

THIRTEEN SECONDS

a sixty minute screenplay by

HEATHER O'CONNOR

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Thirteen Seconds

FADE IN

EXT. KENT STATE UNIVERSITY (EST) DAY

The CAMERA PANS from above the University. From above, STUDENTS can be seen wrestling in the dirt and pouring plastic buckets of muddy water from dorm windows. A CAR drives by slowly and is pelted by mud balls. Unexpectedly, the car's DRIVER and PASSENGER hop out of the car and returned their attacker's fire with a blast from a FIRE EXTINGUISHER. The good-natured fun, participated in by nearly 300 students, occurs perilously close to the Commons.

*need a TEXT: Date,  
for page 13  
text to  
make  
sure*

*Dissolve to:*

EXT. THE COMMONS, KSU (EST) DAY

A canopied temporary stage is set up in the middle of the Commons and bedecked by BALLOONS and STREAMERS. ALUMNI and their families are seated on stiff metal folding chairs in front of the stage. PRESIDENT ROBERT WHITE is at the lectern on the stage. Distinguished alumni are seated in a half circle behind him. The 40-some gathered alumni and White are attempting to ignore the frolicking going on behind them. Every once in a while a stray mudball will find its way to the seating, and White's speech will be briefly interrupted until he can find his place again.

White bends close to the microphone to be heard over the rabble.

WHITE

Kent State alumni, family and friends,  
I am honored to be here to introduce to  
you a very distinguished alumni from the  
class of 1946, Dr. William Caldwell, senior.

White waves a hand behind him to acknowledge a tall, stern European-looking man, DR. WILLIAM CALDWELL.

[applause]

WHITE (CONT.)

Dr. Caldwell's son, William Junior  
is a distinguished member of our  
University's class of 1971, pursuing  
an excellent liberal arts degree here  
at Kent State University.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

White waves a hand to acknowledge the stocky <sup>son</sup> ~~version~~ of Dr. Caldwell, ~~but~~ <sup>who has</sup> with long dark hair tied back in a bandanna.

BILL, JR. squirms uncomfortably in his seat under the gaze of his father and the audience. He glances wistfully at his fellow students frolicking in the yard, and pretends to ignore the occasional jeer or "Ole Billy Boy!" from behind the audience of alumni.

WHITE (CONT.)

I would like to introduce <sup>Doctor</sup> Dr. Caldwell who will present an award to the University to fund the construction of our new Reserved Officers Training Corps Building. Thanks to the generosity of Dr. Caldwell, we will no longer have to house our excellent ROTC men in those unsightly temporary quarters.

White nods to a pair of ranshambled MOTOR HOMES on the edge of the quad, which serve as offices and storerooms for KSU's ROTC corps.

WHITE (CONT.)

<sup>Doctor</sup> Dr. Caldwell...

[more applause]

Dr. Caldwell reluctantly rises from his seat and shoots a warning look at his son, forbidding him to attempt to leave. He glumly approaches the microphone.

CALDWELL

<sup>Doctor</sup> Dr. White, distinguished alumni, friends... a lot has changed since we were students in these hallowed halls <sup>... when things were much better than today...</sup>

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. WHITE'S OFFICE (EST) DAY

A small, simple office furnished in dark cherry furniture, White peers over a desk piled high with FOLDERS and PAPERS awaiting his signature. He is busily at work when a LOUD BUZZ SOUNDS from his TELEPHONE. White picks it up.

WHITE  
(Speaking into his intercom)

Who is it Rachel? ~~(pause) Who?~~

Dr. Caldwell opens the heavy oak door and walks brazenly into the office.

CALDWELL  
It's Bill Caldwell, <sup>Doctor</sup> Dr. White. I told your secretary that you'd want to see me.

WHITE  
(apologetically)

Oh, ~~Dr.~~ Caldwell, please come in. (a beat)  
Here, have a seat. Please call be Bob.  
May I get you a cup of coffee? Tea?  
(speaking into the intercom again) Rachel,  
two coffees ~~in here~~ please. The presentation  
went most well this afternoon, don't you agree?  
The alumni were most impressed with your... (Back to Caldwell)

Dr. Caldwell refuses the offered CHAIR.

CALDWELL  
(interrupting)

No, Bob. I won't be staying. I've just had a discussion with my son and several other alumni and I'm afraid I am going to have to withdraw my donation.

WHITE  
(stunned)

Wh-wh-what?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CALDWELL

This afternoon's fiasco was a perfect example of the shenanigans that you permit at this University. When I was at Kent State, this University was a place of learning, not of childish games. And I will not have my money going to finance such nonsense. I've had my secretary stop payment on the check. I will expect a receipt and letter of acknowledgment next week.

Caldwell begins to leave the room. White is still standing with his mouth gaping open in shock. As he reaches the door, Caldwell turns around.

CALDWELL (CONT.)

*in 150*  
I ~~will~~ be withdrawing William, Jr.'s registration from this university, effective today. I understand he has become involved in some anarchist group which you have permitted to meet on campus. I would think you would know better than to let students at a State-run University engage in unpatriotic activities. I will deal with my son, but I strongly suggest you take a closer look at your students. ~~You're~~ loosing control of this university, White. *OK*

Caldwell exits the office with a *slam* BANG of the door. White is left standing in the middle of the room with his mouth agape, oblivious to his TELEPHONE that begins to RING.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. LOUNGE OF TRI TOWERS DORM (EST) NIGHT

ROSEANNE CANFORA is at the PIANO humming a protest song she is composing. A TELEVISION is in the corner, but no one is watching. A Vietnam story flickers on the screen. ALISON KRAUSE and BARRY LEVINE are huddled on an oversized BEANBAG alternatively smoking a JOINT and strumming a GUITAR. ALAN CANFORA and his girlfriend BARBARA HENRY are relaxing on large, comfortable VUNYL COUCHES, listening intently to Alan's cousin, DAVID, tell stories about the war. David is dressed in a tattered ARMY UNIFORM, with a CAST on his leg and a grown-out crew cut. The rest of the students are in long hair, BELLBOTTOMS and LOVE BEADS.

DAVID

So after boot camp they sent me over in a troop with about a dozen other guys from Kent. They gave us ~~a couple of guns~~ and ammo and enough food ration packets to last us a month and then just ~~put us~~ *struck us in* ~~right on the front lines~~ and left us there.

ROSEANNE  
(from the piano)

What was it like?

DAVID

It was scary, man. When you're out there, in the jungle, it's just you against them. There were guys that were so shit-scared that they cried themselves to sleep every night.

BARB  
(awed whisper)

Did you ever have to... I mean... shoot anyone?

ALAN

Barbara!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

DAVID  
(quietly)

No. My best buddy did, though. We got ambushed one night when my buddy was on guard. That's where I got this.

(smacking his cast) They woulda fuckin' annihilated us. But Bobby, he got `em. We barely got outta that one alive. I'm lucky all I got was a little scrapnel in the leg. My buddies are still out there.

ALAN

The war's fucked up, man. We shouldn't be there.

Alan explodes in a fit of anger, slamming his fist on the table.

ALAN (CONT.)

Dammit, man, we shouldn't be ~~in~~ there!

ALISON and Barry look up from their love nest in surprise, and even Barb and David seem taken aback.

DAVID

There's nothing you can do about it, man. It's the system. Just be fucking glad you got this place to keep you safe. Stay in college till the war's fuckin over, that's my advice. ~~I'm goin home and get me a nice, cushy desk job.~~

BARB

Tom and Bill were with SDS last weekend working on a letter-writing campaign. He said they sent out nearly three hundred letters. Maybe we could do something like that?

*write it out so viewers will know/remember what it is*

ALAN

Letters? Letters?! What the hell is that going to do? It's fucked up, man, fucked up.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

David and Barry nod their heads in agreement. Barb shrugs and turns up the volume on the television. David and Alan settle back into their conversation.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. WHITE'S OFFICE (EST) DAY

White is seated at his desk, much more confident than he was the day before. He's got a GLASS OF SCOTCH and ICE next to his pile of papers and sits at his desk with a contented grin on his face. There is a BUZZ from the TELEPHONE.

OS ["Alan Canfora is here to see you, sir."]

WHITE  
(eagerly)

Send him in, Rachel.

Alan opens the heavy door and walks nervously into White's office. His hair is in a disarray, loosely tied back with a dirty BANDANNA. His hands are grubby and his clothing looks like it's been slept in. He stands in front of White's desk, anxiously shifting from foot to foot.

*A Symbolic T-shirt would be good here.*

*(A beat) is always a separate line unto itself*

WHITE

Ahh, <sup>*Mr*</sup>Mr. Canfora. Please come in.  
(a beat) Sit.

White indicates a stiff upright CHAIR ~~in the corner.~~

*Maybe: "Question Authority"*

WHITE (CONT.)

I guess you're wondering why I called this little meeting.

Alan shrugs defiantly.

WHITE (CONT.)

How many years have you been enrolled at this university, <sup>*Mr*</sup>Mr. Canfora?

*Mr*

CONTINUED



CONTINUED

ALAN

Two years, ~~sir.~~

WHITE

And you're still taking freshman English?

ALAN

<sup>yes</sup>  
Yessir.

WHITE

Well, as I'm sure Miss Prescott has told you, you are in danger of failing both ~~history~~ and political science. (a beat) We wouldn't want you to have to drop out of college, now would we? That ~~might~~ <sup>could</sup> mean that you might have to leave all your little longhaired friends and go to war. And I know how much you'd hate for that to happen.

Alan shruggs.

WHITE (CONT.)

Then I think ~~perhaps~~ you should devote ~~a little~~ more time to your studies and ~~a little~~ less time to that Students for a Democratic Society group you've got going. (PAUSE) You're dating that Henry girl, aren't you?

ALAN

Sir?

CONTINUED

*His (Alan) a  
little too  
polite with  
all this  
"sir"  
stuff*

CONTINUED

WHITE

I was just wondering if her parents know what she's been up to since she's been here? I'm sure the little lady is too busy with all her extracurricular activities to talk to her parents often. (a beat) Perhaps I should write Senator and Mrs. Henry a letter updating them on their daughter's engagements of late. I'm sure they'd be quite concerned.

*Misses*

ALAN

I'm sure that's not necessary, sir.

WHITE

Well, we'll just have to make sure of that, won't we Mr. Canfora? I trust that we understand each other?

ALAN

(looking glumly at the floor)

Yessir.

WHITE

Good.

White picks up his telephone.

WHITE (CONT.)

(speaking into the telephone)

Rachel, Mr. Canfora is ready to return to class now. ~~Thank you.~~

He returns the phone to its cradle.

WHITE (CONT.)

(to Alan)

*(a beat)*

Rachel will escort you to class.

Alan walks out the door held open for him by White. He snitches a PEN off the secretary's desk as he leaves.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. ALAN'S ROOM (EST) NIGHT

We are in the flat of three 20-something college males. A TIE-DYED SHEET hangs from one wall, STRINGS OF BEADS hang over the doorway. The place is a mess, with dirty dishes, cigarette butts and clothing in heaps on the floor and cracked-paint windowsills. Bill Caldwell, Jr. is hunched over one bed, throwing piles of clothing into a GREEN DUFFLE BAG. He is watched by a small TERRIER who pulls clothing out of the bag as quickly as Bill puts it in. Alan and TOM CANFORA walk in, talking angrily. They stop short and are silent when they see Bill.

Tom throws a small rubber TOY at the dog.

TOM

Shoo, Sid. (to Bill) What's <sup>happening?</sup> going on?

Bill turns around with tears in his eyes and an armful of clothing.

BILL

My old man talked to White. He heard about that protest SDS had last month against the war. He heard I was a part of it.

TOM

So?

Bill tears a Martin Luther King POSTER off the wall and wads it into a ball that he throws at the dog.

BILL

So I'm outta here. I woulda flunked out anyway. My old man's taking me down to the station tomorrow.

Alan has been standing silently in the doorway, but now he steps forward and rescues the poster from the teeth of the dog, throwing it on the bed angrily.

ALAN

You can't go. (louder) You can't go!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BILL

Look, Al, we've been buddies since we were kids. You know my old man. What do you want me to do?

ALAN

What about all that we've been fighting for? You're just going to go and sign up?

Alan grabs Bill by the shirt collar and looks about to punch him.

ALAN (CONT.)

What the fuck's a matter with you?

Bill is suddenly angry. He shoves Alan away and picks a small card off the dressing table. It is a DRAFT CARD. He shoves it on Alan's chest.

BILL

I've been drafted. Fuck you, man.  
Fuck you, *mslwk.*

Bill turns back to his packing.

Alan stands silently in the doorway, staring blindly at the card. Then he abruptly turns and throws the card and poster on the floor and walks out.

Tom adds a few snapshots from the dressing table to Bill's pack.

TOM

Don't mind him, man. White threatened him with expulsion ~~today~~, too. He's just messed up about it.

BILL

Well, you'd better tell your buddy to get his shit together if he doesn't want to be on the next ship out.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

The two finish packing and Tom helps Bill hoist his pack on his back. Tom walks Bill out to his father's car, and they exchange good-byes.

TOM

Take care of yourself, man. Write if you can.

BILL

Say bye to Al for me, OK?

Bill pats the head of the terrier that has followed them out.

BILL (CONT.)

And take care of ole Sidhartha here for me, OK?

TOM

Will do.

Bill climbs into the passenger seat next to his stern-looking father. As they pull away, Bill leans out the window.

BILL  
(yells)

Tell Al that the dog stays. I'll be home soon!

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. TRI TOWERS LOUNGE (EST) NIGHT

TEXT: THURSDAY, APRIL 31, 1970.

Students are sitting in the lounge, as a year before. They look a little older and a lot scruffier. Alan sits on the COUCH, reading a newly arrived LETTER aloud to the rest. The TELEVISION is off.

ALAN

"Dear Al, Tom, Barb and company..."

ROSEANNE

(looking up from the PIANO)

Aww, what about me?

BARB

(laughing)

You're the "and company."

ALAN (CONT.)

"I've been over here for nearly a year now, can you believe it? And let me tell you, it sucks. I haven't had a decent meal in weeks. It's cold and rainy, but they've got great grass."

[Laughter from the other students.]

ALAN (CONT.)

"We don't get much news here, but I did hear that the Yanks up at Ohio State and Columbia have been protesting so hard they've got the Guards out. Didn't hear anything about good ole KSU, but I'm sure you guys are keeping the faith. If I'm lucky, I might be home in time for your graduation, Al. Take care of the girls and Sid for me. Bill."

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BARB  
(to Alan)

He doesn't know that you're not graduating?

ROSEANNE

He doesn't know about SDS either. Or  
should I say, the lack of it.

BARB

He'd be pretty disappointed to come  
home and hear how we've been sitting *on*  
our asses since...

She is interrupted by the TELEPHONE RINGING. Roseanne  
reaches over and picks it up off the piano.

ROSEANNE

Hullo? (PAUSE) Yeah? (PAUSE) Yeah?  
(to Barb) Barb! Turn on the TV! *now!*  
~~Quick, now.~~

Barbara hops up and switches on *Shock* the television in the  
corner. The students listen in ~~awe~~ as they hear NIXON  
ANNOUNCE the troops' invasion of Cambodia.

BARB

He... he can't!

ALAN

Damn!

ROSEANNE

(Still holding the phone to her ear)

Yeah thanks, Tom. I'll see you tomorrow.

The students sit in shocked silence for a few minutes.  
Suddenly Alison Krause, who has been sitting quietly in the  
corner with her boyfriend Barry Levine, jumps up and pulls  
Barry up next to her.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALISON

So what are we gonna do about this,  
man? We're not gonna take this shit.

ALAN  
(cynically)

So what are you gonna do about it, princess?

ALISON  
(enthusiastically)

Tomorrow. Noon. On the Commons by  
the Victory Bell. Bring as many guys  
as you can. (to Barry) C'mon Barry,  
we've got some organizing to do.

Alison drags Barry out of the room as the others sit in  
solemn silence.

FADE OUT



FADE IN

EXT. THE COMMONS (EST) DAY

TEXT: FRIDAY, MAY 1, 1970

The students are gathered at the VICTORY BELL, a small bell in a cement stand, traditionally rung to celebrate sports victories. The bell is now being RUNG loudly by a long-haired, scruffy STUDENT in bellbottoms. Several students stand nearby holding SHOVELS and joking and laughing. Students on their way to class or lunch are stopping by to check out the action.

Alison is standing to the side holding a MICROPHONE and talking to another STUDENT.

ALISON

No, we haven't found a copy yet. Can you believe it? And they call this an American university!

Another STUDENT runs up to ALISON carrying a large history TEXTBOOK. He reaches ALISON out-of-breath and begins paging through the book until he locates a particular page. ALISON laughs aloud and rips the PAGE out of the book.

ALISON

This will have to do.

Alison turns to the gathered students and waves the torn paper in the air.

ALISON (CONT.)

We got it.

Alison turns back to the student holding the book.

ALISON (CONT.)

I hope you didn't need this.

STUDENT

Nah, I was failing history anyway.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Alison turns on the microphone and hops atop the Victory Bell casing. She holds the torn paper to the audience, and we can now see that it is a textbook copy of the U.S. CONSTITUTION.

ALISON  
(to the audience)

Well, I think we all know why we're here today.

OS: ["Yeah," "Fuck Nixon" and "Fuck the pigs" from the students.]

ALISON (CONT.)

This so-called American Constitution that I've got in my hand here is dead. *A beat* (pause) So we thought it ~~only proper~~ *we should* today to give it a proper burial.

OS: [More shouts and cheers from students.]

ALISON (CONT.)

We certainly can't have it stinking up these hallowed halls of KSU now, can we?

OS: [More cheers]

Alison waves a hand towards the students with shovels.

ALISON (CONT.)

~~So, men,~~ would you like to do the honors?

The students begin digging a hole in front of the Victory Bell, when Tom runs up and grabs Alison from behind.

TOM  
(hoarsely)

What the hell do you think you're doing, Alison?! Don't you think we're all in enough trouble already?

Alison pulls out of his grip and struggles to regain her composure.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALISON

Is that all you care about, Little Tommy?  
Saving your own ass? Well why don't you  
just run along and play, little boy.

As they have been talking, Alan has walked up behind them  
and is listening.

ALISON

(over Tom's shoulder to Alan)

So are you going to give us a hand with  
the shoveling, Mr. President?

TOM

He's not Mr. President and there's no  
SDS and you're gonna get our asses  
expelled in another minute.

ALISON

(ignoring him)

So what about it, Mr. President? Are  
you with us?

TOM

(desperate, pleading)

What about Bill? DO you ever think about  
Bill and all the others? What does this  
say to them? Dammit Alison, they're over  
there dying and the least we can do is  
support them.

Tom turns to look over his shoulder at Alan.

TOM (CONT.)

Right Al? Tell her it's right, Al.

Alan merely shrugs his shoulders and turns to walk away.  
Crushed, Tom releases Alison, and she turns back to cheer on  
the diggers. Tom walks dejectedly away.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. KENT STATE UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA (EST) DAY

A typical college cafeteria, stark white and Lysol clean, is mostly empty at the mid-day lull. A large WINDOW occupies the majority of one wall of the cafeteria, and from there students can be seen gathering on the grassy Commons. PRESIDENT ROBERT WHITE, STUDENT PRESIDENT and other STUDENTS are gathered for a luncheon. White is dressed in a TWEED JACKET with leather elbow patches and wrinkled GRAY SLACKS. He frequently licks his fingers and runs them through his hair, trying to plaster the last few strands of salt-and-pepper hair out of his eyes.

WHITE

The conference is scheduled for 9am, so I'll have to catch the last flight out tonight in order to make it in time. Now do you think the campus will be able to hold without me?

STUDENT 1

I don't know, President White. The Black Students Union have threatened to boycott, but everything looks pretty calm out there.

The student flicks a finger towards the window.

STUDENT 2

I heard they've called out the guard at Ohio State...

White begins to collect his PAPERS and shove them haphazardly into his battered BRIEFCASE.

WHITE

(with a tone of finality)

Nothing like that could ever happen at my University. I'll see you guys on Monday.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. STREETS OF KENT (EST) NIGHT

We see the streets in the seedy part of Kent where the students hang out. The CAMERA PANS and sees a group of STUDENTS gathering at the intersection of Water and Main Streets, outside of a BAR called JR's. They appear drunk and somewhat restless. The night is warm and students are still up from the excitement that afternoon.

The studentd wander around restlessly from bar to bar, kicking and throwing stones and getting increasingly louder. The students are mainly longhaired hippies and the TOWNSPEOPLE are obviously nervous as the crowd, now nearly 100 students, makes it's way to the center of town.

A storefront WINDOW is broken, setting off an ALARM and arising the nervous level of the crowd.

A YOUNG MAN appears with a SPRAY CAN and begins vandalizing the sidewalk with "Fuck Nixon" and "US out of Cambodia."

*word* The Kent POLICE arrive and try to disperse the crowd and heard them back towards campus. The night is still young and the students are unwilling to turn in. The small police force fails to disperse the crowd.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. A BAR IN TOWN (EST) NIGHT

This is a small, preppie bar. Several fraternity and ROTC MEN, including WILLIAM SCHROEDER, with COLLEGE SWEATERS and CREW CUTS, are watching # game on the TELEVISION above the bar. They are caught up in the excitement of the game and oblivious to the ruckus outside. Suddenly the door ~~is~~ bursts open and several POLICEMEN run in, brandishing their GUNS.

POLICE 1

~~OK kids,~~ everyone out! This bar is closed, by order of the mayor! Put down your drinks and go ~~along~~ home. Now!

WILLIAM  
(annoyed)

Aw, go away man, we're watching the game.

POLICE 1

I said now, or you'll get the butt of this gun right up that pretty ass of yours.

Students are now clearing out of the bar, but very irate and many with DRINKS still in their hands. They join the crowd milling around in the streets.

A MAN climbs atop a STOPLIGHT and shouts obscenities at the crowd.

Students begin kicking cars and bashing in windows.

The Kent police are still trying, unsuccessfully, to herd the students back on to campus.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. GENERAL SYLVESTER DEL CORSO'S HOME (EST) NIGHT

*need*  
*A*  
*DESCENDING*  
*SINCE THIS IS OUR*  
*FIRST MEETING*

DEL CORSO is asleep in BED with his WIFE when the TELEPHONE RINGS. It takes him a few minutes to find the phone, glancing at the ALARM CLOCK which reads midnight.

DEL CORSO  
(groggily)

Del Corso. This had better be good.

There is a pause while he listens to the voice on the other end of the line. Suddenly he is wide awake and begins pulling on his PANTS next to the bed.

DEL CORSO (CONT.)

*CALL ME TOO*  
Yeah, ~~send out the alarm~~. I'll be right over.

Del Corso finishes getting dressed and casually kisses his wife, who has begun to stir, on the cheek.

DEL CORSO

Sorry, hon. Those hippies down at Kent are causing trouble. I'll see you in the morning.

She nods and rolls over. Del Corso takes his HANDGUN from his dresser drawer and checks the bullets.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. NATIONAL GUARD HEADQUARTERS (EST) NIGHT

National GUARDSMEN, many in their 20s, are milling around. Some are handing out GUNS, ammo and GAS MASKS to the Guards. Del Corso walks in, and everything comes to a standstill. Guards sit in FOLDING CHAIRS set up in front of a stage that Del Corso stands on.

DEL CORSO

OK, men. Here we go again. Those damn hippies down at Kent State are causing some trouble in town and the mayor called to ask for our help. Now I know we're all worn out from the fiasco up at Ohio State last week, but we can't let these hippies get the better of us.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. KENT (EST) NIGHT

The Guardsmen arrive at Kent in military VANS.

The Guards brandish their GUNS and BAYONETS and attempt to force the students back towards campus. Students fight back by throwing rocks. TEAR GAS canisters are thrown and appear to disperse the crowd.

Alan and Tom are not permitted to return to their apartment and are chased back to campus with all the other students and young people in town.

They take refuge in Tri Towers and fall asleep to SIRENS and helicopter LIGHTS.

FADE OUT



FADE IN

INT. BARB AND ROSEANNE'S DORM ROOM (EST) DAY

TEXT: SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1970, 9:00 AM

Barb and Roseanne leave Alan and Tom asleep on their floor and wander out of the dorm and through campus. The campus is now occupied by National Guardsmen. The girls exchange pleasantries with two young Guardsmen in the lobby of their dorm. Other Guards are nailing up SIGNS on trees and posts on campus prohibiting damage to KSU or Kent property. They are handed a LEAFLET with information about curfews and new rules by a fellow student and another LEAFLET with conflicting information by a Guard.

ROSEANNE

What does all this mean?

GUARD 1  
(shrugging)

We're supposed to stop you guys from damaging any state property, that's all I know.

BARB

Who called you in? President White is out-of-town.

GUARD 1

Listen, I dunno. I'm just doing my job.

There is a pause and the girls begin to walk away.

GUARD 1 (CONT.)

Hey! Do you know where I could get a decent cup of coffee around here?

ROSEANNE  
(laughing)

You could try the student center. That's the red brick building over there.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

The girls meet Alison, who is out exploring the campus as well. Alison is carrying a bunch of newly picked FLOWERS. Roseanne and Barb watch from a distance as Alison places a DAISY in the barrel of a guardsmen's GUN. She flashes him a peace sign and a sweet smile.

ALISON

Make love, not war.

*New scene*  
Barb and Roseanne giggle quietly and continue their walk. The girls walk silently into town, where they see merchants sweeping up broken glass and putting up SIGNS in BROKEN WINDOWS. They stop in a small deli to pick up some coffee and doughnuts. There is a young, bearded MAN in Ben Franklin glasses in line in front of them. He buys a pack of gum and warns the elderly SHOPKEEPER.

MAN

*TH* Take this as friendly advice. Put up an anti-war sign tonight or you won't have a store tomorrow morning.

On the way back through town, they see the same elderly shopkeeper painting a large cardboard SIGN. He stops the girls and proudly showed them his sign "No Veetnam," asking if he spelled it right. The girls correct him and the shopkeeper gets busy painting another sign.

SHOPKEEPER

I don't want them getting mad because I didn't spell it right.

*why?*  
Roseanne stops by the town where a notice announces that the theater production of "Long Day's Journey into Night," scheduled for a performance that night has been canceled.

ROSEANNE

I can't believe they're canceling opening night.

BARB

They're sure taking this whole thing seriously.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

The girls also notice an extraordinary number of visitors ~~to town.~~ Traffic is backed up all the way down Main Street ~~by noon,~~ and vendors have set up stands all along the shopfront area.

BARB

It's ~~like~~ a three-ring circus here.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. THE COMMONS (EST) NIGHT

At dusk, Barb and Roseanne join a group assembling at the Victory Bell. BLACK ARMBANDS and FLOWERS are passed out by Alison and Barry. They begin shouting anti-war slogans.

The Guardsmen move in and attempt to break up the group. The RIOT ACT is READ and TEAR GAS is fired.

The girls join a group that wanders into town. There they meet Tom and JEFF MILLER at the intersection of Main and Water Streets, where students are holding a sit-down protest, blocking traffic. *Brief description*

Barb begins waving her arms to attract the attention of the guys.

BARB  
(shouting)

Tom! Jeff! Look, Roseanne, it's Jeff  
and Tom!

The guys see the girls and make their way through the shouting crowd to them.

TOM

Have you seen Alan?

ROSEANNE

No, not since we left you guys this morning. What's up?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

TOM

He left early this morning and I haven't seen him since. I'm a little worried.

BARB

He's got more sense than to get himself in trouble, after White's threats.

JEFF

So what do you think of all this?

ROSEANNE

I think it's about time!

Roseanne and Jeff join the crowd of protesters shouting and jeering. Tom and Barb sit on the outskirts of the crowd, looking for Alan.

Suddenly they see Alan walking purposely through the crowd. He is wearing MILITARY DRESS and ~~Vietnamese~~ WAR PAINT. He is carrying a TELEGRAM wadded in his fist.

Barb sees him, and runs up to him, attempting to stop him. She is followed behind closely by Tom and Roseanne.

Barb grabs Alan's arm.

BARB  
(desperately)

Alan! Alan, what's going on?

Alan pushes Barb away roughly.

ALAN  
(gruffly)

Leave me alone.

Barb refuses.

ALAN (CONT.)

I'm warning you, Barbara, let me go.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BARB  
(on the verge of tears)

Alan, what happened?

Barb sees the telegram in his hand and grabs it. Alan half-heatedly attempts to get it back, but then decides to take advantage of Barb's distraction to wiggle out of her grasp.

He continues his march as Barb reads the telegram. She begins to cry, and Roseanne and Tom rescue the telegram from her.

By the flickering light, we can read, "We regret to inform... Private William Caldwell, Junior... STOP... in the line of duty... STOP."

ROSEANNE

NO!!!! He can't be!!! Those bastards!

Alan marches through the crowd directly to a GUARDSMAN, who demands that he stop. Alan ignores him and is knocked down by the guard. The rest watch in shocked silence. Alan's actions lead to confrontations between the guards and students, resulting in several arrests and injuries.

Saturday night's protests fade into Sunday night's protests.

TEXT: SUNDAY, MAY 3, 1970.

More confrontations with the guardsmen, with Alan and Jeff in the heat of the action. In the background, we can see the ROTC BUILDING burning and the FLAMES light up all of campus and town. SIRENS WAIL late into the night.

FADE OUT

*need something  
in the way of  
dialogue to connect the  
story to justify this  
scene*

*New  
Scene*

FADE IN

INT. ALAN'S ROOM (EST) DAY

TEXT: MONDAY, MAY 4, 1970.

Alan, Tom and Barry are in the room making BLACK anarchy FLAGS and preparing for another rally scheduled for noon. There is a KNOCK at the door and Barb walks in, holding a NOTICE prohibiting the rally. She hands it to Tom. He reads it.

BARB

Listen Al, I know you're upset but you've got to think clearly about this for a sec. Roseanne and I were in town. We talked to these guys. They're serious.

Alan is concentrating on painting "KENT" in RED paint on a black FLAG and ignores her.

BARB

(concerned)

Alan, will you listen to me? You're not going to bring back Bill by getting yourself hurt. They had to take some kids into the hospital last night from injuries. I don't think I could handle that happening to you.

Alan is still not listening. Barb looks to the other lads for help.

BARRY

(shrugging)

Leave him alone Barb.

Barb is frustrated and stamps out of the room, slamming the door behind her. Only then does Alan look up from his work.

TOM

(to Alan)

She really loves you, man. You can't keep treating her like that.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALAN

Shut up and hand me that tape ~~over there.~~

Tom laughs and the guys begin joking about the rally and women, etc.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. ROTC BUILDING, THE COMMONS (EST) MORNING

The National Guardsmen are assembled in front of the burned-out shell of the former ROTC building. SMOKE creeps up from the still-smouldering RUINS as Del Corso prepares his men for the noon rally. The Guardsmen standing in a semi-circle in front of him lean wearily on their guns and occasionally glance nervously behind them at the crowd gathering at the Victory Bell. They have been on duty for the past 52 hours and are unshaven, unwashed and many are more ragged-looking than the students. There is a young student PHOTOGRAPHER wandering discretely through the ranks, snapping photos and scribbling feircely in a small notebook. Del Corso, showing a 3-day stubble, is commanding as ever despite his wrinkled and bloodstained uniform.

DEL CORSO

Men. (pause) We're all tired, dirty,  
and have had just about enough of these  
hippies. It's time to stop these traitors  
ONCE AND FOR ALL!

Del Corso emphasizes his words by pounding his gun on the ground. *not likely*

He is interupted by the RINGING of the Victory Bell.

DEL CORSO

This won't be an easy battle. The  
Weathermen have infiltrated this campus  
TO ITS ROOTS. There is a possibility  
of snipers...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Guardsmen turn to look at the roof of the library building on the other side of the Commons. It is the tallest building on campus.

DEL CORSO (CONT.)

We will end this illegal rally by ANY means necessary. But first and foremost, men, you must preserve your own lives at any cost. We WILL NOT let these student traitors hurt us.

He gives a signal and the Guards begin distributing gas masks and tear gas canisters.

FADE OUT



FADE IN

EXT. THE VICTORY BELL, THE COMMONS (EST) NOON

TEXT: MAY 4, 1970 - 12 NOON

A crowd of several hundred students are gathered at the Victory Bell. Other students stop to listen and watch as they cross the Commons between classes. Several students are wearing black armbands or headbands, but on looking closer, most students are carrying books or backpacks. A few students have layed down blankets on the slope overlooking the Commons and are enjoying picnics. Others are playing the radio and talking in small groups. Not all of the crowd are students. There are a handful of professors and other adults, and an extraordinary number of people too young to be of college age.

MS: ALAN AND JEFF AT THE RALLY

Alan can be SEEN wearing TORN JEANS and a DENIM JACKET, his LONG HAIR tied back in a BANDANNA. He is carrying a BLACK FLAG spraypainted "KENT" and is talking to JEFFREY MILLER, dressed in a red cowboy shirt, a RED HEADBAND, boots and DENIM BELLBOTTOMS.

JEFF

I heard about Bill. I'm really sorry, man.

ALAN

Thanks.

JEFF

But it's good to see you here. This time they gotta listen.

ALAN

They will, man. We're gonna make `em listen.

JEFF

For Bill?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALAN

For all of us. They ain't never gonna forget us after this.

Jeff is beckoned by another student. He shakes Alan's hand and wishes him luck. Alan grabs his flag with determination.

LS: THE GUARDSMEN ASSEMBLE

The Guards, organized into formation by Del Corso, advance to the Victory Bell. They form a line behind the students, between them and the ROTC building.

MS: DEL CORSO

Del Corso is seated in a CART with "Kent State University" painted on the side. He speaks into a MEGAPHONE.

DEL CORSO

This is an illegal assembly. You must disperse.

OS: He is answered by a volley of obscenities from the crowd.

DEL CORSO

If you do not disperse IMMEDIATELY, you will be arrested. (pause) I repeat, this is an ILLEGAL ASSEMBLY.

OS: More obscenities.

A stone flung from the crowd lands harmlessly at Del Corso's feet. He gives a signal and the Guards begin to advance.

LS: THE GUARDS ADVANCE UP BLANKET HILL

The Guards advance towards the students at the Victory Bell. They throw tear gas canisters, forcing the students to retreat up Blanket Hill between Johnson and Taylor Halls. The guards follow. Most students retreat eagerly and, reaching the top, disperse towards the Prentice Hall parking lot. A few stragglers harmlessly fling canisters and stones back at the Guards. One student can be seen standing boldly facing the Guards, middle finger upraised, ghostly in a cloud of tear gas. The Guards reach the peak of Blanket Hill and disappear over the top. The Commons behind them is littered with rubbish, but empty of students.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. THE PRACTICE FIELD (EST) AFTERNOON

LS: THE GUARDS ADVANCE ONTO THE PRACTICE FIELD

The Guards can be seen advancing over the top of Blanket Hill in a cloud of tear gas, scattering students in their stead. They pass a PAGODA and a METAL SCULPTURE next to Taylor Hall. The Guards are donned in masks; several students cough uncontrollably and cover their streaming eyes with bits of cloth and t-shirts. Most students flee back along Taylor Hall towards the parking lot. The Guards continue to advance, forcing the remainder of the students onto the Practice Field below. Several students attempt to disperse even further, but are prevented from doing so by a tall wire fence at the far end of the field.

LS: STUDENTS REGROUP

The students forced onto the practice field, when they realise they can retreat no further, regroup and face the Guards. Several students begin their taunting and rock throwing again. Alan can be SEEN waving his FLAG.

MS: ALAN AND ROSEANNE

Alan and Roseanne are in the group forced to retreat onto the practice field. Roseanne sees Alan and struggles through the crowd to reach him.

ROSEANNE

(grabbing the arm that holds his flag)

Alan!

ALAN

Roseanne! (a beat) Have you seen any of the others?

ROSEANNE

No, not since the beginning of the rally. This is getting pretty intense, Alan. I think we should call it quits.

Alan pulls his arm out of Roseanne's grip and looks at her accusingly.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALAN  
(angrily)

What are you talking about?!

ROSEANNE

C'mon Alan. Enough is enough. These guys are serious.

ALAN  
(beginning to walk away)

So am I.

ROSEANNE  
(shouting at his retreating back)

*But* They've got ~~real~~ *live* ammo!

There is no sign that Alan hears her and Roseanne helplessly watches as he disappears into the crowd.

MS: ALAN WAVING FLAG

Alan walks towards the advancing Guards, waving his FLAG boldly and shouting.

LS: THE GUARDS KNEEL

Upon seeing Alan advance, the guards stop, kneel and point their GUNS at Alan and the other students.

LS: THE GUARDS RETREAT

After a few minutes, the Guards rise and, turning their backs on the students, retrace their steps back towards Taylor Hall.

LS: THE STUDENTS FOLLOW THEIR RETREAT

The students, bewildered by the sudden change of events, begin to follow the retreating Guards out of the practice field. As the first line of Guards disappears over the peak of the hill and back onto the Commons, the students lose interest and disperse towards the parking lot, figuring that the excitement is over for the day.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

As the last row of Guards reaches the top of the hill, the majority of students are more than 120 feet away, in the parking lot. A few stragglers continue to follow, ~~throwing~~ <sup>ok</sup> ~~insults~~ and stones that fall far short of target.

MS: ALAN MEETS TOM

Alan had been in the front of the group of students following the Guard's retreat, from a distance of about sixty feet. When he reaches the other side of the practice field, he meets Tom. Tom had been with the group of students dispersed to the parking lot, but returned when he saw the Guards retreating. Alan and Tom ~~exchange greetings~~ and continue to follow the Guards.

MS: THE GUARDS TURN

As the last row of Guards reach the peak of the hill, several of the Guardsmen suddenly turn and point their GUNS at the crowd. They open fire. The gunshots last for thirteen seconds, until Del Corso begins shouting for them to stop. After the shootings, chaos breaks out in the practice field and parking lot, and the Guards calmly about-face and retreat over Blanket Hill and back towards the burned-out ROTC building.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. THE PRACTICE FIELD (EST) DAY

When the Guards begin to fire, Alan ducks behind a TREE, the only one in the area. He moves swiftly, but not swiftly enough. His left wrist, the last bit to be pulled behind the tree, is pierced by a bullet.

Tom, standing a few feet behind, was facing the crowd behind them when the Guards fired, and is thrown off his feet by a bullet peircing his lower leg. He is knocked to the ground and attempts to pull himself up, cradling his leg in agony.

ALAN  
(shouting)

TOM!STAY DOWN! TOM, FOR GOD'S SAKE! GET DOWN!

Tom half-consciously obeys and collapses back into a prone position.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. THE PARKING LOT (EST) DAY

When the Guards open fire, students can be seen standing frozen in silent shock for an instant. Then they begin screaming and ducking behind cars and trees. Bullets shatter car windows, puncture tires and lodge in the car frames.

MS: BARRY AND ALISON

Barry and Alison are in the parking lot when they HEAR the SHOTS. Barry is holding Alison's left hand. They are not facing the Guards. When the shots begin, they jump towards a car on their left. Alison falls on her hands and knees and Barry crouches over her, trying to protect her body with his own. It is only after the shooting stops that he can hear her harsh breathing.

ALISON  
(gasping for breath)

Barry... Barry, I'm hit.

Barry pulls back to look at Alison, and she falls onto her back.

BARRY  
(looking at ALISON who seems to be alright)

Where? What?

It is then that Barry sees BLOOD creeping out from under Alison's left armpit.

ALISON  
(whispering)

Barry, I'm <sup>shot</sup> hit.

*→ is here here.*

Barry becomes hysterical, jumping up and screaming for an ambulance.

OS: "It's on it's way, it's coming."

Alison appears to be loosing her breath. Barry bends down and applies mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. She begins breathing again. Barry sits back and lifts her feet onto his lap. He is crying and stroking her cheek.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LS: AMBULANCES ARRIVE

Finally Barry sees an ambulance on the hill and two men bring a METAL STRETCHER. Together they lift Alison onto the litter and carry her up the hill.

OS: "No, this one is filled, get another one."

MS: AT THE AMBULANCE

AMBULANCE ATTENDANT

(as they lift Alison into the back of the stretcher)

Don't worry, she'll be all right.

Barry climbs into the ambulance behind the stretcher. The ambulance attendants slam the door and it pulls away. Through the back window of the ambulance, Barry can be seen bending over Alison's motionless body.

FADE OUT

*introduce her &  
with brief  
description*



FADE IN

EXT. THE PARKING LOT (EST) DAY

Jeff is standing next to the parking lot sidewalk with his middle finger upraised at the retreating guards when he is shot. He recives the bullet full in the face, and seems to pirouette in the air for an instant before falling face-first onto the ground. The people standing near him turn in shock, and then they drop to the ground.

After the shooting stops, a teenaged girl approaches Jeff. Blood gushes from his mouth ten feet into the parking lot. The girl kneels next to him with her arms outstretched and begins screaming.

GIRL

THEY SHOT HIM! THEY SHOT HIM! THEY SHOT HIM!

The student photographer walks by and snaps their photo. As the photographer walks away, another young person dips a black flag into the dark pool and begins dancing around with it, crazily, splattering the bystanders with Jeff's blood.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. TAYLOR HALL PATIO

William Schroeder, the ROTC student, watched the Guard's retreat from the patio of Taylor Hall. When the Guards began shooting his friend ducked into the building, but William was not quick enough. When he was hit, he fell over the porch railing and onto the ground behind the Guards.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EST. MAIN STREET (EXT) DAY

After the shooting stops, Alan runs through the parking lot and out through the main gates of campus. He passes wailing students leaning over motionless bodies, ambulances, police cars and tourists. Several people try to stop him, frantic to know what happened, but he pushes on ignoring them.

Outside of the main gates, he flags down a car and asks the graduate students inside for a lift to the hospital. They are leary, but agree.

GRAD STUDENT

What happened, man?

ALAN  
(collapsing into the back seat)

I dunno, man. I dunno.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EST. THE HOSPITAL (EXT) DAY

Alan wanders up to the door of the hospital emergency room, holding his wrist in a bloody t-shirt.

There is already one ambulance there. The back doors are open, and no one else is around. There is a stretcher in the back of the ambulance. Alan peeks into the back of the ambulance and sees Jeff laying motionless on the stretcher. The blood has been cleaned from his face, and he appears to be sleeping serenely. There is a silver-dollar-sized hole in his right cheek. Alan vomits into nearby bushes before staggering into the hospital.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EST. THE HOSPITAL (EXT) DAY

SIRENS WAIL as a third ambulance pulls up to the emergency room door.

OS: "Jump off when we get to the emergency room."

MS: The ambulance back door opens and Barry steps from the back to wander aimlessly into the hospital. He is crying.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EST. THE WAITING ROOM (INT) DAY

Barry wanders into the hospital waiting room. It is a small, stark white room with orange plastic chairs standing against all four walls and a poster about the Heimlich Manuever on the wall. Two men sit in one corner talking business. A little girl who had fallen from her bike cries while her mother soothes her. Bloody bodies are hustled by in the corridor outside as the walking wounded stumble by. Barry stands in the doorway for a second before collapsing into a nearby chair. A few seconds later, Alan walks in, his wrist bandaged and his arm in a sling.

BARRY

Do you know anything about the ~~two~~ girls?

ALAN

I heard it's bad. Is that her blood on your shoe?

BARRY

(looking at his shoes, numbly)

I dunno.

Alan leaves and Barry waits in a dazed silence. The girl and her mother get up and leave. The two men finish their conversation and leave, glancing at Barry over their shoulders and whispering. Finally a nurse comes in.

NURSE

*Does anyone*

Who are you waiting for?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BARRY  
(coming out of his dazed stupor)

Miss Krause.

The nurse leaves and then returns, carrying a medical NOTEBOOK.

NURSE

Alison Krause?

Barry nods.

NURSE  
(looking at her notebook)

I'm sorry. (a beat) Alison was dead on arrival.

BARRY  
(stunned)

She couldn't be... She couldn't be. She was still breathing.

Barry collapses into his chair. The nurse leaves. A few minutes later, the nurse walks by the doorway again.

BARRY

I'd like to see her.

NURSE

You'll have to get permission. I'll check with the doctor.

The nurse leaves, and then returns.

NURSE

It'll take a couple of hours.

The nurse leaves. A policeman walks in and sits down. He looks at Barry suspiciously and fingers his HANDGUN in its HOLSTER.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

POLICEMAN

What are you waiting for?

BARRY

~~To go to~~ the morgue.

POLICEMAN

You won't be allowed. You can't wait around here. You'll have to leave.

Barry stares at the policeman blankly.

BARRY

I have no place to go. The school is closed.

POLICEMAN

(standing up and showing Barry the door)

You can't stay here.

Barry slowly rises and numbly stumbles out the door and out of the hospital. The policeman watches in silence.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. THE COMMONS (EST.) DAY

TEXT: TUESDAY, MAY 4, 1990

There is a temporary stage set up, as in the beginning, and STUDENTS, ALUMNI and townspeople are sitting in fold-out chairs in front of it. These students, however, wear LEATHER JACKETS and carry LAPTOP COMPUTERS. It is the ALUMNI who wear BELLBOTTOMS and LOVE BEADS. Barry Levine is sitting in the audience, surrounded by his wife and three teenaged girls.

An aged Alan Canfora, with the same LONG HAIR, is on the stage. He fiddles with the MICROPHONE before he begins to speak.

ALAN

It has been twenty years since those thirteen seconds of deadly shots were fired just over my shoulder. And if anyone had told me that my fate would be layed out for me when I was twenty, I never would have believed them.

Alan pauses as Tom Grace, who arrived late, limps up the asile with his CANE and finds a seat in the audience.

ALAN (CONT.)

How could any of us have known how profoundly that warm spring day would affect the history of this university, and of this country? On that May day, twelve of my fellow students were brutally gunned down for doing nothing more than is granted to them as citizens of this country. All of us were denied our first ammendment rights, and four students paid with their lives.

As Alan is speaking, a crowd of STUDENTS and ADULTS, carrying a large BANNER that reads "LONG LIVE THE SPIRIT OF KENT STATE." Others are carrying poster-sized PHOTOGRAPHS of Alison, Barry, Jeff, and another student killed. Most wear BLACK ARMBANDS and stand in silence as Alan finishes his speech.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ALAN (CONT.)

The fight is far from over. Today in many countries around the world young people are being ruthlessly murdered in their fight for justice and democracy.

CUT TO shots of TIANAMMEN SQUARE MASSACRE, a BELFAST BOMBING, the LOS ANGELES RIOTS.

OS: [ALAN: "It is up to you. Each and every one of you must fight for your rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."]

FADE OUT

Nice close

90 A-