

The Seven Courts

By

Lauren Meley

SATURDAY AFTERNOON, SUMMER, 3PM - NICK'S FRONT STOOP

The year is 1993. Nick, 10-years-old, gets his bike ready. He pumps up the tires, shines the handlebars, ties his shoes, puts his Tamagotchi in his pocket, kicks away the kick stand, and finally climbs on the seat.

OTS: NICK SPEEDING AROUND HIS COURT IN CIRCLES.

CLOSE UP: HIS TIRES ON THE BLACK, FRESH PAVEMENT.

Nick lives in a neighborhood comprised of 7 separate courts. All Tudor-style townhouses. As he bikes around his court, we notice there are is not a single car parked anywhere.

Nick stops circling. He bikes to the entrance of his court and stops. The camera stays at his back. We see a sign that reads "NEW PAVEMENT. NO CARS."

3 kids speed by him on their bikes.

A younger kid trails behind them on his Radio Flyer tricycle.

It's clear the new pavement has created some sort of car-free, Skateland-like kid-zone throughout the neighborhood.

Nick turns his hat around so it faces backward. The camera counter-balances this movement and we finally see Nick's face.

He bends over the handlebars and enters the larger neighborhood circle. He bikes fast, and faster. He catches up to the three boys.

NICK
Hey, guys.

NICK
Hey, guys!

BOY 1
Hey Nick.

NICK
You wanna race today?

BOY 2
Why? So I can beat you again?

(CONTINUED)

BOY 3

Yeah, so he can beat you again?

NICK

No. I just... thought it was fun. I was thinking we could maybe do two ramps this time and--

BOY 1

Boring!

BOY 2

Yeah, that sounds totally lame.

BOY 3

We're doing speed trials today. To see who can make it around fastest.

The 3 boys stop at a cone with a flag in it. Nick stops too.

BOY 1

You start here.

Boy 3 pulls out his Power Rangers watch.

BOY 3

I'll time you.

NICK

Ok.

Nick readies himself at the starting line. Boy 2 grabs the flag and holds it out in front of Nick.

BOY 3

On your mark. Get set. Go!

Boy 2 waves the flag, like a Nascar race, and Nick is off. He speeds around the large neighborhood circle. We see him pass the entrances of court after court.

About halfway through we notice a young boy, about Nick's age, hopelessly trying to put an old banana-seat bike together. The young boy looks like he's just about given up. Nick continues riding. He passes the little boy on the tricycle, young girls drawing with sidewalk chalk, older boys on skateboards, girls with girly baskets and girly stuff on their bikes, older girls wearing roller-blades and midriff shirts and cool sunglasses, little boys in Power Wheels cars, and even two boys who put a cat on a skateboard and are dragging it around.

Nick reaches the finish line. The 3 boys are gone.

(CONTINUED)

Nick takes this in. Clearly he was dumped and it hurts. He looks around in vain.

NICK
(still out of breath)
Guys? Hey? What was my time? Guys?

Nick throws his bike and himself to the ground. He lays in the middle of the newly paved street, looking up at the sky.

Suddenly a girl in a girly bike almost runs him over. The whole group giggles and keeps riding.

GIRL 1
Sorry!

Nick gets up, brushes himself off and gets back on his bike. He begins biking again, slowly, around the circle. He runs into the boy trying to put his bike together. Nick stops.

NICK
Hey.

BOY
Hey.

NICK
You need help with that?

BOY
It was my mom's from the 60's. It's busted. I don't want to ride it anyway.

NICK
Well, do you have another bike?

BOY
No.

NICK
Want to ride mine for a little bit?

BOY
No. Thanks anyway.

Nick puts his bike down on the grass and sits next to the boy. He examines the bike.

NICK
Yeah, that's a mess. My name is Nick.

BOY

Peter.

NICK

Seriously, take my bike for a few laps. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience I think. I mean, how often do they pave the whole neighborhood?

Peter doesn't respond.

NICK

I saw you on the bus last week. You're new right?

PETER

My parents got a divorce, so...

NICK

So how about you take my bike for a lap and I'll try and figure out this... thing.

PETER

That's really nice of you.

NICK

It's ok. I've ridden enough anyway.

Nick picks up his bike.

NICK

Here ya go. The brakes are right here.

PETER

And I just go all the way around?

NICK

Yeah, it's one big circle. Are you in Medici court? (He points behind them)

PETER

Yeah.

NICK

Ok, so there's seven courts, and they're all named after like some British people. There's Medici here, then Romanov, then Orange - that's where I live - Bernadotte,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICK (cont'd)
Hapsburg, Borgia, and Neves. Which
isn't a name at all, but "Seven"
spelled backwards. They ran out of
ideas I guess.

PETER
Ok.

Peter climbs on the bike.

NICK
Ok, have fun!

Peter, a little unsteady, bikes away. He turns the corner
and he's gone. Nick looks at the broken banana-seat bike,
it's a lost cause. He sits on the ground, picks a blade of
grass, puts it between his hands, and starts blowing on it
to make an annoying squeaky sound.

Peter starts gaining speed and confidence. As he bikes
around the circle the weight of his parents divorce and
sudden move disappears.

As he passes each court, he starts to imagine the
neighborhood kids dressed in the historical European garb
respective to each royal family. He passes the Medici's
counting Italian money, the Romanov's during WWI, the
Orange's sitting on their thrones, the Bernadotte's on
horses, the Hapsburg's in a castle, the Borgia's poisoning
people, and the Neves playing cards with **four 7's** on the
table.

Suddenly, the royal family kids all start noticing him. Then
they begin chasing him. Peter pedals as fast as he can.
Finally, he pops the bike up the curb and onto the grassy
area in the middle of the circle.

He tosses the bike to the ground. He's surrounded by all the
royal family kids. They move in closer and closer. Peter
drops to the ground and screams.

NICK
Peter! Peter! Hey Pete!

Peter opens his eyes and looks up at Nick. He realizes he's
not actually being chased by neighborhood kids dressed as
royal monarchs.

PETER
Oh hey Nick.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

You ok?

PETER

Yeah. Just admiring the grass here.

NICK

Yeah, it's nice grass. Last week I found nudie coin right about here. Wanna see?

Nick reaches into his pocket, pulls out the coin with a naked lady on it, and stealthily shows it to Peter.

PETER

Oh.

NICK

(putting the coin away)
Don't tell anyone.

NICK

(picking up his bike)
So how was the ride?

PETER

Oh great.

NICK

Hey I was thinking we could build a couple ramps and see how high we can get. Wanna help?

PETER

Nah, that's ok. I should get home.

NICK

No luck with your bike man. I think it needs a new chain or something.

PETER

You just left it over there?! I thought you were going to watch it for me.

Peter starts jogging in the direction of his abandoned bike. Nick jumps on his bike and goes after him.

NICK

No one's going to steal a busted bike, Pete!

(CONTINUED)

PETER
(running faster now)
It's Peter.

NICK
Huh?

PETER
My name is Peter. Not Pete.

NICK
Oh sorry Peter. Well, I'm thinking
maybe my dad has something in his
shed we can fix it with.

PETER
Yeah if no one has stolen it
already.

NICK
Man, no one is going to steal it.
No one is even going to touch it.

CUT TO: Peter and Nick arriving at Peter's bike. The look of
horror strewn across their faces.

We pull back and see that the group of girly girls are
sitting around Peter's bike and they have decorated it for
him. GIRL 1 is tying a pink basket on the front, GIRL 2 is
painting the pedals with pink nail polish, GIRL 3 is tying
streamers around the handlebars and Girl 4 is just tossing
glitter around.

PETER
Oh no.

NICK
I'm sorry for your loss Peter. Any
last words?

PETER
No. My mom's gonna kill me.

NICK
Are you kidding, she's gonna love
it!

PETER
(pushing through the group of
girls and picking up his bike)
Excuse me. This is my bike.

(CONTINUED)

GIRL 1

Well now it looks be-U-tiful! (the other girls laugh)

PETER

Yes thank you.

Girl 4 tosses glitter in Peter's face. Peter spits some out of his mouth.

NICK

Hey! That's my friend and if you toss glitter on him you have to toss glitter on me too.

Girl 4 tosses glitter on Nick.

NICK

Thank you. I feel so... pretty.

NICK

C'mon Peter. Thank you girls.

ALL GIRLS

You're welcome!

Nick and Peter walk away with their respective bikes. The front wheel on Peter's bike doesn't work, so he has to walk it, holding it up in a permanent "wheelie" position.

SATURDAY EVENING, 7PM - NICK'S FRONT STOOP

Peter waits on Nick's front stoop. Both bikes lay on the ground nearby.

Nick comes running out of his house with tools.

NICK

Got em.'

NICK

(going over to Peter's bike)
I think if we just reattach the chain and straighten the front wheel it should be good. Want me to take this stuff off? (the basket and streamers)

PETER

Nah, that's ok. I kinda like it.

(CONTINUED)

NICK
How about your mom?

PETER
Oh, I don't see her until next weekend.

NICK
How about your dad?

PETER
He won't notice. So you think you can straighten that wheel?

NICK
(picking up the hammer)
Yeah, we can hammer it. Should straighten right out.

PETER
Alright.

The two start working on the bike. Nick hammers the front wheel while Peter tries to realign the chain.

PETER
So you live here long?

NICK
Yeah, since I was six. Where you from?

PETER
Just the other side of town.

Nick's little sister Emily comes out of the house. Nick and Peter stop talking. Emily proceeds to sit on the sidewalk and begins laying out Pogs in some organized fashion.

NICK
(to Emily)
You know that's not how they work right? You're supposed to play with them.

EMILY
I like to organize them.

Nick rolls his eyes.

NICK
That's my sister Emily.

(CONTINUED)

PETER
(to Emily)
Whatcha got there?

EMILY
I got 5 Wizard of Oz, 7 smiley
faces, 2 of these funky looking
ones, and one slammer.

PETER
Oh nice.

Nick throws the hammer to the ground.

NICK
Ok done. Give that a try.

Peter picks up the bike. He puts both wheels on the ground
and pushes it forward - it works! He jumps on.

NICK
Take it up the sidewalk!

Peter rides up the sidewalk. He gets to the end, does a
squirrely turn-around, and then rides back to Nick.

NICK
Awesome!

PETER
Thanks man.

NICK
Ok let's go!

Nick picks up his bike and the two ride out of the court,
towards the circle. Again they pass the sign: "NEW PAVEMENT.
NO CARS."

They get to the entrance of the court. The three boys are
there waiting for them.

BOY 1
Well, well, well. It's about time
you showed up.

NICK
We were fixing Peter's bike.

BOY 1
Oh that's a bike? Because it looks
like a unicorn threw up all over
it.

(CONTINUED)

The other boys laugh.

PETER
Yeah, it's my bike. And it goes
really fast.

NICK
That's right. See these streamers
here? Extra turbo power boosters.

BOY 1
That's stupid.

PETER
You don't believe me?

BOY 1
No, of course I don't believe you.
But there's only one way to find
out. I'll race you around the
circle.

PETER
Ok, let's do it.

NICK
(aside to Peter)
You don't have to. You can use my
bike if you want.

PETER
(aside to Nick)
It's ok, it's ok, I got this.

BOY 1
Tommy!

Boy 2 steps forward, pulls a piece of chalk out of his
pocket and draws a line on the pavement.

BOY 1
Here's our start and finish line.
Are you sure you want to do this?

PETER
(pulling his bike up to the
line)
You bet.

BOY 2
Ok, everybody ready? On your mark,
get set, GO!

(CONTINUED)

Peter and Boy 1 take off. Nick watches nervously. Boy 1 takes the early lead. Peter pedals faster to catch up to him.

As he pedals around the circle, Peter sees the royal family kids again. Only this time, as he passes each family, they slowly bow to him. One court after the other. This gives Peter even more confidence. He pedals even faster and catches up to Boy 1.

They loop around to the final stretch. A group of kids have gathered at the finish line.

Peter closes in on Boy 1 and passes him right at the end. Peter crosses the finish line, pink streamers basking in the wind. He is the winner!

The kids cheer as he crosses the finish line. Nick gives him a high-five. Boy 1 throws his bike down in frustration and his friends pat him on the back.

NICK

That was awesome!

PETER

I totally thought I was gonna lose.
But I dunno, I just kept going so
fast.

In the background we see the street lights turn on, one-by-one. And the kids in the background start heading home.

NICK

Well, you did awesome man.

PETER

Thanks. And thanks for fixing my
bike.

NICK

No problem. If you have anything
else that needs fixing or whatever,
you should bring it over and we can
work on it.

PETER

Sure. See you on the bus on Monday?

NICK

You bet.

By this point Peter and Nick are the only two kids left outside.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

Well, I guess I should be getting home.

PETER

Me too.

NICK

(reaching into his pocket and pulling out the nudie coin)

Here you can have this.

PETER

(unimpressed)

Oh thanks.

NICK

Bye.

PETER

Bye.

Nick rides away. Peter looks at the ridiculous nudie coin. He throws it into the pink basket, but as he does, it hits something. He looks in the basket and there are four 7 cards - one of each suit. Was his adventure just a dream or reality?

Peter bikes towards home. As he leaves frame, it widens, and we see all seven courts illuminated by the street lamps.

CUT TO BLACK