

THE ORANGE GROVES

1976 Word

Written by

Courtney Jones

After the death of Trent's mother, he and his two best friends, Eddy and Beau, set off on a revealing journey to enact revenge on the supposed murderer. Synopsis: Taking place in rural Florida in the late 1900s, Eddy, Trent, and Beau spend their childhood days running through orange groves, racing through their city streets on their bikes, and shooting off their BB guns. Eddy is a logical young chap, Trent is all brawn, and Beau has an unusual habit of crying over everything. Tensions rise when Trent's mother is assaulted and killed after her closing-shift at Little Charlie's Diner. Colson, Trent's alcoholic father, blames his wife's boss, for her death. Trent believes justice has not prevailed and the boys must take matters into their own hands, planning to go to Little Charlie's property and scare him with a gun. As Eddy and Beau reluctantly make the journey with Trent, Eddy discovers that Trent's plan to scare Little Charlie is more than a threat and may turn into murder.

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EXT. FOREST - DAY

A pair of feet race through the thick foliage of a forest. They are the feet of EDDISON (EDDY, 12 and scrawny. His striped shirt hangs loosely on his body and his belt is tightly tied to hold up his large shorts.) In the distance, GUNSHOTS go off, forcing the feet to race forward faster and faster.

CUT TO:

EXT. ORANGE GROVES HIDEOUT- DAY

In the middle of an orange grove, there is a clearing. Here, three BOYS hang out. A few lawn chairs and one old, ratty lazy-boy are scattered about the clearing. Several beaten up copies of *Starlog Magazine* are strewn about. There are *Transformer* action figures set up.

Eddy, dressed in his usual attire of a t-shirt and shorts, aims a BB GUN at a CAN of Pepsi Cola that rests on top of a stump from an orange tree. He's a small, almost bald boy with a layer of sweat from the Florida heat and dirt on his skin. He fires the BB gun. PINK! It goes through the can.

TRENT, a 13-year-old boy, who sits on the ratty chair, looking at a MAGAZINE, nods his head with approval. Trent wears a tank-top and swimming trunks. His hair is longer and loosely curled. He gets his good hair from his momma.

BEAU

Nice!

BEAU (12) sits on the ground next to a pile of newspaper comics. He's sharpening a stick with a pocket knife, but grinning wildly at Eddy. He wears cargo shorts and a *Transformers* cartoon t-shirt.

Eddy smiles and proudly walks over to Trent, handing him the BB gun. They switch places, but Trent grabs his small BACKPACK and takes it to the firing area with him. Eddy looks at the magazine.

Trent unzips his bag and pulls out a real GUN --a Baretta 92F.

Eddy looks up from the magazine and Beau stands up, walking over to Trent.

BEAU (CONT'D)

Woah. Is that real? Where'd you get it?

EDDY
Put that thing away.

TRENT
It's my pop's.

Eddy shakes his head, returning his attention to the magazine.

Beau bends around Trent, trying to get a better view of the gun. Trent shakes him off

TRENT (CONT'D)
Get back before you hurt yourself.

BEAU
I'm not gonna hurt myself.

TRENT
Knowing you...

Trent smiles at Eddy before lifting the gun up and taking aim at the can, lining it up in the sight. Eddy suppresses a smile.

EDDY
Yeah, Beau. While you're at it, be careful with that stick. Don't want you to poke your eye out.

BEAU
Shut up.

A branch CRUNCHING brings the boys attention to the surrounding orange trees.

Trent stops aiming the gun. Eddy stands from his seat. The boys are on guard.

EDDY
Who's out there?

Silence. The boys all share a look.

Trent looks to Eddy and Beau before smirking and pointing the gun in the direction of the sound.

EDDY (CONT'D)
Wait, what are you doing?

TRENT
Shhh. Just gonna shoot the ground -- scare 'em.

Trent's finger hovers over the trigger.

Beau's older sister, CECELIA, (15) with a high puff of curls in ripped jeans and a stripped pink polo, yelps and jumps out from behind one of the trees holding up her hands. Her eyes are wide with fright.

CECELIA

Don't shoot, you moron! It's me.

Eddy quickly shifts Trent's hands down, lowering the gun.

TRENT

What's she doing here? Boys only.

Cecelia holds her middle finger up at Trent.

CECELIA

You better not've just aimed a real gun at me.

She puts her hands on her hips then shifts her attention to Beau.

CECELIA (CONT'D)

Ma wants you home to do chores and help with dinner.

BEAU

Tell her you couldn't find me.

CECELIA

I'm not lying for your sorry ass.

Beau raises his brows, challenging her.

CECELIA (CONT'D)

I'm telling Ma you're out here with a gun.

She breaks into a run through the trees.

BEAU

Cecelia wait!

Beau's eyes fill with tears. He drops his stick and runs to grab his backpack. His tears spill over.

BEAU (CONT'D)

She's gonna get me in trouble.

Beau runs off after his sister, leaving Trent and Eddy alone.

Trent shrugs at Eddy and starts to unzip his backpack to put the gun away.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Trent and Eddy walk down a dirt road. A few beaten-down houses line each side of the road. The yards are filled with stacked tires, old lawn chairs, clothes lines, and garbage. Ahead of the boys, a scrawny, stray DOG eats from a knocked-over garbage can.

The boys are silent for a while.

TRENT
So what did you think?

EDDY
Of what?

TRENT
Back there... The gun?

EDDY
Oh. It was cool I guess. Dangerous.

TRENT
But cool.

EDDY
Your dad just gave you his gun?

TRENT
Naw. I slipped it from the table by his bed. He keeps it in the drawer.

Eddy raises an eyebrow.

TRENT (CONT'D)
I won't get caught. Gonna slip it back once I go home. Pop's been staying out pretty late since my momma works the closing shift.

EDDY
It's not that. It just doesn't seem smart to be carrying a gun around like that.

Trent rolls his eyes.

EDDY (CONT'D)
I mean. What if it goes off? What if you shot Cece?

Trent scoffs.

TRENT
Your girlfriend shouldn't have been there anyway.

EDDY
She's not my girlfriend.

TRENT
I know you like her. You've got a crush on her.

EDDY
I don't, but you could've killed her on accident.

TRENT
Calm down, Eddy. It's not loaded.

EDDY
What?

TRENT
I left all the bullets at home. I just wanted to show y'all the gun.

Eddy stops and Trent continues to walk. Eddy shakes his head before running up to Trent and jumping on him.

EDDY
You should have told me that earlier!

Trent laughs.

EDDY (CONT'D)
Wanna watch TV at my house before my dad gets back?

CUT TO:

INT. EDDY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

A dimly lit living room with an old chair and textured walls. The only light comes from the tungsten floor lamp. A small box television sits on a beaten and worn stand.

Trent lies on his stomach, craning his neck up to see the television, while Eddy sits beside him with his back against the lazy-boy. *G.I. Joe* plays on the television.

The front door slams closed.

ROBERT O.S.

Edison?

Eddy turns towards the front door.

EDDY

Yes, sir? I'm in here with
Trent.

ROBERT (39) enters the living room. He's dressed in a t-shirt, jeans, work boots, a cap, and wind breaker. He stops when he sees the boys.

He takes off his boots, cap, and jacket.

ROBERT

Hey, boys. How're you, Trent?

TRENT

Doing well, sir.

ROBERT

How's your pop doing?

TRENT

Good.

ROBERT

And your momma?

TRENT

She's good. Been working a lot.

ROBERT

I hear that.

Robert makes his way to the lazy-boy and falls down into it.

Eddy hands Robert the REMOTE from the floor, and Robert changes the channel to boxing. Eddy stands up and heads out of the living room and into the kitchen. He returns with a can of BEER and hands it to Robert.

Robert cracks open the can.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Thanks.

The three of them watch the boxing match.

INT. EDDY'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

The boys are still on the floor in different positions, but Robert has three empty beer cans on the tray next to his chair.

The once white, but now yellow phone that hangs on the wall RINGS.

Eddy gets up and runs over to answer it. He drags a small stool over, so he can reach.

EDDY

Hello?

(beat)

Hi.

(beat)

Yes, ma'am. I'll tell him.

Eddy hangs up the phone. Robert looks over at him as Eddy makes his way back to the group.

EDDY (CONT'D)

It was Trent's momma. She says it's 6:40 and she wants him home before she goes to work tonight.

Trent stands up and grabs his backpack. Eddy sits back on the floor.

TRENT

I'm heading out. Thanks for having me over, Mr. Richards.

Robert nods at Trent.

TRENT (CONT'D)

Can I borrow your bike? I'll bring it back tomorrow.

EDDY

Sure.

Trent puts on his shoes and exits.

Eddy and Robert sit watching the television.

EDDY (CONT'D)

You making anything for dinner?

Robert checks his watch.

ROBERT

I suppose I forgot. I think there's
a box of mac and cheese in there.

EDDY

It's okay. I'll make it.

Eddy exits into the kitchen.

Robert continues to watch the television.

CUT TO:

INT. EDDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eddy lies in his twin bed with Batman sheets and comforter.
He's asleep.

The room is small and relatively clean besides the few
action figures and Lego pieces that scatter the floor.

Red and blue lights begin to fill his room. They shine across
his face for a few seconds before waking him. Eddy is groggy
for all of five seconds before he jumps out of bed and looks
out the blinds of his window.

From the window he sees a POLICE CRUISER and OFFICER 1
standing and talking to Robert.

Robert shakes his head and rubs his eyes with one hand. He
takes a moment holding his head before looking back up to the
officer and nodding his head.

Eddy cannot make out what anyone is saying. The officer says
something in his WALKIE that is clipped to his chest. OFFICER
2 gets out from the police cruiser and opens the back door,
letting out Trent.

Trent is in his pajamas and holds a pillow. OFFICER 2 leads
him to Robert. Robert puts a hand on Trent's shoulder before
heading back into the house.

Eddy pulls away from the window and jumps back in his bed,
pulling his blanket over him.

Robert opens Eddy's bedroom door. He squeezes Trent's
shoulder.

ROBERT

Hold on, bud.

Robert crosses over and turns on the floor lamp.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Edison?

Eddy rolls over and looks at his father then Trent. Trent stands, looking down. His eyes are empty and his expression blank.

EDDY

Yeah?

ROBERT

Trent is going to be staying here for the night.

EDDY

Okay.

Robert bends down to pull out the trundle bed. Eddy goes to his closet and pulls out another comforter.

EDDY (CONT'D)

The police are here?

Robert takes the comforter from Eddy and spreads it on the bed. Eddy looks at Trent.

EDDY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

Robert places a hand on Trent's shoulder and guides him to sit on the bed.

ROBERT

Let's let Trent get some rest.

Trent gets under the covers. Eddy crawls back onto his bed. His expression is confused and he looks at his father. Robert shakes his head at Eddy.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Goodnight, boys.

Robert turns off the lamp, making the police lights more obvious, and leaves. Eddy sits on his bed. He watches Trent, who has his back turned to him.

Outside, Eddy can hear the murmur of indiscernible voices. Robert has returned to talk to the officers.

EDDY

Why did the cops bring you here?
You okay?

Trent sighs before turning over to face Eddy. His expression grave.

TRENT
Something bad happened --my momma,
she got attacked.

Eddy's brows raise.

EDDY
Is she okay? What happened.

Trent shakes his head.

TRENT
My momma's dead, Eddy.

The boys stare at each other. Eddy tries to find words to comfort Trent, but comes up with nothing. He leans forward to rest a hand on Trent's shoulder.

EDDY
I'm sorry.

Trent shakes him off.

TRENT
It's whatever, man. Let's just
sleep.

Trent rolls back over and pulls the covers over his head.

Eddy sits there for a moment, staring at the back of Trent's head before sliding down under his covers.

Eddy drifts off to sleep. Before his eyes close completely, his brows furrow. He hears sniffing. He listens, but can't make out the sounds over the running engine and radio traffic from the police car outside. Before he can say anything, sleep overtakes him.