

**THE TARDY BOYS (2009)**

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INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

ROBERT JONES, a 15-year-old high school student, is quickly putting on his clothes as he rifles through his messy room, pulling out schoolbooks from beneath the bed and under stacks of comic books.

He frantically keeps checking the clock as he gets his stuff ready for school.

Robert is putting on his USC sweater when the door bell rings. He dashes to the window and calls outside:

ROBERT  
The door's open. Come in,  
I'll be right down.

Robert grabs his back pack and races down stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Robert stops at the bottom of the stairs. He finds nobody there to meet him.

ROBERT  
Yo Andrew! Where are you?

He opens the front door, looks outside. No one's in sight.

ROBERT  
Yo Andrew! C'mon man,  
stop playing.

Robert comes inside, closing the door behind him. He checks his watch and sighs.

Suddenly Robert is startled by the sound of a refrigerator door slamming shut in the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Robert creeps into the kitchen only to find ANDREW, a 15-year-high school student who is kind of spacey, swigging the last of Robert's orange juice.

ANDREW  
Oh, hey Robert. Hope you  
don't mind me helping  
myself here.

ROBERT

Andrew what are you doing? You're going to make me late again.

ANDREW

Dude, no problem we have plenty of time. Do you have anything to eat? I'd kill for some waffles right now.

ROBERT

(checks his watch)  
It's 7:25, we've got thirty-five minutes before the first bell rings.

ANDREW

All right, chill out, man, lets go then.

Robert and Andrew head into the --

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

As Robert and Andrew are about to leave --

ANDREW

Dude, I have to use the bathroom.

ROBERT

Damn, dude, NOW?

ANDREW

Yah, orange juice always makes me pee like a Russian race horse.

Robert just sighs. Killing his best friend isn't an option.

ROBERT

(Sighing)  
Fine, use the one by the stairs.

ANDREW

Be right back.  
(Smiles cheerfully)  
Trust me, dude, we're as good as there.

Andrew heads to the bathroom. Roberts waits impatiently, looking up at a wall clock which reads 7:30.

EXT. OUTSIDE - MORNING

Robert is walking quickly away from the house. Suddenly, we hear:

ANDREW (V.O.)  
Hey, dude, wait up!

Robert turns to see Andrew exiting the house on to the porch.

ROBERT  
Hurry up! And close the door behind you!

Andrew turns to see the door still open. He starts messing with Robert by closing the door in slow motion.

Robert just shakes his head and continues on, walking at a faster clip. Andrew finally shuts the front door and races to catch up to Robert.

ANDREW  
Dude whats your problem, why are you acting this way?

ROBERT  
How many times do I have to tell you? I can't be late.

ANDREW  
Whats the big deal? You've been late before.

ROBERT  
Exactly. Twice last week and once the week before. And that's just this month. Mr. Lemos said he'd suspend me if it happened again.

ANDREW  
Ahh, Lemos is full of it. He's like this little Chihuahua we used to have. All bark, no bite.

ROBERT

At the very least he'll  
call my parents. If he  
does then I'll be dog  
meat.

ANDREW

Okay, chill out, dude,  
we've got plenty of time.  
Lookee here, we're at the  
bus stop.

They come to a halt at the bus stop. Robert sighs  
in relief.

ROBERT

Hey, I don't mean to be  
such a wimp and all. It's  
just that my Dad's been  
on my case about this  
punctuality thing, it's  
like he still thinks he's  
in the army and --

ANDREW

(interrupting)

Dude, is that our bus?

Robert follows Andrew's gaze down the block to  
where a bus is stopped at the light. He squints  
his eyes for a better look, and then reacts in  
shock:

ROBERT

Oh shit, it is.

Suddenly, they start running towards the bus like  
a pair of wild men.

ROBERT/ANDREW

Stop! Stop!

The bus doesn't see them and drives off without  
them.

A dejected Robert just stands there, trying to  
catch his breath. Andrew takes Robert's hand and  
checks his watch for the time.

ANDREW

Hey dude, is your watch  
running fast?

Robert just closes his eyes in frustration.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING

Robert and Andrew are waiting at the bus stop. We join Robert in the midst of laying into Andrew.

ROBERT

What do you mean no problem, you swore on a stack of bibles I'd get there on time!

ANDREW

I'd never do that. You know I'm an atheist.

ROBERT

You know damn well what I mean. Christ, I am so dead.

ANDREW

(glances at the sky)  
Hey, watch your mouth, man. Last thing you want is to get Him angry.

Robert slumps down on the bus stop bench. He puts his head in his hands.

ANDREW

Dude chill I got an idea.

ROBERT

Oh really what is it, something stupid I bet.

ANDREW

Naw, man, it's a brainstorm. We should just take a cab.

Robert considers this possibility. It's something, anyway. He and Andrew both check their wallets for money. All they find is lint.

ROBERT

Well, it might have worked if we had money!

ANDREW

I guess that would help. Wait -- I have another idea.

ROBERT

What now?

ANDREW

Just follow my lead.

Andrew takes off his hat, closes his eyes and sits on the ground behind the bus stop. As pedestrians walk by --

ANDREW

Money for the blind?

ROBERT

Oh Jeez...

Robert turns away in embarrassment. Just then, an elderly man stops to put a few crumpled up dollars in his hat.

ANDREW

God bless you.

Robert reacts, amazed that Andrew's plan worked. He grabs Andrew's hat.

ROBERT

Let me do it, you're bound to mess it up.

Robert assumes the position on the ground. Closing his eyes, he extends the hat.

ROBERT

Money for the blind?

A well-dressed woman walks by, regards Robert sadly, as she drops some change in his hat. Robert opens his eyes to see that he only got a couple of pennies.

ROBERT

That's it? Five lousy pennies?!

The lady looks back at him. Busted, Robert curses to himself.

LADY

You horrible boy  
pretending to be blind,  
you should be ashamed of  
yourself.

ROBERT  
Trust me, lady, I am.  
It's just that I needed  
money for a cab.

LADY  
Why? Where are you trying  
to go?

ROBERT  
I'm trying to get to  
Kennedy High. If I'm late  
one more time...

LADY  
Kennedy High? Well why  
didn't you just say so.

She hands him a twenty.

ROBERT  
Wow, lady, thanks a lot.

LADY  
I used to be late for  
school all the time...  
Then I finally got  
suspended by Mr. Lemos.  
You sure don't want that  
to happen.

Robert and Andrew exchange knowing looks.

ROBERT  
I can imagine. Thanks  
again, lady.

The lady walks off. Robert rifles through his  
backpack and can't find it.

ROBERT  
Damn, I left my phone on  
the dresser. Give me your  
cell, I'll call a cab.

ANDREW  
What cell? Didn't I tell  
you? I dropped it in the  
toilet while I was  
peeing.

ROBERT  
Did you check if it still  
worked?

ANDREW

No, I was to disgusted to get it . So I flushed it down.

ROBERT

Terrific. Where's the nearest pay phone?

ANDREW

There's one in front of the Liquor Store. Let's take a shortcut through the alley. It will save us some time.

ROBERT

Good idea lets go.

The boy's race down the street and cut through an alley behind several buildings.

EXT. ALLEY - MORNING

They run through the alley, only to come to a dead stop when a trio of gangsters, huge, 18-year-old, ripped guys, exit from the back of a building and block their way.

GANGSTER #1

Yo, look what we got here.

ROBERT

Look, man we don't want trouble.

GANGSTER #2

You guys were moving kinda of fast there. Been doing something that you shouldn't be doing?

The Gangsters surround them.

GANGSTER #3

Give us your money. We'll make sure it gets back to its rightful owner.

ROBERT

Look, man, we didn't steal anything. And I'm in a hurry, so...

The gangsters close in on Robert and Andrew.  
Menace is in their eyes.

ANDREW

Robert, lets just give  
them the money.

ROBERT

No way, we need it for  
the taxi...

The Gangsters grab Robert and throw him to the  
ground.

GANGSTER #1

Yo, Robert just give us  
the money and nobody else  
will get hurt.

The Gangsters look at Andrew.

GANGSTER #3

Cough it up.

Andrew reaches his trembling hand into Robert's  
pocket, grabs the twenty and gives it to the  
gangsters.

GANGSTER #1

That'll teach you not to  
steal other people's  
money.... Suckers!

They grab Andrew and throw him on the ground  
beside Robert. They laugh and walk away.

Robert gets up, dusts himself off. Andrew just  
sits on the ground for a moment, tears of shame  
and anger in his eyes.

ROBERT

Why did you give them the  
money?

Andrew wipes the tears of his face.

ANDREW

I don't know, man. I was  
just... scared. I don't  
know what to say  
except....

Andrew's voice trails off. He's too ashamed to  
look at the friend he let down.

ROBERT  
 (Offers a forgiving  
 smile)  
 Damn, Andrew, you and  
 your shortcuts.

Robert extends a hand to his friend and helps him  
 to his feet.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MORNING

Robert and Andrew walk into a deserted parking  
 lot.

ROBERT  
 (Checks his watch)  
 Ten more minutes until  
 first period. Well, at  
 least we gave it our best  
 shot, right?

ANDREW  
 Man I'm really sorry  
 about what happened. If I  
 hadn't screwed things up  
 from the begging...

ROBERT  
 What the hell. Look, I'm  
 going to the bathroom in  
 the liquor store. If I'm  
 not out in ten minutes  
 it'll mean I flushed  
 myself down the drain.

ANDREW  
 Hey, if you do, see if  
 you can find my cell  
 phone.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF LIQUOR STORE - MORNING

Robert approaches the entrance to the liquor  
 store. All of a sudden the doors fly open and a  
 desperate man comes running out. He's wearing the  
 exact same USC sweater as Robert's -- same color,  
 same hoodie. The man disappears around a corner.

ROBERT  
 What the heck was that?

But before Andrew can answer, a distraught ASIAN  
 STORE OWNER and his wife dash out of the store.  
 The Asian man is hoisting a broom as a weapon.

ASIAN STORE OWNER  
(Spotting Robert)  
There he is! That's him!

Robert turns, thinking the man spotted someone behind him. The Asian man descends on Robert, swinging the broom STRAIGHT INTO THE CAMERA, BLACKING OUT THE IMAGE.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. POLICE CAR - MORNING

Regaining consciousness, Robert holds his aching head and squints to get his bearings. He bolts upright, realizing he's in a moving squad car. He turns to find Andrew beside him.

ROBERT  
(In a low tone)  
What happened?

ANDREW  
You blacked out.

Robert glances around and starts freaking out.

ROBERT  
Why are we in a police car? I didn't do anything.

ANDREW  
Just relax, man, you got mistaken for the guy that robbed that liquor store. But don't worry, I used my powers of persuasion to clear everything up.

ROBERT  
Where are we headed then?

ANDREW  
Their escorting us to school. Nice of 'em, isn't it?

ROBERT  
Tremendous. But it doesn't matter anymore, seeing as I'm already a half an hour late.

The police car comes to a halt.

POLICE MAN  
(Smiles at them)  
Here we are, sorry about  
the confusion.

Robert glances at Andrew.

ROBERT  
Well, time to face the  
music.

Robert and Andrew slowly get out of the car....  
and are instantly thunderstruck by what they  
confront.

EXT. SCHOOL - MORNING

Robert and Andrew discover what appears to be the  
entire student body milling about in front of the  
school.

ROBERT  
What's going on, why is  
everyone outside?

ANDREW  
Dude, I know as much as  
you do.

Robert dashes to a group of students.

ROBERT  
Why aren't you guys in  
class?

The student looking puzzled at Robert.

STUDENT #1  
Are you kidding? Didn't  
you hear?

ROBERT  
Hear what?

STUDENT #2  
Somebody called a bomb  
threat this morning.  
Looks like school's out  
for the day.

Robert's jaw drops. It's still hanging open as  
Andrew joins.

ANDREW

(Smiling)

What did I tell you? No  
problem.

THE END

## Characters List

1. Robert
2. Andrew
3. Lady
4. Gangster #1
5. Gangster #2
6. Gangster #3
7. Asian Store Owner
8. Police Man
9. Student #1
10. Student #2