

"A Car Is A Statement"

SCOTT (Cont'd)
sagging ruin and your face may look
like a potato ... but there's
knowledge in that wrinkled old
brain.

Charlie twitches, fighting the impulse to strangle this
loathsome twit. Instead:

CHARLIE
(with sly
friendliness)
You hungry, kid? You feel like
going to Denny's?

FLIP TO:

A MOVING SHOT - CHARLIE'S CAR
going in the opposite direction. Charlie's alone.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - CHARLIE'S CAR
cruises slowly past. School's just getting out.

START

INT. THE CAR - PAST CHARLIE

as he looks for Kenny. He pulls around the corner, and
there Kenny is, concealing his face with a notebook. As
Charlie pulls up, Kenny quickly runs around and gets in,
then slides down so his head is below window level.

KENNY
Hit the gas, dad.

CHARLIE
Sure, son.

Charlie cops a U-turn.

KENNY
(alarmed)
What're you doin'? Dad??

We're still HOLDING THE MOVING SHOT PAST CHARLIE. He
turns the corner and is back in front of the school. He
picks up his radio mike, flips on the loudspeaker.

KENNY
Dad! Don't to it!

M/M
CHARLIE
KENNY

CHARLIE
(into the mike;
amplified)
Attention, Kenny Street's peer
group!

A PASSING SHOT - THE CAR

Kids look up, laughing, as it cruises by.

CHARLIE'S VOICE
(amplified)
Kenny Street is riding in this car.
It belongs to his father. That is
all.

A MOVING SHOT - CHARLIE AND KENNY

Charlie gives him a big grin, really pleased with himself.
Kenny sits up, really pissed. He snatches the microphone
out of Charlie's hand, slams it back on the dash.

KENNY
(furiously)
Why do you do that to me? I've got
enough problems around here, livin'
in El Segundo.

CHARLIE
I'm only trying to keep you from
going Beverly Hills on me. Are you
forgetting who's buying who a car?

KENNY
(glowering at him)
I'll get you for that. Maybe not
today, but when I'm like thirty,
I'll get you.

A POV PAST KENNY - A PORSCHE DEALERSHIP

KENNY
Hey, dad! I'm not mad any more.
Porsches! They're callin' my name!

He looks hopefully at Charlie, who gives him a look.

KENNY
Just checking.

They ride along in silence for a bit. Kenny's keeping an
eagle eye out for car dealerships.

KENNY
Hey, dad ... did you ever think
you'd be raising a kid all by
yourself?

CHARLIE
Nope.

KENNY
Well, I want you to know that I
think you're doing a pretty good
job.

CHARLIE
You mean you like the way you're
turning out?

KENNY
Yeah. I think I'm okay.

CHARLIE
You aren't just buttering me up so
I'll buy you a sports car?

KENNY
(sounding wounded)
C'mon, dad. You gotta learn how to
accept strokes, okay?

CHARLIE
Okay.
(really pleased)
Thank you, son.

ANOTHER POV PAST KENNY - A HONDA DEALERSHIP

KENNY
Hey, dad! An Accord! What about an
Accord?

CHARLIE
I don't think so.

ANOTHER POV PAST KENNY - A YUGO PLACE

KENNY
I don't mind a Yugo. Yugos are cool
if you put mag wheels on 'em ...

Charlie makes no move to slow down.

KENNY
(worried)
C'mon, pop, you can't get any
cheaper than that.

CHARLIE
Keep your shirt on. Money is no
object.

KENNY
Yeah? Then what about the Porsche?
(then, worried)
Hey. Where're we goin'? Dad!?

EXT. L.A.P.D. AUTO AUCTION YARD - DAY

There's a big sign, saying so. Charlie pulls in, the car
rocking and wheezing over packed dirt.

KENNY
You're only kiddin', right?
Pleeeeeease say you're only kiddin'!

CLOSE ON A BATTERED POLICE CAR - DAY

Still painted black and white with holes in the top where
the light rack used to be. The SHOT OPENS OUT as a
paunchy guy in a BHPD uniform smacks the hood. Call him
CURT.

CURT
She's a beauty, ~~kid~~. Only 275,000
miles on her!

CAMERA FINDS Kenny. He looks utterly stricken.

KENNY
Dad! You can't do this to me. What
babe is ever gonna want to ride in
a thing like this? I'll be ruined!

CHARLIE
I have a very good reason.

KENNY
For destroying your only son?

CHARLIE
You're a kid. You're gonna hit
something the first half-hour you
have the car.

KENNY
I won't! I swear!

CURT

(a happy memory)

I snapped the gear-shift handle
right off my old man's new '68 Buick
the first time he let me drive it.
Then I hit a tree.

CHARLIE

You're getting a big, heavy car. So
you won't kill yourself.

KENNY

(really pleading)

Look, dad. A car is a statement.
Don't you understand that? Your
idea of a car is, like a moving
garbage can.

CHARLIE

So don't put garbage in yours.

KENNY

Listen to me, will ya? Please? My
statement's supposed to be "All
babes get in this car."

(getting a little
hysterical)

But look at it! It's got holes in
the top! It's got this thing in it
so prisoners can't attack you! It's
got white doors!

CHARLIE

Paint 'em.

KENNY

Look, you get a big rush outa people
thinkin' you're this weird guy. I'm
a kid. You said it yourself. Well,
a kid isn't supposed to march to the
sound of his own drummer. Please!

(a primal scream)

I CAN'T DRIVE IT! IT'S HORRIBLE!

Charlie sighs deeply, puts his arm around Kenny.

CHARLIE

Son ... this is a nice, big safe
car. It's what I want you to have.
Maybe it's ugly, but some cop loved
it. So take it or leave it.

Kenny, knowing he's lost, stands and stares at the car.
He knows his life is over. Charlie pats him.

CHARLIE

(to Kenny, gently)

Tell you what. You can have the garage. I'll park mine in the street.

KENNY

(dully)

Nah. I'll park this in the street. Maybe somebody'll steal it.

(then, looking at it)

Nah ...

END

Curt puts an arm around Charlie's shoulder and they start for the office. Kenny just stands there, thinking about the ruin of his existence.

CURT

(walking away)

Hey, Charlie, what're you doin' wearin' that Yuppie tie? What, have you gone Beverly Hills on us?

CHARLIE

It's my disguise. I'm on a case.

(then, worried)

You don't think it goes with me, huh?

CURT

(considering, then:)

I think the problem is ... you don't go with it.

END OF ACT ONE