TEA TIME FOR TYRANNY

Written by

Richard Woolbert

Richiewoolbert@gmail.com
FADE IN:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Lower Third: Monday

FRANK, 12 years old and tall for his age, sits at a desk in front of ALBERT, 12 of average height and slightly overweight for his age. Mr. Lewis, mid-thirties wearing a vest and bow tie, stands in front of sleepy and bored seventh graders.

MR. LEWIS
Hot dog! What a great discussion. Let’s all talk about the American Revolution.

The exuberant teacher pulls down a map of America. Students groan.

MR. LEWIS (CONT’D)
This is a story of many standing up against a king...

Mr. Lewis’ eyes widen as he looks at the students.

MR. LEWIS (CONT’D)
... When victory seemed impossible!

Frank, sitting in the second row, turns around in his chair and faces Albert.

FRANK
I don’t understand how he gets away with so much. This is a democracy.

Albert shakes his head.

ALBERT
It’s not a democracy, dude. When it comes to the school hallways, Lars is king.

Frank frowns.

FRANK
It’s just stupid. I get it, he’s four years older than us and much bigger-

ALBERT
-and a jerk.

Frank nods.
FRANK
Yeah, but he can’t just push all us seventh graders around!

Frank jumps up from his chair with his arms in the air, in an attempt to illustrate his point to Albert.

MR. LEWIS
Mr. Higgembothem, sit down!

Frank slumps back into his chair while the class laughs. He turns his head slightly backwards towards Albert.

FRANK
Someone needs to take a stand.

Albert keeps his head down, focused on writing history notes.

ALBERT
Why not you?

The bell RINGS.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Frank and Albert walk down the hallway. Students rush in different directions around them, others look through lockers.

ALBERT
I don’t know, if I had the chance I would probably sock him right in the face.

Albert grins as he punches the air.

FRANK
Yeah right, what about when he dumped the “baked bean surprise” lunch meal on your head?

Albert’s grin becomes a frown.

ALBERT
You said you wouldn’t bring that up anymore, man. I already get enough crap...

FRANK
Sorry, I’m just saying...

A swarm of younger students run by them, screaming.
FRANK (CONT’D)
What the heck!?

ALBERT
Oh no. Let’s get out of here!

LARS, 16 with the physical appearance of a German Olympian and an accent as if he just arrived from his homeland, turns the corner and struts down the center of the hallway.

A group of sixteen-year-olds, including JEREMIAH, 16 and of average build with his arms folded across his chest, follow closely behind Lars, pushing students and banging on lockers as they progress towards Frank.

LARS
Qué pasa, nerds? Clear a path, the man is here!

Albert jumps to the side of the hallway.

LARS (CONT’D)
Are you stupid or something? I said move, dork breath!

Frank holds his ground and stares at Lars, completely silent.

ALBERT
(whispers)
What are you doing!?

FRANK
You know, you don’t need to be so mean to everyone.

LARS
Are you kidding me, loser?

Lars looks back at his friends and holds his arms up in the air.

LARS (CONT’D)
Do you want me to punch you in the face?

JEREMIAH
Yeah! Hit him Lars!

Lars pushes Frank to the side of the hallway. Lars then notices Albert.

LARS
Oh... What’s up, bean man?
Lars’ gang thunders with laughter. Frank’s expression darkens as he looks at Lars.

    FRANK
    (muttering)
    You’re an asshole.

Lars looks back quickly at Frank.

    LARS
    What did you say?

Frank straightens his posture and lifts up his head.

    FRANK
    I said, you’re an asshole!

The room immediately becomes silent. Albert looks in disbelief. Jaws drop among Lars’ cronies.

    LARS
    All right. Friday. Eight a.m.
    Baseball field. Be there. I will CRUSH you!

Lars punches a locker next to Frank’s head and makes a large dent. OSWALT, 11, scrawny with bad acne, thick glasses, and high white socks, enters the hallway and notices the damage to the locker.

    OSWALT
    My locker!

Lars jumps at Oswalt.

    LARS
    What are you going to do, acne boy!

Oswalt sprints back in the direction he entered. Lars points at Frank.

    LARS (CONT’D)
    Be there, or I will find you.

Lars and his crew exit.

    ALBERT
    You made him look like a wimp!

    FRANK
    I was standing up for YOU. Look where that got me!

The bell RINGS.
INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Frank sits at the dinner table with his parents, SARAH, early 40’s and cheery, and LEONARD, mid 40’s with a protruding gut.

    SARAH
    How was your day, honey?

Frank moves food around his plate with his fork.

    FRANK
    Uh.. All right, I guess.

    SARAH
    Well, how are classes going?

    FRANK
    Fine, normal.

Sarah smiles. She looks to Leonard.

    SARAH
    Oh, I almost forgot! Dear, didn’t you read something interesting in the newspaper today?

Leonard stops shoveling food in his mouth. He wipes his face with a napkin.

    LEONARD
    Oh, yeah. Frank my boy, I read about an all-star boxer from your school...

Frank frowns at his plate.

    LEONARD (CONT’D)
    I wondered if you were friends with him. Boy goes by the name... what was it? Lars something. Do you know a Lars?

Frank nods.

    FRANK
    Uh, yeah I know him. Not really friends with him though.

    LEONARD
    Well supposedly he’s never lost a match before. Anyway, seemed like a great fighter.
FRANK
Yeah, supposedly he’s the current state champion... Don’t really know.

Sarah tilts her head and looks at Frank with a perplexed expression.

SARAH
You’re not very talkative tonight.
You sure you’re all right, honey?

Frank eats his food slowly while looking at the plate.

FRANK
Yeah, I just have a lot on my mind.

LEONARD
You know you can talk to us.

Frank stops eating and looks up to Leonard.

FRANK
Well... There’s this bully at school. Today I stood up for Albert, and now the neanderthal wants to fight me.

LEONARD
That was good of you to stand up for your friend, son. But you shouldn’t start fights.

SARAH
Your father’s right. I don’t want you getting in any trouble at school.

FRANK
I know, but he torments all the students. He needs to learn a lesson.

Frank hits his fork against the table.

LEONARD
Well, as long as he’s not this Lars character you may have a shot.

Frank laughs slightly to himself.

LEONARD (CONT’D)
Use your head instead of your fists, son.
Frank looks down at his hands and clenches them into fists.

FRANK
Yeah, right.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Albert and Frank play basketball at the playground of school.

ALBERT
So how are you, man? It’s almost Friday.

FRANK
I know, I don’t know what to do.

Frank misses a three-point shot. Albert catches the rebound and makes a quick lay up shot. He throws the ball to Frank.

ALBERT
I think you should fight him, for all of us. Take one for the team. You never know, maybe somehow you could actually win.

FRANK
Thanks for the support.

Frank misses another shot, and the ball rolls away. Lars stops it with his foot. Albert stands completely frozen.

FRANK (CONT’D)
Just give us the ball back, will ya?

Lars stares at Frank and doesn’t move.

FRANK (CONT’D)
Hello?

LARS
Your head, Friday.

Lars picks up the basketball and crushes it instantly with his hands. He throws the deflated basketball on top of a roof behind the court. Lars walks away.

The bell RINGS and students run towards the school from all directions. Frank stands alone at the basketball court. He kicks his foot across the ground and slowly walks to the door.
INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Frank walks into Mr. Lewis’ classroom.

    FRANK
    Hey, uh... Mr. Lewis. Are you busy right now?

Mr. Lewis looks up from grading papers and smiles at Frank.

    MR. LEWIS
    Mr. Hig to the Bothem! What brings you to my room of knowledge?

Frank walks in slowly.

    FRANK
    Yeah, I just wanted to ask you about something from class...

    MR. LEWIS
    Sure, what’s up?

Frank sits at a desk next to Mr. Lewis.

    FRANK
    Um, what were you saying the colonists did at the Boston Tea Party again?

    MR. LEWIS
    I don’t know, I wasn’t invited!

Mr. Lewis looks eagerly at Frank, who appears uneasy and confused.

    MR. LEWIS (CONT’D)
    Sorry... Anyway, the Boston Tea Party, yes. Well, what do you remember from class?

    FRANK
    Uh, it seemed like the King-

Mr. Lewis nods.

    MR. LEWIS
    - King George.

    FRANK
    Yeah, him. He took advantage of the colonists. Made them pay more than usual for tea.
Mr. Lewis crosses his arms against his chest and leans back.

MR. LEWIS
So what did the colonists do?

FRANK
They stood up against the king, right?

MR. LEWIS
You bet they did!

Mr. Lewis squints off to the side, as if he is peering into the distance.

MR. LEWIS (CONT’D)
One day, the colonists decided not to take anymore bologna from ol’ King George.

Mr. Lewis looks directly at Frank.

MR. LEWIS (CONT’D)
(with energy)
They boarded the British ships and dumped all the tea into the Boston Harbor. Did they have their “pinky’s up?” I don’t think so!

FRANK
Do you think what they did was right?

MR. LEWIS
Yes I do. Sometimes one person believes they can boss others around.

Mr. Lewis holds his hand against his heart and frowns.

FRANK
I know someone just like George-

Mr. Lewis is so deep in thought he completely ignores Frank’s comment.

MR. LEWIS
- These people need to have a reality check. They must understand that even the few, the weak, will take a stand!

Frank stands up.
FRANK
Thanks Mr. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis looks startled.

MR. LEWIS
Sure, ah, no problem Frank. Glad I could help. See you in class tomorrow!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank lies in bed. He looks at the ceiling. The clock reads 3:00 a.m.

FRANK
(to himself)
What did I get myself into?

Begin fantasy.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Lars laughs at Albert.

LARS
Hey, bean man!

Oswalt looks at his dented locker. He touches his locker with one hand slightly.

OSWALT
My locker...

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Leonard looks at Frank sternly.

LEONARD
Never start fights, son.

Frank turns to his Mom. Sarah tilts her head down and looks at Frank with complete seriousness.

SARAH
I don’t want you getting in any trouble...
INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MR. LEWIS
Sometimes one person believes they can boss others around.

Mr. Lewis leans in closer to Frank.

MR. LEWIS (CONT’D)
They must understand that even the few, the weak, will take a stand!

End fantasy.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Lower third: Thursday

The clock reads 7:30 a.m. A rooster crows.

Frank looks out the window and smiles mischievously.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Mr. Lewis faces the chalk board and writes furiously. He speaks to the class.

MR. LEWIS
And that’s why those years are referred to as the dark ages... there were so many knights!

Mr. Lewis laughs to himself. Frank shifts slightly in his seat.

FRANK
(whispering)
Al!

Albert looks up from writing down notes.

ALBERT
(whispering)
What?

FRANK
(whispering)
I know what we’re going to do tomorrow.

ALBERT
What WE’RE going to do!?
MR. LEWIS
Albert!

Frank grins.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Lower Third: Friday.

Albert leans against a door which reads “Locker Room”. He holds a note in his hand. To his side is a broom. Jeremiah casually walks down the hallway with Lars’ normal crew of followers. Albert jumps in front of Jeremiah.

ALBERT
Hey, you’re friends with the German fella right? ’bout 6 feet tall...

Jeremiah scans the hall.

JEREMIAH
You seen ‘em? We’ve been looking all over.

Albert passes Jeremiah the note. Albert looks eagerly at the sinister group while Jeremiah stares down and reads the note.

LARS (V.O.)
Comrades, I run late today. I give this message to small servant boy. Wait for me in the locker room, I arrive soon to prepare for fight.

Jeremiah looks up at Albert, who whistles and looks around the hallway, appearing as unsuspicious as he can manage to the group of hooligans.

Jeremiah tilts his head and shrugs. He waves his hand forward, signaling for a follower to open the Locker room door.

JEREMIAH
Thanks, kid.

Jeremiah hits Albert in the shoulder, hard. Albert almost loses his balance. Jeremiah and the gang enter the locker room.

Albert casually lifts up the broom and sticks it through the Locker room door handles. He then turns and struts down the hallway, whistling.
EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAWN

Mist fills the air as the sun rises. Frank stops short of the field.

    FRANK
    (to himself)
    Great, they’re all here.

A large group of students stand in a circle by the baseball field. They all talk amongst themselves. Oswalt notices Frank walking towards the group and points.

    OSWALT
    There he is!

All of the students start chanting.

    STUDENTS
    FIGHT!  FIGHT!  FIGHT!

Frank walks up to Oswalt and nods. Oswalt nods back. Frank continues through the crowd and emerges into an open area of grass. Lars stretches his arms and jumps up and down. He stops when he sees Frank. A tumbleweed rolls by.

    LARS
    Look who showed up!

    STUDENTS
    FIGHT!  FIGHT!

Frank stares directly at Lars, and then scans the crowd. Albert rushes through the crowd, out of breath. He looks at Frank and nods, smiling. Frank grins and returns a slight nod of his head.

    FRANK
    I came here to show you I’m not afraid, you nincompoop. But, I won’t fight you.

Lars leans backwards and scoffs.

    LARS
    Are you scared, little boy?

    FRANK
    Later, Lars.

Frank turns around and walks away.

    LARS
    Do not turn your back to me!
Lars runs and punches Frank in the back of the head. Frank falls to the ground. The crowd goes silent.

LARS (CONT’D)
Why did you stop chanting! Get up
Frank! Fight me like a man!

Frank slowly gets up. Lars holds his clenched fists in front of his face, swaying his arms back and forth.

FRANK
Fight like a man? Like you, sucker punching me?

Frank crosses his arms. He looks to Albert, who walks into the middle of the circle.

ALBERT
Hey Lars, damn you!

Lars turns around in disbelief. He laughs.

LARS
Well, if it isn’t Bean Surprise.

Oswalt comes forward from the crowd and points at Lars. Lars quickly turns his attention, holding his arms in a judo-esque defense stance.

OSWALT
-You dented my locker!

Students in the crowd start to talk amongst themselves. NORMAN, 12 with a baseball cap, suspenders, and high shorts leaves the crowd and stands in the center.

NORMAN
You gave me a swirlie two weeks ago!

Norman frowns.

NORMAN (CONT’D)
It was clogged... Why? Why must you do such a thing?

Bertha, 12 and taller than most of the boys, follows Norman’s lead.

BERTHA
You took my lunch and locked me in the maintenance closet!

Oswalt holds his fist out, shaking it towards Lars.
OSWALT
We are not going to allow you to terrorize us anymore!

Frank glares at Lars.

FRANK
Looks like you’ve messed with a lot of people here, huh Lars?

Lars looks around at the entire crowd.

LARS
Wait a minute. You’re all seventh graders. You can’t talk to me like this!

Lars looks in all directions, uneasy.

All of the students begin to move in towards Lars. Lars turns his head rapidly in all directions with his brows squinted. He appears uneasy. Frank stands his ground with his arms crossed.

LARS (CONT’D)
What the?

The mob closes in further, each with expressions similar to rabid dogs.

LARS (CONT’D)
Stop. Please! Frank, help!

Frank grins at the crowd.

LARS (CONT’D)
Little people, let’s be reasonable!

Frank looks at his fellow seventh grader’s expressions. He looks at Albert, whose grits his teeth with a face now fury red. Frank frowns and shakes his head.

OSWALT
Freedom!

The students all scream and lunge forward, now only a few inches from Lars. Frank throws his arms in the air.

FRANK
(with all his might)
STOP!

The students freeze and look back at Frank.
FRANK (CONT’D)
Look at what we’ve become.

Albert tilts his head and squints his eyes.

ALBERT
What are you talking about?

LARS
Yah, what are you talking about?

Frank shakes his head.

FRANK
I wanted revenge against this gigantic buffoon more than anything. But right now, we’re all acting just as bad as him.

Oswalt looks to Albert. Students look to each other as if they just woke up from a trance; wide, crazy eyes become normal, everyone looks at one another.

FRANK (CONT’D)
Al, Oswalt, let’s go.

Frank turns around and walks towards the school. Albert hits his shoulder against Lars as he walks by. The group begins to disperse.

Lars looks at Frank with reddening face, bewildered.

LARS
Where are you going? Get back here and fight!

Albert slaps Frank a high five. Lars is left alone in the field. Lars drops his head.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Lower Third: One month later.

The bell RINGS. Frank and Albert exit a nearby classroom and enter the hall. Students move in both directions quickly. Frank and Albert stroll casually.

ALBERT
I do have to say, life has been better lately.

Frank nods.
FRANK
It’s just too bad Lars got injured in shop class and had to forfeit the championship match.

Lars enters at the far end of the hallway. He sulks with a cast on his arm. Jeremiah and the posse enter the hallway. Lars waves at Jeremiah, who shakes his head, looks down, and continues past the injured fellow.

Lars walks down the hallway and looks up at Frank slightly. He then focuses on the floor and walks by.

FRANK (CONT’D)
Yo, Lars.

Lars turns around and faces Frank.

LARS
Yes?

FRANK
Al and I are playing soccer after school. If you don’t mind hanging with some seventh graders, you can join.

LARS
Really? Uh, yeah, sure. That would be fun. But my arm-

Frank shakes his head.

FRANK
- We’ll meet after class. See you then.

Lars smiles at both Frank and Albert. Albert looks at Lars, then at Frank, in complete shock with his jaw dropped. Lars walks away, standing taller than before.

FRANK (CONT’D)
He’s learned his lesson.

Albert begrudgingly nods.

FRANK (CONT’D)
Plus, you’re no good at soccer. Maybe I’ll finally have some competition.

Frank punches Albert lightly in the arm, they both exit.

FADE OUT.