

PROPOSITION ONE

Hank Isaac

FADE IN:

INT. A CITY DANCING SCHOOL FOR KIDS -- 1960 -- DAY

A gaggle of eight-to-nine-year-olds in suits and party dresses awkwardly wheels around the old wood floor to a mid-century vinyl rendition of "The Tennessee Waltz."

No one looks comfortable.

ON THE WALL -- A TRUCK-SIZE BANNER

"BALDWIN'S BALLROOM" and beneath that, "END OF TERM SOIRÉE" followed by "JUNE, 1960." Ghosts of previous dates are almost hidden.

To everyone's relief, the song finally ends. White gloves clap dutifully -- sounds more like a flag flapping in an angry breeze.

MISS BALDWIN (O.S.)

All right everyone! A short break
then the rhumba!

As if pulled by magnets, the girls and boys stampede to opposite ends of the floor -- the brave ones head for MISS BALDWIN and the oversized punch bowl.

A GROUP OF BOYS

...debate the merits of dying of thirst versus mingling with the girls. Only one boy, MICHAEL(9), stays out of it -- looks way too serious & concerned.

A BOY

I hate the rhumba. I never know
where my feet are s'posed to go.

ANOTHER BOY

It's like the cha-cha. Just pretend
you're stomping out a fire.

STEVE(9) slides up next to Michael.

STEVE

So?

MICHAEL

(whispers)
All right, all right.

STEVE

Well?

Michael bolts away -- Steve chases after him.

INT. REST ROOM CORRIDOR

Michael paces at the far end. Steve slides to a stop right next to him -- gets right in his face.

STEVE

What?

A girl approaches -- the boys clam up -- she smirks at them then enters the girl's room. And as the door closes...

MICHAEL

I still don't know. Right or left.
Which is it?

STEVE

What difference? Look, this is your
last chance.

MICHAEL

Maybe if she doesn't know it's me.

He dons a pair of aviator's sunglasses.

STEVE

You look like a dork.

Michael reluctantly pockets them.

MICHAEL

They're Ray-Bans.

STEVE

Uh, huh. You're not gonna puke, are
you?

MICHAEL

No. Maybe. I dunno.

INT. THE DANCE FLOOR

Michael & Steve emerge from their corridor sanctuary.

MISS BALDWIN

All right, everyone! Choose a partner
for the... Rhumba!

STEVE

Go! Go!

Michael approaches the cluster of girls as if on his way to the gallows -- keeps glancing over his shoulder at Steve's nodding encouragement -- notices all the boys have gathered around Steve and all are watching him.

AT THE GIRLS

Michael stares into the middle. As if on cue, all the girls part like a stage curtain, leaving ALLISON(8) standing alone to face Michael. Elvis' "Now Or Never" starts to play.

MICHAEL

(whispers to himself)

Left or right? Left or right? Left
or right...?

He finally approaches Allison -- stops just short -- looks like he's about to ask her to dance.

HIS POV

Allison glows.

Michael stares at the floor. His feet. Her feet. Looks behind him. Then into Allison's eyes.

He finally drops to one knee -- seems unsure -- now on both knees.

The other girls all giggle.

MICHAEL

(to Allison)

Allison Michelle Baxter, will you
marry me... in... nine years, two
months, and... and... and five days?

A previously stoic Allison manages a tiny smile.

LATER

Parents rescue their kids. Steve confronts Michael.

STEVE

Well? Well? So what did she say?

Michael flashes a sly smile at Steve.

FADE OUT: