

VODKA BOREALIS

By Alex Wasowicz

punkstyle@yahoo.com

703.963.8277

FADE IN:

EXT. NURSING HOME - DAY

The sign says STERLING GLEN ASSISTED LIVING ESTATES.
ELDERLY PEOPLE mingle about the quaint, well-kept grounds.
A STATION WAGON parks in a VISITOR space.
Zack (9) and Caleb (12) hop out, ready for action.

ZACK AND CALEB

Grandpa!

They race off across the parking lot.

ELLEN (38) and BRUCE (41) climb out, weary.

ELLEN

Kids! Wait!

BRUCE

I'm telling you, we really don't
have the time.
(checks watch)

ELLEN

I know, I know. I'll just give him
his stupid paper and we'll be out
of here in five minutes.

She grabs a NEWSPAPER and heads after the kids.

BRUCE

Right behind you. Just gotta check
my email.

Bruce looks at his PDA and sighs.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

GRANDPA (77), a handsome old gentleman, pours a ridiculous
amount of SYRUP onto a stack of PANCAKES.

Zack and Caleb barge into the room!

ZACK AND CALEB

Grandpa!

They stick to him like magnets, almost knocking him over!

GRAMPS

Oof! You little rascals!

They giggle as he tickles them!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

You two get bigger every week!
And your ears get bigger!

He pulls a COIN out of Zack's ear and hands it to him.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

And your noses get bigger!

He pulls a COIN out of Caleb's nose and hands it to him.

The kids are thrilled.

Ellen arrives, out of breath.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

You brought the Times!

ELLEN

Of course. I know how important it
is to you. Although I've never
understood why.

He eagerly takes the newspaper from her.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

So, how's everything?

Gramps scans the headlines.

GRAMPS

No complaints. Hey, anybody want
a pancake?

Zack and Caleb each grab a pancake with their bare hands and
stuff their faces.

Ellen dips her finger in some Syrup and licks it.

ELLEN

Mmm. Good syrup.

Gramps turns the page, and stops cold.

GRAMPS

(dread)
Oh no.

ELLEN
What's wrong?

The kids exchange confused looks.

GRAMPS
The Borealis story!

He points to an article.

ELLEN
Huh? Borealis?

Gramps takes a deep breath.

GRAMPS
Nobody panic. Things might be
okay. As long as there's no vodka
ad.

He quickly flips through the pages.

As he holds the newspaper, we can see the back has a
full-page ad for RED KREMLIN VODKA.

Bruce strolls in, still focused on his PDA.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Please, don't let there be a vodka
ad. Please, oh please, don't let
there be a vodka ad.

Bruce and Ellen exchange worried looks.

BRUCE
What happens if there's a vodka ad?

GRAMPS
You don't want to know.

ZACK
(points)
Look, Grandpa! On the back page!

Gramps discovers the vodka ad, and almost faints!

ELLEN
Uh. Dad?

BRUCE
(whispers)
He's lost his mind.

ELLEN
 (whispers)
 Shhh!

Gramps tries to think.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
 Dad? Are you feeling okay?

GRAMPS
 Quick! I need a pen and paper!

Zack and Caleb dash off in opposite directions!

BRUCE
 (whispers)
 He needs a straight jacket and a
 tranquilizer.

ELLEN
 (whispers)
 You're not helping.

The kids instantly return. Zack has PAPER, Caleb has a PEN.

GRAMPS
 Excellent!

Gramps writes quickly, almost mechanically.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
 We must collect the following list
 of things.

Zack and Caleb are confused.

A crowd of interested ELDERLY PEOPLE starts to gather.

A STAFF MEMBER approaches Bruce and Ellen.

STAFF
 Everything alright here?

Bruce looks at Ellen -- She bites her lip.

ZACK
 What's all this stuff for?

GRAMPS
 It's top secret. But there isn't a
 moment to lose. If I don't
 assemble these materials and
 complete my mission by noon
 tomorrow, we'll all be dead!

ZACK

Cool!

The kids get excited. Bruce and Ellen are perplexed.

GRAMPS

First things first! I need to find a pay phone! Immediately!

ZACK

What's a pay phone?

CALEB

Here, Grandpa, you can use my cell phone.

Caleb offers his CELL PHONE.

GRAMPS

No, thank you, but it has to be a pay phone. It's protocol.

CALEB

Protocol?

GRAMPS

Carlos! Where's Carlos?

CARLOS (80) sits in the corner with a HAM RADIO and a giant antenna, listening through headphones.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Carlos!

CARLOS

Huh? What's up?

GRAMPS

You know where the nearest pay phone is?

CARLOS

Um. There's one behind the supermarket on Vine.

GRAMPS

Great! Where's Jerry?

JERRY looks up from a game of DOMINOES.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Jerry! I need to borrow your car! The fate of the nation depends on it!

JERRY
 (amazed)
 The fate of the nation? Wow!
 You got it!

Jerry tosses his KEYS to Gramps.

Gramps stuffs a pancake into his mouth, grabs his WALKING CANE and hobbles towards the exit.

ELLEN
 Wait! Dad! Stop!

STAFF
 Sir, please.

GRAMPS
 Out of my way!

He shakes them off and keeps moving.

EXT. NURSING HOME - DAY

Gramps approaches a pristine 60's CONVERTIBLE.

Suddenly a POLICE CAR pulls up, blocking his path!

The SHERIFF (40) climbs out--

SHERIFF
 Howdy!

Gramps tries to walk around him--

SHERIFF
 Hold on just a minute, buddy.

GRAMPS
 I have important work to do,
 Sherriff.

SHERIFF
 That's fine. Listen, I hear you
 like pancakes?

Gramps perks up!

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 So why don't we head back inside
 and get you a short stack, and you
 can tell me all about it?

GRAMPS

You don't understand. My mission is of grave importance.

SHERIFF

I'm sure it is.

GRAMPS

Many thousands will die if I fail.

SHERIFF

What kind of mission are we talking about?

GRAMPS

(whispers)

The Russians have initiated operation Vodka Borealis. I was informed of it through a secret message in this morning's paper.

The Sheriff nods.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Very few have the training and expertise to counter such an attack. I may be our only hope. I must not fail.

SHERIFF

I fully understand.

GRAMPS

Good. Then you can help by escorting me to a pay phone. I have to check in with headquarters and let them know I'm activated. There's no time to lose.

SHERIFF

I hear what you're saying. And I support you. But first, why don't we just go back inside, eat some pancakes, and maybe take a nice long nap? How does that sound?

GRAMPS

(sighs)

It seems I have no choice.

SHERIFF

That's right. Come along now.

Suddenly Gramps grabs the Sheriff's PISTOL!

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Oh crap!

The Sheriff runs for his life!

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

He's got a gun! Everyone down!

Everybody takes cover!

Gramps cocks and aims--

BOOM! BOOM! The front tires of the Police Car go FLAT!

Gramps hops in the Convertible and speeds away!

Zack and Caleb dance with joy!

ZACK

Yay Grandpa!

CALEB

Omigosh! Did you see that?

Bruce and Ellen are speechless.

The Sheriff comes out of hiding to inspect his flat tires.

SHERIFF

Dag gummit!

He throws his hat on the ground, and kicks it!

BRUCE

I guess we should go after him?

ELLEN

We have to.

BRUCE

Kids? Get in the car.

Zack pretends to shoot tires--

ZACK

Kapow! Kapow!

Caleb finds the list Gramps made lying on the ground and pockets it.

FADE TO:

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Gramps talks on a PAY PHONE--

GRAMPS

This is agent whiskey Romeo Sierra,
in receipt of assignment one, one,
five, seven, alpha. Proceeding as
per protocol. Out.

He hangs up.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(sighs)

It finally happened. After all
these years. I'm gonna get to be a
hero.

He wipes a TEAR from the corner of his eye.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

Ellen sits nervously. Bruce paces, irritated.

RING! They both reach for the PHONE -- Bruce gets it.

BRUCE

Hello? Boy, that was quite a stunt
you pulled.

ELLEN

Dad?

BRUCE

Let me put you on speaker.

Bruce puts Gramps on SPEAKERPHONE.

ELLEN

Dad?

GRAMPS (V.O.)

Ellie?

ELLEN

Where are you?

GRAMPS (V.O.)

I'm laying low.

BRUCE

That's probably smart. The cops must be looking for you.

GRAMPS (V.O.)

It's not the cops I'm worried about.

ELLEN

What the heck's going on, Dad? Talk to me.

GRAMPS (V.O.)

I know this will come as a shock. But I've been a sleeper agent throughout the cold war, waiting for the Soviets to initiate operation Vodka Borealis. They finally did. And now I have to stop them.

Bruce and Ellen stare at each other.

ELLEN

Bruce thinks you should turn yourself in to the police.

BRUCE

Immediately.

GRAMPS (V.O.)

Are you two listening? There's an evil rooskie plot underway!

BRUCE

It's all in your head.

GRAMPS (V.O.)

I have a mission to accomplish, and I'm going to accomplish it. I don't care what you say.

BRUCE

For crying out loud! As if Sibyl wasn't giving us enough trouble!

GRAMPS (V.O.)

How is dear Sibyl?

BRUCE

Impossible. Delinquent.

ELLEN

Bruce!

BRUCE

Let me see. She dropped out of school. She's living with a bunch of bohemians.

ELLEN

Those are her bandmates.

BRUCE

Oh yeah, that's right. She's in a band.

(shakes head)

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A ROCK BAND practices a grunge jazz song.

SIBYL (19), the one girl, is lead singer and bassist.

A CLOVE CIGARETTE hangs from her mouth. Lavender lipstick compliments her pink/purple streaked blonde hair.

She wears a ton of eyeliner. Numerous TATTOOS and PIERCINGS. All her clothes are BLACK.

The drummer suddenly stops--

DRUMMER

Eight o'clock! Game time!

He grabs the REMOTE and turns on a FOOTBALL GAME.

The GUITARIST tosses him a BEER.

Sibyl rolls her eyes.

INT. SIBYL'S ROOM - DAY

Sibyl plops down on her "lunar surface" bedsheets, puts on HEADPHONES to drown out the football game, and opens a book about UFOs.

Her room is painted BLACK, specked with white stars. Science fiction POSTERS hang on the walls. Images of flying saucers and extraterrestrials are everywhere.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

BRUCE (V.O.)

She's been going downhill ever since she started believing in aliens a few months ago.

(shakes head)

GRAMPS (V.O.)

Is her band any good?

BRUCE

Who knows? Who cares? Sibyl isn't the issue right now. Let's handle one disaster at a time.

ELLEN

Dad? How can we convince you to give up this spy fantasy?

GRAMPS (V.O.)

It's not a fantasy, Ellie. You have to trust me.

BRUCE

Turn yourself in, you crazy old man!

ELLEN

Bruce!

BRUCE

You're not a spy. There aren't any Russians out to get anybody.

GRAMPS (V.O.)

I got work to do. I'll call you back later.

ELLEN

Be safe. Love you, Dad.

GRAMPS (V.O.)

Love you too, Ellie.

CLICK. Gramps hangs up.

Bruce shakes his head.

ELLEN

Humor him. He's old. Old people say weird stuff.

BRUCE

Ellen. He believes this crap.
Deep down, in his heart, he's
convinced he's a secret agent.

Ellen knows Bruce is right.

ELLEN

What if he's telling the truth?

BRUCE

Don't you start.

ELLEN

I mean, sleeper agents really
exist, don't they?

BRUCE

Ellen.

ELLEN

My instincts are to take his side.
He's my dad.

BRUCE

He stole a gun from a cop! This is
already totally out of control.

ELLEN

When my dad sets out to do
something, you can either get
behind him or get in his way. He's
set on this. And I'm gonna support
him, with or without you.

Bruce sighs, shakes his head and loosens his tie.

His PDA CHIMES!

BRUCE

Please don't let this be important.

He checks his PDA--

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Ugh. Wouldn't you know it?
Emergency meeting.

Ellen pats Bruce lovingly on the back.

He tightens his tie.

INT. SELF STORAGE FACILITY - DAY

Gramps unlocks a locker--

Inside is a SHOEBOX and a SUITCASE.

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

Gramps drives with the shoebox sitting on the passenger seat.

EXT. DONUT SHOP - DAY

The Sheriff struts into the shop.

Gramps pulls up and parks next to the POLICE CAR.

He tosses the Sheriff's PISTOL through the open window--

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

It lands perfectly on the driver's seat.

Gramps backs out and drives away.

The Sheriff returns with his mouth and hands full of DONUTS.

He opens the door, climbs in, sits down.

SHERIFF
(mouth full)
Ruruh huh?

He reaches down and finds his gun!

Shocked, he quickly looks for Gramps!

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Gramps swaps CASH for a ROOM KEY.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

Gramps pokes around his room, opening and closing drawers.

He suspiciously peers out the blinds.

Opens the dusty SUITCASE. Sorts through the contents.

Pins a giant AMERICAN FLAG to the wall.

Takes a few deep breaths.

Stretches--

GRAMPS

Oh. Ah! Eh. Ugh.

His joints crack and pop!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Who needs to stretch anyway? On to push-ups.

He lies down into a push-up position.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Down. Up.

Down is easy. Up is impossible.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Up! Up I say!

He struggles, but can't do one pushup.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(sighs)

What's next? Sit-ups.

He rolls over and tries to do a few sit-ups.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(sighs)

This sucks.

He tries to stand -- POP!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Ah, my back! Why didn't I stretch?

He collapses to the floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

Gramps unwinds a JUMP ROPE.

He focuses, and swings the rope over his head--

It gets caught on the ceiling fan!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
What the holy mother?!

The rope twists around and whips him!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Ah! Mercy!

He runs to the wall and switches off the fan.

KNOCK KNOCK!

BELLHOP (O.C.)
Room service!

Gramps peers through the peephole--

EXT. HALLWAY - DAY

The BELLHOP carries a COVERED TRAY.

Gramps opens the door with a pleasant smile.

The bellhop tries to ignore the giant American flag and the jump rope hanging from the fan.

BELLHOP
Your food, sir.

GRAMPS
Lovely, lovely.

Gramps takes the tray and shuts the door.

The Bellhop is bummed.

Gramps opens the door again--

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Almost forgot. Keep the change.

He hands the Bellhop a HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL!

BELLHOP
A hundred?! Really?!

GRAMPS
That's how I roll, son.

Gramps shuts the door. The Bellhop is speechless.

INT. MOTEL - DAY

Gramps removes the cover from his tray--

A stack of PANCAKES, a pitcher of MAPLE SYRUP, a bowl of EGGS and an empty glass.

He takes the eggs and cracks them into the glass--

One. Two. Three. He stirs them up.

GRAMPS

Here goes nothing.

He drinks the eggs. Makes a yuck face.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Never doing that again.

He gathers the jump rope and finds a spot away from the fan.

Takes a deep breath, and swings the rope over his head--

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Whoop!

He trips and falls on his face!

The jump rope lands in the trash can.

Gramps practices throwing slow, weak punches.

He does a few weak kicks.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Little rusty.

Gramps looks at himself in the mirror.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

You sure you're up for this?

Gramps opens the shoebox, which contains a PISTOL and several thick wads of CASH!

He casually stuffs a few thousand dollars in his pocket and closes the shoebox.

Peers suspiciously out the blinds..

Grabs his keys and exits.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Ellen pulls an APPLE PIE out of the oven.

RING! She answers the phone--

ELLEN

Hello? Sure honey. I'll be there
in ten minutes. Love you. Bye.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

The station wagon pulls up to a towering skyscraper.

Bruce waits nervously at the curb. He gets in--

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

ELLEN

Hey hun! How'd it go?

BRUCE

Not bad, not bad.

Bruce loosens his tie.

Ellen senses something is amiss.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Gramps holds a SHOVEL and a roll of DUCT TAPE. He stares at the selection of SPOOLS of wire.

EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

Can I help you find something, sir?

The EMPLOYEE (19) looks eager and competent.

GRAMPS

I need two feet of copper wire.

EMPLOYEE

What gauge?

GRAMPS

Sixteen.

EMPLOYEE

Let's see. Here we are.

The Employee finds the right spool.

GRAMPS

This is a hundred feet. I only need two feet.

EMPLOYEE

I'm sorry, sir. That's the smallest size we have.

GRAMPS

This thing costs six bucks! I'm not paying six bucks for ninety-eight feet of wire I don't need.

EMPLOYEE

I'm not sure what I can do.

GRAMPS

Where's the manager?

INT. CUSTOMER SERVICE - DAY

The MANAGER looks skeptically at Gramps.

GRAMPS

Hear me out. Six dollars for fifty feet works out to twelve cents a foot. I only need two feet. That's twenty four cents. With sales tax let's call it twenty-five. I'm prepared to pay twenty-five cents for two feet of copper wire, or I'm prepared to take my business elsewhere.

MANAGER

Sir?

GRAMPS

Business which includes the purchase of this thirty-dollar shovel. I'm no cheapskate. I'll shell out for quality.

MANAGER

I'm glad you like our shovel.

GRAMPS

Like it? The craftsmanship astounds me. Just look at the riveting on the tang!

MANAGER

Uh huh. I'll tell you what.

GRAMPS

May I add that I'm also buying forty-five yards of duct tape, when all I really need are a few inches?

MANAGER

Geez. You want me to sell you duct tape by the inch?

GRAMPS

No, I'll take the whole roll. Duct tape is awesome.

The Manager rolls his eyes. He inserts his MASTER KEY into the register and punches the keypad.

MANAGER

I can give you sixty percent off the copper wire. How's that?

GRAMPS

You drive a hard bargain, son.

MANAGER

That's why I'm the manager.

GRAMPS

It's a deal.

They shake on it.

The manager rings Gramps up. BEEP BEEP BEEP.

MANAGER

And your total comes to thirty-six, seventy-two.

Gramps whips out a wad of cash--

GRAMPS

Can you break a hundred?

The Manager is speechless.

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

Gramps cruises along with the shovel in the back seat.
 He keeps checking his rear-view mirror.
 A POLICE CAR is right behind him!
 He makes sure he's going the speed limit.
 He turns, but the police car follows him.
 He turns again, and it keeps following him!
 He drums his fingers on the steering wheel.
 Suddenly the police car activates its SIRENS and LIGHTS!
 Gramps gulps!
 He pulls over.
 The police car accelerates, swerving around him!
 It zooms down the road, screeching around a corner, and disappears!
 In the distance, more SIRENS join the chase.
 Gramps breathes a sigh of relief.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

ZACK
 Lemmie see it!

CALEB
 Shhh! It's top secret. Remember?

Zack and Caleb covertly review Grandpa's list:

1. Tube radio. 2. Wind-up pocket watch. 3. Jumper cables.
 4. Gyroscope. 5. Paper clips. 6. Soldering iron + solder.
 7. Shovel. 8. 2 ft. Copper wire. 9. Duct tape. 10.
 Scoreboard from Zany Zombies pinball machine. 11. Pocket
 calculator. 12. Socket wrench + 7/16 bit. 13. Screwdrivers.
 14. Wah Wah pedal. 15. Oscilloscope.

ZACK
 I don't know what half this stuff
 is. Gurascope?

CALEB

Gyroscope. It's this metal thing that spins. There's one in the attic.

ZACK

What's it for?

CALEB

It's like some kind of old toy kids used to play with back before there were video games.

ZACK

Huh. Well if it's in the attic, you're getting it.

CALEB

Zack. How many times do I have to tell you the attic isn't haunted?

ZACK

I stand by my conviction.

CALEB

Whatever. In the mean time, I'll get the paperclips.

ZACK

I'll get the duck tape.

They race off in opposite directions!

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Zack dumps out a drawer full of TOOLS, making a big mess.

He finds the SCREWDRIVERS--

ZACK

I got the screwdrivers!

He crosses them off the list.

Caleb finds a SOCKET WRENCH--

CALEB

I'm pretty sure this is a socket wrench. Boom! It says right on it. Socket wrench.

ZACK
Where are the bits?

CALEB
Right here.

ZACK
(checks list)
We need seven sixteenths.

Caleb looks for it--

CALEB
Aw, man.

ZACK
What?

CALEB
It's the stupid metric system.

ZACK
Ugh! Not the metric system!

CALEB
How do you convert millimeters
to American?

ZACK
Psh! Good luck with that.

Caleb frowns, stumped.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

Ellen PAINTS her toenails while listening to HEADPHONES.

Bruce watches TV.

RING! They both go for the phone -- Ellen gets it.

ELLEN
Hello? Dad?

She puts Gramps on SPEAKERPHONE.

Zack and Caleb rush into the room--

ZACK AND CALEB
Grandpa!

GRAMPS (V.O.)
Hey you little rascals!

ZACK
We found some of that stuff you
need.

Bruce and Ellen exchange awkward looks.

GRAMPS
Oh really?

CALEB
We got the paper clips, the duct
tape--

GRAMPS (V.O.)
--Shhh! Just say the numbers.
Your phone might be tapped.

BRUCE
Don't be ridiculous!

ELLEN
You're being paranoid, Dad. You're
gonna make yourself sick worrying
like that.

GRAMPS (V.O.)
Better sick than dead. Never
underestimate the K Agents.

CALEB
K Agents?

GRAMPS
Naturally the Russians have
sleepers to counter our sleepers.
If I've been activated, certainly
one of them has been activated to
stop me.

BRUCE
(shakes head)
Oh brother.

ZACK
(checks list)
We got items four, five, nine,
eleven and thirteen.

CALEB
And maybe twelve.

ZACK
(mutters)
Stupid metric system.

GRAMPS (V.O.)
Great! That's great work, kids!

The kids are proud. Ellen shares their pride.

GRAMPS (V.O.)
See if you can locate item number
ten. I have a pretty good handle
on the other stuff.

The kids check the list, and frown.

ZACK
(whispers)
I've never even heard of that.

CALEB
(whispers)
Me either.

ZACK
We'll do our best, Grandpa.

GRAMPS (V.O.)
That's all anybody can ask.

CALEB
How can we reach you, after we find
it?

ELLEN
Yes. How can we reach you?

GRAMPS (V.O.)
Let's meet somewhere at sixteen
hundred. I don't want to name the
location out loud, but you know
that diner with the pizza you kids
like?

ZACK
What pizza don't we like?

GRAMPS (V.O.)
It's on the way to the mall.

CALEB
I know the place you mean.

GRAMPS (V.O.)
Good. Ellen, dear?

ELLEN
Yes Dad, I'd be glad to give the kids a ride to meet you at sixteen hundred.

GRAMPS (V.O.)
Beautiful! See you then. Be careful, boys. Keep an eye out for anything suspicious. And try to focus on item number ten. I'm counting on you. Over and out.

ZACK AND CALEB
Bye Grandpa!

CLICK. They hang up.

ZACK
He's counting on us.

The kids exchange serious looks.

Ellen nods proudly. Bruce shakes his head.

INT. BUNKER - DAY

A TAPE RECORDER stops, rewinds, and plays back:

GRAMPS (V.O.)
Let's meet somewhere at sixteen hundred. I don't want to name the location out loud, but you know that diner with the pizza you kids like?

A hand wearing a black GLOVE takes notes in Russian.

ZACK (V.O.)
What pizza don't we like?

GRAMPS (V.O.)
It's on the way to the mall.

The tape recorder stops.

The hand pours a SHOT of Red Kremlin Vodka and drinks.

FADE TO:

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

With the help of a CHAIR, Zack and Caleb manage to unfold the LADDER leading up to the attic.

It's dark and spooky.

ZACK

Go on. You said you weren't scared.

CALEB

I'm not.

A CREAK makes them both jump!

Caleb musters his courage and climbs the ladder..

INT. ATTIC - DAY

Caleb looks around with a FLASHLIGHT.

BOXES are marked "WEAPONS," "BLOCKS," "WOOD TOYS," "SPORTS."

He finds the "METAL TOYS" box.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

Caleb dumps everything out, making a big mess.

Inside are ROBOTS, RACE CARS, MAGNETS, AIRPLANES, ACTION FIGURES, and other metal toys.

Zack immediately plays with them--

ZACK

Vroom! Pew pew! Kapow!

Caleb finds the GYROSCOPE!

He crosses it off the list.

Ellen strolls in.

ELLEN

Wow. This is quite a mess you guys made.

CALEB

We'll clean it up later.

ZACK
Yeah. Later.

They hurry out of the room.

Ellen puts her hands on her hips.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

Bruce sits drinking a BEER and consulting his PDA.

Ellen marches outside--

ELLEN
Honey?

BRUCE
Just a sec. Gotta shoot off this
email.

She waits impatiently. Looking around, she notices messes
the kids have left:

WATER GUNS. BASEBALL GLOVES. Little plastic ARMY MEN.

She puts her hands on her hips.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Okay. Okay. Just give me like
five minutes.

ELLEN
Nevermind.

She goes back inside.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Ellen puts on HEADPHONES and opens her COOK BOOK.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

Zack and Caleb sit at the COMPUTER.

ZACK
What's an anticky?

CALEB

Antique. It means old enough to be in a museum.

ZACK

So how are we supposed to find this thing?

CALEB

Does it have to be in working condition?

ZACK

(checks list)

Doesn't say. But I would think so.

CALEB

And we need it tonight.

ZACK

Grandpa's counting on us.
Thousands of lives are at stake!

The kids are worried.

CALEB

Hey! Look up Vodka Borealis.

ZACK

How do you spell it?

CALEB

Just type something. Google will figure it out.

Zack types and clicks.

ZACK

Vodka Borealis was the code-name given to a theoretical Russian missile delivery system. Citation needed. Due to lack of funding, the project was abandoned in the mid-seventies. Citation needed. That's all it says.

CALEB

Sounds like they never got off the drawing board. You think Grandpa's making it all up?

ZACK

The internet's not always right, you know.

CALEB
Where'd you hear that?

ZACK
I read it on the internet.

The kids are worried.

CALEB
Let's call Sibyl.

INT. SIBYL'S ROOM - DAY

Sibyl uses a LOUPE to examine a photograph of a FLYING SAUCER.

Her ringtone is the theme from FRAGGLE ROCK.

She answers--

SIBYL
What's up? Huh? Vodka what?
Listen, I don't have time. And
I don't care. Bye Zack.

She hangs up.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

ZACK
I told you she would brush us off.

CALEB
(shouts)
Mom! We need a ride!

INT. ARCADE - DAY

The kids speak with the OWNER (40), who apologizes that he can't help.

INT. NEXT ARCADE - DAY

The kids plead with the SUPERVISOR (31), who can't help them.

EXT. THIRD ARCADE - DAY

The MANAGER (27) smokes a CIGARETTE by the door.

MANAGER

You guys still looking for that
zombie game?

ZACK

Yes sir.

CALEB

Nobody has it. They can order it,
but we need it tonight.

The kids are depressed.

The Manager thinks of something.

MANAGER

I'll tell you what. It's a long
shot, but there was this old
collector guy. Mister Humphrey.
I think I got his address around
here somewhere.

He stubs out his cigarette and heads inside.

The kids regain some hope.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

Ellen breaks apart pieces of PEANUT BRITTLE and arranges
them on a plate.

RING! Bruce goes for the phone, but Ellen gets it--

ELLEN

Mom's taxi service.
(checks watch)
Kay. See you soon. Love you.

She hangs up.

BRUCE

You going to pick up the kids?

ELLEN

And take them to meet Dad. Don't
you remember the rendezvous at
sixteen hundred?

BRUCE

You're not really going through
with that.

ELLEN

Uh. Yeah, I am. See you in a bit.

BRUCE

I honestly don't know what's gotten
into you. Setting such an example
for the kids. Encouraging such
reckless, lawless behavior when you
should be working with the police.

ELLEN

There you go again.

BRUCE

I'm not saying lock your dad up in
the rubber room right away.
Although I wouldn't object to it.

ELLEN

Never!

BRUCE

He's a madman!

ELLEN

He's my dad! Quit patronizing him!

BRUCE

You heard all that gibberish.
I mean, come on.

ELLEN

You talk a fair amount of gibberish
yourself, honey.

BRUCE

But this is full-on delusion!

ELLEN

What are you, a doctor?

BRUCE

I understand it's difficult to
accept. But your dad's lost his
mind.

ELLEN

He's not crazy.

BRUCE

No. I've always known him to be quite sane, even after a few cocktails.

ELLEN

Exactly.

BRUCE

Which is why it's so obvious something has snapped. Maybe he had an aneurysm. Or a stroke? I don't know. I'm not a doctor.

ELLEN

(worried)

You really think that's what happened?

BRUCE

Could even be schizophrenia.

ELLEN

No.

BRUCE

We should refer him to a specialist.

ELLEN

Hm. Let me think about it.

BRUCE

At least run some tests. Have him checked out. For his own good.

ELLEN

You're probably right.

EXT. RADIO PLUS - DAY

Gramps parks the convertible in front of the giant store.

SHOPPERS leave with huge sets of SPEAKERS.

INT. RADIO PLUS - DAY

Gramps is overwhelmed by the size of the place.

TEENS play LOUD MUSIC to test various audio equipment.

GRAMPS
 (covers ears)
 You call that music?

Gramps looks at the Teens like they're insane.

The Teens look at Gramps like he's insane.

Gramps finds a WORKER (18) stocking HEADPHONES--

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
 Hey, kid. I need a tube radio.

WORKER
 Tube? I'm not familiar with that company.

GRAMPS
 All this stuff is solid-state.
 Where do you keep the old vacuum tube gear?

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
 We don't sell vacuums, sir. Just radios.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
 No, tubes. Tubes! You know?
 They're like these glass bulbs.

WORKER
 Light bulbs? We don't sell those either.

GRAMPS
 How old are you, kid?

WORKER
 Eighteen.

GRAMPS
 What are you doing working here?
 You should be out living life,
 being eighteen.

WORKER
 (shrugs)
 I need the money.

GRAMPS
 Listen, kid. What you need is a hockey stick and a root beer float.

Gramps gives him several HUNDRED DOLLARS.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
 Here's your severance package.
 Congratulations. You quit.

The worker is speechless.

Gramps turns and leaves.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

Gramps barges in. People wave to him.

OLD TIMER
 Hey! Woodrow's back!

GRAMPS
 Can't stay long. I need Carlos.

Carlos sits monitoring his ham radio.

Gramps yanks him to his feet!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
 Come on buddy, I need your help.

CARLOS
 Where are we going?

GRAMPS
 In search of vintage electronics.

Carlos grins.

They run into Jerry--

JERRY
 How's the car treating you?

GRAMPS
 Handles like a dream, Jerry.
 Thanks again. Hey! Wanna go for a
 quick ride with me and Carlos?

Jerry shrugs.

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

Gramps, Carlos and Jerry cruise along in the convertible.

They stop at a RED LIGHT..

A sleek, modern CONVERTIBLE pulls up next to them, with THREE YOUNG MEN in it.

The old and young exchange looks of mutual respect.

The light turns GREEN. They go their separate ways.

INT. THRIFT STORE - DAY

Carlos searches through old RADIOS.

Gramps pokes through BOOKS.

Jerry pretends to look at LAMPS, but really admires all the ELDERLY LADIES walking around.

He's so captivated by a passing SKIRT that he strains his neck--

JERRY

Ow!

Carlos comes up empty handed--

CARLOS

I couldn't find anything. It's all modern plastic junk.

GRAMPS

Hm. We could try an antique store?

CARLOS

Maybe. How soon do you need this?

GRAMPS

Tomorrow morning at the latest.

CARLOS

That's awful short notice.

GRAMPS

As a last resort we can burgle the museum.

CARLOS

Pardon me?

GRAMPS

Nevermind. Let's get outta here.

Jerry hands his BUSINESS CARD to a little old lady named GERTIE (70)--

JERRY
Here's my card. Call any time.

GRAMPS
Come on, Jerry.

They pull him away.

JERRY
Hope to hear from you! Ciao!
Jerry blows Gertie a kiss. She giggles.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

GRAMPS
You have a business card?

JERRY
More or less.

GRAMPS
Let me see.

Jerry hands Gramps his CARD--

It belongs to a staff member at the Sterling Glen nursing home. The name is crossed out, and "Jerry" is written in.

JERRY
Hey. It works.

GRAMPS
Whatever.

Carlos is suddenly distracted--

CARLOS
Holy poley.

An unmarked VAN with a towering array of ANTENNAE is parked nearby.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
Look at the size of that relay!

He walks towards it.

GRAMPS
Careful! Might be K Agents!

Carlos knocks on the side of the van.

The door slides open--

NANCY (67), with thick GLASSES and wild hair, is pleasantly surprised.

NANCY
Why, hello.

CARLOS
Sorry to bother you, young lady.

She giggles.

CARLOS (CONT'D)
I couldn't help but--
(looks past her)
Is that a CTX three forty?

She turns to an OSCILLOSCOPE.

NANCY
You betcha! With a tri-cam
expansion module.

Carlos is smitten.

GERTIE (O.S.)
Ready to roll, Nancy?

Gertie gets behind the wheel.

CARLOS
Where you gals headed? If you
don't mind my asking.

NANCY
Nowhere important. Why? You
fellas wanna tag along?

Carlos looks at Jerry, who grins like a fox.

INT. NANCY'S HOUSE - DAY

LOUNGE MUSIC fills the air.

Jerry and Gertie sit on a couch, eating CHEESE and CRACKERS, laughing.

Gramps POPS the cork off a bottle of CHAMPAGNE and fills a few glasses.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Carlos and Nancy rummage through HARDWARE like kids in a candy store.

CARLOS

Unbelievable! The original Datamax Wave Drive! I haven't seen one of these in thirty years!

NANCY

I used to work for Datamax. My team designed that thing.

CARLOS

Get outta here!

NANCY

No, really. I got the schematics around here somewhere.

She searches.

Carlos is smitten.

INT. NANCY'S HOUSE - DAY

JERRY

Now watch very closely.

He points at his open palm.

Gertie pays close attention.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Nothing up either sleeve.

Jerry pulls back his sleeves--

A plastic FLOWER falls out!

JERRY (CONT'D)

Dammit! I mean, ta-da!

He makes a magical gesture!

Gertie giggles!

Gramps checks his watch.

Carlos emerges from the basement carrying a BOX full of ELECTRONICS! Nancy follows him, giggling.

CARLOS

This woman is amazing! You know she has a Master's in aerospace engineering?

GRAMPS

Were you able to find the necessary hardware?

CARLOS

You should see her workshop! She fabricated these rotors, which have integrated--

GRAMPS

--Carlos! Focus! Did you collect the gear I need? Or what?

CARLOS

Oh, yeah. No sweat.

He sets the box down.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

We even tested all the circuits. Everything works perfectly.

GRAMPS

Outstanding!

NANCY

Also, there's a device in there to secure telephone lines. You said you thought someone might be tapping your calls?

GRAMPS

Brilliant! Honestly, I can't thank you enough.

Carlos and Nancy exchange proud looks.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(checks watch)

Well, fellas. We oughta get going.

Jerry gives Gramps a dirty look.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

At least, I gotta go. You can stay if you want.

GERTIE
Stay! Stay!

JERRY
Would it be inconvenient?

NANCY
No, no, no. Don't be silly.

CARLOS
We'd hate to impose.

GERTIE
Stay! Stay!

Jerry refills their glasses.

JERRY
(to Gramps)
We'll see you back at the fort.
(winks)

GRAMPS
Okay. You kids behave.
(to Nancy)
Thanks again for all the kit.
You're a life-saver.

NANCY
(waves it off)
Don't mention it. Good luck with
your project.

Gramps takes the box and leaves.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Ellen drops off Zack and Caleb.

ELLEN
Call me when you need a ride home.
Love you! Bye!

The kids ignore her and run inside.

Ellen sighs and drives away.

INT. DINER - DAY

ZACK AND CALEB

Grandpa!

The kids stick to Gramps like magnets!

GRAMPS

Oof! You two should play football!

A WAITRESS (20) shows up--

WAITRESS

Can I get you fellas some drinks?

GRAMPS

I'd like a mango smoothie please.

CALEB

Chocolate shake, please.

ZACK

Vanilla shake, please.

WAITRESS

Coming right up.

GRAMPS

We're also ready to order.

WAITRESS

Okay. What would you like?

GRAMPS

A stack of pancakes and two slices
of pepperoni pizza.

WAITRESS

No problem.

GRAMPS

Thanks.

The Waitress departs.

ZACK

Man! The pizza here is the best!

GRAMPS

The pancakes aren't too bad either.
(winks)

CALEB

So. Bad news, Grandpa. We can't find the pinball machine anywhere.

GRAMPS

Really? I thought it would be pretty easy to track down Zany Zombies. That game was huge in the forties.

ZACK

I never heard of it.

CALEB

Me either.

ZACK

The forties? I'm surprised they even had electricity back then.

GRAMPS

This is a troubling development. I really need that component.

CALEB

We'll keep looking.

Gramps is worried.

The Waitress brings out everything but the smoothie.

WAITRESS

Your smoothie will be out in a moment.

GRAMPS

Terrific.

The kids chow down!

ZACK AND CALEB

Mmmmmmm!

Gramps drowns his pancakes in SYRUP.

A shady SERVER (25) brings out the SMOOTHIE.

SERVER

(Russian accent)
Your smoothie.

GRAMPS

Thank you, young man.

SERVER
Pozalujsta.

Gramps gets suspicious. He keeps an eye on the server.

GRAMPS
I don't remember that Russian kid
working here. Is he new?

The kids shrug, focused on their food.

CALEB
I can't believe you like vanilla
more than chocolate.

ZACK
I like em both. How's your
smoothie, Grandpa?

Gramps hasn't touched it. He pushes it away.

CALEB
Aren't you even gonna try it?

GRAMPS
On second thought, I don't want it.

ZACK
I'll have it!

GRAMPS
No, we'll just throw it away.

A FAT LADY (30) turns around--

FAT LADY
You can't throw away a perfectly
good smoothie!

She snatches it from him!

Gramps is speechless.

The Fat Lady drinks a huge gulp!

FAT LADY (CONT'D)
Mmmm. Delicious!

She suddenly coughs and chokes!

FAT GUY
You okay, darlin?

The Fat Lady collapses!

FAT GUY (CONT'D)
Holy crap! Somebody call an
ambulance!

The Fat Lady convulses and drools!

GRAMPS
Check please!

EXT. DINER - DAY

Gramps leads the kids to the convertible.

ZACK AND CALEB
Shotgun!

CALEB
I called it first!

They race to the car.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

A COP (30) arriving on the scene spots them.

COP
Hey dispatch? Wasn't there an APB
out for an elderly gentleman in a
classic convertible? Over.

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Uh. Roger. Let me pull that up.
Over.

The cop waits. An AMBULANCE arrives.

Gramps drives away.

The cop shifts gears from PARK to DRIVE.

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Negative. According to the
computer, the elderly gentleman in
question has federal immunity and
is not to be apprehended. Repeat,
do not apprehend. Over.

The cop shifts back into PARK, confused.

EXT. BOULEVARD - DAY

The convertible cruises along. Zack and Caleb share the front bench seat.

GRAMPS

Hand me that shoebox, would you?

The kids hand it over. Gramps pokes through it.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Here's some dough. If you have any trouble getting that pinball machine, break this out. Everyone has a price.

He gives them each a wad of CASH. They're astonished!

Gramps checks his rear-view mirror.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

You kids wearing your seatbelts?

CALEB

There aren't any seatbelts.

GRAMPS

Nevermind then.

The kids exchange nervous looks.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

There's a K Agent following us. I'm going to try and lose him.

ZACK

Nuh uh.

CALEB

Omigosh!

The kids look back--

A sleek and sinister BLACK SPORTS CAR follows them!

GRAMPS

Hold on!

Gramps yanks the wheel!

They swerve in and out of traffic!

HORNS HONK at them!

MOTORIST (O.S.)
Watch it, ya jerk!

The black sports car stays on their tail.

ZACK
Go faster!

CALEB
Yeah, faster!

Gramps grins and accelerates.

The black car accelerates.

The speedometer climbs past 60.

Suddenly Gramps brakes and turns!

They SKID around a corner!

ZACK
Woohoo!

The black car SKIDS around the corner!

Gramps drives off the road!

They plow through a FENCE!

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

A GOLFER prepares his shot.

Suddenly the two cars come barreling down the fairway!

GOLFER
Sweet Sally McGee!

He runs for his life!

The cars zoom right past him!

His GOLF BAG gets obliterated!

The convertible drives in a wild loop! The black car stays on their tail!

The vehicles tear up the course, carving deep trenches in the delicately groomed grass.

The poor Golfer has a nervous breakdown!

GRAMPS
Sheez! Where'd this guy learn to
drive like this?

Gramps yanks the wheel, and plows through a HEDGE!
Zack and Caleb hang on, astonished and thrilled!

EXT. CLUB HOUSE - DAY

GIRLS in BIKINIS lounge by the POOL.
Svelte SERVERS deliver DRINKS.
Suddenly the cars approach! Somebody SCREAMS!
Everybody runs for their lives!
The cars crash through tables and chairs!

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

A gaggle of GEESE scatter!
The cars jostle for position!
The black car pulls alongside the convertible--
Gramps whacks at it with his cane!
Its tinted window lowers a few inches--

GRAMPS
Duck!

They all duck! The rear-view mirror SHATTERS!
A NINJA STAR lands on the floor!
Gramps picks it up and throws it back!
The cars jump the curb and destroy more landscaping!

EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD - DAY

The cars zoom past a WRONG WAY DO NOT ENTER sign!

CALEB
Wrong way?!

ZACK
Do not enter?!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Gramps weaves through oncoming traffic!
Panicked MOTORISTS swerve and HONK!
The kids are petrified!
A truck bears down on them!
Gramps yanks the wheel--
The convertible screeches down an embankment!
The black car stays on their tail!

EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD - DAY

The cars sail through a RED LIGHT, causing havoc!
They whiz past signs warning RR CROSSING and BUMP.
Up ahead, there's a ridge where RAILROAD TRACKS cross
the road.

GRAMPS
Prepare for liftoff!

Both cars sail through the air!
SPARKS fly as they land!
Gramps yanks the wheel and they SKID around sideways!
He floors it! Tires spin!
They head back in the opposite direction!
The black car is slow to turn around after them.
Gramps pulls onto the railroad tracks!

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

The convertible rattles like a paint mixer as it drives along the bumpy tracks!

The black sports car follows them!

Up ahead, a busy street crosses the tracks. Farther ahead, the tracks disappear into a tunnel.

CALEB

I hope we're not going into that tunnel.

Suddenly the railroad crossing BELLS DING and SIGNAL ARMS lower to block traffic!

ZACK

I hope there isn't a train coming!

A train WHISTLE blows!

Gramps accelerates!

The convertible speeds into the tunnel!

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

PITCH BLACK.

The kids can't resist making crazy tunnel noises:

CALEB (V.O.)

Areoreoreoero!

ZACK (V.O.)

Ooga wooga wooga!

FADE IN:

A faint LIGHT grows as they reach the end of the tunnel.

Suddenly the oncoming TRAIN bears down on them!

A deafening WHISTLE blows! The kids scream!

EXT. TUNNEL - DAY

The convertible emerges from the tunnel and pulls off the tracks just before the TRAIN flashes by!

ONLOOKERS are awestruck.

Zack and Caleb are speechless.

GRAMPS
You boys okay?

They're petrified.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
I better get you back home.
I didn't realize it would be so
dangerous so soon.

Gramps pulls onto the road and joins the flow of traffic.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

Ellen sits nervously at the computer.

She reads an article about "ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE."

She clicks a link and reads about "DEMENTIA."

Reads about "DELIRIUM."

Reads about "SCHIZOPHRENIA."

Bites her fingernails.

The front door opens!

She closes the internet browser.

Gramps walks in--

He slips on a toy RACE CAR!

GRAMPS
Whoopsa! Hiya! Ho!

He uses his cane to regain his balance.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Cripes! I almost broke my gizzard!

Zack and Caleb exchange guilty looks.

ELLEN
How many times have I told you kids
to clean up after yourselves?

Ellen puts her hands on her hips.

The boys dutifully clean up their toys..

Bruce strolls in--

BRUCE

We were just talking about you!

Gramps fakes a smile.

ELLEN

Dad, we have concerns about your
mental health.

GRAMPS

Oh, for Pete's sake. I don't have
time for this.

He turns to leave, but Bruce blocks the way--

BRUCE

Frankly, old man, you've lost it.
There's simply no way you could
be a secret agent without either
of us knowing about it.

GRAMPS

That's why it's called secret,
isn't it Bruce?

Ellen bites her lip.

BRUCE

And exactly how long have you been
at this spy business?

GRAMPS

I started working with military
intelligence in the seventies.

ELLEN

I thought you worked at a tire
factory in the seventies.

GRAMPS

That was my cover story.

Bruce shakes his head.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

During the sixties, I worked with special forces in the Caspian theater. Some commie shot me with a harpoon!

BRUCE

Yeah right, pops.

GRAMPS

How do you think I got this scar?

Gramps lifts up his shirt.

ELLEN

Mom said you fell off a ladder with a pair of gardening shears.

GRAMPS

That was my cover story!

BRUCE

You and your cover stories.

GRAMPS

I've been undercover for decades. I'm still undercover. This cane is part of my disguise. I could manage perfectly without it.

Bruce snatches the cane away!

Gramps wobbles unsteadily, then falls over!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Ah! My back!

ZACK AND CALEB

Grandpa!

ELLEN

Dad! Are you okay?

Ellen and the boys help Gramps to his feet.

GRAMPS

Of course I am. It's all an act.

Bruce gives Gramps his cane back.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

In the fifties I was a test pilot for all the famous spy planes.

(MORE)

I even worked on classified
aircraft at area fifty one.

BRUCE
Area fifty one?

Bruce and Ellen exchange worried looks.

ELLEN
There is no area fifty one.

GRAMPS
(laughs)
Of course there is! I worked there
for years!

Ellen sighs.

BRUCE
Enough of this farce! I'm sorry,
old man. You're loony as a lark.
We're going to have to put you
somewhere safe. I don't know
where, but I'm going to make a few
calls and figure something out.
You need serious help.

He paces.

ZACK
He's telling the truth! A K Agent
really did chase us down the train
tracks through a tunnel!

CALEB
Yeah! And they tried to poison
Grandpa's smoothie too!

BRUCE
Look what's happening. Look what
he's doing to the kids. I swear,
this entire family is a disaster.

GRAMPS
(sighs)
I think I should leave.

BRUCE
You're not going anywhere until the
authorities get here.

Gramps heads for the door.

Bruce tries to grab him--

Suddenly Gramps whacks Bruce with his cane!

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Ow! So help me!

Bruce lunges at Gramps!

In a flash, Gramps uses his cane to hook Bruce around the neck and send him crashing into the wall!

Everyone is shocked!

Gramps calmly exits the house.

ELLEN

Honey?

Dazed, Bruce staggers to his feet--

BRUCE

That man is a menace! I won't rest until he's locked up!

Bruce storms out of the room. Ellen rushes after him.

CALEB

We need to do something. Quick.

ZACK

Let's call Sibyl.

CALEB

(shrugs)

Okay.

INT. SIBYL'S ROOM - DAY

Sibyl listens to CLASSICAL music and smokes a CLOVE CIGARETTE as she surfs the internet.

Her PRINTER spits out images of CROP CIRCLES.

The FRAGGLE ROCK theme cuts through the music--

She casually answers her phone.

SIBYL

What's up?

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

CALEB

Hey. We didn't know who else to call. Dad flipped out and said he's going to have Grandpa locked up.

(beat)

They think he's nuts because he said he used to work at some place called area fifty one.

INT. SIBYL'S ROOM - DAY

Sibyl is gobsmacked. She drops her phone!

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - DAY

Bruce tries to avoid Ellen, who tries to rub his shoulders.

ELLEN

I know. I know. Just try to relax, hun.

Bruce checks his PDA--

BRUCE

Oh Lord.

ELLEN

Don't tell me they need you at the office.

BRUCE

(reading PDA)

They needed me at the office five minutes ago. It's an emergency.

ELLEN

There's always an emergency at the worst possible time.

BRUCE

What can I say? Business is business. Gotta fry while the skillet's hot.

He puts on a DRESS SHIRT.

ELLEN

Can't they get somebody else? Tell them you have a family crisis to attend to.

BRUCE

They wish they could call somebody else. But the client wants me, because I'm the best. Sorry honey. Duty calls.

Ellen sighs, and ties Bruce's NECKTIE.

EXT. LIBRARY - DAY

A decommissioned AIRPLANE is mounted out front. The sign reads J.R. ROYCE AERONAUTIC LIBRARY. Sibyl parks her VESPA and hurries inside--

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

The male CLERK (16) at the front desk waves--

CLERK

Hi Sibyl!

A male LIBRARIAN (19) waves--

LIBRARIAN

Hi Sibyl!

SIBYL

Hey guys.

She hurries past. They watch her go.

She turns around--

SIBYL (CONT'D)

Anyone wanna help me look for something?

The boys drop what they're doing.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Ellen notices her FUEL gauge is about half full.

ELLEN
Ah, forget it.

She drives away.

EXT. CUL DE SAC - DAY

The station wagon crawls leisurely down the street, turns around and returns.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Ellen stops at a 4-WAY STOP.

Waits, despite there being no other traffic..

Switches on her LEFT TURN signal. Looks both ways.

Switches instead to the RIGHT TURN signal.

Sighs. Closes her eyes.

HONK! A car is behind her!

She switches off the turn signal and drives straight.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The station wagon parks in the middle of nowhere.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Ellen stares off into space.

She makes a call--

ELLEN
Hi honey, it's me.
(checks watch)
(MORE)

Just wanted to know if you needed a
ride home. Call me back. Love
you. Bye.

She hangs up and sighs.

Stares off into space.

Throws her phone!

Holds her head and cries..

INT. BAR - DAY

Bruce stirs a glass of BOURBON and checks his PDA.

BRUCE

Bah! Not you again!

He puts it away, and signals for another drink.

STRANGER (O.S.)

Let me guess. Your old lady
busting your chops. Wants to know
where you are. When you'll be
home. Blah blah blah blah blah.

The STRANGER (40), wearing a suit, sits down next to Bruce.

BRUCE

Buddy, you don't know the half of
it.

STRANGER

Lay it on me, brother.

BRUCE

Her father, my father-in-law, as of
yesterday has gone completely
utterly batty. I'm talking insane.
Worse than the tea party.

The stranger cringes.

The BARTENDER (35) brings them each a DRINK.

STRANGER

Say. That's a heck of a suit.
I thought I was the best-dressed
guy in here.

BRUCE
Here's to the business lunch.

They clink and drink.

STRANGER
What line of work you in?

BRUCE
Real estate, mostly.

STRANGER
No way! I'm actually looking for a three-bedroom in the mid to upper twos. Got anything?

BRUCE
I specialize more in acreage. Developed and undeveloped plots.

STRANGER
Oh. How developed are we talking?

BRUCE
(embarrassed)
Actually, it's mostly undeveloped.

STRANGER
Ah. Interesting. So how's business? Good?

Bruce clears his throat and stirs his drink.

The Stranger feels awkward.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Let me buy you a shot. You drink tequila?

BRUCE
Sure. Why not?

THUNDER RUMBLES.

EXT. ROY'S MUSIC SHOP - DAY

Gramps exits the store carrying a BOX marked "Dunlop Crybaby Classic Wah Pedal."

A crack of THUNDER! It starts RAINING!

PEOPLE run for cover!

Gramps hobbles to the convertible and puts the roof up.

He doesn't notice the black sports car lurking across the parking lot.

INT. KITCHEN - EVENING (RAINING)

Ellen listens to HEADPHONES and hums along as she measures two teaspoons of BAKING POWDER and half a teaspoon of SALT into a SIFTER full of FLOUR.

She sifts everything into a bowl, then pours it back in and sifts it again.

Using a manual EGG BEATER, she lovingly mixes the batter.

Lines a CUPCAKE PAN with paper cups.

Carefully fills each cup.

Slides the pan into the oven.

Zack and Caleb lick the leftover batter.

INT. BAR - EVENING (RAINING)

Bruce is drunk. He looks idly around the bar.

A HOUSEWIFE (45) sits alone.

He swallows the rest of his drink, and looks at his wedding ring.

He tries nonchalantly to slip it off.

It won't come off. He pulls harder.

It's stuck. He twists and yanks.

BRUCE

Sonofa!

He uses his teeth.

Finally he tries to put it between his feet--

He falls off his stool!

DINK! The RING rolls across the floor--

It disappears behind the JUKE BOX!

Bruce slaps himself in the forehead!

PATRONS laugh at him.

PATRON (O.S.)
Look at that old drunk!

The housewife shakes her head.

INT. LIBRARY - EVENING (RAINING)

Sibyl scans old articles on a MICROFICHE projector.

The Librarian sifts through stacks of INDEX CARDS.

The Clerk pores over old YEARBOOKS.

CLERK
Bingo. Woodrow R. Sanderling.

He shows Sibyl the PHOTO:

A YOUNG GRAMPS in uniform, rank Airman First Class.

SIBYL
Hm. Interesting.

She absently rests a hand on the Clerk's shoulder.
He cherishes her touch.

EXT. MOTEL - EVENING (RAINING)

The convertible pulls in and parks.

A few blocks behind, the black sports car does a U-turn
and sneaks away.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - EVENING (RAINING)

Ellen artfully applies FROSTING to her cupcakes..

Zack and Caleb stuff their faces.

RING! -- Ellen answers the phone.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - EVENING (RAINING)

Bruce sits on the curb, soaked, trying to get his wedding ring back on.

The station wagon pulls up, splashing him.

INT. STATION WAGON - EVENING (RAINING)

ELLEN

Everything alright at the office?

BRUCE

Actually, things kinda fell apart tonight.

ELLEN

Oh. I'm sorry, honey.

(rubs his arm)

What happened to your finger?

Bruce's ring finger is all scratched.

BRUCE

My ring was irritating me. I had to take it off. I think it might be getting to tight.

ELLEN

Maybe a few more shots of liquor would help?

BRUCE

What's that supposed to mean?

ELLEN

How much have you had to drink?

BRUCE

I haven't been drinking.

ELLEN

For cry sake. You smell like Charlie Sheen.

BRUCE

I swear. You're just as crazy as your old man.

Ellen pulls over!

BRUCE (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

ELLEN
Get out.

BRUCE
Honey.

ELLEN
Out!

BRUCE
Listen.

She punches him!

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Ow!

ELLEN
Out!

BRUCE
Okay, okay. I have been drinkin.

She punches him!

BRUCE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry!

ELLEN
No you're not.

BRUCE
I'll make it up to you.

ELLEN
No you won't.

She starts to cry.

ELLEN (CONT'D)
Get out.

BRUCE
I'm not getting out.

She grabs his PDA and throws it outside!

BRUCE (CONT'D)
What? No! Ellen!

She drives away.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - EVENING (RAINING)

BRUCE

This is BS! How am I supposed to deal with so much BS? I take it all day at work. Lord knows I take it from you and your dad. I even take it at the bar! And don't get me started on Sibyl's BS!

ELLEN

Keep your voice down!

BRUCE

Why should I? This is my house!

ELLEN

You want the whole neighborhood to hear you?

BRUCE

To hell with them!

ELLEN

What about the kids?

BRUCE

You think I give a damn?

Ellen throws cupcakes at him!

ELLEN

You selfish, lousy, good-for-nothing drunk!

BRUCE

Don't forget ugly.

ELLEN

You think I don't know about your emergency meetings? You filthy liar!

A cupcake hits him in the face!

ELLEN (CONT'D)

You think I don't know you cheat on me?

She frisbees the plate at him!

It hits him square in the gut!

BRUCE

Ow! The hell you talking about?
You crazy old bat! Just like
your idiot father!

ELLEN

You! You!

EXT. AVERY RESIDENCE - EVENING (RAINING)

The rain almost drowns out the voice--

ELLEN (O.C.)

You God damn asshole!

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - EVENING (RAINING)

BRUCE

Let it all out, baby!

ELLEN

I just did!

She marches off to the kitchen.

Bruce flops down on the couch. Rubs his sore gut. Picks up
a nearby cupcake and eats it.

EXT. AVERY RESIDENCE - EVENING (RAINING)

LIGHTNING and THUNDER!

A WIND CHIME dances wildly in the wind!

A BIRD BATH overflows.

The driving rain washes away the plastic army men.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - EVENING (RAINING)

Bruce tries to find something to watch on TV.

Ellen sips TEA and watches the rain batter the window.

Bruce finally turns the TV off.

ELLEN

Something is terribly wrong with my dad. I don't know what. He might be sick. He might be dying. But I'm scared, Bruce. I'm really freaking out. I could use your support. In fact, I'm not sure I've ever needed it more.

Bruce embraces Ellen.

They hold each other tight.

The boys timidly enter, and join the hug.

The family shares a moment together.

ZACK

Mom?

ELLEN

Yes?

ZACK

We need a ride.

Ellen smiles and looks out the window.

The rain has stopped.

EXT. MR. HUMPHREY'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ellen waits in the station wagon as Caleb and Zack ring the DOORBELL.

Nobody answers.

They ring it again. No answer.

ZACK

(points)

Is that him on the roof?

MR. HUMPHREY (60), a gruff old curmudgeon, shuffles unsteadily across the slippery wet roof.

CALEB

Mister Humphrey!

Startled, he slips and almost falls!

MR. HUMPHREY
Who said that?

CALEB
Down here!

MR. HUMPHREY
Oh. Whatever you're selling,
I don't want it. Scram!

ZACK
We're not selling anything. We're
just looking for mister Humphrey.

MR. HUMPHREY
Never heard of him. Now beat it.

CALEB
He's supposed to be a leading
expert on pinball machines.

MR. HUMPHREY
Oh, he's an expert alright. Hold
the ladder, would you?

The kids hold his LADDER steady as Mr. Humphrey climbs down.

CALEB
He's supposed to have a collection
of nearly every pinball game ever.

MR. HUMPHREY
Yes, his collection is quite
impressive.

ZACK
So surely he would have Zany
Zombies.

MR. HUMPHREY
I imagine he might. But you must
excuse me. I have to clean my
gutters.

Mr. Humphrey opens the door to his GARAGE--

ZACK
What's that?

MR. HUMPHREY
What's what?

Zack runs into the garage!

INT. GARAGE - EVENING

Zack pulls the cover off a PINBALL MACHINE!

ZACK
A pinball machine!

MR. HUMPHREY
Hey! You little devil!

Zack plugs it in -- It lights up, flashes and DINGS!

Mr Humphrey lights up too. A smile grows on his face as he watches Zack play.

DING! DING! DING! DING! DING!

MR. HUMPHREY (CONT'D)
You gotta hit the blue bumper.
That's the bonus.

Zack hits it! DING! DING! DING!

MR. HUMPHREY (CONT'D)
Alright! Now try to get it up that
ramp. It unlocks the extra ball.

Zack hits it! DING! DING! DING!

MR. HUMPHREY (CONT'D)
Nice shot!

They high-five!

MR. HUMPHREY (CONT'D)
Now whatever you do, don't hit the
green kicker--

Zack hits the green kicker! His ball shoots back too fast,
ending up in the gutter -- GAME OVER!

ZACK
Aw, man. Now you tell me.

Mr. Humphrey resumes his gruff demeanor.

MR. HUMPHREY
Good game, kid.

Caleb dusts off an old machine -- ZANY ZOMBIES!

CALEB
Omigosh! Found it!

ZACK

Woo hoo!

MR. HUMPHREY

I'm sorry, but it's time for you
children to leave.

Caleb clings to the machine!

CALEB

We have to buy this game, mister!

ZACK

How much do you want for it?

MR. HUMPHREY

Look, son. It's not for sale.

Zack whips out his wad of CASH!

Mr. Humphrey lights up! DING!

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

The Librarian shows Sibyl a PHOTO.

LIBRARIAN

You're not gonna believe this.
Groom Lake, baby.

SIBYL

Nuh uh.

Sibyl examines it:

A YOUNG GRAMPS wearing a FLIGHT SUIT seated in a U-2 cockpit!

SIBYL (CONT'D)

Groom Lake! He's not crazy!

Sibyl kisses the Librarian on the cheek. He blushes.

She jumps on a table!

SIBYL (CONT'D)

He's not crazy!

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

BRUCE

What do you mean he's not crazy?

Sibyl slaps the PHOTOS on the table.

SIBYL

He's not crazy!

Ellen puts on her glasses and examines the evidence.

BRUCE

Are you still smoking cigarettes?
You are, aren't you?

Sibyl rolls her eyes.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

It's a disgusting habit. And why
don't you take a few classes this
fall? It wouldn't kill you.

ELLEN

(excited)

It's him! It's really him!

SIBYL

There's more!

(shuffles papers)

Best of all, I found his name on a
classified airforce roster from
nineteen seventy-two. His rank is
listed as Technical Sergeant, and
he was awarded the Bronze Star.

BRUCE

Did you say classified? Or
declassified?

SIBYL

Um.

BRUCE

This has a classified stamp on it!

SIBYL

Ignore that part.

Bruce skeptically looks at the documents.

BRUCE

You aren't pulling our leg, Sibyl?
You didn't whip this up on the
computer?

Sibyl gives him a dirty look.

Ellen claps her hands!

ELLEN

My dad isn't crazy! Hallelujah!

She does a victory dance!

Sibyl dances too!

Caleb and Zack run in and start dancing!

BRUCE

You people.

ELLEN

We'll see who's right tomorrow
morning.

BRUCE

Tomorrow's Monday. I have work.
The kids have school. Sibyl
probably has nothing planned.
Besides smoking cigarettes.

Sibyl rolls her eyes.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

Are you spending the night?

SIBYL

If that's alright.

ELLEN

Of course, of course. And for the
record, the boys do not have school
tomorrow. I'll write them a note.

CALEB

Omigosh!

ZACK

Alright, Mom!

Zack and Caleb exchange high-fives!

Bruce shakes his head. Ellen gives him a hug.

ELLEN
Honey. Just think. This will all
be over tomorrow morning.

BRUCE
Whatever. I'm through arguing.

ELLEN
Aw. Thanks, hun.

She kisses him on the cheek.

BRUCE
(checks watch)
Did anybody check the mail? I'm
gonna go check the mail. Be right
back.

Bruce slides out of the house.

The rest of the family keep dancing.

EXT. AVERY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The Sheriff sits in his POLICE CAR.

Bruce climbs into the passenger seat--

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

SHERIFF
Mister Avery.

BRUCE
Sheriff.

They shake hands.

SHERIFF
I understand you want your father-
in-law forcibly taken to a mental
institution.

BRUCE
Sure do.

SHERIFF
I feel the Zacke way about my
mother-in-law.

They both chuckle.

BRUCE

This guy's legitimately crazy though. Psychiatric examination will bear that out.

SHERIFF

Does he have any money?

BRUCE

Nah. Not a nickel. Why?

SHERIFF

Too bad. You can repossess a lot of property when you lock up a loved one.

The Sheriff hands Bruce a thick FOLDER.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

There's quite a bit of paperwork involved.

BRUCE

I'll get right to it.

SHERIFF

Your wife has to sign a few parts. Is she on board with this?

BRUCE

I'll figure something out.

SHERIFF

Okay. Here's my card.

The Sheriff hands Bruce his BUSINESS CARD.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Give me a ring when you got everything filled out, and I'll come snag the old geezer.

BRUCE

I don't exactly know where he is. He's been staying at some motel.

SHERIFF

Well, you better find him. And you and your wife need to bear witness when we take him away.

BRUCE

I see.

SHERIFF

Well, I think that's about it.

BRUCE

Thanks, Sheriff.

They shake hands.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Gramps connects an electronic DEVICE to the telephone.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

RING! Ellen reaches for the phone--

Sibyl gets it!

SIBYL

Avery residence? Grandpa!

INT. BUNKER - NIGHT

Loud obnoxious STATIC.

The hand wearing the black glove adjusts instruments, but to no avail. The signal is scrambled.

The hand clenches a fist and pounds the table!

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

GRAMPS

That's terrific news, kids.
Terrific! I'll tell you what.
Leave it by the bird bath and I'll
pick it up some time tonight.
Okay? Awesome. You two are heroes
in my book.

He crosses the final item off his list.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Caleb wraps the ZANY ZOMBIES SCOREBOARD up in a TOWEL.

The boys race out of the room!

Ellen wanders in.

The disassembled pinball machine is in A THOUSAND PIECES, scattered everywhere. A huge mess.

She puts her hands on her hips.

EXT. AVERY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Zack and Caleb nearly run into Bruce!

They all look guilty.

BRUCE

Hey kids.

Bruce tries to hide the Sheriff's paperwork behind his back.

CALEB

Hey Dad.

Caleb tries to hide the wrapped scoreboard behind his back.

An awkward beat.

ZACK

Great night for stargazing. Nice and clear.

(looks up)

BRUCE

Oh yeah, you bet. Stars are looking good tonight.

(looks up)

BEEP! BEEP! The Sheriff honks and waves as he drives by!

Bruce ducks inside.

The kids hurry over to the BIRD BATH.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sibyl lies curled up in an army SLEEPING BAG, reading her UFO book.

Ellen knocks on the door frame.

ELLEN

Why don't I fix up the pull-out couch? It won't take two minutes.

SIBYL

I'm fine, Mom. Really. Thanks. Good night.

ELLEN

Night dear. You want this light on or off?

SIBYL

Everything's good. I love you. Go to sleep.

Ellen smiles and leaves.

Sibyl keeps reading.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Zack and Caleb finish cleaning up the mess of pinball machine parts.

Ellen walks in. She looks around, pleasantly surprised.

They all exchange smiles.

INT. KID'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ellen tucks the boys into bed.

ELLEN

Sleep tight.

ZACK

I'll try. Even though it feels like Christmas eve.

ELLEN

I know what you mean.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Gramps drops a set of JUMPER CABLES onto the floor.

He puts on a pair of BIFOCALS and rummages through the box Nancy and Carlos prepared.

Gramps fully disassembles an OSCILLOSCOPE, CALCULATOR, TUBE RADIO and POCKET WATCH.

Using a SOLDERING IRON, he constructs bizarre circuitry which doesn't look like it would work.

He checks his watch. Makes COFFEE.

Adds a dash of milk and a generous amount of MAPLE SYRUP.

Gets back to work assembling the device:

Calculator buttons and radio dials go on the sides.

The pinball scoreboard display attaches to the front.

The wah pedal and jumper cables attach to the back.

The GYROSCOPE fits into a bracket on top.

He checks his watch. Sighs. Lies down on the floor.

GRAMPS

Okay. Down, up.

He manages to do a push-up!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Alright! Down, Up!

Unfortunately, he can't do another.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

One is better than none.

He pulls the jump rope out of the trash can.

Jumps rope for a good while..

Takes a break to catch his breath.

Jumps rope some more.

Wipes sweat from his face.

Throws a few awkward but strong punches.

Practices a few good kicks.

Takes a break to catch his breath.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Getting there.

He drinks some WATER. Eats some PANCAKES.

Finishes the coffee and makes another pot.

INT. AVERY RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Bruce sips COFFEE as he fills out the Sheriff's paperwork..

He comes to a part he has trouble with.

BRUCE
Hm.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bruce flicks on the LIGHT.

BRUCE
Honey?

Ellen sits up, disoriented and alarmed!

ELLEN
Is there a fire?

BRUCE
No.

She goes back to sleep.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
I need your signature.

ELLEN
Mmm hmm.

BRUCE
Here. Just sign your name.
It's for the kids.

He puts a PEN in her hand and extracts her signature.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Perfect. And here. And here.
Lovely. And here.

She SNORES as he moves her hand across the final page.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Gramps lays down his tools, removes his bifocals and steps back to admire the completed GIZMO.

GRAMPS
This thing better work.

He packs it snugly into the suitcase.

Suddenly he hears something outside!

He grabs his PISTOL and peers out the window--

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

A SHADOWY FIGURE lurks near the convertible!

Gramps runs outside in his underwear!

GRAMPS
Hey! You!

The shadowy figure runs away!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Stop!

The figure disappears around a corner--

Tires SCREECH!

The black sports car zooms away!

Gramps aims, but decides not to shoot.

Suddenly his convertible EXPLODES!

A massive FIREBALL rises into the air!

Gramps is speechless.

FADE TO:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Ellen melts BUTTER, sifts FLOUR, cracks EGGS--
 She pours perfect circles of BATTER onto a hot GRIDDLE.
 RING! She licks her finger and answers the phone--

ELLEN

Morning!

INT. MOTEL - MORNING

GRAMPS

Hey Ellie. It's me. Things are on
 schedule, but I need a big favor.
 I need a lift.

He looks out the window at the SMOULDERING CAR WRECK.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Yeah. I did have a car. But not
 anymore. Thanks, Ellie.

He hangs up, waits, and dials another number.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

This is agent whiskey Romeo Sierra.
 The ball is in play. Repeat, the
 ball is in play. Out.

Gramps hangs up. He looks at himself in the mirror.

With deliberate seriousness, he puts on a BERET.

He unfolds dark SUNGLASSES and puts them on too.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Too much?

He takes off the glasses. Straightens his beret. Gives
 himself a tough look in the mirror.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Let's do this.

EXT. AVERY RESIDENCE - MORNING

The whole family piles into the Station Wagon. Sibyl rides
 in the trunk. Bruce drives.

EXT. MOTEL - MORNING

POLICE have cordoned off the CAR WRECK. DETECTIVES investigate the remains of the convertible.

The station wagon pulls into the parking lot.

Gramps sits on his suitcase, holding a shovel and his trusty cane.

The kids roll down their windows--

ZACK AND CALEB

Grandpa!

SIBYL

Nice beret!

BRUCE

What the heck happened here?

ELLEN

That's not your car, is it?

GRAMPS

Good morning everybody! I smell pancakes!

INT. STATION WAGON - MORNING

Ellen hands Gramps a plate of PANCAKES.

GRAMPS

Well bless your heart, darling.

ELLEN

And since it's kind of a special occasion, I broke out some of the good stuff.

She hands him a fancy bottle of SYRUP.

GRAMPS

Ah, Miller's Creek Black Maple reserve! Ninety-seven! Quite a vintage!

He opens, sniffs and tastes it.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

Holy sweet mother.

BRUCE

Which way are we headed, captain?

GRAMPS

Get on the interstate. Westbound.

EXT. INTERSTATE - MORNING

The station wagon cruises along.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

GRAMPS

(licking fingers)

I gotta hand it to you, Ellie.
Nobody makes pancakes half as good
as you.

ELLEN

Aw. Thanks Dad. I learned from
the best.

GRAMPS

I'm not just saying that. If they
needed improvement, I would tell
you. I'm not afraid to be honest
about your cooking.

For instance, I don't especially
care for your peanut brittle.

ELLEN

What's wrong with my--?

GRAMPS

--And frankly, your lasagna sucks.
I don't know how you can screw up
lasagna, but you do.

ELLEN

Really?

BRUCE

He does have a point. There's
something wack about your lasagna.

ELLEN

Kids? What do you think?

ZACK

Wack.

Caleb makes a yuck face.

ELLEN

Huh. So much for that.

GRAMPS

But your pancakes are divine!
They couldn't possibly be any
better. Honestly. Honestly.

Ellen is touched.

ELLEN

Glad you like them, Dad.

BRUCE

So where exactly are we headed?
Am I going the right way?

GRAMPS

You're doing fine, son. Just keep
your foot on the gas. I'll tell
you when to turn.
(checks watch)

Bruce gives Ellen a skeptical look. She shrugs.

SIBYL

So Grandpa. Tell us about Vodka
Borealis.

ZACK

Yeah Grandpa! Tell us!

GRAMPS

Let's see. Vodka Borealis is the
most advanced Soviet missile
guidance system ever developed. It
incorporates random variable
trajectories into the flight path,
resulting in a missile with an
erratic course, like a knuckleball.

SIBYL

Sneaky.

GRAMPS

You can't predict where it's going
to land, and worse, you can't
intercept it.

SIBYL

So you have to stop it before it launches.

GRAMPS

Can't. All you know is the general area it'll come from, and the approximate time, based on lunar phases.

BRUCE

(laughs)

Lunar phases? You mean astrology?

GRAMPS

No, Bruce. It's called rocket science.

SIBYL

Wait. So how do you stop the missile?

GRAMPS

Luckily, our boys finally developed a sophisticated mechanism whereby an operator can manually steer a similarly erratic missile close enough to disable the warhead electromagnetically.

(pats his suitcase)

But it's a tricky operation. Never tested in the field. And we only get one shot.

SIBYL

(astounded)

You're gonna launch a missile?

GRAMPS

(grins)

That's the plan.

Zack and Caleb excitedly bounce up and down!

Bruce looks incredulously at Ellen. She bites her lip.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Farm land on either side. LIVESTOCK grazes in lush fields. CROPS grow in neat rows.

The station wagon coasts along.

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Everybody's bored. Caleb yawns.

Suddenly Gramps perks up--

GRAMPS

Wait! I think. Yes! I'm sure of
it! There should be a creek up
ahead, and a small bridge.

He fidgets excitedly. His enthusiasm is contagious.

ZACK

Is that it?
(points)

GRAMPS

(squints)
I can't see that far. Ah!
I think you're right!

They approach and pass over a BRIDGE.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

That was it! Pretty soon we'll
come to a fork in the road. Bear
left.

BRUCE

Will do.

They keep driving. Everyone waits anxiously.

They pass the fork, bearing left. Confidence grows.

GRAMPS

Next we'll see an old chimney,
and a gravel road, which we take.

BRUCE

Got it.

Excitement builds as they spot the chimney and turn in.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - DAY

The station wagon parks. The family unloads.

Gramps triumphantly points to a row of old FENCE POSTS--

GRAMPS

See those fence posts? The panel's
buried next to the seventh post.

Caleb and Zack grab the shovel and run ahead!

Sibyl lights a CLOVE CIGARETTE.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(surprise)
You smoke?

SIBYL

(shame)
I'm quitting.

She throws away the cigarette.

Bruce and Ellen exchange surprised looks. Ellen shrugs.

GRAMPS

If you carry the battery, I'll dig.

SIBYL

What battery?

GRAMPS

The car battery.

BRUCE

My car? This car? Oh no. No way.

GRAMPS

We need a battery, Bruce.

BRUCE

Yeah? We also need a way home.
Look around. We're in the middle
of nowhere. Ellie? You're with me
on this one.

GRAMPS

We need a battery, Ellie.

ELLEN

They need a battery, Bruce.

Sibyl pops the hood.

BRUCE
(to the sky)
Lord, grant me the serenity to
accept the things I cannot change.

Sibyl extracts the BATTERY.

Gramps hauls his suitcase over to the seventh post.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Honey, can I borrow your phone?
Seems somebody threw mine out in
the rain last night, and I need to
call the office.

Ellen hands over her PHONE.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Thanks, babe.

Bruce steps aside to make his call.

He pulls out the Sheriff's business card and dials.

EXT. SEVENTH POST - DAY

Caleb and Zack are exhausted.

Sibyl, sweating, digs a big hole.

SIBYL
Am I getting close?

GRAMPS
Another inch or two. You should
hit it any second.

Sibyl keeps digging.

And digging.

BRUCE
That's right. Any second.

The family exchanges looks of doubt.

Sibyl keeps digging.

And digging.

Finally she stops.

SIBYL
It's not here, Grandpa.

GRAMPS
(confused)
It has to be here! It has to be!

Gramps takes the shovel and digs.

The family quickly loses faith.

Bruce shakes his head and impatiently checks his watch.

The kids are disappointed. Ellen winces.

Sibyl thoughtfully watches the clouds.

Gramps stops digging. He sits, defeated.

The boys head back to the car.

ELLEN
Well? What do you say we pack
it up?

GRAMPS
But. But. I don't understand.

ELLEN
It was fun, Dad. We all had fun.
But it's over. Accept it.

BRUCE
You really had us going there for
a while.

They all head back to the car.

Gramps is depressed.

Bruce smirks at Ellen.

Suddenly Zack trips and falls on his face!

ZACK
Ow! What the heck?

CALEB
Watch where you're walking, dum--

Caleb trips and falls too!

CALEB (CONT'D)

Ow! There's something here. Under the grass.

They pull and dig, and uncover a piece of WOOD.

CALEB (CONT'D)

What's this doing here?

SIBYL

It's a fence post! This is the first fence post, not that one!

CALEB

Omigosh!

Everybody exchanges excited looks.

Zack races to the real seventh post!

The rest of the family is close behind.

Bruce grabs the shovel and digs like a machine!

Dirt flies! The hole quickly grows.

The kids run amok. Ellen nervously wrings her hands.

Gramps calmly checks his watch.

DINK! The shovel jolts.

SIBYL

I hit something!

Everyone exchanges anxious looks.

They use their hands to quickly uncover a METAL PLATE!

ELLEN

It says high voltage!

GRAMPS

That's just to scare people.

BRUCE

It's bolted shut.

Gramps hands Bruce the socket wrench.

Bruce unscrews the bolts and pulls off the plate--

Inside are a tangle of multicolored WIRES.

Gramps attaches his gizmo by connecting the appropriate wires.

CALEB
This is so cool.

ELLEN
Dad. I think we all owe you an apology.

GRAMPS
Not now, Ellie. I have to concentrate here.

Ellen shuts up.

Gramps checks his watch, licks his finger to test the wind speed, and adjusts dials on the gizmo.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Okay. Now we hook up the jumper cables.

SIBYL
Got it.

Sibyl reaches for the battery--

Suddenly the black sports car zooms up the road towards them!

ELLEN
Who on earth could that be?

The driver's window rolls down--

VERONIKA (65), a femme fatale wearing the black gloves we recognize, leans out the window with a TOMMY GUN!

GRAMPS
Get down! Now!

The Avery family hits the deck!

TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT!

Bullets kick up dirt as Gramps runs, rolls, ducks and dives!

He pulls out his pistol and returns fire!

PAP! PAP! PAP!

A BULLET splinters the sports car windshield!

The car skids to a halt! Veronika leaps out, shooting!

TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT! TAT!

Gramps keeps moving and returning fire as bullets whiz by.

PAP! PAP! PAP! PAP!

CLICK! Veronika runs out of ammo and discards her gun.

CLICK! Gramps runs out of ammo and discards his gun.

The Avery family exchange looks of disbelief.

Veronika and Gramps glare at each other.

Veronika peels off her gloves.

Gramps rolls up his sleeves.

Veronika steps out of her high heels.

Gramps kicks off his shoes.

Veronika removes her earrings.

Gramps straightens his beret.

They glare at each other.

Suddenly Veronika whips out a pair of NUNCHUCKS!

Gramps unsheathes his cane, which contains a SWORD!

CALEB

Omigosh! Yes!

Sibyl takes a picture with her PHONE.

Ellen faints!

BRUCE

Honey?

Veronika and Gramps glare at each other.

Suddenly she charges at him!

Their weapons clash! TINK! TINK! TINK! TINK!

They separate, circle, and clash again!

TINK! TINK! TINK! TINK!

The nunchucks wrap around the sword--

Veronika yanks and Gramps is suddenly disarmed!

He kicks and she is suddenly disarmed!

She kicks! He blocks.

She punches! He grabs her arm--

They exchange elbows!

She head-butts him!

He's momentarily dazed.

She picks up his sword!

He cautiously backs away.

She advances!

He trips and falls!

She closes in!

He raises his hands in defense!

She prepares to stab!

TZKZTIKTZTKIZIITKZ! Veronika spasms and falls over!

The Sheriff stands there holding a TAZER GUN!

Bruce faints!

SHERIFF

Somebody wanna tell me what the
hell's going on here?

Gramps points to the sky.

GRAMPS

Here it comes!

They all look up:

A MISSILE flies erratically across the sky! It dives, climbs
and turns randomly, even going in circles!

SHERIFF

Holy cow! Is that a rocket?

The Sheriff reaches for his RADIO.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)
 Dispatch? Dispatch, come in.

Gramps quickly hooks up the jumper cables--

SPARKS FLY as the gizmo whirs to life!

The pinball scoreboard lights up!

Gramps checks his watch. Adjusts the dials. Flips a switch.

GRAMPS
 Fire in the hole!

He presses a button!

SPARKS FLY! But the gizmo goes dead!

Gramps frowns.

ZACK
 Did it work?

Gramps bites his lip.

SIBYL
 What's supposed to happen?

GRAMPS
 See that water tower over there?
 (points)

SIBYL
 Yeah.

GRAMPS
 It's not really a water tower.
 It's a missile silo, containing an
 anti-ballistic missile which should
 have just launched.

Gramps looks dismally at the gizmo.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
 I don't get it. I thought I did
 everything according to protocol.
 What went wrong?

Suddenly a RUMBLE like THUNDER!

CALEB
 What was that?

The ground QUAKES!

ZACK
Earthquake!

They all lose their balance and fall over!

The RUMBLE gets so loud they cover their ears!

EXT. WATER TOWER - DAY

The tower shudders violently! Pieces break away!

SMOKE billows!

The roof caves in! Walls crumble!

A sudden FLASH!

A MISSILE LAUNCHES as the tower collapses!

FIRE jets skyward!

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The Sheriff faints!

The American missile rises higher and higher.

It arcs towards the Russian missile.

Gramps spins the gyroscope. The gizmo BLINKS and CLICKS!

Gramps presses buttons and turns dials. The scoreboard flashes random numbers.

The American missile starts to jitter erratically.

Zack and Caleb cross their fingers.

Sibyl is gobsmacked.

Veronika struggles against her HANDCUFFS.

Gramps keeps calculating and making fine adjustments.

His foot rocks on the wah pedal.

The American missile dips and turns just as randomly as the Russian missile!

The two crazy missiles get closer and closer together..

GRAMPS
Yes! Yes!

VERONIKA
Nyet! Nyet!

Gramps holds the controls steady.

GRAMPS
Almost. Almost.

Everyone holds their breath.

The missiles collide!

KGHPHOOM! A huge EXPLOSION!

FLAMING DEBRIS rains down!

Gramps pumps his fist!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
U-S-A! U-S-A! U-S-A!

Zack and Caleb dance!

ZACK AND CALEB
U-S-A! U-S-A! U-S-A!

Sibyl takes pictures.

Veronika cries. Her makeup runs down her cheeks.

FADE TO:

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

An OLD MAN bursts in--

OLD MAN
Woodrow's back!

OLD WOMAN
Woodrow!

ELDERLY PEOPLE cheer as Gramps enters, still wearing his beret. Somebody throws CONFETTI!

GRAMPS
My! What a welcome!

Jerry and Carlos hurry over--

CARLOS

Thank God! We thought you were dead!

JERRY

They said the car was totaled!

GRAMPS

They were right about the car.

Nancy and Gertie hurry over.

GERTIE

You're okay!

NANCY

This calls for a celebration!

CARLOS

I got some booze hidden in my room!

He hurries off.

An ORDERLY frowns.

JERRY

So what the heck happened?

NANCY

There was an explosion?

GRAMPS

Well, you know. Sometimes cars explode.

GERTIE

Do they?

GRAMPS

It happens.

JERRY

You wouldn't believe how big my insurance is paying out! What do you say we all go on a cruise to Bermuda?

GRAMPS

Why not?

CARLOS (O.S.)

Here here!

Carlos returns with the BOOZE and starts filling cups.
The Orderly sighs and takes a cup.

NANCY
By the way, I love your hat.

Gramps straightens his beret.

GRAMPS
So do I.

Somebody puts on an old MILES DAVIS record.

OLD TIMERS sway nostalgically.

Jerry and Gertie waltz.

Zack and Caleb do the twist.

Gramps sniffs the air--

A cart full of PANCAKES is wheeled out!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
Alright! I thought it was getting
to be lunch time.

Gramps tucks a napkin into his collar and grabs a PLATE.

Zack and Caleb mimic him.

Gramps piles his pancakes high and drowns them in SYRUP.

Zack and Caleb do likewise.

Ellen and Bruce think it's hilarious.

SIBYL
Everybody, shhh. Check this out.

Sibyl turns up the TV volume--

ON TV:

"BREAKING NEWS" wipe.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A REPORTER (38) holding a MICROPHONE stands near where the missiles collided. Behind her, FIREFIGHTERS search the area.

REPORTER

I'm standing in a field where witnesses say an explosion of some kind occurred in the sky earlier today.

The CAMERA pans the scene. WORKERS collect SMOULDERING DEBRIS.

REPORTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

A spokesperson from the Department of Defence denied speculation that a missile test had been conducted, and assures us that at no time were any civilian lives in any danger.

INT. PRESS CLUB - DAY

A SCIENTIST shrugs and says something.

REPORTER (V.O.)

NASA has issued a statement attributing today's unfortunate event to a faulty weather balloon, which apparently malfunctioned and caught fire.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

REPORTER

In an unrelated incident, a nearby water tower seems to have collapsed. No injuries are reported. Back to you in the studio.

INT. NEWS ROOM - DAY

ANCHOR

Alright. Thanks, Tina. Coming up, weather and sports. But first, your local traffic.

CUT TO:

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

Sibyl turns off the TV.

SIBYL
A weather balloon, huh?

BRUCE
See? I knew there was a logical
explanation. And you guys really
thought Grandpa launched a missile.

Sibyl rolls her eyes.

Zack and Caleb roll their eyes.

Ellen gives Bruce a dirty look.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
I swear. It's amazing the things
people believe.

OLD TIMERS nod in agreement.

GRAMPS
Wait a second. What's this?

Gramps picks up a MAGAZINE.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
An ad for hiking boots?

He flips through it.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
There better not be an article
about soy milk in here.

Bruce and Ellen exchange worried looks.

Zack and Caleb get excited!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
(worried)
Uh oh.

He removes the napkin from his collar, picks up his trusty
cane and stands.

GRAMPS (CONT'D)
I need to get to a pay phone.

Ellen and Bruce are petrified!

GRAMPS (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Just kidding! It's all over. I'm
Done. Retired. Finito.

Ellen breathes a sigh of relief.

They all laugh.

BRUCE

Thank goodness! I couldn't handle
another assignment.

ELLEN

Me neither.

GRAMPS

No sir. No more top secret
missions for me.

Behind his back, Gramps has his fingers crossed!

Zack and Caleb, who see this, exchange excited looks!

Sibyl sees it too.

Gramps turns and winks at them!

FADE OUT.

THE END.