

Young Mentors  
by  
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EXT: PARK - DAY

NEIL (30) wearing jeans, a leather jacket and carrying a half-full plastic bag, casually strolls across a muddy path in a sunny, grassy park. He sips from a soda can then throws the empty rubbish behind him. It lands on a bearded OAP's foot. Outraged, the OLD MAN taps NEIL on the shoulder and confronts him as three BOYS ahead (10, 5 and 3 years old) and all on swings, watch.

OAP  
Are you going to pick that up?

NEIL  
Come on. Who cares about one can?  
There are no bins, anywhere...

OAP  
Wait till you find one, then.

NEIL  
No.

OAP  
Well, I'll call the police, then.

NEIL  
Because I dropped a can??

The eldest BOY jumps off the swing and approaches NEIL.

ELDEST BOY  
I get you, man. I used to be like you  
when I was younger. Like nothing  
really mattered...

NEIL  
Errr...

The OAP puts his hands on his hips.

OAP  
Getting support from a child, huh?

NEIL  
Um...

ELDEST BOY  
It's ok. Once you sort your life out,  
things will get a lot better...

NEIL  
Thanks...

ELDEST BOY

So are you going to pick up your  
litter and apologise to this man,  
here?

NEIL

Errr....

The 5 year old BOY sighs and approaches NEIL.

MIDDLE BOY

Hey... I used to be like you when I  
was younger, too.

The OAP stares in amazement.

OAP

A five year old is more mature than  
you??

NEIL

Oh God.

MIDDLE BOY

It's true. When I was in nursery  
school I got in trouble all the time  
for ignoring my teachers. Then I got  
told I could be real successful if I  
worked proper...

NEIL

Thanks. That was very deep.

MIDDLE BOY

What do you mean?

NEIL

Never mind.

MIDDLE BOY

So... The can?

NEIL

Look, I'm not going to take  
instructions from a toddler...

The YOUNGEST BOY sighs and waddles to NEIL. The OAP remains  
stunned, but smiles.

YOUNGEST BOY

I used be like you, too. Then mummy  
show me how to act...

NEIL

(to himself)

God, this is depressing.

YOUNGEST BOY

Then when I good, she gave me sweets.

NEIL

(jokingly)

You think I can get sweets, too?

YOUNGEST BOY

Sure, but first you got to be like me.

NEIL face-palms, picks up the can and puts it in his bag. The MIDDLE BOY then picks a paper gold star from his pocket and hands it to NEIL. The OAP laughs.

MIDDLE BOY

Here... Take this. I was going to show it to mum, but you've earned it.

NEIL

Thanks.

OAP

This is great. I'm going to stay here, for a while.

The ELDEST BOY then hands NEIL some Smarties.

ELDEST BOY

Here... But remember, eat them in moderation.

YOUNGEST BOY

Too many sweets, bad.

MIDDLE BOY

But treats are ok, every now and then.

NEIL

Thank you. You know what, I've just been to the shops and bought a Metallica CD - 'Master of Puppets'... Would you guys like to share it between you?

ELDEST BOY

Don't you think they're a little childish?

NEIL concentrates hard.

NEIL

... .. No...

ELDEST BOY

Well, I do. Very simple music.

The OAP winks.

OAP  
Good boy.

NEIL  
I'm sorry, I don't agree. The song  
'Master of Puppets' has some bars of  
23/32 in it...

ELDEST BOY  
Ha! I only listen to music with bars  
of 41/10 in them.

NEIL  
I don't believe you.

ELDEST BOY  
Ok, I made that up. But the pop music  
I listen to actually follows proper  
voice-leading rules.

The OAP gives a thumbs up.

NEIL  
You've got me, there.

YOUNGEST BOY  
And the children music I like, does  
too.

NEIL  
How do you know about voice-leading?

YOUNGEST BOY  
Pretty simple. Just more clever chord  
writing...

NEIL  
Well thanks for your time, but I'm  
off. Bye.

The OAP walks off too, laughing his head off.

ELDEST BOY  
And don't you think lots of your  
sketches end with people walking off?

NEIL  
Good point.

NEIL dissolves.