

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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CONTEST / CONCURS (1982)

DAN PIȚA

OVERVIEW

AUTEUR Born in 1938 in Dorohoi, Romania, Dan Pița is one of the most gifted directors of the Romanian golden age of cinematography. He is the director of an impressive number of films, such as *Paso Doble* (1985), *November, the Last Ball* (1989), *Top Hotel* (1992), *Pepe and Fifi* (1994) and *Second Hand* (2005), to name just a few. In 1986, he was awarded Honorable Mention for *Paso Doble* at the Berlin Film Festival.

FILM *Contest* is one of the best movies by Pița and its cast is outstanding. *Contest* received several awards for best director and and honorary mention for Best Actor, Claudiu Bleonț (the Kid), at the ACIN Film Festival (1982). At the Costinești Film Festival, it received the awards for best director, best image and best music (1982) It also received the Omnitrix award at the New Delhi Film Festival (1982). The movie is a 96-minute drama sprinkled with inadvertent or dark humor. It criticizes the mindset of bureaucrats in Romania during communist rule.

BACKGROUND The film could be interpreted as a parable or metaphor on the beauty of morality and courage over the ugliness of petty motives, envy, opportunism and so forth. The former values are embodied by the Kid, while the latter are embodied by the other team members. Dan Pița shows the degradation of the human spirit under the rule of despotism, rigidity and nonsense. He highlights the fact that such a system brings out the worst in men, as we see in each of the characters in his movie, except for the Kid. The film forms part of the director's continued criticism of the communist government. Romania.

SYNOPSIS

A young man 20 years old – the Kid – enters a Scouts' skills challenge (inadvertently, as he was presumably trying to get rid of his pursuers). The team he joins is made up of working men and women who go on scouts' challenges every once in a while. The contestants are full of moral flaws and prejudices which show up in the development of the chain of events. First, a windstorm scatters poultry from a truck and they all go to help out but let the Kid do the hardest job. Then, a fight ensues between two of the contestants and we see the pettiness of their actions. After this, they come hear screams from a woman in the forest. None of them goes to the rescue, except for the Kid, who is, however, unable to find the woman. Then they come to a lake and none of them has the audacity to cross; instead, they ask the Kid to go into the lake and check if it is safe. The Kid does so and almost drowns himself. The next obstacle is a large and deep ditch that none of them has the courage to jump over. Again, they ask the Kid to do it first. He does so and manages to get across. One by one they all manage to cross to the other side. Then one of them disappears without a trace. They all conclude that he has fallen into a deep well and again, ask the Kid to go after him. He goes down and finds a depressed Mitică, who no longer wants to continue with the contest. The last problem is when Aristide enters a meditation-induced trance and they all think that he is dead. After this, they all arrive safe and sound at the camp, not without having blamed the Kid, who had done nothing but help them. Before they leave, they ask the Kid for one more favour – that he gather the flags left behind. They leave the camp without the Kid and the flags. When they reluctantly return, at the boss' insistence, dynamite explodes and probably kills the boss. In the meantime, the Kid has found the dead body of the woman who was screaming. He is very upset but takes the flags, leaves them with the contestants and carries on with his bike ride in the fog.

CHARACTERS

The Kid – a young man of about 20 years

The boss – the leader of the Scouts' team

Jenica – the leader's wife

Panati, Mitica, Vasile, Sandu, Aristide, Lavinia & Tatiana—members of the boss's team

Oana – a member of another team

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

The Kid

The Kid is the main character in the movie. He stands for courage, freedom and ethical principles. He is sensitive yet aware of human nature and nothing seems to surprise him. He is adventurous, not staying away from any danger, because he wants to cooperate and help the other team members.

Sensitive We can tell that the Kid is sensitive from the fact that he listens to classical music and from his way of helping the others. He likes all beautiful things and he does not hesitate to face danger when it comes to helping his colleagues. He understands the problems of the others such as the time when Mitică went down the well and he went after him.

Aware The Kid is also aware of many things, for instance, of the ways to tame snakes or to treat a sprained ankle. When a snake threatens the life of one of his colleagues, he takes it gently by its head and simply pushes it away. When Lavinia dislocates her ankle, he knows how to put the bone back in place. Moreover, he seems to understand human nature and the reasons behind his colleagues' irrational reactions.

Adventurous The kid is also adventurous. He is the one who chosen to face the danger first and he agrees at all times. First of all, he is the one looking to see where the woman's screams are coming from. Secondly, he is sent to test the depth of the lake by trying to walk through it. Thirdly, he is the one asked to jump over the ditch first, which he does, with success. Lastly, he goes down the deep well to rescue Mitică.

Cooperative The Kid is highly cooperative. He tries to help as much as he can and he is the one leading the expedition to a good end. He accomplishes all the tasks asked of him to do, he carries the biggest backpack, he rescues his colleagues and he manages to resolve conflicts.

Calm The Kid has a strange kind of calm. Even when he is judged publicly by Panait and others, he does not lose his temper; instead, he responds calmly, giving the best explanations he can, based on what he knows. The only time we see him lose his temper is when he discovers the dead body of the raped girl. On all other occasions, he is absolutely calm.

Mitică

Mitică is one of the most disengaged characters in the group. We see him becoming interested only when he listens to the Kid's music and when he finds the hen he will take care of until the end. He is an unhappy man, who does not seem to like the group or anyone else for that matter.

Disinterested Mitică is not interested in the competition itself, or in the struggle for power or leadership or in the race for supremacy. He is only interested in his hen, which he takes a lot of care of. He does not participate in the competition of who will be the leader and does not judge like the others do.

Unhappy Mitică is an unhappy man. When the Kid finds him in the well, he says he no loner wants to get out and or participate in the competition. He says he does not like anyone, not even the Kid, because he smells of sweat. Mitică is clearly depressed for reasons the director does not make available to us, but we can surmise that he is fed up with the political system he is subjected to.

Panait

Panait is the type of self-assured man, who is aware of the flaws in others, but is unaware of his own. Because of this, he is suspicious, as he thinks everyone, even the Kid, is like him.

Aware Panait is aware of his colleagues's flaws and uses them as ways of dominating or humiliating them. He is also aware that Lavinia is in love with him and takes advantage of this in order to have sexual intercourse with her. Although he is aware and mature, he makes the same mistakes the others make, such as the time when he picked on the Kid.

Suspicious Panait is suspicious and starts asking the Kid questions about his identity, his plans and his secrets. The Kid responds politely and gives exact answers but this does not prevent Panait from drilling him further. Because of his suspicions and jealousy, he says they should not go to save the Kid from the forest explosions.

Aristide

Aristide is the type [a stereotype] of an artistic bureaucrat. He is a counsellor, but he knows everything about plants and literature. He is a little effeminate and the director uses him to parody a certain type of bureaucrat who is sensitive, yet irresponsible.

Sensitive Aristide is more sensitive than the other bureaucrats in the group. He is never aggressive or violent and he takes the side of the Kid when it comes to rescuing him. He stops to smell the flowers and to listen to music, He enjoys everything artistic.

Irresponsible However, Aristide is also irresponsible. He begins a meditation exercise in the middle of the contest, when they were already running late, and falls into a trance. They all think he is dead and carry him in their arms for a few miles. He wakes up from his trance to say that meditation works wonders for him and that he feels like a newborn baby.

Lavinia

Lavinia is a friendly, positive, yet too trusting a woman. She is the lover of Panait. She is one of the few who takes the Kid's defense. She is also beautiful and assertive.

Friendly Lavinia is a friendly person. She gets along with everyone, women and men. She has no ounce of suspicion towards the Kid, unlike the others. She talks to him and defends him when he is judged by Panait (which only infuriates Panait further). She is open-minded and kind.

Trusting However, Lavinia is a bit too trusting. She trusts Panait's promises and sleeps with him again although she had broken up with him. She hopes that one day he will marry her and have many kids together, which is what he tells her when they are both targeted by the other members of the team.

Sandu

Sandu is the type of man who is cooperative, yet moody. He tries to do his best for the team, but he is constantly sabotaged by Vasile. Because of this, whenever Vasile is around, he becomes moody and even angry.

Cooperative Sandu is cooperative. Despite of his hard feelings for Vasile, he returns to him the compass which he had lost. He is also the more conciliatory of the two.

Moody Sandu is moody, especially when it comes to Vasile. He reproaches Vasile and does not give him the recommendation he needs. They often come to blows and the others have to separate them. Sandu is unstable because he is ambitious and emotive and gets easily offended.

Tatiana

Tatiana is a middle-aged woman in the group. She is cooperative and supportive. However, she is careless and thus jeopardizes the safety of the group.

Cooperative Tatiana takes the Kid's side when he is accused, as well as Mitică's when he is prevented from drinking the water he needs by Vasile. She says they should let Mitică drink all the water if he needs it. Tatiana works well with the team but she is driven by instincts.

Careless Tatiana is careless. She manages to eat all the group's food supplies (including the candy) well before they approach the finish line. When it comes to jumping the ditch, she says she is unable and that will stay behind and no longer participate in the challenge.

Vasile

Vasile is the type of Communist bureaucrat who is too serious and rigid. He tries to plan ahead and keep everything under his control, yet he lamentably fails.

Serious Vasile is extremely serious. He tries to impose on others through this seriousness but nobody listens to him. Rather, they all laugh at him. He typifies the Communist bureaucrat keen on implementing party policies.

Planner Vasile also sees himself as a great planner and leader of the expedition. He hangs onto his compass as if it represented the only true way to the destination. When Sandu mocks him for this, he gets mad again and gets into a fight with Sandu.

The boss

The boss is a man with a kind heart but is totally disorganized. He is cheated on by his wife, and except for Vasile, nobody listens to him. He has no sense of direction and manages to get the team lost when he decides which way to take.

Generous The boss is generous. He offers to welcome the Kid into his home after the contest is over, realizing how much good the Kid had done for his team. Moreover, when the Kid is left behind, he is adamant on going back to the forest, despite many protests. This generosity costs him his life, however, as, when he goes to find the Kid, he gets caught in an explosion.

Disorganized The boss is disorganized. He is unable to control his team or to find the way to the destination. Because of this, everyone does as they please and this is why disaster after disaster happens.

THEMES

SOCIETY

Class Class is one of the most important themes in the movie. The director parodies the Romanian upper working class during Communism. The movie is, in many respects, a derisive portrayal of this class. Through his characters, Pița showed the pettiness, carelessness, lack of empathy and disloyalty of people who have been, at the time, party members. The boss, however, is an exception to this rule. Moreover, he highlighted their opportunism, fixation with rules and arbitrary impositions and general ineptitude. However, he mollified this impression through some comedic acts by great Romanian actors, which shows a more humane face of the characters; in the end, we can say that with all their foibles and flaws, they are only human. The fact that he had his characters participate in a competition shows the highly competitive nature of people at the time, who walked over dead bodies in order to reach their goals. In the contest, the worst and the best parts of the characters are revealed – they are shown in their negative, but also in their endearing features. Class is, as it is with Communism, a struggle, and each of the participants in the competition – with the exception of the Kid – strives to reach the destination, that is, get to the top.

Language Language is also parodied in the movie. During communism, there was a special type of language, called 'wooden language', which was peculiar to the party members and activists. Wooden language is overly formal language, devoid of content and meaning. This language is used profusely in the movie, in particular by Vasile, the boss, and Aristide. Vasile uses stock phrases/wooden language referring to discipline and organization – '*discipline, comrades*' – and keeps referencing rules and regulations. He is uncompromising and his behavior mirrors the language he uses. The boss also utilizes 'wooden language', but to a lesser extent than Vasile. Aristide uses proverbs and stock phrases too. He knows many Latin quotations and employs them liberally. Most of the characters in the movie use these stock phrases and expressions. Through the rigidity and ridiculousness of this language, the director shows that the more pompous the words, the more inept the ideas they transmitted. The wooden

language in the movie also symbolizes the rule of stupid people over more gifted ones, which appears in the movie in the guise of the struggle for power of the characters.

JUSTICE

Crime The theme of crime appears in the movie with the desperate cries of the woman that the contestants hear in the forest. The mystery is resolved at the end when the Kid finds the dead body of a woman, probably a rape and murder. The reactions of the contestants to the cries in the woods reveal character traits. Vasile, for instance claims that it was a *Fata Morgana* ('illusion'), that they were hearing things. The others say that they have heard the cries. However, the only one who investigates is the Kid. He, nonetheless, finds nothing and returns. A crime in the innocuous atmosphere of a Scouts contest comes as a shock to the viewer used to laughing and participating with the contestants in their mundane adventures. The crime horrifies and saddens the Kid, who screams out of pain and frustration. The other ones have already left with the bus, leaving the Kid behind despite the dangers of explosions. The presence of crime indicates the director wanted to show the grim face of humanity, in spite of the jocular mood of the film.

POLITICS

Leadership The struggle for winning the contest reaches a climax when the contestants struggle for leadership. It is when they are in the difficulty of jumping over a deep ditch that this struggle for leadership surfaces. First, fearing for their lives, they ask the Kid to jump, and he succeeds wonderfully. Then, little by little and with great efforts, the other ones jump. The last remaining contestant who has not yet jumped is the boss. However, given his position, he musters all his strength and, helped by the Kid, reaches the other end. In the meantime, four of the contestants and co-workers decide to throw the dice on who will be the leader should the boss not be able to jump the ditch. Before that, they try to appoint someone but no one is deemed to have enough qualities for the position. This decision to quickly choose another leader and leave the old one behind is an ugly face of the contestants, showing that selfishness and desire for power. The real leader is also parodied as his position is eroded by his wife's cheating on him (and everyone knowing it) and by his low physical and organizational abilities. The real leader of the group is the Kid, but he is contested by everyone because they know nothing about him, probably due to envy.

Conflict Conflict is the driving force of the action in the movie, appearing almost every ten minutes. There are the dissensions between the Vasile and Sandu, which are constant and grow in intensity. There is Mitică's inner conflict, when he goes depressed and wants to abandon everything. There is Aristide's faux-death, which throw the contestants into a tantrum. There are also the incapacities and limitations of the members of the team as they are faced with obstacles they cannot surmount. There is also the team's turning against the Kid under Panait's direction. All of these conflicts, small or great, bespeak an inner misunderstanding and mistrust among people. Pița probably wanted to hint at the general air of distrust in communist Romania, when nobody could trust anybody. These conflicts become a tragedy when the boss dies in the explosion. Because of the lack of communication and general distrust, a man loses his life and another (the Kid) is put in danger. And we can wonder that if the team had believed they heard the woman's cries and had gone to rescue her, a life might have been saved.

Freedom Freedom appears symbolically in the movie through the character of the Kid. At the beginning of the film, we see him cycling on wet pavement and looking behind, probably being followed by someone. A few moments later, a skinny white horse appears in the picture, accompanying the Kid. The movie ends as the Kid cycles his way past the contestants and through the smoke coming from the explosions in the forest. Thus, the Kid symbolizes freedom from arbitrary rules, from 'wooden language', from vicissitudes and moral flaws. The director subtly hinted at those people who lived during Communism who were ethical and free, unlike the ones who were affiliated with the Communist Party (which the other contestants epitomize). While the first stayed away from rigidity and nonsense rules coming from those in power, the latter obeyed and followed them blindly, just as Vasile, for instance, does. Of course, Pița could not spell out all these issues clearly as the movie was filmed during Communism, but we should note his courage in showing them even symbolically and subtly. The Kid is a free man and remains a free man until the end because he is ethical, courageous and empathic.

RELATIONSHIP

Disloyalty Disloyalty is also present in the movie. It appears as the disloyalty of the contestants to their leader and boss, among one another and in Jenica's cheating on the boss. None of the bureaucrats are truly loyal to one another. When something bad happens to one of them, no one will go and look for him or take care of him. For instance, when Mitică disappears all of a sudden, all the contestants ask the Kid to go after him into the deep well. Some of them fight all the time, like Vasile and Sandu. They are even ready to tell one another secrets everyone knows but nobody dares name. They are also disloyal to the Kid, who has done nothing but help them all the time. They leave him behind when they leave the camp and some of them even suggest not going back to save him. Vasile proposes, during their hike, that they get rid of him somehow. To top that off, there is Jenica's disloyalty to her husband, the boss. Jenica pretends to be ill so that she can avoid participating in the contest and remain in the caravan with her lover. Everybody knows about Jenica's indiscretions, but they only dare allude to them. Disloyalty seems to be the rule among the group of scouts and co-workers.

Attraction Attraction appears as the love affair between Panait and Lavinia. Although they had been together for six years, Panait had not proposed and Lavinia had broken their relationship. However, Panait keeps on chasing Lavinia until the latter gives in. The couple get lost for a while in the woods in order to make love. Everyone realizes what they are doing. The film shows how women were duped by men into sleeping with them at the time. However, these same men rarely married the women or became engaged to them. Panait will probably not commit after resuming his physical relationship with Lavinia. In the movie, the issue of marriage is debated by some of the contestants, and the boss concludes that if you are rich, you can hope to get married quickly; if not, you might end up a spinster. Lavinia always defends the Kid and it is a pity she should fall prey to her attraction for Panait, who probably just uses her for sexual pleasure.

Marriage Marriage is presented in the movie through the relationship between the boss and Jenica. The latter cheats on the boss and everyone seems to know about it, the boss included. Marital relationships seem to be based on interest rather than love, and love is sought elsewhere, outside of the marriage. Jenica invents an illness so that she can remain and spend time with her lover after her husband has left on the expedition. Marriage also appears in the guise of the discussion between the two women on the expedition, Lavinia and Tatiana. Tatiana tells Lavinia that it is hard to find a man to marry if you are not rich, saying that she should use some of the plants gathered by Aristide to charm a man into marrying her. Although she has many good qualities, Lavinia is not able to convince Panait to marry her. He probably uses her just for sexual pleasure because she is not well-positioned in society. The picture we get of marriage from this movie is a discouraging one, lacking love, empathy, affection and respect. Love and sex are sought after outside marriage.

Sexuality Sexuality is present in the movie in various guises – Jenica's infidelity, the rape of the woman in the forest and the sex scenes between Lavinia and Panait. Jenica has sex with another man and, we can infer from the characters' words, she used to have sex with other men in the past. However, Jenica flaunts the ideal wife image in front of everyone. In the apparently casual and innocuous atmosphere of the contest, a rape happens and the contrast between the contest and this act is such that we are shocked when the Kid finds the young woman's raped corpse in the woods. The action in the movie is interspersed with scenes of sex between Lavinia and Panait, who do not shy from making sex in the forest. In all three instances, there is a gap between appearance and sordid reality, showing that people who appear to be civil human beings can be sexual predators driven by primary instincts.

SCENES

A YOUNG MAN RIDES A BIKE A young man rides a bike on the wet pavement. He keeps looking behind, as though someone were following him. For a while, he rides alongside a white skinny horse. He then arrives at an enclosure and enters it through the fog. He has arrived in the middle of a scouts' skills challenge of working men and women.



THE KID MEETS OANA The young man (the Kid) tries to find his way and, in the process, he meets Oana, a woman from the contest. They introduce each other and then Oana asks him if he is there for the contest. He denies it but Oana says she will not tell anyone.



PANAIT HITS ON LAVINIA Panait, one of the contestants, follows a female contestant in the wood. She is just getting dressed. He goes to her and touches her back but she pushes him back. He merely smiles.



THE KID IS RECRUITED FOR THE CONTEST The team leader's wife, Jenica, says she feels ill so she cannot participate in the contest. The leader has to find someone else, or his team cannot compete. He sees the Kid and immediately recruits him, although he knows nothing about him nor the Kid anything about the contest.



THE CONTESTANTS SET ON THEIR WAY The contest begins and everyone is prepared to go. They have their backpacks, their food and water supplies, their raincoats and their compass. They take to the forest in a line and seem fairly organized.



JENICA CHEATS ON HER HUSBAND No sooner are the contestants gone from the camp, than Jenica enters the bus with her lover. He has prepared cold beers for the occasion. They kiss and have sex shamelessly in the bus. Jenica had lied when she said that she had felt ill.



THE CONTESTANTS RUN INTO A POULTRY CRISIS All of a sudden, hens begin to appear in the way of the contestants. They soon realize that a truck filled with poultry had got stuck in the woods and the hens have flown from it. They go to help the truck driver to gather back his hens. Mitică keeps one hen for himself.



A CONFLICT EXPLODES BETWEEN VASILE AND SANDU Sandu is always contesting Vasile's decisions. Vasile claims that Sandu wants to put him in a bad light. Sandu denies this and a quarrel ensues between the two. Sandu reproaches Vasile not giving him a much-needed recommendation. They soon come to blows.



MYSTERIOUS MEN APPEAR As the group is advancing, they meet a group of men dressed in black who seem to be watching over a state secret. We see them keeping guard AT one of the areas in the forest where nobody is allowed to enter. They are inflexible and have an ominous look about them. They remind the group that they have to finish the competition by 7.30 PM.



THE KID ALMOST GETS DROWNED IN A LAKE The hikers reach a lake and are unsure whether it is safe or not to cross it. They ask the Kid to go in and see. He obeys and, as he gets to the middle of the lake, starts to go under. The group throw him a hook on a rope and rescue him.



A WOMAN SCREAMS IN THE WOODS The hikers are back on their way when, all of a sudden, they hear screams from a woman somewhere in the forest. They wonder whether they have heard real screams or just an illusion. While they are debating the problem, the Kid goes on his own to find the screaming woman. However, he returns alone as he has not been able to find her.



THE CONTESTANTS HAVE TO JUMP OVER A DEEP DITCH Another obstacle faces the contestants: they are stopped in their tracks by a large and deep ditch that they have to jump over. Again, they are all afraid of doing this and ask the Kid to do it first. He jumps onto the other side without problems, and one by one all the other ones follow. The last one is the boss who is very afraid of jumping but, helped by the Kid, manages to cross over eventually.



THE CONTESTANTS DEBATE WHO WILL BE THE LEADER While the boss was having misgivings about jumping or not, four of the members of the team try to decide who will be the next leader, should the boss fail to jump. First, they try to nominate one of them, but none seems to have enough qualities. Then they decide to throw the dice.



MITICĂ HAS A BREAKDOWN The group keeps on walking and Mitică stops to eat fruit from a tree. He tells the group to keep going and that he will catch up with them. However, he does not return and the group goes after him. They find the hen but Mitică is nowhere to be found. The kid is asked to go down a deep well where they think Mitică has fallen. The Kid finds Mitică, who says that he does not want to return. Eventually, the Kid persuades him and the two return safe and sound.



VASILE IS IGNORED BY EVERYONE Another dispute breaks out between Vasile and Sandu. Vasile accuses Sandu of stealing his compass and of trying to sabotage him all the time. Nobody listens to him, not even when he begs them to take his defense.



THE WHOLE GROUP QUARREL After the fight between Vasile and Sandu, all the other members of the group have a fight. For instance, the boss accuses Lavinia of being sexually loose and Lavinia, in her turn, alludes to Jenica's cheating on the boss. They all are told off in one way or another in this scene.



PANAIT DRILLS THE KID In the midst of the heated discussions, Panait turns against the Kid. He starts asking him questions--who he is, what his name is, what does he do and what he has heard or seen. His questions are like a police interrogation, but the Kid keeps his calm and answers politely and with dignity.



ARISTIDE FALLS INTO A TRANCE After the interrogation, the group sets out again, save for Aristide who sits immobile. They go to take him from there, but when they touch his shoulder, Aristide falls on his side. They all think he is dead and carry him in their arms for a while. All of a sudden, Aristide wakes up and explains he has been in a trance induced by meditation. Everyone is upset with him.



JENICA GREETES THE CONTESTANTS BACK As the contestants return to the camp, Jenica is still with her lover in the bus. She rushes out, hugging her husband and whispering sweet words to him and congratulating each and every contestant. They all look at her suspiciously as they know what she has been up to.



THE CONTESTANTS LEAVE THE CAMP After this, the boss tells the Kid to go gather all the contest flags from the forest. Forgetting that the Kid is in the forest, they all leave the camp on their bus. When they realize they have forgotten the flags and left the Kid behind, some of them are reluctant to go back and others are more worried about the flags than the Kid. Very few insist that they return for the sake of the Kid.



THE BOSS GOES OUT TO RESCUE THE KID One of the firmest defenders of the Kid is the boss, who insists on returning despite his wife's and the driver's argument that they do not. Finally, they return and when they approach the forest, the boss gets out of the bus to look for the Kid. Suddenly, explosions are seen and heard just where the boss must have been.



THE KID FINDS A DEAD WOMAN As he was gathering the flags, the Kid stumbles upon the dead body of a woman. She is naked and her legs are spread out, probably a victim of rape and murder. When he realizes she is the woman he had heard screaming, he starts screaming himself.



THE KID RIDES AWAY IN THE FOG As the contestants are trying to see through the fog, the Kid appears riding his bike and carrying their flags. The Kid throws the flags at their feet without stopping, does not say a word, and carries on. The contestants follow him through the fog one by one, until they all disappear.

