

BLEACHER SEATS

Written by

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First 10 pages

FADE IN: EXT. THE BRONX, NY. 1942, EARLY SUMMER MORNING.
THREE BOYS ARE CAMPING OUT IN THE BACK YARD BEHIND A ROW OF
APARTMENT BUILDINGS IN A MAKE SHIFT TENT. THE THREE PRE-
ADOLESCENTS ARE ANTONIO (SKIPPY), BENNY AND SAL.

ANTONIO

(Narrating)

I grew up a Boston Red Sox fan in
The Bronx. First generation,
Italian American. I was born nine
months and six days after my
parents were married and nine
months and two days after they came
to America. Being Italian, with
parents "off the boat" made me a
lot of friends in The Bronx. Being
a Red Sox fan made me tough.

The boys, still half asleep, crawl around outside of their
make shift tent as they meet the hot summer morning.

BENNY

Hey, Skippy...

Benny points up with his eyes at an open window on the third
floor of the apartment building.

BENNY (CONT'D)

...there's your girlfriend.

SAL

Jennifer.

Jennifer is an attractive, twenty-something year old. She is
sitting at an open window, smoking a cigarette. She glances
down her nose at the boys playing in the back yard, below her
window.

JENNIFER

Antonio, come up here. I need you
to go to the store. I have no milk
for my coffee. I'll give you money.

BENNY

Antonio.

SAL

Maybe she doesn't need milk,
Skippy. Maybe she needs something
else.

ANTONIO

Yeah, like what. Like you'd even
know what to do. Let me go see.

Antonio walks out of the yard into the apartment building. He walks up the stairs and to Jennifer's door. He knocks.

JENNIFER

Antonio?

ANTONIO

Yes.

JENNIFER

Hold on.

THE SOUND OF A LOCK TURNING.

The door opens slightly and Jennifer leans her head and her arm out. Jennifer is not yet dressed, wearing only a thin fabric robe. She hands Antonio some money.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Here...get me a bottle of milk, and be quick.

ANTONIO

Yes, Jennifer, I'll be quick.

As Jennifer turns and walks back into her apartment, the door opens further and Antonio pauses and stares at her. She yells to him as she walks away from the door.

JENNIFER

Don't keep me waiting! Go!

Antonio runs down the hall way, down the stairs and out onto the street to Mr. Di Pietro's grocery store. He goes in.

MR. DI PIETRO

Antonio Spettatore, what do you need?

ANTONIO

I need a bottle of milk, Mr. Di Pietro.

MR. DI PIETRO

Milk? Your mother bought milk yesterday.

ANTONIO

It's not for my mother. Jennifer, on the third floor asked me to get her some milk for her coffee.

MR. DI PIETRO
Jennifer?

ANTONIO
Yes, sir.

Mr. Di Pietro walks over to a refrigerator and grabs a bottle of milk. He hands it to Antonio and Antonio gives him the money.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)
Thank you.

Mr. Di Pietro stares at him as he leaves. Antonio runs out of the store, back to the apartment building. Antonio runs up the stairs of the apartment building and knocks on Jennifer's door.

JENNIFER
Antonio?

ANTONIO
It's me. I have your milk.

JENNIFER
Come in. It's open.

Antonio walks in. The living room is barely furnished, but there is a couch and a chair that are placed on two sides of a coffee table. Next to the couch is an end table with a lamp on it. Jennifer walks into the room holding a tray with two coffee cups on it. She is still only wearing the light fabric robe that is barely closed.

ANTONIO
I have your milk.

JENNIFER
I see that.

Jennifer walks around the couch and leans over to put the tray on the coffee table. As she does, Antonio sees her robe separate to expose some of her breast.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)
Would you like a cup.

ANTONIO
Uh. No, thank you. I should get back. I have to write to my father.

Antonio places the milk on the tray on the coffee table. Jennifer sits down and reclines into the arm of the couch.

As she does her robe opens further and fully exposes one of her breasts. Antonio looks up from the table and sees her bare breast and starts to walk backwards.

JENNIFER

Your father? Are you sure you wouldn't rather have coffee with me? You can write the letter later.

ANTONIO

Uh...

Antonio trips over the lamp wire next to the end table and falls on the floor in a seated position in front of Jennifer.

JENNIFER

That's a pretty clever way to sneak a peek under my robe.

Jennifer laughs.

JENNIFER (CONT'D)

Is that what you're trying to do?

ANTONIO

Uh, uh. No. I...

JENNIFER

That's okay. I forgive you. Come sit next to me on the couch.

ANTONIO

No. I gotta go.

Antonio jumps to his feet and runs out of the apartment and down the stairs. As he gets to the second floor slows down and starts thinking about what just happened. He walks down the hallway towards his apartment. His mother opens the door and meets him in the hallway.

ANTONIO'S MOTHER

What are you doing with that puttana? I told you not to go up there.

ANTONIO

But mamma, she asked me to come up.

ANTONIO'S MOTHER

Your mother told you never to go up there.

She starts smacking him around the head.

ANTONIO

Mamma, she needed milk.

ANTONIO'S MOTHER

I know what she needed. Mr. Di Pietro told me all about it. What she needs, she's not getting from my son.

Still smacking him.

ANTONIO'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Now get inside. Wait until I tell your father!

ANTONIO

(Narrating)

My mother always threatened to tell my father when I was bad. But my father was in the navy. He'd enlisted in 1938, and in 1940 he headed to the Pacific on the newly commissioned aircraft carrier, The Hornet.

INT. ANTONIO'S BEDROOM LATER THAT SAME NIGHT. ANTONIO IS SITTING AT A DESK WRITING A LETTER.

ANTONIO

(Hearing his thoughts as he writes)

Dear Dad, The Red Sox have a new shortstop. His name is Johnny Pesky. He's got a great bat, too. They say that Ted Williams is going to go into the navy. Maybe if you meet him, you could get his autograph. I love you dad. I miss you. Antonio.

Antonio puts down his pencil, folds the letter and puts it in an envelope. He rests his head on his desk. It's late.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

(Narrating)

It was August, 1942. The last letter I got from my dad was in April. Later I found out that his ship had fought at Midway, then Guadalcanal. The Hornet was the last American aircraft carrier left in the south Pacific. The others were either damaged or destroyed.

(MORE)

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

I didn't know if he was dead or alive, but I wrote him a letter every week.

EXT. YANKEE STADIUM STANDS. ANTONIO, BENNY AND SAL ARE WATCHING THE LATE INNINGS OF A CRISP SEPTEMBER GAME AGAINST THE RED SOX.

ANTONIO

(narrating)

It felt funny, going to baseball games without my father. But before he left, he insisted that I go as often as possible. He said, this way I could tell him all about it when he got back. So I went to as many games as I could, because I knew he was going to come back. He had to come back.

BENNY

I can't believe this.

ANTONIO

This looks like it could be a really good day.

SAL

Yeah. Yeah.

ANTONIO

We're already up two games to one in this series. This is a really good day.

The crowd reacts as the Yankees lose.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Yes!

SAL

Sure. Cheer all you want. Only one of these two teams are going to the World Series...and it ain't the Red Sox!

ANTONIO

It's not all about the World Series. Sometimes it's just about doing what's important.

BENNY

Yeah, what's that?

ANTONIO

Having a winning record against the Yankees.

Walking home.

BENNY

I don't get it, Antonio. You're completely square, except for this Red Sox problem you have.

SAL

Yeah, Skippy, just 'cause your dad was stationed in Boston when he learned about baseball, doesn't mean you have to be a Red Sox fan.

ANTONIO

Listen. My dad says I'm a Red Sox fan because I'm supposed to be a Red Sox fan. Besides, The Yankees are going to get to the series. So stop whining.

SAL

Who's whining?

ANTONIO

You're whining. Bunch 'a sore losers.

BENNY

Sciocco!

ANTONIO

Sore loser!

They laugh and rough-house as they head home.

INT. THE SPETTATORE APARTMENT.

We see Antonio as he enters and hears voices in the back ground.

ANTONIO

Ma?

The voices quiet.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Mamma?

Antonio walks towards the kitchen. He enters.

ANTONIO'S MOTHER

Antonio.

Antonio's father gets up from his chair.

ANTONIO

Papa?

ANTONIO'S FATHER

Antonio.

ANTONIO

Papa!

Antonio runs and hugs his father.

ANTONIO (CONT'D)

Are you staying, Papa? Do you have to go back?

ANTONIO'S FATHER

No, Antonio. I've been discharged.

ANTONIO

Papa.

They hug.

SUNDAY MORNING. SPRING 1943. INT. THE SPETTATORE KITCHEN.

Antonio walks into the kitchen where his father and mother are sitting at the kitchen table.

ANTONIO'S MOTHER

Good morning, Antonio.

ANTONIO

Good morning, Mamma. Morning, Papa.

ANTONIO'S FATHER

Good Morning Antonio. You ready for another season?

ANTONIO

Papa, I have some news.

ANTONIO'S FATHER

What is it.

ANTONIO

I got a job.

ANTONIO'S MOTHER
A job? You're too young.

ANTONIO
No, Mamma. I'm going to help Mr.
Mooney.

ANTONIO'S FATHER
Mr. Mooney?

ANTONIO
Yes. Mr Mooney, the wedding
photographer. I'm going to be his
assistant.

ANTONIO'S FATHER
Antonio, that's great. Connie, you
hear that? Antonio has a job.
That's my young man!

ANTONIO
Papa, there's just one thing.

ANTONIO'S FATHER
What is it?

ANTONIO
Papa, can I have twenty four
dollars?

ANTONIO'S FATHER
Twenty four dollars? For what?

ANTONIO
I need to wear a jacket for the
job. I'll pay you back.

ANTONIO'S FATHER
Mamma, doesn't Antonio have a
jacket?

ANTONIO'S MOTHER
He has two.

ANTONIO'S FATHER
Antonio, you have two jackets. Wear
one of them.

ANTONIO
Papa, they're so old. I need to
look good.

ANTONIO'S FATHER

Antonio, my whole life I've never had any money trouble. You want to know why?

ANTONIO

Papa...?

ANTONIO'S FATHER

Because I've never bought anything I couldn't pay for. I've never borrowed any money from anyone and I've never lent any money to anyone.

ANTONIO

But Papa, it's for a job.

ANTONIO'S FATHER

Antonio, wear one of the jackets you have until you can afford to buy a new one. Problem solved.

Antonio storms out of the kitchen.

EXT. NEXT DAY. AFTERNOON AFTER SCHOOL. OUTSIDE OF MR. ALON'S MENS SHOP. ANTONIO IS STARING IN THE WINDOW AT A JACKET.

Mr. Alon walks out of the shop and stands next to Antonio.

MR. ALON

Antonio, can I help you?

ANTONIO

No, sir. I wanted to buy that jacket but my father wouldn't lend me the money.

MR. ALON

Well, borrowing money is a bad habit to get into. I tell you what, do you want me to put the jacket on lay-a-way for you?

ANTONIO

No. I need it in two weeks.

MR. ALON

Hmm. I wish I could help you Antonio.

ANTONIO

Hey, Mr. Alon, I have an idea.

MR. ALON

What is it?

ANTONIO

How about I deliver your tuxedos for you?

MR. ALON

Well...that's an idea but the Jacket is \$24. I can't pay you that much for a couple of deliveries this weekend.

ANTONIO

Not a couple, Mr. Alon, all of them. How many weddings do you have this weekend?

MR. ALON

Five.

ANTONIO

And next weekend?

MR. ALON

Four.

ANTONIO

Great! I'll deliver the tuxedos this weekend and the next. You can pay me what ever you want. I'll make the rest up in tips. With any luck, I'll have enough money, in two weeks to buy the jacket a couple of hours before I need it. Then I'll be able to work for Mr. Mooney.

MR. ALON

Mr. Mooney?

ANTONIO

Yes, sir. He offered me a job. That's why I need the jacket.

MR. ALON

Wait a second, Antonio. You're looking for a job so you can get a job?

ANTONIO

Yes, sir.