

Avenue Saints
by
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FADE IN:

EXT: STREET CORNER - DAY

An inner city neighborhood bustling with summer activity. Children playing in the spray of a fire hydrant, screaming and splashing in the empty street.

A few girls have given up their game of jumprope to scatter to their houses for lemonade.

A man, working under the hood of a clunker, pauses to wipe sweat from his brow.

The corner store has its usual steady stream of customers, passing some OLDER MEN in folding chairs as they go in. The first man is WILLIAM KING (50s), known to his comrades simply as "King", he's holding court in his favorite spot. Next to him is BERT (50s), a drinking buddy from way back. Sitting behind them is MOSE (50s), a giant of a man with a slow manner and deep, rumbling voice.

KING

So then, I look her right in the eye and say "Just because there's a little snow on the roof, don't mean there ain't no fire in the furnace"

BERT

Shit, a little snow? Looks like an ice storm hit your ass and knocked some shingles loose.

The two men chuckle while the third pipes up.

MOSE

Yeah, and a blizzard froze your lizard.

The first two stop laughing and look at the third in disgust.

KING

What? That don't even make sense.

BERT

Ignore his ol' jughead ass. His brain's all boiled up.

MOSE

I meant...

KING

Aw, now don't try and explain it, you'll just hurt yourself.

BERT

Yeah, just sit there and sweat in quiet.

Mose grumbles, but settles back in the shade.

BERT (CONT'D)

Jughead.

One of the LITTLE GIRLS from the jumprope group walks past, clutching a dollar tightly on her way to the store.

KING

Excuse me little darlin', are you going to the store?

The girl stops, too shy to speak, but not quite afraid enough to run away.

KING (CONT'D)

Could you do an old man a favor?

Still no response.

KING (CONT'D)

Your mama told you never talk to strangers, didn't she?

She nods.

KING (CONT'D)

Well, don't you know who I am?

This time, a shake of the head.

KING (CONT'D)

Why, I'm the King of 49th Street. This here's my Royal Advisor. And back there's the Court Jester.

GIRL

Where's your crown?

KING

We're in disguise. If everybody knew the King was out of the castle, we'd be mobbed. I'd be signing autographs all day, and never get a lick of peace.

GIRL

I dunno...

KING

You can keep a secret, right? Only you and the man in the store know who I really am.

GIRL

Okay...

KING

So what I need you to do is this: Tell the man in the store that the King would like a glass of the Royal Iced Tea.

He looks at the girl for a moment to see if she's got it.

KING (CONT'D)

I would go in, but if anybody heard me ask for it, my cover would be blown.

The girl looks at him for a second, then darts into the store.

MOSE

Why do I have to be the jester?

KING

I made you the ROYAL Jester, didn't I?

BERT

Yeah, Sir Jughead.

King elbows Bert and they share yet another chuckle at Mose's expense. He spies the girl returning and settles down.

KING

Hush up, here she comes.

The girl comes out carefully balancing a full glass of iced tea in one hand and an ice cream cone in the other. She hands the glass to the "King".

KING (CONT'D)

Thank you, baby.

GIRL

The ice cream man said give you a message.

KING

What's that, darlin'?

GIRL

He said "Tell King Windbag that the Queen called."

The "King" looks alarmed at the mention of his better half.

GIRL (CONT'D)

She said, "He better bring home the Colonel, or his Royal goose is cooked".

The other men break into fits of laughter as the girl looks on confused.

GIRL (CONT'D)

You eat geese?

BERT

Yeah... it tastes like chicken!

KING

Alright, alright. Thank you for the tea, little darlin'. You'd best run on home, your ice cream's melting.

The girl skips down the street as the men slap their knees and elbow King for his misfortune.

At that moment, a car careens around the corner, chased closely by another.

The girl was starting to cross the street, but jumps back between two parked cars when she hears the tires SQUEAL.

A SHOT rings out from the second car, SMASHING the rear window of the first and sending it out of control.

It CRASHES into the back of the parked car where the little girl was hiding.

Her ice cream cone lies crushed and melting on the sidewalk.

Onlookers start to SCREAM, as the second car ROARS down the street.

FADE TO:

TITLE CARD: AVENUE SAINTS

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