.

JEFF

And we're up for assault. Would you believe that?

Spontaneous laughter erupts, even with Hank, as best he can force it.

RICHIE

Anyone know about Don Greeberg?

JEFF

His family's letting him rot for a while to teach him a lesson. But they'll bail him out.

VINNY

That nigger I scored with three months ago; she suddenly showed up at the scooters again. She comes running up to me, "Vinny, Vinny, what happened?" I said, "What the hell da you care?" Jesus, did she cry. She put her hands over her eyes and ran like the devil's chasing her.

(He stares straight ahead for a few seconds.)

Well, it's her fault. She should've looked for one of her own.

BARRY

Listen to what happened to me. They didn't pull me in but my parents came in screaming with the paper at breakfast. I told them I wasn't there. Now, I have to be careful for a while about wearing high-neck shirts when they're around.

Barry pulls out his T-shirt to show bruises all over his chest. That sends Vinny, Jeff and Richie rolling off the bench.

EXTERIOR-OCEAN PARKWAY BETWEEN AVENUES K AND L-DAY

Kosher has just parked on the service road going toward Coney Island. He gets out into the traffic lane and calmly shuts the door. He walks a few feet and prepares to cross over when he turns around to the sound of rapid footsteps and sees a policeman running in his direction. In a few seconds, he notices it's Cerello and doubles his pace in fright, but Cerello easily gets him. Cerello grabs Kosher by the back of his shirt and Kosher gasps with mouth wide open.

CERELLO

You lousy bastard, I got ya now!

(He throws Kosher face first against a nearby car.)  
Ya thought you'd get away with it, didn't ya?

(He kicks Kosher several times as he frisks him.)  
I had them change my shifts 'cause of you. Ya didn't think I knew what you were up to. And now I nailed ya with the goods. Your little pals squealed on ya and you'll be up shit's creek for a good while.

A crowd begins to gather, made up partly of ELDERLY PEOPLE who'd been seated at the bicycle mall. Cerello grabs the back of Kosher's shirt again and takes his club in the other hand. He marches Kosher toward his own police car, walking sideways at a right angle to him.

CERELLO

Trafficking in stolen auto parts.

Cerello whacks Kosher's chest with the stick.



KOSHER

Ow!

CERELLO  
(continuing)

Contributing to the delinquency of minors.

Cerello whacks Kosher again. Kosher comically contorts as he lurches forward.

CERELLO  
(continuing)

And for good measure, not paying your traffic fines.

Cerello hits him on the chest again.

KOSHER

Ooh! Stop it! Will ya?

CERELLO  
(almost chuckling)

What's a matta? Ya don't like this show after all the others ya put on?

Cerello puts the club back in its holster, takes out his keys and opens the car. He flings Kosher into the back and gets quickly into the driver's seat himself, slamming the door shut. The siren starts howling and the red light flashes as Cerello revs up the motor and drives Kosher off. The crowd of onlookers has gotten bigger and many shake their heads in disapproval.

INTERIOR-ARTIE'S POOLROOM-DAY

Hank, Vinny, Sal, Don, Richie and Barry are seated on a bench. Jeff walks in front of the group with an envelope in his right hand.

JEFF

Bail for Kosher.

Hank, Vinny, Sal, Don and Richie give Jeff five dollars. Jeff gets to Barry and Barry hesitates.

BARRY

Why should I bail him out?

JEFF

This was a dead neighborhood before he got out of the army. He came here and livened it up.

Barry half-heartedly hands Jeff his five dollars. Jeff carefully puts the envelope into his pocket and goes off to play pool.

INTERIOR-HALLWAY OF KING'S COUNTY CRIMINAL COURT-DAY

The large corridor has many doorways leading to the various courtrooms. Typewritten signs on the walls show the court dockets.

Don, Vinny, Jeff, Sal and three others are huddled outside the entrance to their court part.

DON

Kosher's gonna meet us here when his hearing's over.

Kosher appears in a few seconds as if from nowhere.

KOSHER

They continued my case for now, but let me tell you what went on yesterday!

Everyone gets a little closer.

KOSHER

(continuing)

The kids in Juvenile Court took it back that I put them up to it!

(unable to contain his laughter)

They must've believed it that I know organized crime guys who can knock them off! My lawyer even told me the judge gave them a lecture on character, good citizenship and telling the truth.

Everyone guffaws and Kosher signals for them to keep on listening.

KOSHER

(continuing)

But that's not all. Some old cockers were watching when I got arrested. One a them went to the stationhouse and told the captain I wasn't resisting. Cerello put that in with the other stuff 'cause he clubbed me on the way to the car. And now this guy's gonna testify in court!

All their features break out into euphoria.

KOSHER

(continuing)

That fuck musta got tired of feeding the pigeons. He comes on with my lawyer, "I fight dees from years ahgo."

The others snicker.

KOSHER  
(continuing)

But now listen to the payoff. I went and did some investigating on my own. Anyone know who called the cops when they bagged you guys?

DON

Who?

KOSHER

Dr. Steinfeld, the dentist from Sixteenth Street near the corner. And he saw the whole thing and reported it right away. He told them on the phone, other guys were beating you up. And it turns out they didn't even get arrested! It wasn't like Cerello put it down on the complaint! So now Cerello's in trouble! They may not believe any of us but they sure will believe Dr. Steinfeld. He's a good, solid citizen!

VINNY  
(smiling elatedly)

That means we'll get off!

KOSHER

You guys, scott free! Me, they got me for not paying my tickets. I'll lose my license and have to shell out some more money for getting it in late. But Cerello, they transferred him to the Bedford Stuyvesant!

THE OTHERS

(in broken chorus and some leaping up for joy)

Yahoo!

KOSHER

(continuing)

He'll see niggers every time he opens up his eyes!

A group of blacks walks by and glances disapprovingly at them.

JEFF

(nudging Kosher's shoulder)

Kosher, not here.

The whole group starts walking out.

KOSHER

(continuing)

He thought he'd rid of me and instead, I got us all rid a him.

INTERIOR-CHINESE RESTAURANT-DAY

It is a second-floor walk-up, anywhere in New York City. Tables are spread throughout the large room.

Kosher, Hank, Vinny, Richie, Don, Sal and Jeff enter through the stairwell and take seats at a big table. There are no other customers except a middle-aged black couple, seated a few spaces away. Kosher looks at the black couple with an evil twinkle in his eyes. Two waiters are talking at a far end of the restaurant and Kosher turns his attention their way.

KOSHER

Hey, chink! Serve the goddamned niggers, will ya?

The BLACK MAN springs out of his chair. The BLACK WOMAN gets up to restrain him.

BLACK WOMAN

Henry, don't you pay no attention to that white trash.

Kosher rises and gapes at the woman.

KOSHER

Trash? Who ya think ya callin' "trash"? Look at me and look at you. I wasn't born all dirty.

Henry tried to lunge but the woman holds him back.

HENRY

That's my wife! Don't you dare to insult my wife---!

Hank, Vinny, Richie, Don, Sal and Jeff stand up, poised to fight if they have to.

BLACK WOMAN

(trying to ease Henry back into his seat)

Don't you pay him no mind. Now just don't you pay him no mind. He ain't worth it.

INTERIOR-BRIGHTON EXPRESS-DAY

Hank and Jeff are squeezed in during the morning rush hour. Hank is wearing a suit and tie, but Jeff is casually dressed. The train is humming through the underground.

HANK

Jeff, I'm quitt'n' the avenue.

Jeff looks at him but doesn't reply.

HANK

(continuing)

Remember, I told you it all had to end sometime?

Jeff nods.

HANK

(continuing)

Well, the time's now. I was lucky this once. Maybe next time, things won't work out so hot.

The train stops at Atlantic Avenue to pick up and discharge passengers.

HANK

(continuing)

I still got my job and I recovered from the beating. So why push things too far?

JEFF

I got lucky in another way. The D.A. dropped the charges.

The door closes and the train goes off again.

JEFF

(continuing)

But I had to sign a paper saying I can't sue the city. That means no money from this. And no job's coming because I can't get any references. Not much I have to lose.

HANK

But I do. And I won't be hanging out in the same places anymore.

(almost tearfully)

I guess I'll miss it for a while. But I'll get used to the new thing. Look me up at my house when you can. Let's not be two strangers.

They slow down to stop at DeKalb Avenue.

JEFF

(continuing)

I'll see you right away tonight, just as soon as I'm through collecting.

The train stops, the door opens and Jeff has to hurry out.

JEFF

(continuing with a bitter-sweet smile)

---and useless job-hunting.

Jeff runs off and the door quickly closes. The train continues with Hank in it.

EXTERIOR-AVENUE J AND EAST 16 STREET-NIGHT



Kosher, Jeff and Barry are hanging out at the corner. Kosher obviously has something on his mind.

KOSHER

(to Jeff)

Still can't find work, right?

JEFF.

Right.

KOSHER

Suppose I told ya ya won't have to sweat it out anymore?

JEFF

I'd ask why not.

KOSHER

'Cause I got something better, that's why and I'll explain it now. Ya know, every girl's a whore at heart. There's those who hide it and those who don't. Ever think of that?

JEFF

I sure have.

KOSHER

Well, with almost my last penny I had them widen the trunk of my car and put some breathing holes in it. Then I made it over like a bed. And that's where they can hide it all! Five bucks a couple each hour!

Jeff glances at Kosher as if to say "What a great idea!"

KOSHER

(continuing)

No worry about the cops! Ya just drive along and in case they do catch ya, ya can pay them off on this.

JEFF

Sounds like just what the doctor ordered!

KOSHER

(continuing)

The Mafia ain't involved in this kind a thing, so they don't give a shit what we do. And it can be big stuff if we save up and get some more sets of wheels.

(He beams at Jeff)

No more gett'n' fired by some turd. The whole operation'll be ours!

Jeff beams back at Kosher. A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN walks by. Kosher does a mocking tip of a hat.

KOSHER

Good evening. How's ya doughnut?

The woman hurries away and Jeff and Barry laugh.

KOSHER

(as if to all passers-by)

I don't give a fuck!

(turning to Jeff)

You with me on this, Jeff?

JEFF.

Yes.

They give each other some skin. Two more WOMEN go past them.

KOSHER

(to each one respectively)

So how's ya doughnut? So how's ya doughnut?

Barry and Jeff burst into laughter once more.

KOSHER

(to Barry)

You with me, Rosenberg?

BARRY

No.

KOSHER

(with a puzzled look)

Why ain't you with me, Rosenberg?

Barry tries to start answering, but Kosher cuts him off before he can.

KOSHER

Okay, do what your old man says. Study. Go ta college. It won't turn out to help at all. When it's over, you'll live like a nigger.

BARRY

(turning around to look Kosher right in the face)

You know something? Every other word out of your mouth is “niggers” this and “niggers” that. There isn’t a time I’ve seen you when you’re not saying something about “niggers”. What do you have against the colored anyway?

Kosher nearly freezes in his tracks as his orbit and he stares open-mouthed at Barry. Jeff gives Barry a surprised look as well but much milder than Kosher’s. Kosher then slowly moves his head in every direction, trying to think of an answer to this question. Several seconds elapse before he can even begin.

KOSHER

(enunciating the words slowly)

Niggers are filthy people. They don’t take baths and stink up the street wherever they walk.

(more rapidly and gesticulating violently)

Niggers don’t go to work! All they ever wanna do’s hang around the corner like a bunch a bums!

Jeff takes the answer normally but Barry stares blankly ahead. Three more women walk by. Kosher does the mocking hat-tip gesture.

KOSHER

(to each one respectively)

So how’s ya doughnut? So how’s ya doughnut? So how’s ya doughnut?

The women scamper off. Jeff and Barry laugh and Kosher motions and quips to others who happen along as background music plays SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL by BILL HALEY AND HIS COMETS.

