

A FLORIDA STORY

OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCE:

EXT. LARGE FIELD--DAY

Vintage old-looking photography. It resembles the old homemade films of the late seventies. A group of four Caucasian children are playing around, chasing bugs, pushing each other around, throwing dirt on each other, etc.

MARK (12), the oldest, is pushing around the others. He obviously rules the group. The smallest of the four is LUKE (4). He is trying to keep up with everyone. The other two boys are JAMES (11) and GENE (11). They are obviously identical twins, dressed similarly with the same haircuts.

The film is scratched as it displays its extreme wear. Jump cuts reveal the children's activities: eating at a picnic table, rolling a tire, fighting, waving at the camera. The credits of the cast and crew fade in and out during this.

An adult male voice is suddenly heard as the on screen movie focuses on one of the twins. The voice belongs to GENE (26).

GENE (V. O.)

Once upon a time, there were three boys that ended up drifting in three different directions, and one that didn't get a chance to drift at all. Their names were Mark, Luke, James, and Gene.

As he states each name, the film cuts to each boy, goofing around for the camera. The boys begin to run to a lake. They all jump in with their clothes and shoes.

GENE (V. O.) (CONT' D)

--And they all lived happily together in the sunny land of Florida.

A wide shot is shown of a large oak tree. The four boys run towards it. The title card "A Florida Story" is superimposed.

GENE (V. O.) (CONT' D)

In Clarksville, Florida to be exact. I don't think I ever noticed how deep our roots were until they were threatened.

The next shot is of MARY MOMBERGER (30). She is pretty, and comes off as having a very warm personality. She is setting a picnic table, waving the camera away. She looks very happy.

GENE (V. O.) (CONT' D)

And there's mom. You know what? I've only seen her cry once. The day James--

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The next shot is of an ADULT MAN named MATTHEW MOMBERGER (33).

GENE (V. O.) (CONT' D)

Dad, on the other hand is a different story--

The film flickers violently, flashing and distorting the image. Loud noise is heard.

GENE (V. O.) (CONT' D)

Damn!

CUT TO:

INT. MOMBERGER ATTIC-- DAY

GENE (26) puts down the microphone to a sound recording device and crawls quickly to a vintage projector on the floor. He is projecting the film on a sheet hanging on the wall. Gene is a stocky gentleman with a beard. He is wearing a worn tee with old shorts and sandals. The attic is fairly neat, and is covered with comic book posters and band posters. Boxes are nicely placed in the corner. It is apparent that he has converted this space into a work area. Quite a few of the posters are of the old band "The Monkees." While on the floor, he is tinkering with the old projector.

A knock is heard at the door. MARY (48) peeks her head in. She still appears young for her age, but a bit older from the old film. She is carrying a dish towel. Gene is so involved in fixing the projector, he doesn't notice her.

MARY

Gene!

This gets his attention.

GENE

Huh? What?

MARY

Just checkin' to make sure you're okay. When you get into your work mode, I sometimes forget you're up here.

Gene ignores her as he works on the projector.

MARY (CONT' D)

You going to the Fall Festival, dear?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GENE

Huh? No. I have to go to work.

MARY

Really? What time?

GENE

Two.

Mary glances at her watch. A look of surprise takes her.

MARY

Gene. It's a quarter after right now.

Gene is taken aback.

GENE

What? A quarter after?

MARY

Yes. A quarter after two.

GENE

Oh hell!

He jumps up and bolts past his mother, barely tripping as he flies down the narrow steps. Mary yells after him.

MARY

Gene, be careful! Make sure you're on time for dinner tonight!

EXT. MOMBARGER HOUSE--LATER

A beautiful three-story classical house from the turn of the century. It helps to anchor a street full of similar well put together houses. Gene runs out of the driveway. He is wearing a black suit, although not very put together. He runs to an old red pickup truck and quickly jumps in.

He puts the key in the ignition. The truck won't start.

GENE

Come on! Come on! Shit!

It becomes painfully apparent that the truck won't start. He hops out, obviously thinking of solutions. He runs into the garage.

EXT. STREET-LATER

Gene is on a bicycle, biking to work. An OLDER COUPLE drinking coffee on their front porch stare at Gene as he bikes by. He is biking with extreme urgency.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CLARKSVILLE-- DAY

The Fall Festival is occurring. It is a typical celebration indicative of small towns. Tables of antiques and crafts are set out, clowns are walking around, people are barbecuing, and children are running around with balloons. A large banner hangs over the main street. It states "Clarksville, Florida presents the 99th annual Fall Festival."

Gene tries to maneuver around the crowds as much as possible. He bikes past a Greyhound bus that has just arrived. People are unloading the bus as the attendants are distributing people's luggage. One of the passengers, a young looking black man, steps off the bus steps and looks around. He is obviously out of place in this town as he is dressed a bit more colorful than most of the residents. LUCEF R. JOHNSON (26) pulls a camera out of a camera bag and begins to snap pictures of the festival.

INT. MOMBERGER'S HARDWARE-- CONTINUOUS

A hardware store that definitely is small town. MATTHEW MOMBERGER (54), a slightly heavyset man, is reading the paper at the counter. He comes off as quite unapproachable. A youthful, exuberant Mexican man, JESUS RAMIREZ (27) is moving boxes around the store. He is being quite dutiful. While working, he looks out the window and witnesses Gene biking through the Festival. He interrupts his boss' reading. He has a thick accent.

JESUS

Mr. Momberger? Is that your son?

Perplexed, Matthew puts down the paper. He looks toward the direction in which Jesus is referring. He sees Gene biking wearing his job uniform. He frowns as he checks his watch. He frowns again.

MATTHEW

Jesus, do me a favor. Go check to see whether our new shipment of doorknobs came in or not.

JESUS

Yes, sir.

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Jesus exits to the back of the store. Matthew glares at the window, shakes his head, and goes back to his paper. Two gentlemen enter. The first, JOSHUA SCHULMAN (42) is barking into his cell phone. He has a very thick Northern accent, most likely from New York. The man behind him, EZEKIEL HODGE (39), is African-American. He is very professional appearing, wearing a polo shirt and khakis. Both enter, appearing quite frustrated. Matthew glimpses over his paper to acknowledge the new arrivals.

JOSHUA

(in cell phone)

What! It's not my fault that my flight from Jacksonville was late! I want those plans at my office no later than tomorrow morning!

Ezekiel tries to distance himself by checking out fuses a distance away.

JOSHUA (CONT' D)

(in cell phone)

I don't know the zip code to this place? Hold on a second!

He looks toward Matthew and slowly begins to walk toward the counter. Matthew glances over his paper and slowly puts it down.

JOSHUA (CONT' D)

What's your area code around here?

Before Matthew can answer, Joshua pulls out a Blackberry and starts jotting down something.

JOSHUA (CONT' D)

(in cell phone)

Three, two, three...Uh huh. Got it. That took long enough. What did you do? Mapquest?

He walks away from Matthew. Confused, Matthew returns to his paper. Ezekiel approaches the counter with a fuse.

EZEKIEL

Hey. How's it goin'

Matthew glances over his paper again. He puts it down to help his customer.

MATTHEW

Fine, sir. That will be five ninety-five.

(CONTINUED)

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Ezekiel begins to pull out his wallet to pay when Joshua returns to the counter.

JOSHUA
(in cell phone)
Tomorrow! Goodbye!

He ends his call.

JOSHUA (CONT' D)
You almost ready to go? We've got the meeting within the hour, and I have no idea where things are around here.

Matthew completes the transaction. Joshua addresses him

JOSHUA (CONT' D)
So. What's happening outside? A street party?

MATTHEW
Sorry?

JOSHUA
That shindig outside. What's that about?

MATTHEW
It's the Fall Festival.

JOSHUA
The what?

MATTHEW
Fall Festival. It's the way we bring in fall around--

Joshua's cell phone rings again. He answers it, walking away from Matthew. He exits the store. Matthew gives Ezekiel an offended look.

EZEKIEL
Sorry about that. He's a busy guy. Thanks so much.

MATTHEW
Yes, sir. Come back and see us.

Ezekiel takes the fuse and exits the store. Matthew shakes his head and goes back to his paper.

EXT. MOMBARGER' S HARDWARE-- DAY

Ezekiel joins Joshua. He is yelling in his cell phone while standing next to a rental car. An ASIAN WOMAN (35) that is obviously homeless approaches Joshua. He shakes his head and continues with his cell phone call. The woman walks away.

JOSHUA
(in cell phone)
Clarksville! Clarksville! C-L-A... Hello?
Hello! Dammit! I lost my signal. Dammit!

Ezekiel ignores this. Joshua takes out a pack of cigarettes. He unwraps the package and throws the wrapper on the ground. He lights a cigarette and takes a long drag. He scans the town.

JOSHUA (CONT' D)
Nice town, isn't it?

A large pickup truck with large wheels drives by. A large Confederate flag is attached to the back. Ezekiel notices this.

EZEKIEL
Fantastic. A regular Mayberry.

JOSHUA
You know this place is going to be so different within the next year. It's insane that no one knew about this place! Whenever we finish with the Bryant townhouse project, this town is finally gonna be up to date.

EZEKIEL
Uh huh.

JOSHUA
Think of it. Orlando, Jacksonville, and Tampa are in a day's drive, the beach is less than thirty minutes away!

EZEKIEL
How long am I going to be here for? I do have a family.

JOSHUA
Not too long. You just work with the architects and keep the natives out of the know, and everything will be all right. Don't forget I have investors to deal with.

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He finishes his cigarette and throws it on the ground.

JOSHUA (CONT' D)

Let's get out of here. We need to find this place. They want more pictures of the area sent to New York by the end of the week.

Ezekiel frowns as both approach the rental car. They both get in and drive off.

EXT. DIXON FUNERAL HOME--DAY

Out of breath, Gene bikes to the front of a funeral home. He throws the bike down on a bush near the garage area. He runs in.

INT. DIXON FUNERAL HOME GARAGE--CONTINUOUS

He runs through a garage area where a hearse and a family limo are parked. An older African-American gentleman, SAUL COLEMAN (65), is wiping the windows of the hearse. Gene runs past.

GENE

Good afternoon, Mr. Coleman.

INT. DIXON FUNERAL HOME--DAY

A typical funeral home lobby. Gene runs to the back. He approaches an office door. The name "Benjamin Dixon" is on the door. Gene lightly knocks. A voice answers from the other side.

BENJAMIN (O. C.)

(gruffly)

Come in!

Gene takes a deep breath and slowly opens the door. BENJAMIN DIXON, a balding, heavysset man is going through paperwork. He appears stressed. The sight of Gene sets him off.

BENJAMIN (CONT' D)

Get in here and close the door!

Gene cautiously enters and closes the door.

BENJAMIN (CONT' D)

You've got a lot of explaining to do, Momberger. Where were you?

Before Gene can answer, Benjamin continues.

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BENJAMIN (CONT' D)

What time is it?

Gene glances at the ticking wall clock.

GENE

(quietly)

Three o' clock.

BENJAMIN

Right, Momberger. Do you know what time you were supposed to have been here today?

Gene looks down.

GENE

Two-fifteen.

BENJAMIN

Wrong! You were supposed to been here at Two o' clock. I needed a driver for the Young funeral. I had to call in Saul on his day off to cover you! This is the third time you've been late this month! Don't forget that one of the main reasons you have this job is because I'm doing your dad a favor. Don't let this happen again! Goodbye, Momberger!

Gene steps toward the door, and slowly exits.

INT. PAUL HOLLAND'S HOBBIES AND ANTIQUES-- DAY

A store that doubles as both an antique store and a comic book/music store. A small assortment of antiques are on one side of the wall, while the majority of the store is covered with comic book posters. Gene leans on the counter flipping through a comic book. JUDAS HOLLAND (24), a tall, skinny man with large thick glasses stands behind the counter organizing paperwork.

JUDAS

That guy's a dick! I remember he yelled at me when it took three days longer for his order to come in. The whole family is assholes.

Gene chuckles as he continues to flip through the comic book.

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JUDAS (CONT' D)

Hey! check out what came today. I didn't put it out because I knew you would probably want it first.

He pulls out a record. It belongs to "The Monkees." Suddenly, a man that looks very similar to Judas comes out from the back. PAUL HOLLAND (50) is also, tall and skinny. He is wearing a sweater vest.

PAUL

Hello, Gene!

GENE

Hello, Mr. Holland.

PAUL

Judas, you two are going to have to chat later. I need you to help me straighten up the back. Gene, tell your father I said hello.

He returns to the back of the store. Judas frowns and rolls his eyes. He does a "jerking off" motion to display his displeasure.

JUDAS

I hope you enjoy listening to the record. It came with something extra in it.

He winks as he goes in the back. Confused, Gene exits.

EXT. STREET-LATER

Gene is slowly biking down a side street. It is apparent that he is taking his time. A distance away, Lucef is taking pictures of the side of an old building. Between shots, he takes pictures of the locals. He attempts to focus the lens when he hears a Gene's bicycle approaching. He turns in the direction of the noise, continuing to look through his lens. Through the lens, he sees Gene. Lucef puts the camera down and reacts with surprise. He waves in Gene's direction. He comes off slightly effeminate.

LUCEF

Gene!

Hearing his named being called, Gene looks in the direction of where he heard the noise. He instantly recognizes Lucef and bikes over to him.

GENE

Lucef Johnson!

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For the complete script please contact Jennifer Brooks at
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