

# Stakeout

(Adventure) (1988)

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## Major Characters

Chris Leece.....Richard Dreyfuss  
A police detective in Seattle, Washington.

Bill Reimers.....Emilio Estevez  
Chris' partner, who is another Seattle police detective.

Maria McGuire.....Madeleine Stowe  
A very attractive woman, who Chris and Bill are assigned to protect.

Stick Montgomery.....Aidan Quinn  
Maria's violent ex-boyfriend, who escapes from prison.

## Plot Summary

Stick, who is a ruthless murderer, escapes from prison. Afterward, Chris and Bill are assigned to keep a "stakeout" on Maria, because the police think that Stick may try to go back and see Maria at her apartment. A stakeout is a secret surveillance of a person or building, usually done by the police.

During the stakeout, Chris gets to know Maria, although Maria doesn't know he's a policeman. She thinks he is a telephone repairman, which is what he told her that he was. Over time, Chris and Maria develop a romantic relationship, which violates one of the most basic rules of police surveillance; Do not get involved with the people that you are spying on. As Chris falls in love, he decides to ignore this rule, which complicates things when Stick does in fact return to Maria's house. Soon, Chris and Bill find themselves in a desperate effort to save Maria's life, as well as their own...

## Words and Expressions and that You may not know

***Stick the murderer escapes from prison,  
as Chris and Bill search for other criminals.***

Yeah, tell me about it!

A good expression which means that you completely agree, usually because you have even more experience than the speaker, concerning the subject being discussed.

What did I tell you about screwing around with my books?

"To screw around with" something generally means to play with it, though in this case it refers to trying to secretly change official records.

Piss off! Fuck You!

Two very crude and classic insults. "Piss off" is much more British.

Doc, keep your shoes in place.

"Doc" is colloquial and short for doctor. Here, the sentence means "Doc, stay where you are."

Do you think its human to poke perfectly healthy prisoners full of thorazine?

"To poke" is to push with a finger, or in this case, a shot (needle). "Thorazine" is a well known medicine given to people with mental and emotional problems (including prisoners, who may not want it).

A side order of sausage.

Food that needs to be specially ordered in addition to the main entree, such as a salad or French fries, or in this case, sausages.

Savor the qualities of the cuisine and the smell.

"To savor" is a great verb meaning to taste or smell with great pleasure.

For Christ's sake.

A common way to start a sentence in order to express emotion such as anger or frustration (used by everybody, including Christians, Muslims and even atheists).

You take the dock.

Platforms on the water where goods are loaded off ships. In this case, the sentence means "You go and search on the docks."

I picked up the check, so you take the fish.

"To pick up" a check is to pay for it:

Oh god.

Another general expression of anger, frustration, or in this case, total fear, said by the religious and non-religious alike.

Nobody in cuffs, here?

Short for "handcuffs," the metal objects used by police that are wrapped around the wrists of prisoners in order to restrain them.

Somebody got their ass kicked.

"To kick someone's ass" is colloquial and crude for beat up, or physically hurt by punching and kicking" (Note here that it is used in the passive tense).

Captain wants to see you A.S.A.P.

A common way to say as soon as possible.

Wait a minute, chuckles.

A nick name for somebody who laughs a lot ("To chuckle" is to laugh quietly to oneself).

***Chris and Bill are assigned to a stakeout:  
The ex-girlfriend of the escaped convict.***

What the hell happened to you?

A classic colloquial addition to any "Wh question" that expresses such emotions as anger, surprise, etc.

Regional FBI headquarters.

The "Federal Bureau of Investigation," which is the police force used by the federal (national) government.

Right on!

A very 1960s way of expressing approval of whatever has just been said.

He should've had the chair, but he had a good attorney.

Here, a reference to "the electric chair," a favorite way to kill people sentenced to die for their crimes.

He just busted out of Stonehearth.

"To bust out of" a prison is to escape from it.

We're setting up a half-dozen stakeouts.

"To set-up" something is to make or organize it, and a "stakeout" is a secret police surveillance of a building or person.

We're going to have to move on this quick.

"To take immediate action in response to what has happened.."

There's something a little ripe, here.

The word for fruit that is ready to eat, but used here sarcastically to mean unfair or ridiculous.

Low priority on some shit detail.

Note that "shit" used as an adjective directly before any noun is a common and crude way to criticize the noun in question. In this case, the "detail" refers to a police assignment or job.

I'm a cop, not a security guard.

A very common colloquial word for policeman.

What an asshole!

Common and very crude for jerk, idiot, bastard, etc.

I don't want to hear that kind of crap.

Another crude but very useful word for lies, nonsense, etc.

Don't bullshit me

A great crude and colloquial noun and verb: "To bullshit somebody" is to tell them lies or nonsense, or perhaps to try and manipulate them.

Lick my left one, buddy.

Apparently, this is a variation of "kiss my ass," which is another way to say "fuck you." I presume "my left one" is the left cheek of his derriere, though I've never heard it used this way. ("Buddy" is a word that means friend, which is often said precisely when you mean the opposite!)

They're slobs.

A "slob" is a very messy or dirty person (Also known as a pig!).

Paul did all the pissing!

"To piss" is a critical slang verb meaning to urinate.

I don't give a shit if you don't like to date.

The classic colloquial and vulgar way to say "I don't care."  
"To date" is to go out socially, usually with somebody for whom you may have romantic intentions.

If you fuck this up, I'm going to take your nuts and put them through the shredder.

An ominous sentence!: "To fuck up" is a common and crude way to say to do badly, or to fail at. It's safer for you to say screw up. "Nuts" are a common slang word for testicles, and a "shredder" is a machine that "shreds," which is to rip paper into tiny pieces.

Home sweet home.

A common way that people refer to their own homes.

I'm freezing my butt off.

Colloquial and a bit crude for "I'm very cold."

***Chris and Bill settle in to the apartment across the street from Maria's.***

I'm striking the captain from the Christmas list.

"To strike someone" from a list is to take them off that list, which is to say, here, "I'm not getting him a Christmas present."

Poor bastard.

Usually "bastard" is a crude insult, but in this expression, it shows a touch of sympathy for a person in a lot of trouble.

The 16th President? I'll give you a hint.

A "hint" is an important word for a small bit of information that will help a person solve a problem or answer a question.

The rocks in the socks.

Bill's expression, but its never used: "She's come home."

God, she's cute.

A great adjective: Not necessarily beautiful or even very pretty, but perhaps attractive and charming.

Winston, take a break.

Usually this means "take a rest," though here it's used to tell the dog to go to the bathroom.

What a dump.

A Common word for a very messy, dirty and unpleasant house or apartment (short for "garbage dump").

Cute, very cute. Amateurs!

When used sarcastically, "cute" can also mean anything from "pathetic" to "you guys are such idiots." An "amateur" is a person who is a beginner, without much experience.

Are you kidding me?

"To kid" someone is to tease or make fun of them, although when used in a question, the person could be asking "are you lying to me?"

So the answer to the quiz is...

"A quiz" is a small test that teachers often give their students.

Pull the shades.

A type of curtain used to cover windows in order to keep light out.

Did you crack the seal?

One not so common way of saying "have you started to open the bottle of wine?"

We get the phone by tonight. Yippie!

An old-fashioned exclamation to express happiness.

I'm going to be reincarnated as a judge.

"To be reincarnated" means to be reborn in another life.

You figure she still has your money?

"To figure" is a common colloquial way to say think.

***Chris meets Maria, posing as the phone repairman,  
and successfully places electronic bugs on her phone.***

Yeah, my phone's dead.

Any appliance or machine that is "dead" does not work

Five days, max.

Often used as a shot way to say "maximum."

Bingo!

An old fashioned way to say "exactly!"

Not bad for an old fart.

A crude way of referring to an old person (A "fart" is the act of passing gas after you've eaten too much).

And now a word from our sponsors.

A cliché that television announcers use to introduce advertisements.

Stop screwing around, for Christ's sake

"To screw around" means to fool around or do something in a lighthearted or unserious manner. "For Christ's sake" is an interesting way to show anger or other emotion.

If you blow this, and we get busted, I'll kill you.

"To blow" something is a very common way to say to do it badly, or screw it up. (A very widely used phrase is "Don't blow it!"). If you are "busted," you are caught doing something wrong or illegal.

Jesus Christ!

A curious but very common way to express everything from anger to surprise.

Can you get bail for my brother?

In this case, "bail" is the money a judge demands before a person in jail will be released while waiting for his trial.

I was putting in a bug.

Common term for a secret device planted in telephones that allows the police or others to overhear phone conversations (As well as, of course, the common term for insects and software).

Going through her drawers is not putting in a god damn bug!

"Drawers" are the containers in desks or furniture that holds things such as clothes.

This is the fed's party.

Reference to the federal government

I'm not going to get my ass canned for illegal procedure!

"To get one's ass canned" is a colloquial way to say to be officially punished. "Illegal procedure" refers to the violation of official rules that all police must obey in order to protect the Constitutional rights of American citizens.

I'm making you nervous?! That's a hoot.

A sarcastic way to say that something is ridiculous. (Literally, a "hoot" is the sound that an owl makes).

Sometimes I get so mad I can wipe out a whole planet.

"To wipe out" something is a powerful phrasal verb which means to destroy.

Take this down. We have something to check out.

"To take something down" is to write it down.

"To check out" something is to investigate or research it.

He has a buddy who works on the docks.

Another word for friend, but it is often used sarcastically.

Holy shit! Get out of the fucking house!

A truly interesting colloquial phrase that expresses emotion such as great fear or surprise.

**Come on, Chris!**

The most versatile and widely used phrasal verb in English. Here, meaning "be serious."

I want you to run a make on him.

Colloquial police slang for "investigate him."

Find out any priors.

Police slang for prior criminal convictions (in a criminal record).

Yeah, and one bullet came from the grassy knoll.

For Americans, the words "grassy knoll" always connote the assassination of John Kennedy, since he was shot in Dallas, Texas as his car passed a grassy knoll ("a small hill").

Earl Warren and Gerald Ford just lied?

References to two famous Americans who served on "The Warren Commission," which investigated Kennedy's assassination (Ford later became President, from 1974-1977).

Those bastards left us a god damn dog turd.

"Bastard" is a crude word for an unpleasant or mean person.

"God damn" as an adjective is a vulgar way to show anger or other emotion. A "dog turd" is a more formal way to literally say dog shit.

Doughnuts? :: Why not, we're cops.

In the US, police are famous for eating doughnuts while working.

***Chris and Maria meet by accident in a store, and she invites him up for dinner.***

My bike has a stupid flat.

In this case, a flat tire.

What the hell.

A colloquial way to say "OK, why not?"

Where are my doughnuts, you prick.

A very crude insult ("prick" is vulgar slang for penis).

Note the use of "you" before any noun can intensify an insult.

I hate being nice. It's a curse, like "medium."

"A curse" is a period of evil misfortune or bad luck.

Here, "medium" means average, or one who is not exceptional.

I've always wanted to be bad.

In very colloquial English (particularly Black English), "bad" is good.

"Bad" isn't all its cracked up to be.

An excellent expression: If something "isn't all its cracked up to be," it isn't as great as people think it is.

I'd settle for a little "nice"

"To settle for" something means that one would be satisfied with it.

For crying out loud!

A somewhat old fashioned way to express frustration or other emotion.

It's a big deal in Latina culture.

Something that is "a big deal" is important or widely discussed.

Skeleton.

The internal structure (bones) of a body.

Now, I've got a full graveyard.

Another word for "cemetery."

Honey, I'm home.

The most common three words that the average American yells into the house upon returning from a day at work.

I bumped into her at the god damn store.

"To bump into" somebody is to meet them by accident.

Glazed doughnut, oreos.

"Glazed" doughnuts are covered with a type of liquid sugar (truly delicious). "Oreos" are a very famous brand of cookie.

**Give me a break!**

A classic and very common expression meaning everything from "stop being ridiculous" (as here), to "Please be nice to me."

She told me her brother was in jail and I thought it was a lead.

In the right context, a "lead" is a clue or piece of information that will help the police find what they are looking for.

I'd appreciate it if you not act like a walking hard-on while we work together!

A "hard-on" is a slang term for a (sexual) erection.

Succinctly put.

A nice way to say "well said."

That's hardly worth rubbing people out for.

"To rub out" someone is gangster slang meaning to kill.

***Chris helps Maria's brother get out of jail, and then helps save her from the violent husband of a friend. He then starts to fall in love with her.***

This girl's father has **got it in for me**.

Another grammatically complex phrasal verb worth your time:  
If someone "has it in" for you, they are trying to make your life as difficult as possible.

Why did you hot wire the car?

"To hot wire" a car usually means to steal it, by manipulating its electric wires in order to start it.

I want to know what kind of guy you are before I get you out.

Here, meaning "before I get you released from jail."

Mess with me, and you're right back in.

"To mess with somebody" is to mistreat, abuse or try and lie to them.

Deal!

"Agreement." This is a quick way to say "It's a deal and I agree."

What rock did they find you under?

A clever insult ("You look like a lizard that came from under a rock").

Seems they got anxious and they blew their cover.

If the police are pretending to be students but they "blow their cover," this means that other people find out who they really are.

No funny stuff.

"Don't do anything you shouldn't."

Let's get the hell out of here!

Very common and colloquial for "Let's leave now."

The recorder is totally shot, so I have to get a new one.

If any type of machine is "shot," it's broken and probably not repairable.

How much longer, man?

"Man" is often added at the end of sentences for no particular reason!

This carburetor sucks.

If something "sucks," this simply means that it is very bad. This is a crude but widely used slang verb.

There's something we have to get straight here.

"To make perfectly clear to everybody."

I got great taste in men.

Noted here to show one can have "great taste" in more than just food or clothes.

Don't be such a woos.

A very colloquial word for "coward."

I heard the sizzling behind you.

"To sizzle" is to make the noise that meat will make when it is put in a very hot frying pan.

Are you a psychic or something?

A "psychic" is person who can predict the future (or so they claim).

Just because you're a little in trouble doesn't mean I'm going to let you off the hook.

"To let somebody off the hook" is to let them go, or to let them get away without being punished.

Those bastards! I smell a rat!

An interesting way to say "I suspect somebody is doing something wrong or illegal."

They're up to something.

"They're doing something, but they won't say what."

Son-of-a-bitch!

A crude insult, but often shouted to express anger, pain or great surprise (as here).

Cover me!

"Protect me" (in this case, with a gun)

Who the fuck are you?

Grammatically useless and very crude, but added to sentences in order to show intensified emotion.

Thinks he can barge in?

"To barge in to" a room or house is to enter quickly without asking.

Put your ass in that chair.

A crude and abusive way to say "sit down."

Yeah, I was kind of out of it.

If somebody is "out of it," this means that they are not thinking clearly, perhaps because of drugs or alcohol, or just from being very tired.

I'm in over my head.

If somebody is "in over their head," they are involved in something that is too difficult or complex for them to understand or do well in.

Like a rash?

A "rash" is reddish outbreak on the skin.

***Chris starts to learn the dangers of being in love  
with the person you're supposed to be spying on.***

Pink hat and shawl.

A type of head covering or hat.

Did we practice safe sex?

The term for sex with condoms, popularized since the 1980s (Note the use of "the royal we," used sarcastically and not uncommonly in place of the plural "you").

That's the last fucking straw.

"The straw that broke the camel's back" is a common expression referring to the last of many acts which finally causes a definitive reaction or outcome.

Break it off or get reassigned.

"To break off" a relationship is to end it.

I'm not going down with you!

"I will not be punished for your stupid actions."

You used to be a hell of a cop.

A common expression functioning as an adjective, which means great.

Get your shit together.

A cruder version of "get your act together," which is a way to tell someone to start behaving appropriately and do what it takes to get their life working well.

***The police finally catch up with Montgomery, but after a long car chase, Montgomery is not as dead as the police think he is.***

Bacon on the left.

A crude reference to the police, who are sometimes called pigs by those who are very hostile to them (Bacon is a type of pork that is popular for breakfast).

Just **hang in there!**

A very common way to say "try to hold on and survive."

It's not over until its over.

A cliché popularized by a famous baseball coach, meaning things can change until the game is declared officially finished.

Were blowing this pop stand.

"To blow this popsicle stand" is one way to say "leave this insignificant and boring place." A pop stand sells soda pop, whereas a popsicle stand clearly sells popsicles (frozen fruit desserts), but the idea is the same.

The car ended up in the river and nobody came out.

One way of saying that there were no survivors.

A pat on the back, job well done, next case.

Bill's summary of what happens after a case is completed: A pat on the back is the way somebody might physically say "job well done."

You're one lucky **s.o.b.**

Common abbreviation for "son-of-a-bitch," which in this case is not used as an insult.

I thought it would be you that would **screw up.**

"To screw up" something is to do it badly. An important phrasal verb.

***After Chris confesses his identity, Stick soon appears at Maria's house, and thus the true adventure begins.***

I can't believe the size of the hole I dug for myself.

A "hole" is one way to refer to big or numerous problems.

I'm a detective.

A person, who investigates crimes and other things, usually working for a police force or other government agency.

I'm staking out the ex-girlfriend of an escaped convict.

A common term for person convicted of a crime who has spent time in prison. Often called a "con."

Take a fucking walk!

Very crude for "leave" (even without "fucking," its considered a very aggressive way of speaking).

What are you doing bothering my old lady?

A true idiot's way to refer to a girlfriend or wife. Don't use this!

She found out that I was violating my parole.

"To violate" is to abuse, or in this case, to ignore or act against. Prisoners released from prison "on parole" must still agree to certain conditions, like not leaving an area, or reporting to a parole officer.

What kind of candy-ass crime did you do?

A crude but funny adjective for insignificant.

Did you do time?

"Did you serve time in prison?"

Wally Wally

The name of the prison where Chris tells Stick he did time.

What was he in for?

"What crime did he commit?"

The reports of my demise have been greatly exaggerated.

A very technical word for death. This sentence is a famous line popularized by the American writer Mark Twain.

What the fuck is going on?

A crude but common question. "What's happening?" is safer.

The last people I trust are ex-cons.

A "con" is short for convict. An ex-con is a person who has been released from prison.

What's the deal with this guy?

Here, meaning "What does he want?"

One minute you're a god, and the next a scum-sucking pig.

"Scum" is filth or waste matter, and often used as a pejorative adjective or noun. Still, this is a somewhat ridiculous insult.

Drive, sucker!

A "sucker" is often a fool, though in this context, it can mean asshole, jerk, etc.

I'm killing them because that guys  
a cop and the other was inside you.

A reference to sexual intercourse that if said in the right context, could be romantic (though here it's just obnoxious).

What's the matter pal? Chicken?

"Pal" is a word for friend, but as here, is often used sarcastically.

A "chicken" is a common word for a person who is afraid, or a coward.

When I get better, I'm going to break off your legs.

"To break off" is a more precise way to say cut-off, or simply remove.

You're dust.

"You're in big trouble."

What a boner.

In this case, a sarcastic way to refer to a stupid person, though it is usually a slang word for a (sexual) erection.

# Stakeout

## Some Possible Questions for ESL Class Discussion

1. For a movie that was trying to be a comedy, it seemed to have an awful lot of pretty intense violence; Did this bother you, or do think it made the movie more interesting?
2. Did Chris act professionally as a police officer, or was he doing things that he should be disciplined for?
3. What were the most interesting relationships in this film?
4. Would you want to be a police detective? Why? Why not?