

IN THE CUSTODY OF STRANGERS
(formerly "Forty Days For Danny")

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FORTY DAYS FOR DANNY

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

THE SCREEN IS BLACK. Hear FINGER-SNAP, CLAP. MAIN TITLE. FINGER-SNAP, CLAP; FINGER-SNAP, CLAP. TITLE CARD. FINGER-SNAP, CLAP; FINGER-SNAP, CLAP; FINGER-SNAP, CLAP; faster and faster as TITLES RUN, the SCREEN LIGHTENING gradually on the hands, capable, skin youthful, unmarked, ANGLE WIDENING as TITLES END to reveal:

1 INT. CRANE CAB - DANNY CALDWELL - DAY 1

Sixteen years old, big, good-looking, hair tousled, his face intent as he stares through the misted window of the cab, elbows on his knees, never missing a beat of the hand jive. KAREN DEWAARD watches him from the other bucket seat. Sixteen, blonde, no makeup on her fresh, pretty face, her expression concerned, vaguely irritated as:

KAREN

Stop doing that! I can't think.

DANNY

So don't think.

She reaches out, covering his hands with her own:

KAREN

Danny, I don't like it any more'n you do, but you're talking crazy, there's no way we...

DANNY

(overlap)

There is a way! We just gotta figure it out. We got friends, we know people, we can find a place...

KAREN

Where?

DANNY

What about Laurie, she's got three bedrooms, or... or Mr. West, he said I could have his spare room, remember he said that last year...?

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

KAREN

(overlap)

That was for you, not you and me...

DANNY

(not hearing her)

... or we could rent a place, yeah,
that'd be good, doesn't have to be
a big place, just a coupla rooms,
we could get somethin' bigger later...

KAREN

Rent a place? Where we gonna get
the money?

DANNY

I'll get a job...!

KAREN

What job! Danny, there are no jobs!
The mills are all closed up and
there are no jobs and that's why my
folks're moving! Danny? Danny!

He has wrenched open the cab door, is scrambling out.

2 EXT. KINGSTON STEEL - DAY

2

Danny is down from the cab, shirt flapping in the cold wind as he stares around the deserted steel yard, the huge cranes, the tons of weed-covered scrap, iron slag, picks up a rock and hurls it at the boarded-up furnace shop, Karen tripping and falling down the metal cab ladder, shouting:

KAREN

Danny, don't! Please!

But he has stooped for another, turns at her shout,
hurls the rock anyway, yelling:

DANNY

We'll get married! Then you'll
have to stay with me!

CRASH! The rock shatters two window panes. Danny looks at it a moment, turns to Karen, staring at him, touched that he cares so much, unsure of her own feelings, and then she moves to him, arms around him, and they hold on to each other very tight, Danny determined never to let her go.

3 EXT. STREET - DAY

3

On Danny, running along the sidewalk, oblivious to the closed supermarket, "Space for Lease" signs plastered all over, the closed-up shops, abandoned gas station, weeds growing through the tarmac apron, intent on reaching the corner 7 Eleven up ahead.

4 INT. 7 ELEVEN - DAY

4

Canned goods pushed to the front of the shelves, no backup stock. A lot of Specials. A half-dozen customers. The woman at the cash register sneaks a smoke, hiding it under the counter, checks the I.D. of two beer-buying teenagers, giving them a sharp look. SANDY CALDWELL is thirty-seven years old, and she's tired. Looks up as Danny enters, swinging around the register, kissing her, with:

DANNY

(fast)

I know, I'm sorry, don't be mad,
I stayed over at Pick's last night,
his Mom took us to school...

SANDY

Danny, if I tell your father...
and you're late for picking up Jeff.
(to teenagers)
Five ninety-seven with tax...

Danny is helping himself to a candy bar, scowls at the cigarette, smashes it out. Sandy makes change, rings it up, smacks his hand away from the candy, glares at him over the cigarette, half-laughing as she hands him a house key, all the while:

DANNY

Ah, c'mon, Mom, don't get me in
trouble, I won't be late, I'll take
the shortcut... you shouldn't smoke,
did Dad call? How'd he do?

SANDY

He'll tell you himself when he gets
home, honey, listen, don't forget
to defrost the hamburger and don't
cook the noodles until it's all
ready...

DANNY

Did he get the job?

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

SANDY

Will you please move, you know Mrs.
Cooper doesn't like to wait...

Danny grabs a candy bar, heads for the door as:

SANDY

(continuing)

... and Danny, don't let Jeff watch
TV, have him play in the yard,
Danny? Danny!

But he's gone, the doors swinging closed behind him.
HEAR OVER:

DANNY'S VOICE

... if they're gonna spend money
on anything they're gonna get the
dishwasher fixed, you're gonna have
to wait for your cleats...

5 EXT. ELM STREET - DAY

5

Danny rounds the corner, walking briskly, his four-year-old brother JEFF perched on his shoulders, ten-year-old STEVE tagging behind, swinging a pair of football boots. Elm Street is a row of two- and three-bedroom tract homes, each with its one-car garage and small yard back and front, not much to tell between the houses except some have "For Sale" signs stuck into overgrown lawns, drapes pulled over picture windows. Throughout:

STEVE

I always used to get new ones...

DANNY

Steve, we can't afford anything
now!

STEVE

Hey, Dad's home!

He runs on ahead, Danny grimacing, breaking into a trot as he sees the ten-year-old Chevrolet in the driveway of Eight Seven Four, FRANK CALDWELL pulling a suitcase from the back seat. A big man, he looks a lot like Danny, thirty-nine years old, face lined, tired, but the faded jeans and workshirt are pressed, immaculate. He glances up as Steve runs toward him, Jeff struggling down, grabbing Danny's hand, thumb into his mouth, his small face watching Frank anxiously as, throughout:

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

FRANK

Danny, where've you been? You're supposed to have the boys home by three o'clock, you know the rules...

(hugs Steve)

Hey, Tiger, how was practice?

Danny has reached for Frank's bag, opened the front door, stands aside to let his father and brothers precede him, face expressionless.

6 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - DAY

6

Wall-to-wall shag carpets, Sears furniture, framed school pictures of Danny and Steve, a bronzed boat of Jeff's on the coffee table, bowling trophies on the mantle. Danny has handed the case to Steve to put in the main bedroom, heads straight to the kitchen, Jeff to the TV set in the corner. Frank looks around, sinks gratefully into an easy chair, starts pulling off his boots, his eyes on the stack of mail. In the kitchen Danny takes out hamburger from the 'fridge, seeing the frown on Frank's face as he looks at the red "Final Demand" stamped on the first bill, rips open the second, chewing the inside of his cheek at the all-too-familiar Collection Agency notice inside. Finally:

DANNY

So how'd the trip go?

Frank glances through the rest of the envelopes, pulls two out and throws them on the coffee table, crosses to his desk and shoves the bills into the already stuffed full top drawer, all the while:

FRANK

Not bad. Not bad.

DANNY

Jeffy, turn the TV down, huh?

(takes canned
vegetables down
from the cupboard)

I mean, was it worth the drive,
you know?

Steve, back from the bedroom and now into the cookie jar, looks up as Frank glances at Danny:

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

FRANK

If you mean did I get the job,
I'm not saying anything, but...

His smile answers the question. Steve whoops, Danny grins.

DANNY

Alright! Did you tell Mom?

FRANK

I'm not telling anybody anything
until they call me tonight, okay?
But, well... it looks good.

Danny empties a dozen potatoes into the sink for peeling, looks pointedly at Steve:

DANNY

Steve, set the table.

Steve moves to the cutlery drawer, sensing something.

STEVE

What's the big rush?

DANNY

(quietly)

I got an errand to run...

As he hurriedly starts peeling potatoes --

CUT TO:

7

EXT. LAWSON HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD - LATE DAY

7

Practice is over, the suited-up team jostling around COACH WEST, a huge man in sweatsuit, cap and whistle who orders a last lap around the field, ignoring the groans, waits for the last man to go and starts after them, stops, hearing:

DANNY'S VOICE

Hey, Coach! Wait up!

Hands on his hips, a faint hope dawning, West waits as Danny runs toward him across the deserted playground, reaches him, his rehearsed speech drying up, starting the hand jive as:

WEST

What do you want, Caldwell?

DANNY

Yeah, uh, how's it goin'? Shapin' up okay, huh?

WEST

It'd be shaping up a damn sight better if I still had you for quarterback.

DANNY

Hey, man, I told you, I got all this stuff to do...

(in a rush)

Listen, you said you had a spare room at your place I could use if things got tough at home and well...

He tails off as West's face closes up. No quarterback. He eyes Danny, then:

WEST

I'll give it to you straight, Caldwell. You play football for me, we'll talk about the room...

DANNY

But you said I could have the room. You never said I had to be on the team!

But West has gone, jogging onto the field, whistle blowing, yelling instructions. Danny stares after him, angry, turns away, CAMERA HOLDING on him as he walks, then runs, toward the school gates. Hear over:

LAURIE'S VOICE

What are you, nuts or somethin', Danny? Rent you a room?

Thirties style grimy brick, five story. On the front steps, arms folded, LAURIE PETERS, still in red and white cheerleading outfit, stares at Danny. Karen, in skirt and sweater, looks miserable as:

LAURIE

No way!

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

DANNY

(blows)

I'll tell you somethin', Laurie,
you can take your apartment and
shove it, I wouldn't live in a
dump like this anyway. Come on,
Karen.

He grabs Karen's hand, starts across the street, narrowly avoiding being run over by a passing car. Laurie makes a face after them, goes inside the building.

9 ACROSS THE STREET

9

CAMERA TRACKS Karen and Danny as he smashes his hand into the corrugated-steel sheets nailed over a deserted storefront, wincing at the pain, doing it again. Karen pulls his hand away and they walk on, close now, until he stops outside the dusty window of a jewelry-cum-pawn shop, staring at the display of cheap wedding rings on a velvet board. Karen looks too. He glances at her, and she smiles, points at one. Danny shakes his head, gestures at another, and her face lights, nodding. Hear over:

FRANK'S VOICE

I said you could go out if you were
back for dinner! It's nine o'clock
at night! And what's all this about
ditching school? This is the third
letter...

10 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - NIGHT

10

Danny stands tensely, hands jammed into his pockets, staring at Frank who is pacing up and down, waving one of the two letters, now opened. Sandy is washing dishes in the kitchen, putting them into the drying rack, eyes flicking from Frank to Danny. Steve huddles over homework at the dining table.

DANNY

I'm sorry I missed dinner...

FRANK

You're sorry. You think sorry's
gonna fix it? I tell you to be
home, you be home, you understand?
I don't make the rules around here
so you can ignore them...

(CONTINUED)

SANDY
(from the kitchen)
Frank...

FRANK
You stay outa this, Sandy.
(to Danny)
Well?

DANNY
(shrugs)
I had some things to do...

FRANK
(overlapping)
What the hell's the matter with
you anyway? Look at you, your
hair's halfway down your back,
you couldn't get those pants off
with a can opener. Your grades
are junk!

During this Sandy has crossed the room, ostensibly to
pick up Jeff's discarded clothing from the sofa, re-
place a clean ashtray on the table, passing Danny,
whispering very quietly, almost mouthing:

SANDY
He didn't get the job...

FRANK
Look at this! Failing English,
failing math, what kind of a job
you think you're gonna get you
don't do good in school?

Sandy has motioned Steve to get to bed, sits down at
the table, lighting a cigarette, waiting for the ti-
rade to end. Danny's eyes are on her, seeing the
weariness, hating it, the news about the job sinking
in, mingling with his own frustration. Looks quickly
back at Frank as:

FRANK
(continuing)
Hey! You look at me when I'm
talking to you! You're gonna
wind up washing dishes for a
living you don't get your mind
on your books and off of that
girl!

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

DANNY

Don't start in on Karen!

FRANK

You talk to me like that I'll...

But Sandy is up from her chair, stopping Frank in mid-stride toward Danny, his mouth mutinous, fists clenched.

SANDY

Frank, that's enough, Danny, go to bed, we'll talk about this in the morning, Frank, please...

Danny slams off down the hallway, CAMERA with him hearing:

FRANK'S VOICE

Kid needs a damn good hiding!

SANDY'S VOICE

You sound just like your father, remember how he used to yell when we started dating in school...

CAMERA FOLLOWS Danny into:

11 THE BOYS' BEDROOM

11

Two single beds, Steve's corner covered with football posters, merit certificates from Little League, etc., Steve already in bed, his clothes a heap on the floor, eyes on Danny, who sinks down on his own bed, stares at the gleaming stereo on brick-and-plank shelving along the wall. It may not be expensive, but it's his pride and joy, and his face softens a little as he carefully selects an AC/DC album, puts it on the turntable, pulls off his jacket, slips on a set of headphones, adjusts volume, bass and treble, and lies back against the pillows, relaxing into the music only he can hear. It's a little eerie watching him, fingers drumming along, playing a guitar riff here, an organ solo there, lost in his own world, tension dissolving. Throughout, continue to hear from the living room:

FRANK'S VOICE

I'd've talked to my father like that I wouldn't have walked for a week...

But his anger is dissipating, there is the soft SOUND of a KISS, a moment's silence, then:

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

FRANK'S VOICE

(continuing; quieter)

Maybe I can pull some hours at
Parberry's next week...

SANDY'S VOICE

Frank, you haven't driven a forklift
in years...

The bedroom door opens, Danny hastily closing his eyes,
Frank and Sandy glancing in, not really looking,
Frank's arms sliding around her, nuzzling her neck:

FRANK

What, you think I can't handle it?

Leaving the door open as he turns her around, propelling her into their own bedroom across the hall, Sandy's arms sliding around Frank's neck as he pushes the door closed with his foot, hear:

FRANK

(continuing)

Not too tired...?

... the door closing on Sandy's murmured denial. Hear over:

THIN WOMAN'S VOICE

The State requires applicants for
a marriage license to be over
eighteen years of age...

12 INT. CITY HALL - LICENSE DIVISION - DAY

12

ON a hand-lettered sign "Marriage License Applications & Registration of Births," CAMERA TILTING DOWN to the drab office cubicles, only a few office workers, and a THIN WOMAN adjusting her glasses as she reels off by rote:

THIN WOMAN

... or have the written consent
of their parents, be a resident of
this county for not less than ninety
days and pay the fee of fourteen
dollars. No blood test necessary.

She stops, looking at Danny across the counter. He is a little nervous, very determined. Nods, tapping out a little drum riff on the counter edge:

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

DANNY

That it? I mean, that's all you
gotta have?

The Thin Woman leans on the counter, considers:

THIN WOMAN

Well. I guess it would help to
have a place to live, a job... some
money in the bank? I never did
believe two could live as cheaply
as one. Did you?

Danny looks at her, at the ringless fingers, the shape-
less sweater, graying hair. Smiles at her, a swe t,
genuine smile, laughs a little:

DANNY

I dunno. I never tried it before.

It is a moment only, their eyes meeting in a shared
joke. Then he nods, starts to move away.

THIN WOMAN

Oh, young man?

(he turns back)

Usually both parties apply
together... so you can sign the
papers, you know? You and your
girl.

Danny nods again. Walks out, smiling.

13 EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

13

The City Hall, courthouse, city buildings and County
Jail seem lifeless, deserted under the gray sky. Danny
walks TOWARD CAMERA, lost in thought, the trace of a
smile left, looks up quickly, hearing:

FRANK'S VOICE

Danny?

Across the street, outside the State Employment Ser-
vices building, Frank is staring at his son, waving
him over. Danny shoves his hands in his pockets,
crosses the road.

FRANK

(continuing)

What're you doing down here? You
should be in school.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

DANNY

(patiently)

Dad, school gets out at noon now,
you know? We only got four classes
and one of them's study hall...

Frank frowns, takes Danny's arm and propels him through
the glass doors of the building.

14 INT. STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES - DAY

14

CAMERA MOVES AROUND the crowded room. Mostly men.
Most dressed in clean coveralls, jeans, workshirts.
Big factory boots. Most have been waiting for hours,
and it shows. Under the quiet exchanges, the inevitable
jokes from a foursome in one line, the common
denominator is a quiet fear. An older MAN in starched
bib overalls, a Massey-Ferguson cap clutched in both
hands, stares at the floor, ashamed to be here, embarrassed
that anyone should see him. As CAMERA PASSES
he surreptitiously wipes one already pristine boot on
the back of his pants leg.

15 DANNY AND FRANK

15

sit at the plastic table of Frank's CASEWORKER, a
once compassionate, now inured woman in her thirties:

CASEWORKER

... well it's a shame about the
Yorktown job, but it is a long
drive every day, Mr. Caldwell...

(shakes her head)

There may be some cannery work
around, I know you're not interested
in that, but...

Danny looks up. Frank is silent. Then:

DANNY

Dad...?

CASEWORKER

... your extended benefits period
only has one more week to go.

FRANK

What's that mean?

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

CASEWORKER

It means twenty-six weeks maximum benefits, thirteen weeks extended benefits. Taking into consideration the odd work days you've had, last week was your thirty-ninth week. One more check.

Frank stares at her, baffled:

FRANK

And then what?

CASEWORKER

You should start your welfare application right now, they're taking longer to go through now... I guess they're swamped. Now about this cannery job...

She looks up, but Frank is hardly hearing her, hearing only:

FRANK

Welfare...?

CAMERA MOVES TO INCLUDE Danny, watching his father with a thrill of horror as the realization sinks in. Welfare.

16 EXT. STATE EMPLOYMENT - BY FRANK'S CAR - DAY

16

Frank unlocks the passenger door, straightens, face tight:

FRANK

Welfare. Twenty years at the mill, seven years a foremen.

Danny looks away, uncomfortable, feeling an odd rush of sympathy. Then, thinking:

DANNY

Hey, Dad, listen, I could come with you tomorrow, you know? There's no school... I mean, if you'd like the company...

He looks up, startled to see Frank's eyes on him with something akin to gratitude. His big hand rests on Danny's neck and he nods, blinks hard, opens the car door.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

FRANK

Yeah. Yeah.

Danny scoots into the car, leans over and opens the driver's door from the inside, gratified by the response.

17 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAWN

17

Frank drives the Chevy down a tree-lined road, looking out at the harvested fields all around, spots the billboard "Dorne River Cannery" and pulls into the gravel drive. Stops a moment, glances at Danny, staring out the window.

FRANK

Pretty, huh?

Danny looks at him, surprised. Nods, smiling. Then they are out of the car, both stretching from the long drive.

18 EXT. CANNERY - DAY

18

As Danny and Frank APPROACH CAMERA, Danny checking the place out with interest, feeling the humming activity, seeing the big trucks pulling in and out of the warehouse loading bays. CAMERA MOVES WITH them as they round a corner, stop.

19 OUTSIDE THE PERSONNEL OFFICE

19

are perhaps fifty men. It's a small-scale "On The Waterfront" without the docks. Talking quietly among themselves, eyes constantly moving to the corrugated steel office and the chalkboard: "Hiring Today. Six vacancies."

20 FRANK AND DANNY

20

Danny staring, Frank's expression hopeless. Danny looks at him, almost challengingly, before he starts into the crowd, Frank hesitating only a moment before he follows. As one person they move through the men, slowly, not jostling, just inexorably shouldering their way toward the front.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

It works fine until they reach the hard-core front line, all BIG GUYS. One of them turns to Danny:

BIG GUY

Hey, buddy, back off. Early bird
'n all that, you know?

DANNY

(cocky)

Just wanna work, man, is all.

He hitches up his pants, grins at Frank, who is staring at him, surprised. Then the crowd falls quiet as the office door opens and the FOREMAN appears, piggy eyes not pleasant as they look over the men, enjoying his moment of power. Then, pointing:

FOREMAN

Welles... Thiel... Smith...

The three men directly in front of Danny and Frank move to sign the Foreman's clipboard, the Foreman's eyes stopping on the two strangers, passing to the next three men:

FOREMAN

... you, you... and you, Ottman.
That's all, folks.

Before Frank can stop him, Danny is moving:

DANNY

Hey, what's wrong with us, huh?
You looked right at us!

FRANK

Danny...

DANNY

No, Dad, that's not right. He's
hiring the guys he knows, an'
that's not fair!

The men are beginning to snicker, and the Foreman looks Danny up and down, then, to Frank:

FOREMAN

Go buy him a candy bar and tell
him the facts of life, mister.

Incensed, Danny launches himself at the man, who stumbles back in sheer surprise, crashes into the office...

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

Danny sinking a hefty blow into the beer belly hanging over his belt, hauls back for another, but a stunned Frank is galvanized into action when two of the Big Guys move to join in, Frank grabbing Danny, shoving him away, Danny going for Frank before he realizes who it is, then going back for the Foreman again as, apoplectic:

FOREMAN

You ain't outa here in fifteen seconds I'm calling the cops.

Frank struggles to restrain Danny, drags him through the men, most of whom are laughing, though some are eyeing Danny with a grudging respect.

21 FRANK AND DANNY

21

as they round the corner toward the car, CAMERA TRACKING, Danny walking fast, shoulders hunched, Frank after him. Throughout:

FRANK

You don't pick a fight with the guy who's hiring!

DANNY

He wouldn't've hired us if we'd stood there all day! What's the difference?

FRANK

How you gonna hold a job you can't hold your temper, huh? Those are the facts of life... The guys he picked live around here, drink beer with him Friday nights. That's how it is.

DANNY

So why'd we bother to drive sixty miles, huh?

FRANK

You gotta give it a try...

DANNY

(swings around)

You call that a try? I'm gonna stand there an' let creeps like him push me around? Uh uh, no way, man, not me!

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

He wrenches open the car door, gets in, slamming it shut. Frank stares at him, tight-lipped, furious, frustrated, smashes his hand down on the trunk, moves to the driver's side and gets in. Danny stares resolutely out the window as Frank starts up the car, SQUEALS out of the space and pulls away.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

22 EXT. KINGSTON STEEL MILL - DAY 22

Frank stares down at the deserted mill from the bridge overlooking the yards, his thoughts inward. Faintly at first, FILTERING THROUGH, the MUSIC of April Wine's "Caught in the Crossfire," Danny singing along:

DANNY'S VOICE

'Caught in the crossfire,
Caught in a world insane, Lord,
War of the Empire...'

23 DANNY 23

standing by the car, parked at the curb, fingers drumming along to the RADIO MUSIC, eyes on Frank:

DANNY

Hey, Dad?

(then)

'Oh, caught in the crossfire,
Caught in the new age war, we were.'
Dad!

Frank doesn't move, Danny reaching into the car, flicking off the radio as it starts on a commercial.

DANNY

(continuing)

Hey, Dad, I gotta split.

Frank pushes himself away from the parapet, aware of Danny's cool gaze as he backs away from the car.

FRANK

What's your hurry?

DANNY

I got stuff to do, you know?

FRANK

What, hang around downtown with
those punks... Danny!

DANNY

See you later, Dad.

And he's gone, spinning on his heel, running off toward the town, Frank staring after him. Hear OVER:

LANDLADY'S VOICE

Well, you want to see it or not?

24 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

24

Danny stands on the whitened steps staring in sheer disbelief at the LANDLADY.

DANNY

How much you say?

LANDLADY

(bored)

First and last month, hundred dollar damage deposit... that's five hundred dollars.

DANNY

Yeah. Well, thanks.

He turns away, tugging a folded newspaper from his jeans pocket, apartments circled, crosses out the first with a felt-tip pen.

25 EXT. ELM STREET - ON THE NEWSPAPER - DAY

25

a column of crossed out circles, as it is thrown into a trash bin. Danny stares at it a moment, frowning, kicks idly at an empty beer can, starts off down the street, hands shoved into his pockets, kicking the can, making a rhythm out of it, one, two, three, kick, one, two, three, kick. Stops. Stares down the tree-lined street toward his house, starts to run.

26 OUTSIDE THE HOUSE

26

A few neighbors hang around watching. Sandy, holding a crying Jeff, listens to BRADLEY, a collection agent, eyes on the white-coveredalled reposessor who is loading Danny's stereo into the back of a VW van.

BRADLEY

I'm real sorry, Mrs. Caldwell, but you're not the only ones, believe me. People just don't have the money anymore. If you'd sign here...

Danny explodes into the group.

DANNY

What's going on? Mom? They're taking my stereo!

SANDY

Danny, we can't afford to pay...

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

DANNY

(overlap)

You gave me that for Christmas!
They can't take it back!

Sandy, aware of the neighbors, tries to push him toward the house, but he shoves her away as:

SANDY

Honey, I was going to tell you,
with your dad not working...

DANNY

He's gonna get more hours at
Parberry's, he said he was...

SANDY

(low)

Danny, there's so many payments,
we don't have the money...

DANNY

He's got money! He spent twenty
bucks on gas this morning! For
nothing!

He whirls to Bradley:

DANNY

(continuing)

Listen, my dad's getting a job,
can't you wait some more?

The reposessor slams the doors of the VW van as:

BRADLEY

I'm sorry, son. Mrs. Caldwell.

He gets into the van, the reposessor starts it up and they pull away. With a murderous look at the fascinated audience, Danny pushes past Sandy, goes into the house.

27 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - LATE DAY

27

Dinner. The tension palpable. Even Jeff eats quietly, Steve's eyes moving from his father to Danny, Sandy looking at Frank. Danny stares at his plate, hardly eating, foot tapping on the floor.

SANDY

Danny, more potatoes?

He shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

SANDY

(continuing)

Come on, honey, you're hardly
eating a thing.

FRANK

Leave him alone, Sandy, he can
help himself.

Silence. Then Steve reaches for a piece of bread,
knocks over his water glass.

FRANK

(continuing)

Steve!

SANDY

It was an accident... Steve, get
a cloth...

Steve gets a cloth from the sink, starts mopping up,
Sandy moving the waterlogged meatloaf remains, runs
into Steve who knocks against Frank's chair, jogs
his arm. Frank is up, yelling:

FRANK

What's the matter with you! Can't
a man get his dinner in peace!

(shoves Steve)

Get out of the way! How many
times I gotta tell you, you want
something at the table, ask for
it!

Steve bursts into tears, starts for his room.

FRANK

(continuing)

Get back here and sit down!

During this Danny has risen, taken his plate to the
sink, rinsed it off, picked up his jacket and is mov-
ing to the door. Frank looks up, sees it, looks at
Sandy.

SANDY

Danny, where're you going?

DANNY

Out.

And he is out the door before anybody can say another
word. Frank's mouth tightens.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

The PHONE RINGS. He slams his knife and fork down, crosses to the phone.

FRANK

Hello?

(face clearing)

Oh, yeah, hi, Ted.

Sandy and Steve look up, suddenly still. They watch the expectant look fade slowly as he listens, turning over two or three unopened envelopes on the desk as:

FRANK

(continuing)

Yeah, yeah, I understand. Sure.

Well, thanks for trying, Ted, I really appreciate it.

He hangs up the phone, looks at it blankly, then turns:

FRANK

(continuing)

Parberry's not hiring, they don't have the work.

SANDY

Frank, the mortgage payment...

She breaks off. Frank, face twisted with frustration and defeat:

FRANK

Goddamn...!

... and with one enraged sweep of his hand, the phone smashes against the wall. Then Sandy is with him, holding him, the two little boys watching, wide-eyed, frightened. Jeff starts to cry.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

28

Danny and Karen walk TOWARD CAMERA a little apart, Danny's hands shoved into his pockets, the bus they have just left passing them with a ROAR, blowing litter and dust into their faces.

(CONTINUED)

KAREN

(moment, then)

It's not that I don't love you, you know I do. But it's no use, Danny, we don't have any money, there's no jobs, we can't even afford a place to live...

CAMERA HAS TRACKED with them around a corner, and Danny stops, staring.

DANNY

What?

Across the dark, almost deserted street is the Grand Theater, a fleapit, newly boarded up, closed. Before Karen can stop him Danny is across the road, wrenching at the flimsy slats nailed to the old-fashioned box office, completely out of control, raging around, Karen running after him, throwing herself on him.

KAREN

Danny, stop it! Stop it!

Impeded by her, he goes one more time around, finally hurls the last broken slat at the glass entry doors. It bounces off. Karen holds him very close, his arms going around her.

DANNY

This whole damn town's dead!

Karen kisses his mouth, holding him, more in a helpless reaching out, a need to comfort him, than anything sexual. He pulls away a little, holding her shoulders.

DANNY

(continuing)

Karen, don't leave. Don't leave.

KAREN

(near tears)

What can I do? We're going in two days.

She pulls him close, cheek against his chest, fighting back the tears. His mouth in her hair, muffled:

DANNY

I'll find somewhere. I will!

29 EXT. MAIN DRAG - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

29

TRACKING Danny with his two best friends, PICK, skinny and bright, and ROACH, tough, cute, as they move down the sidewalk, ignoring passersby, Danny bumping into people almost deliberately, his face tight, angry. Pick and Roach exchange a look after he slams one man against the wall, glares at the protest. The three of them hang a left into:

30 A SHOPPING MALL

30

Danny stopping, staring across the littered mall, the fountains not working, most of the small shops with "For Rent" and "Out of Business" signs plastered across white-washed windows. A few old people, unfeted by the cold wind, go in and out of the supermarket.

ROACH

Jeez, this town is the pits.

PICK

Can't blame the town, man, it's the mills closing, you know? It'll be cool when they open...

Danny isn't listening. He's already moving across the tiled mall, stopping at a bank of pay phones, flipping the coin release buttons on the first and second, banging the third, getting three dimes for his pains. Roach whoops, and even Pick, who is watching Danny closely, knowing the signs, relaxes a little, laughs. Danny spins the coins in his hand, looks around the mall, itching for mischief, starts humming under his breath, stops, staring at a TV appliance store with a glint in his eyes.

DANNY

I have this terrific idea.

Pick and Roach groan.

31 INT. TV APPLIANCE STORE - SHOPPING MALL - LATE DAY

31

Television sets, radios, stereos, a thin selection of entertainment hardware and fewer customers. A group of kids hangs out at the back of the store in the record section, Pick, Roach and Danny among them, Blue Oyster Cult's new ALBUM BLASTING, the one salesman keeping an eagle eye on the tapes and albums. He's looking the wrong way.

(CONTINUED)

At a nod to Pick, Danny casually strolls down the glass-fronted cases toward the front of the shop as Roach shoves Pick, Pick shoves Roach back, the salesman starts toward them, and Danny quietly and quickly slips a pocket-sized transistor radio from the display shelf behind the counter, heads for the door, still very cool, helping himself to a pack of batteries en route, then freezes at the shout from the salesman, takes off at a run, Pick and Roach after him, Roach pushing the salesman into a glass display case.

32 EXT. SHOPPING MALL - LATE DAY

32

The three boys race from the mall, CAMERA WITH THEM, ducking into a darkened shop doorway, peering around the corner. The salesman has stopped, unable to leave his store. Danny, Pick and Roach collapse with laughter, Danny putting the batteries into the radio, face lighting in a grin as rock 'n roll MUSIC fills the air.

33 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - CLOSE ON FRANK - DAY

33

furious, ripping the radio from Danny's hand.

FRANK

... tearing up phones, stealing stuff! You gotta take this back! And don't say it wasn't you, you were seen! Frank Caldwell's kid!

Danny glares at him, fists clenched. Sandy is ironing, face tight, knowing she can't avert this one. Steve and Jeff are moving out the back door.

FRANK

(continuing)

You're heading for big trouble, Danny boy, and I tell you, don't come running to me for help, because you damn well won't get it!

DANNY

So what else is new?

Sandy looks up, horrified, puts down the iron slowly, but Frank only whitens, erupts:

FRANK

You think you got problems because they took away your record player!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

FRANK (CONT'D)

You don't even know what problems are! Get out and get a damn job and start paying your own way, boy, because I've had it with you!

DANNY

Alright, I will get a job! And I won't stand around waiting for some creep to do me the favor of hiring me, neither!

He reaches for his jacket, starts for the door.

FRANK

Get back here!

DANNY

I'm goin' to Pick's.

FRANK

As long as I'm paying the mortgage around here and feeding your face you'll do like you're told!

DANNY

Yeah, yeah...

Whiter than Frank, he wrenches open the front door, stops as:

FRANK

You go out that door you don't come back, you hear me?

SANDY

Frank, no! Danny!

Danny turns from the door, stares at Frank.

DANNY

I hear you. I don't hear nothing but you. Well I'll tell you something. Mom's the one who makes the payments around here, and Mom's the one that's feeding my face, and when you get around to doin' it, maybe then you can tell me what to do!

With which he walks out, slamming the door behind him.
HOLD a long moment on the stunned silence in the room.

34 EXT. KAREN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATE DAY

34

A twenty-foot U-Haul is in the process of being packed with furniture, carpets, boxes, the contents of the DeWaard apartment. Neighbors help, Karen's MOTHER, an attractive blonde in her forties, supervising. Danny and Karen help too, but it's half-hearted, their attention on each other, Danny tight, trying to be up, Karen close to tears, both talking too fast.

DANNY

It's not like you're going to another planet, you know...

KAREN

It's not even a day's drive... Mom said I can come on the bus.

DANNY

Hey, let's do it Thanksgiving break... I could thumb it, you think your folks'd let me stay over?

KAREN'S MOTHER'S VOICE

Karen! Honey, you can't take all these stuffed toys! You'll have to unpack some. Karen!

Karen turns to him, and they stare at each other. Unable to stand it any more:

DANNY

I gotta go.

KAREN

Oh, Danny, I'm gonna miss you so much... promise you'll call?

He nods, framing her face in his hands, as though intent on branding her image into his mind forever. Kisses her, softly, very sweet, her arms around his neck, holding each other very tight.

KAREN'S MOTHER'S VOICE

Karen!

DANNY

I love you, Karen.

She pulls away from him, runs toward the apartment entrance, ducking between the laden movers, into the building. Danny stares after her a long moment, turns and walks away.

35 EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

35

Pick and Roach watch through the windshield of a late-model station wagon as Danny waits outside the liquor store, hands shoved in his pockets. A man comes out of the store carrying two brown paper sacks, Danny backing into the shadows as he crosses to him, hands him one. Danny nods his thanks, heads for the car, getting in.

DANNY

Okay, let's go get loaded.

As Pick starts up the car, Danny leans over, INCREASES THE VOLUME on the car RADIO, rock and roll MUSIC thudding through the car.

36 EXT. PICKFORD HOUSE - NIGHT

36

Two-story, in a pleasant residential street. The wagon is in the driveway. From a dimly lit downstairs window MUSIC BLASTS. The front door opens and Danny staggers out, down the path, leans against the wall a moment, looking as though he's going to be sick. Stares woozily at the station wagon. A moment later Pick appears at the front door in time to see the wagon backing out, slewing into the road and taking off with a SQUEAL OF RUBBER. Pick stares, very stoned:

PICK

Oh, man...

37 INT. WAGON - NIGHT (MOVING)

37

Danny squinting into the dark, fumbles for the lights, hits the windshield wipers, the RADIO, opens the hood, the front windows, then the lights. On high beam. Giggles, turns the RADIO UP LOUD, grips the steering wheel.

38 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

38

The wagon brodies around an intersection, hood flapping, weaves across the yellow line, Danny hysterical with laughter, but not so much that he doesn't see the stop light up ahead, or the police cruiser waiting for the light change. He slams on the brakes, TIRES SCREECHING, jerks to a stop as the bumper of the wagon gently nudges into the cruiser. Two doors open. Two cops get out. Danny leans back, tears streaming, laughing like mad.

39 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - ON FRANK - NIGHT
in pajamas, picking up the RINGING PHONE.

FRANK
Hello? Who is this? What? Yes,
he's my son. Drunk? Well...
what? Is he hurt?

Sandy moves beside him, lighting a cigarette, eyes wide.

40 INT. CITY JAIL - NIGHT

The DESK SERGEANT glances up past the night's rowdy clientele to Danny, sitting alone, eyes closed.

DESK SERGEANT
Nobody hurt, no damage done. We'll
issue a citation, he'll have to pay
a fine. If you could come down
right now and sign for him...

41 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank is steaming. Jeff CRIES in his room, awakened by the phone.

FRANK
(explodes)
Damn it, when is he gonna learn!
(beat, then, quieter)
Okay, Sergeant, my son breaks the
law, he takes his punishment. You
keep him there tonight, it's not
gonna hurt him and maybe it'll
straighten him out. I'll be down
to get him in the morning.

He slams down the phone.

SANDY
Frank, you can't leave him in jail!

FRANK
If I saw him right now I'd kill
him. He's better off there.

SANDY
Well, if you won't go, I will!

She starts for the bedroom, but he grabs her arm, neither of them noticing Steve peering from his bedroom door.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

FRANK

Nobody's gonna get him! He's gonna have to get it through his head, Sandy, there's rules and he's gotta learn to live by the rules! A night in jail will do him good!

Sandy pulls away from him, sinks into a chair, crying.

SANDY

I can't believe you're letting this happen!

42 INT. CITY JAIL - ON DANNY - NIGHT

42

as a COP touches his shoulder.

COP

Let's head for the tank, kid.

DANNY

Not me, man, my dad's picking me up.

COP

Well don't hold your breath, sonny, your daddy says we keep you until he's good and ready to come get you. So let's go, huh?

43 DANNY

43

stares up at the Cop, color draining from his face, suddenly very sober. He swallows.

DANNY

He said that?

HOLD on his face as the Cop pulls him to his feet.

COP

Come on. Let's go.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

44 INT. CITY JAIL - HOLDING TANKS - NIGHT

44

ON Danny as he is handed over by the Cop to a GUARD at the door of the tank room. The NOISE is DEAFENING. Singing, shouting, yelling, sobbing drunks, not even a dozen, but sounding like hundreds in the ECHOING space. Hear OVER:

COP'S VOICE

Danny Caldwell, sixteen years old, charge is drunk driving, father won't come get him...

The Guard oddly doesn't write anything down on his clipboard, doesn't look at Danny as:

GUARD

End tank, huh?

COP

Yeah. Sorry. Like there ain't enough problems. Keep an eye on him, okay?

CAMERA MOVES with Danny and the Guard as they walk down the concrete-floored passage, past the open-barred tanks, Danny staring in, seeing the drunks, looking quickly away. The Guard gestures him into the last, small cell, the door closing behind him. He stares at the double-tiered beds, blankets stained and dirty, the jonny pot in the corner, the cracked linoleum. Turns to speak to the Guard, but he's already gone, the NOISE level continuing, INCREASING. Danny stands at the edge of the lower bunk, looks at the floor, raises his eyes and glances quickly up at the chaos around him. He looks smaller somehow. Scared. Defenseless.

45 INT. CITY JAIL - HOLDING TANKS - NIGHT

45

It is later. CAMERA FOLLOWS the Guard down the row of cells. Quieter now. Only two dim ceiling lights illuminate the tanks. CAMERA STOPS at the end tank, Danny lying flat on the bottom bunk, wide awake, whistling a rock theme under his breath, glancing AT CAMERA in sudden hope, then away again as the Guard's FOOTSTEPS return down the row, the door CLANGS CLOSED. A moment, then:

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

QUINN'S VOICE

Pssst... hey, kid...

Danny looks over to see QUINN, a well-dressed man in his fifties, lying on the bottom bunk of the next tank, face against the bars:

QUINN

Do you have a cigarette?

Danny shakes his head.

QUINN

Boy, could I use a smoke.

(beat, then)

First time in here?

Danny nods.

QUINN

Mine too. Can't sleep, keep thinking
what my wife's going to say tomorrow.

Danny takes in the well-cut suit, the manicured finger-nails.

DANNY

What happened to you?

QUINN

Ah, dumb thing. Stopped in at this
bar for a couple of drinks, you
know, unwind? Got into it with
some moron... I should've known
better.

(beat; then)

How old are you anyway?

DANNY

Almost seventeen.

QUINN

(eyebrows raised)

Is that right? I'd've taken you
for older, maybe nineteen, twenty.
You play ball?

DANNY

Not anymore.

Quinn fumbles in his pocket, produces a leather wallet
while:

(CONTINUED)

QUINN

I've a boy your age, not nearly as big, though. Here, I have his picture.

Danny hesitates a moment, then, glad of the company, crosses the cell, squats down, his face on a level with Quinn. Completely unsuspecting, he tilts his head to one side to look at the proffered photograph. A second later two surprisingly strong hands are around his neck, pulling his face to the bars, and Quinn's mouth is on Danny's. For a moment he is too stunned to react, then he tries to pull away but Quinn's fingers are locked behind his head. He scrabbles at his arms, to no avail, then suddenly snakes his own hands through the bars, grabs Quinn's ears and twists his face away. Gasping:

QUINN

Come on, kid, let me...

Danny freaks. Not letting go, he hangs onto Quinn's ears, bangs his head into the bars, Quinn starting to scream, Danny totally out of control, eyes closed, not hearing the other men wakening, yelling at him, until the lights glare on, the two Guards bursting through the door, trying to pull him away. He fights them, CAMERA MOVING IN CLOSE as he is thrown bodily against the far wall, and he slides to the floor. His eyes open, his hand moving to his mouth, wiping it once, then again, scrubbing at it with his shirt sleeve as he pushes himself up, crawls toward the jonny-pot, retching. Hear OVER:

DAY SERGEANT'S VOICE

Caldwell, Daniel Richard. Involved in an incident with another detainee at 3:35 a.m., duty officer is investigating the cause. At 4:10 a.m. Caldwell transferred to County Jail...

46 INT. CITY JAIL - DAY

46

ON the DAY DESK SERGEANT, a big man unimpressed by life in general and people in particular:

DAY SERGEANT

... which is where he should've been put in the first place... we don't have approved facilities for juveniles in this jail.

47 FRANK

staring at him across the desk, clearly intimidated by authority.

47

FRANK

Approved facilities, oh, right, I see, that's why they moved him...

DAY SERGEANT

(beat; then)

Not exactly. See, he should've gone there first, we don't have anyplace for kids. But the night guys got enough paper work Saturdays, they get a kid in, rather than turn him back out on the street they hold 'em upstairs. There was an incident...

FRANK

What do you mean, an incident?

DAY SERGEANT

He got in a fight with another guy...

Frank stares at him.

DAY SERGEANT

(continuing; glances at log)

Well, what is he, sixteen? I got a couple around that age, they're all a pain in the butt.

CUT TO:

48 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DANNY'S CELL - DAY

48

This is Sight and Sound Separation, a closed-off area within the County Jail, reserved specifically for juveniles, who must not come into contact with the main prison population. And depending on the jail, anybody else, either. No windows. No sounds at all. A jonny-pot. A springframe bed with a four-inch foam rubber mattress and pillow. A blanket. Shabby, but immaculately clean. Only the walls offer any diversion; they are covered with ill-spelled graffiti: "Jesus Loves Me," "God get me outa heir," "Sympathy for the Devil."

49 DANNY

49

hasn't slept, the bed untouched. He paces the cell, stopping to read the graffiti, discovering another one, doing his finger-pop hand jive, stops it. Stands listening to the heavy silence. Starts it again, his eyes moving from the wall to the door. He starts to hum softly, in time to the rhythm.

50 INT. COUNTY JAIL - OUTSIDE CARUSO'S OFFICE - DAY

50

The door bears the legend "County Jail. Albert C. Caruso. Jailor." It is opened by DeVRIES, a uniformed County Guard (gray uniform as opposed to blue at City Jail) who carries a cup of coffee and a Danish into:

51 CARUSO'S OFFICE

51

where Frank sits nervously in front of an impeccably tidy desk. DeVries sets the coffee on the other side of the desk, and ALBERT C. CARUSO turns from the bank of file cabinets at the other side of the small room. He is tall, slim, fortyish, voice, soft, authoritative. He has a real problem dealing with juveniles in his jail, covers it with being "by-the-book."

CARUSO

(to the Guard)

DeVries, have them take young Caldwell to visiting.

FRANK

They said I could take him home.

CARUSO

(moves to desk)

The judge will decide if Danny goes home at the detention hearing tomorrow.

FRANK

Detention...?

CARUSO

If the court feels he's a menace to the community, or to himself, they'll keep him. If not, they'll send him home.

FRANK

A menace? He's not a bad kid...

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

CARUSO

Mr. Caldwell, your son beat up a man so severely he's in County Hospital with a suspected skull fracture. You can see him for ten minutes upstairs. Then if I were you I'd go home and call a lawyer.

FRANK

This is a kid, what does he need with a lawyer?

CARUSO

(looks at him)

Assault and battery is a serious charge. He'll need a lawyer.

Frank stares around the room, totally out of his depth, intimidated by Caruso, runs a hand over his face, then:

FRANK

Guess this is kind of routine to you, but...

He breaks off as Caruso's PHONE RINGS and he answers it.

CARUSO

(phone)

Caruso. Hold on a moment.

(then to Frank)

If you wouldn't mind waiting outside, Mr. Caldwell, the guard will come down for you.

Frank, after a moment's hesitation, gets up and goes out, the door closing behind him.

52 INT. COUNTY JAIL - CORRIDORS - DAY

52

ON another door as it opens, CAMERA FOLLOWING DeVries and Frank along the ECHOING corridors, Frank finding himself walking almost on tiptoe, uncomfortable when his metal-tipped boots make a noise on the floor. THROUGH two more doors, FOLLOWING DeVries' uncommunicative back, STOPPING finally at a door marked "Visiting Room." CAMERA MOVES THROUGH INTO:

53 INT. COUNTY JAIL - VISITING ROOM - DAY

53

A row of deal tables down the center of the room, battered chairs on each side.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

Danny is watching the door, fingers drumming on the table top, gets up as Frank enters, DeVries nodding for CLIFFORD, a second Guard, to take over.

DANNY

Hi, Dad.

FRANK

Danny.

There is a moment when they could embrace, even over the table, but Frank is fighting his own anger and unease with the situation, just pulls a chair out across from Danny who hesitates, sits.

DANNY

Dad, I'm real sorry, honest. It was weird, this guy grabbed me...

FRANK

(overlaps; blows
up)

How many times I gotta tell you to handle your temper? You put a man in the hospital, and now there's court tomorrow.

Danny opens his mouth to speak, but:

FRANK

(continuing)

I don't want to hear it! How you gonna get a decent job with a court record? Court! I've never been in a courtroom in my life!

DANNY

I said I was sorry.

(beat, then)

Dad, you gonna get me out of here?

FRANK

Sure, sure, you'll be home tomorrow, I'll talk to the judge...

Danny nods, staring at his hands, feet beginning to tap under the table, Frank glancing at the uniformed guard, looking quickly away, clearing his throat:

FRANK

(continuing)

They told me downstairs I can bring you some clothes...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (3)

53

FRANK (CONT'D)

(stops, then)

Try to look tidy, I mean, try to
look... well, clean, you know...
for tomorrow. For court.

(can't handle it)

I gotta go.

They both rise, another split second where they could
embrace, shake hands, something, but they only stare at
each other, then away, and the moment passes. Frank
heads for the door. Danny watches mutely as the door
closes behind him, then Clifford takes his arm:

CLIFFORD

Okay, let's do it.

Danny glares at the hand on his arm, hesitates, think-
ing better of any protest, suddenly scared again, allows
Clifford to take him out the other door. Hear OVER:

STEVE'S VOICE

But I don't get it. You said you
were bringing him home.

54 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

54

ON Steve, his small face confused. Frank is trying to
watch TV, Sandy washing hands for a muddy, squirming
Jeff. She is expressionless.

FRANK

Steve, he got in a fight last night,
he hit a man and put him in the
hospital. Now he has to go to court.

SANDY

If he hadn't been there last night...

FRANK

(overlap, to Steve)

Your brother broke the rules, you've
gotta go by the rules, Steve, just
like football.

STEVE

But when's he coming home?

FRANK

Tomorrow, after I talk to the judge.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

FRANK (CONT'D)

Now help your mother with the dishes.

STEVE

But that's Danny's job!

FRANK

Help your mother with the dishes!

Steve looks at Sandy, gets no response, sighs, heads for the sink, muttering just loud enough to be heard:

STEVE

Don't see why somebody can't fix the dishwasher...

CUT TO:

55 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DANNY'S CELL - DAY

55

Danny is pacing, measuring his steps, fingers drumming on his thighs, whistling softly under his breath. Hand jive. Stops at the door, drumming his fingers on it in time to his whistle. Tries the door frame, a different timbre. Door. Frame. Stops, hearing the DOOR being UNLOCKED, backing away, shoving his hands into his pockets as the door opens and JOEL CORCORAN enters, a stack of files under his arm, dark, energetic, already balding although he's only in his late twenties.

CORKY

Hey, Danny, how you doing, I'm Mr. Corcoran and I'm your probation officer... let's run over what we got here, okay? Come on, relax, sit down, tell me what happened...

Danny leans against the wall, not sure how to deal with this new phenomenon, but patently relieved that somebody is going to talk to him. He nods his head at the file Corky is opening:

DANNY

What's it say in there?

CUT TO:

56 INT. COURTHOUSE - OUTSIDE JUVENILE COURTROOMS - DAY

56

CAMERA FOLLOWS Frank and Sandy...

(CONTINUED)

... Both dressed in their best, through the chaotic crowd of kids, probation officers, parents, cops, witnesses, attorneys, etc., toward the courtroom doors where two chalkboards announce that Courtroom 4 has Judge Bennet presiding, Courtroom 5 Judge William T. Halloran. Throughout, hear:

1ST P.O.

Selling dope is a
probation violation
Mike, you know that...

1ST MOTHER

I don't want the little
tramp back in the house!

RELATIVE

Why should Penny go to
jail, her father attacked
her!

1ST FATHER

I pay my taxes, you people
gotta take care of my kids!

2ND ATTORNEY

The State doesn't have places
for your seven children,
Mr. Lee.

BLOND KID

You got any other way
I can pay the rent,
my mom split three
weeks ago...

2ND P.O.

Then you have to sign
a foster order or
we'll have to put her
in the State home.

1ST ATTORNEY

For her own protection,
so it won't happen
again.

All over this, Frank and Sandy are trying to listen to MIKE RAINES, 30 years old, pale, harrassed, in worn tweed coat and slacks, sorting through a stack of files. Mike is Senior P.O.

MIKE

... Okay, two shoplifting, one
attempted forgery. Chris is in
detention for assaulting a police
officer...

FRANK

Shoplifting? Forgery?

MIKE

Betjeman, Chris Betjeman, aren't
you his parents?

FRANK

Caldwell. Frank Caldwell.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

56

MIKE

(unfazed)

Caldwell, ah, right. Danny... I
got it.

(checks file)

Okay, briefly, this isn't a trial...

(looks up)

... Has anyone explained this to you?

FRANK

Well, yes, but I wanted to ask,
you're Danny's probation officer...

MIKE

No, somebody else has been assigned
to Danny, I handle the courtroom
stuff... Okay, Danny should be up
in, oh, an hour, maybe an hour and
a half, so if you'd just wait.

And he's gone into the crowd, to be besieged by more
parents, etc. Frank and Sandy exchange a glance, look
for seats, find none, move back against the wall.

57 THE ELEVATORS

57

slide open, revealing Clifford, two boys and Danny.
As they step out, Frank and Sandy move quickly toward
them, Sandy's arms going around Danny, which embarrass-
es him. Nods at Frank.

DANNY

Hi, Mom... Dad. Well, I guess I
lucked out, Corky says I get Judge
Halloran...

FRANK

Corky? Who's Corky?

CORKY'S VOICE

(from behind Frank)

That's me, Mr. Caldwell, Joel
Corcoran, I'm Danny's case officer.

Corky shakes hands with Sandy and Frank, all the while:

(CONTINUED)

CORKY

(continuing)

... What Danny means is, Judge Halloran really tries to look out for the kids, and considering Danny hit the man in self-defense, there shouldn't be a problem...

FRANK

(overlap, nervous)

It shouldn't matter what judge he gets, he was wrong, Mr. er...

DANNY

Dad, you don't even know what happened! You're not listening!

FRANK

No, you're not listening! You've had your way long enough, Danny, time you quit with that mouth of yours and paid some attention!

SANDY

Frank, please.

Frank looks from Danny to Sandy to Corky, turns away, struggling to control his temper. Corky takes a breath, looks at Danny:

CORKY

All you gotta remember with Judge Halloran is to speak up, tell him what happened... tell him the truth...

FRANK

He'll be fine, he'll be fine, he'll tell the judge he's sorry and he's gonna stay out of trouble...

DANNY

Dad, the man's talking to me!

Before Frank can blow again, Sandy moves to Danny, starts to fuss with his shirt while:

SANDY

Frank, it's alright, Danny'll be just fine. Here, honey, your collar...

Frank has subsided, but Corky hasn't missed the tension between father and son, nor the practiced ease with which Sandy heads off another blow-up.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

57

Murmuring something about another client, he moves away. Sandy goes on fussing, Danny glares at Frank, who turns away, clearing his throat. HEAR OVER:

CORKY'S VOICE

It's pretty volatile. Father's real angry, hostile, the kids' defiant, asking for trouble.

58 INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM FIVE - DAY

58

ON Corky and Mike, talking quietly as Mike threads up a tape recorder in front of the bench. The room is small, scarred tables for defense and prosecution, a witness chair, a row of metal chairs in the back of the room, where Frank and Sandy sit tensely. The Assistant Prosecutor, MARNI BLAKE, young, bespectacled, pores over case files, a yellow book entitled "Juvenile Legal Process" in front of her. Danny stares into space, fingers drumming quietly on his knees. During this:

CORKY

You want to go for protective custody?

MIKE

(shrugs)

Let's see what the prosecution's got.

Chambers doors open and WILLIAM T. HALLORAN ENTERS, in black judicial robes, big, easy going, totally at home with the vagaries of juvenile law. Corky moves to Danny as:

MIKE

All rise.

HALLORAN

(waves them to sit)

Good morning. Mr. Raines?

MIKE

(turns tape on)

Your honor, this is in the matter of the continued detention or release of Danny Caldwell, a minor, case number 4407B12.

Halloran scans the papers in front of him, glances up at Danny, a new face:

(CONTINUED)

HALLORAN

Danny. Are the parents present?

FRANK

(rises, nervous)

Yes, sir. I'd like to...

HALLORAN

(easily)

In a moment, Mr. Caldwell. Ms. Blake?

MARNI

(stays seated)

Your Honor, the charges against Danny Caldwell are driving while intoxicated, driving without a permit, and assault and battery. The victim of the assault is still in the hospital. I'd like to request detention be continued until our investigation of the incident is completed.

CORKY

(rising)

Your Honor, the assault was provoked by homosexual advances being made to Danny...

Frank goes rigid, staring at Danny, his face paling. There is a small sound from Sandy as she covers her face with her hands, all the while:

MARNI

Oh, come on, Corky... they were in separate cells with bars between them... how much of a sexual advance could there have been?

CORKY

How much of an assault was there?

MARNI

He put the man in the hospital!

HALLORAN

That's enough! Am I to understand this boy was placed in the City lock-up...?

MIKE

Your Honor, it was Saturday night...

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (2)

58

HALLORAN

Mr. Raines, the law specifically states that juveniles must not be incarcerated with adults...

He breaks off, aware that this is neither the time nor the place, scribbles a note to himself, looks up at Frank.

HALLORAN

(continuing)

Mr. Caldwell, you requested that Danny be detained after his initial run-in with the police...

Frank rises, totally out of his depth, unused to peaking in front of people, trying to deal with the fact of what has happened to Danny, trying to marshal his thoughts:

FRANK

He doesn't always do like he's told, Your Honor... you gotta have rules, Danny, well, he doesn't go for that. I figured a night in jail wouldn't hurt.

(looks up at Halloran)

I didn't know about... nobody said anything about... advances...

DANNY

(swings around)

I tried to tell you! You wouldn't listen! You never listen!

Marni rises, smooth:

MARNI

Your Honor, drunk driving is an offense, a dangerous offense. Furthermore, whether or not the defendant overreacted in City Jail, I'd like to point out that he seems to have very little respect for the law... even his father agrees with that. Therefore, I'd like to request he be kept in detention until arraignment.

She sits down. Halloran taps his pencil on the bench, frowning. Gestures Mike to him, voice low:

HALLORAN

I gather the home situation is difficult... the father?

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

It's not good, Bill.

Halloran nods, looks at his notes, up at Frank, then across at Danny, who is staring at his hands, foot tapping under the table. He looks up as:

HALLORAN

Danny, I have to decide whether to let you go home or keep you in detention until your arraignment, which is when you plead guilty or not guilty to the charges. Understand?
(as Danny nods)

Now you don't seem to be getting along too well with your parents, and while I'm not sure you're a menace to the community, I'm not sure you're not, either. So I'm going to give you some time to think about that in here. Mr. Raines, how's the calendar?

MIKE

We have a cancellation Friday at ten, Your Honor.

HALLORAN

So be it. Danny, we'll see you on Friday morning, and I want you to give some serious thought to the way you've been behaving.

(gavel, look at
Frank)

Mr. Caldwell, do you have a lawyer?

Frank has been following this with mixed feelings, aware that Halloran is saying essentially what he has said about time in jail not hurting Danny, yet also aware Danny isn't coming home. Sandy sits with clenched hands, doesn't look up.

FRANK

No, sir, I don't.

HALLORAN

Can you afford one?

FRANK

(beat, then)

No, sir.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (4)

58

HALLORAN

No problem, the court will provide
Danny with an attorney. See to that,
will you, Mike?

(gavel, then)

Right. What've we got next?

59 EXT. COURTHOUSE - PARKING LOT - DAY

59

Sandy, tight, tense, white-faced, moving away from
Frank's hand at her elbow, walks toward the car,
listening to:

FRANK

This is gonna make that kid grow
up, Sandy, well, you heard the judge
... give him some time to think.
He's gonna learn a lot from this...

Sandy stares at him as he unlocks the car, looks back
at the grim jail building, then at Frank. Quietly:

SANDY

He's not going to learn anything
good in there, Frank.

60 INT. COUNTY JAIL - JUVENILE SECTION - DAY

60

CAMERA FOLLOWING Caruso through the section, passing
the other half-dozen cells, all the doors but one
closed. Hear amidst the POUNDING on Danny's door:

DANNY'S VOICE

(yelling)

Hey! Come on! Somebody! Guard!
Somebody come! Hey!

Caruso waits while DeVries opens the door, goes in,
CAMERA FOLLOWING:

61 DANNY

61

scared, defiant, hands on his hips:

DANNY

It's about time! I been yellin'
myself stupid for hours. What is
this, solitary confinement? I
want a proper cell, I want...

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

CARUSO

You're in here for your own protection, Caldwell, this is a jail for grownups, not kids. You see your parents, your probation officer and your attorney, and that's the way I run it.

DANNY

There's nothin' to do!

CARUSO

My men've got better things to do than entertain you.

As he heads for the door, Danny picks up the untouched plastic dinner tray by the door, hurls it at the wall.

DANNY

You can stick your jail!

CARUSO

(to DeVries)

Get a mop and a pail.

(to Danny)

Now you got something to do. You clean that up, and you do it right or I'll have you scrubbing this cell for the rest of the year.

He walks out, DeVries closing the door, locking it. Danny's face contorts with rage, frustration:

DANNY

Let me out of here! Let me out!

He throws himself at the door, pounding on it. No response. He stops, rubbing his sore hands, biting his lips. Then loses it, kicking the bed, hurling the mattress and pillow on the floor, back to the door, hammering on it, flings himself across the cell to the far wall. CAMERA MOVES TO the glass window in the cell door, the outside curtain parted a little. Caruso is watching Danny. Expressionless. And then Danny starts up again, slamming his fist into the wall, screaming:

DANNY

(continuing)

I want someone to talk to!

I want someone to talk to!

I want someone to talk to!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

62 INT. COURTHOUSE - JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT - DAY 62

Danny is studying a large dartboard painted on the wall. The outer ring is red, the word Restitution printed in black; the next ring is yellow -- \$100.00 fine; then blue -- 30 days; green -- Commitment; white -- continuance, and in the center, a tiny bullseye -- Case dismissed. Danny's pointed finger arcs into the bullseye. Throughout, hear a MUTED HUBBUB, PHONES RINGING, PEOPLE YELLING, ETC., and:

MIKE'S VOICE

Caldwell. Daniel Richard. Sixteen years old. Uhuh. Drunk driving, no license, assault and battery while in temporary detention. No, he's claiming sexual harrassment, prosecutor's office is investigating. Uhuh. Okay, three thirty. See you then.

During this, ANGLE HAS WIDENED TO INCLUDE Mike Raines, on the phone, depressing the receiver, checking Danny's file, dialing again, watching Danny as he slumps into the chair across the desk.

MIKE

Look, it's an adult jail. If it was a juvenile facility you'd be in with other kids...

Danny drums his fingers on the desk.

DANNY

Yeah, but can't I get a radio or something? I seen it in prison movies... they got t.v. sets and magazines and stuff. I got the scribbles on the wall.

MIKE

Listen, you got two more days, Andy Barnes is a good lawyer. You behave yourself, you'll be going home.

(phone)

Yes, Mrs. Caldwell? Mike Raines, Probation Department.

63 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - DAY

63

Still in her coat, Sandy has just come in with Jeff and two sacks of groceries. The house is a mess, dirty dishes, laundry everywhere. Sandy looks exhausted, takes off Jeff's coat, plops him in front of the t.v., all the while:

SANDY

(phone)

He's seeing the lawyer today? My husband's in Everdene on a job interview, Mr. Raines. Well, if it's after three Danny's brother can babysit. I guess.

Jeff has turned up the VOLUME on the t.v., Sandy crossing to turn it down again as:

SANDY

(continuing)

I'm sorry, I didn't hear you. Where is it?

VOLUME GOES UP again.

SANDY

(continuing)

Jeff!

He pushes her hand away from the controls, she pushes him away from the t.v. Wails.

64 INT. COURTHOUSE - JUVENILE PROBATION - DAY

64

Danny looks up, hearing home. Mike sees it, hesitates, then:

MIKE

You want to talk to your mom?

He hands over the phone to Danny.

DANNY

Hello? Hi, Mom. Yeah, I'm okay. Did Karen call? Yeah, I'm eating. I can't hear you, put Jeff on... hey, Jeffy, how you doing? Jeff? This is Danny on the phone. Yeah, Danny.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

64

DANNY (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Listen, I'm gonna be home in one,
two days. Count it... one, two.
Right. Then we're gonna go to the
park and see the fish. Okay?

Mike watches quizzically, holds out a hand for the
phone.

DANNY

(continuing)

I gotta go, Jeffy, but I'll be
home in two days. Yeah, I promise.

He hands the phone over, starts a drum roll on the
desk, pleased with himself, pleased he's going home.

65 EXT. COUNTY JAIL - PARKING LOT - DAY

65

Sandy reaches into the Chevy for her purse, hands Jeff
a couple of cookies, all the while, to Steve:

SANDY

I'll be quick as I can, now don't
get out of the car, and watch Jeff.

She slams the car door, starts for the grim jail
building. Jeff presses his face up to the car window,
stares, Steve looking out from the front seat.

STEVE

Look at the bars on the windows.

JEFF

Danny's not in there.
(face screws up)
I want my mom.

He wails as Sandy disappears into the building. Hear
over:

ANDY'S VOICE

As your attorney in fact, my advice
is to plead guilty on all three
charges.

66 INT. COUNTY JAIL - VISITING ROOM - DAY

66

Danny, hands shoved into his pockets, is expressionless. Sandy folds and refolds her jail pass. Both of them watch ANDY BARNES, young, tanned, in smart three-piece suit. A good lawyer with a pleasant manner.

ANDY

... you were certainly drunk, you don't have a drivers' license, and running into a police car...

(half-laughs)

... well, it's kind of hard to argue that one. Now, the assault...

DANNY

(feet tapping)

Corky says I was defending myself...

ANDY

I know, I know, and we're going to use that. Listen, they had no business putting you in the tank in the first place, and whether they do it all the time or not, we can make a lot of points on that...

DANNY

I don't get it. If I wasn't supposed to be there, and I hit the guy to get him away from me, how come I gotta plead guilty?

SANDY

Danny, let Mr. Barnes finish...

DANNY

Mom! I wanna know why I got to plead guilty, okay?

His tone is Frank's, and Sandy winces at the edge. Andy sits on the corner of the table, touches Danny's arm.

ANDY

Hey, no problem, I know it's tough to understand. Look, the Prosecutor's in a tough spot... first, you shouldn't have been there. Second, you put a guy in the hospital... no, wait a minute, justified or not, Danny, you beat up on a guy while he was in the State's custody. They get real unhappy with that...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

ANDY (CONT'D)

(a breath)

So, you plead guilty to the charge, yes, you did assault him, and you did batter him... but while we enter a guilty plea, we bring in the sexual angle as extenuating circumstances.

Danny eyes him, chewing on the inside of his cheek, feet tapping.

DANNY

So what do I get?

ANDY

You're a juvenile, you have no priors, you've got Halloran. The probation department will run a psychological evaluation... check on your school, that kind of thing, and depending on that, you could be out, or...

DANNY

Or what?

ANDY

Maybe thirty days detention, maybe less...

DANNY

(out of his chair)

Thirty days! Hey, man, you want me to plead guilty, you spend a week in here! You do the thirty days, okay?

SANDY

Danny!

(hesitant)

Mr. Barnes, we want Danny home. If he pleads not guilty...

ANDY

If he pleads not guilty they'll set a trial date. That should be within thirty days, because he's a juvenile, but in reality... hey, the courts are backed up to here... it could be a month, two months, even three.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (2)

66

ANDY (CONT'D)

And you have no guarantee of bail,
no way of knowing if he'll spend
the time before the trial inside
or out.

Danny and Sandy stare at him:

SANDY

You mean if he pleads not guilty
he could be here longer than if
he pleads guilty?

Andy nods. Danny paces, tight, stops, looks at Andy.

DANNY

You sure you got this right?

ANDY

I'm afraid so. Danny, don't get
me wrong, nobody's doing this to
you, you know? I mean, there's no
bad guys out there saying let's
keep Danny Caldwell in the joint.

He checks his watch, lays a hand on Sandy's shoulder.

ANDY

(continuing)

Okay, I have a custody hearing in
ten minutes... Mrs. Caldwell, why
don't you and Danny think this
over, let me know what you decide.
Danny, I'll be seeing you.

He shakes hands with Sandy, then with Danny, goes out.
Danny looks across at his mother, who has shredded the
jail pass into a thousand pieces. Their eyes meet.

DANNY

Mom...

SANDY

(quickly)

I know, honey. Now don't worry,
I'll talk to Dad when he gets
back, he'll decide what's best.

Danny suddenly looks very lost, scared, vulnerable, and
with a small sound Sandy's arms are around him, and
they hold each other very close, Danny's voice muffled.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (3)

66

DANNY

I'm sorry, Mom. I'm real sorry.

Then the door opens and Clifford appears, Danny and Sandy springing apart almost guiltily, Sandy turning to leave, not wanting the tears to show. Danny watches her go, begins to hum.

67 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DANNY'S CELL - DANNY'S POV - DAY 67

Through the judas hole Danny watches a Trustee slowly push a cleaning cart up the juvenile section, never turning, never looking, just trudging. Throughout:

DANNY

(yelling)

... bet it's a real drag, cleanin' up all day, huh? Bet you'd rather be home, huh? Watchin' the ball game? Hey, what's happening with the Vikings? Uh, don't like the Vikings, huh, what, the Packers? The Bears? How's it goin' for those guys? Hey, it's getting kinda cooler, don't you think? Did it snow yet? I dunno if it snowed yet, see, there's no window in here... Hey, come back here... please!

The Trustee disappears, Danny falls back against the wall of the cell, eyes closed, staring upward, fingers banging against the wall. Then he is moving, walking around in circles, starts singing his head off. Finally, his voice breaks. He stops, staring around the cell, reading the graffiti for the thousandth time, listening to the silence. Leans against the wall, slides down to the floor, arms on his knees, head bent. Starts humming softly, eyes closed. Hear over:

FRANK'S VOICE

Sounds terrific! Great! I sure will, Alec. I'll see you then:

(phone hangs up)

Well, are you ready for that!

68 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

68

Sandy, her mouth full of pins, is letting down the hems on a pair of Steve's jeans.

(CONTINUED)

Steve, restless on the table as she works, both twisting around as Frank paces from the phone, his face more animated than ever before.

FRANK

Alec says their supervisor's retiring at the end of the month, he's talked to Don Graves in hiring and they want me for the job!

STEVE

What job?

SANDY

In Akron? Oh, Frank...

FRANK

Of course we have to go through the motions, they've set up an interview for next week... honey, you remember Don, he and I used to run around together, played ball at school. Well! Damn! That's the best news I've had for months!

He moves to the refrigerator, takes out a beer, Sandy removing the pins from her mouth, staring at him while:

STEVE

Uncle Alec lives in Akron, is that in Ohio, Dad? That's Ohio State, right?

FRANK

Damn right, Tiger, best college team there is! Whoo!

(looks at Sandy)

What you gotta say, Momma?

SANDY

(slowly)

I don't know, Frank. It's wonderful.

(then)

Right now I'm thinking about Danny and what the lawyer said...

FRANK

(pleasure dimming)

I already told you, if Danny's not guilty then that's what he's gonna plead.

SANDY

But the lawyer said...

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (2)

68

STEVE

Does that mean we get to move to Akron, Dad?

FRANK

Sandy, we're going to court on Friday morning and Danny's coming home Friday afternoon. That's all there is to it.

STEVE

Dad? Does Uncle Alec still have that neat convertible? How old was I when we went there last? Dad? How far away is Akron?

Frank is staring at Sandy, who holds his gaze a long moment, goes back to pinning up Steve's pants.

CUT TO:

69 INT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM FIVE - DAY

69

Marni Blake talks desultorily with Andy Barnes; Pick and Roach sit in the back row with Frank and Sandy, Frank glancing at the tape-recorder; Mike and Corky talk quietly at the defense table, both glancing occasionally at:

70 DANNY AND KAREN

70

His eyes fastened on her, their hands welded together as:

MIKE

What happened with the Curtis boy?

CORKY

Bennet sent him to State...
(at Mike's face)
... Said the kid's an incurable runaway. I told him he would be too if he was beaten like that. And Tommy Lyons, third armed robbery, Bennet turned it over to adult court. Tommy will go away. Fifteen years old.

KAREN

Your mom was so nice, she called my folks and talked them into letting me come, and she met me at the bus station and everything...
(beat, then)
... Danny...

DANNY

Hey, it's gonna be okay, really, I'll be out today...
(grins)
... I'm so knocked out you're here.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

Everyone stops talking as Halloran enters from chambers, moves to the bench. Karen kisses Danny's cheek, sits next to Sandy, Mike flicks on the tape recorder with:

MIKE

All rise.

Halloran motions them to sit, takes a moment to glance over the papers as:

MIKE

(continuing)

Your Honor, this is in the arraignment of Danny Caldwell, a monor, case number 4407B12...

HALLORAN

(nods; beat, then)

Danny, I have your Advice and Rights Acknowledgement here, signed by you and your mother. You read and understood it?

Danny nods.

HALLORAN

(continuing)

Could you give the court a verbal reply, please, this is being taped.

DANNY

Yes. I understood it.

HALLORAN

And have you given any thought to why you're here in the past few days?

DANNY

Yes. Sir.

(at Halloran's expression; low)

I'm sorry about what I did.

Frank glances at Sandy, nods. Pick and Roach stifle smiles, Karen looks at her hands.

HALLORAN

I'm glad to hear it. Mr. Barnes, how does your client plead?

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (2)

70

As Andy rises, CAMERA HOLDS ON Danny, blinking fast, staring at the table, chewing his cheek. Ready to blow.

ANDY

If it please the court, my client wishes to plead guilty to all three charges. However, we ask that the extenuating circumstances be considered...

DANNY

No! No, I don't want to do that! I'll say I was drunk and I didn't have a permit, but that guy deserved it...

ANDY

Danny...

DANNY

I know what I said to you, but I changed my mind. It's not right, some guy lays that trip on you...

Andy's hand is on his arm with gentle pressure, and Danny subsides, as:

HALLORAN

Danny, you wish to plead not guilty to the assault and battery charge, is that right?

DANNY

Yes, sir.

Halloran is shuffling through the papers on the bench, glances at Marni.

HALLORAN

Ms. Blake, I have witnesses' depositions here, but I can't seem to find plaintiff's affidavit...

MARNI

(rises, flushing)
Your Honor, Mr. Quinn signed himself out of the hospital yesterday... so far we've been unable to locate him.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARNI (CONT'D)

(quickly)

Since I don't anticipate that taking long, I'd like to request detention be continued for...

HALLORAN

(snaps)

Request denied. No reason why the defendant should sit in jail because the prosecutor's office loses people. Mr. Raines, I want a trial date set within the thirty day period... Mr. Corcoran, I also seem to be missing Danny's evaluation...

CORKY

Your Honor, I'm afraid we're kind of backed up in probation...

HALLORAN

Danny's been available to you for five days! I want this resolved.

MIKE

(looks up from
calendar)

Your Honor, November second would be good.

HALLORAN

Very well. Mr. Corcoran, I'm giving you forty-eight hours for the initial psychological work-up...

CORKY

Er, Monday's a holiday, Your Honor, the department's closed...

FRANK

(rising)

Your Honor, when's Danny coming home?

CORKY

... also I have to check with Dr. Foreman's schedule for time...

HALLORAN

Have Dr. Foreman make time!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (4)

70

HALLORAN (CONT'D)

Mr. Caldwell, I'm sorry about this, the court requires an evaluation of Danny and it hasn't been done. Now he'll stay with us until that's underway, and after his release to you he must continue to check with his probation officer and the doctor. Is that understood?

Frank nods, confused by what's going on, sure only that Danny isn't coming home.

CUT TO:

71 INT. COURTHOUSE - OUTSIDE COURTROOM FIVE - DAY

71

ON Danny, face white, furious:

DANNY

First it's one day, then it's five, now it's another week! Dad, I gotta get the f... I gotta get out of here! I'm goin' crazy, I got nothin' to do, nobody to talk to...

He breaks off, not wanting to fall apart, starts to pace. Pick, Roach and Karen stand a little way away with Sandy. Corky heads through the crowd toward them as:

FRANK

I know, I know, listen, I'm gonna try to get another lawyer, somebody older, more experienced...

CORKY

(joining them)

You won't do much better than Andy Barnes, Mr. Caldwell...

FRANK

Look, I'm sorry, Mr. Corcoran, I know you people are busy, but this isn't good enough. That girl losing her witness, you people not doing what you're supposed to... and Danny's still in jail.

He stops, because Sandy has taken his arm, proud that he's speaking up. Corky nods.

(CONTINUED)

CORKY

We do the best we can, sir, we're understaffed and there are always more kids...

FRANK

Well, can't he have a radio or something? Somebody to talk to? It's not right, leaving a boy alone all the time...

CORKY

I don't know about the radio, but he'll be seeing plenty of me for the next few days if we're going to have him out by Friday...

FRANK

(beat; then)

Danny's learned his lesson. It's time he came home.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

72 EXT. COUNTY JAIL - COURTHOUSE/JAIL WALKWAY - DAY 72

Danny slouches along beside Corky, hands in his pockets, straightens a little at the WHISTLES from a second-story barred window, where three girls wave down at him, grinning. Danny looks up, waves a salute back, turns to see Caruso walking quickly toward them. He passes with a nod to Corky as Danny whispers something to the P.O., Caruso stopping to look back as:

CORKY

Hey, Al? You have any problem me giving Danny here a radio for his cell? You know, kind of help pass the time?

Caruso looks at Danny, remembering him. Danny looks back at him, snapping his hand-jive, foot tapping, hopeful.

CARUSO

A radio? How about a color TV and a four-poster bed? You know the rules, Mr. Corcoran.

He goes on his way, Danny glaring after him. Corky touches his arm.

CORKY

Don't worry about it, I'll talk to him...

DANNY

(yells after Caruso)

Hey, you run a great camp here, Commandant! Heil Hitler!

CUT TO:

73 INT. COUNTY JAIL - JUVENILE SECTION - DAY 73

ON the elevator and Danny follows Corky out, tight, tense, along the hallway toward a door marked "JUVENILE DAY ROOM," passing Clifford, entering the Section with two BOYS, one around eleven, the other nearer sixteen. As they walk in, the older one yells something unintelligible to the younger one, who shoves him. Clifford calmly separating them, getting the bigger boy into a cell, slamming the door on him. The little one sobs:

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

LITTLE BOY

It was him hit the ol' lady, I
never... it was him...

Clifford puts him into the next open cell, closes the
door. The Day Room door closes behind Danny and Corky.

74 INT. COUNTY JAIL - JUVENILE DAY ROOM - DAY

74

A ping pong table, a TV. Corky sits at a game table,
Danny pacing around the room, very tense, Corkey look-
ing up from the notes he is trying to take, exasperated,
as:

DANNY

I gotta have some sounds, Corky,
I mean I gotta have some music,
y'know?

CORKY

Danny, you 'gotta' get this done
or you're gonna be in here forever!
Now come on, help, will you?

(checks notes)

Okay, so Pick and Roach are your
best buddies. Roach? Doper, huh?

DANNY

He useta eat cockroaches when he
was little. So what's the ping
pong table for?

CORKY

Juveniles in detention.

Danny stares at him, foot tapping, hand jive. Corky
shrugs.

CORKY

(continuing)

You can only play if there's a
guard supervising. Right now
Caruso's short-staffed same as
everybody else. That your girl
in court?

DANNY

Yeah, Karen. Hey, man, you can handle
Caruso, get me a radio, huh?

CORKY

I told you, I'll try.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORKY (CONT'D)

This Karen, she's really cute.
You guys have sex?

DANNY

None of your business.

CORKY

(sighs, writes)

How about dope? You smoke dope?
Take pills? Drink beer? Liquor?

DANNY

(half grins)

You get me a radio, I'll tell you
anything you wanna know.

CORKY

Listen, kid, I want you out of here
as bad as you do. You think I like
working weekends?

(checks his watch)

Come on, I gotta go pick up my kids.

DANNY

You married?

CORKY

Divorced. Okay, let's get some
answers, you got a shrink to see.

CUT TO:

75 INT. COURTHOUSE - DR. FOREMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

75

Ratty, worn carpeting, building blocks and toys in one corner. DR. WENDY FOREMAN, child psychologist, watches in silence as Danny paces frenetically around the room, hyper-tense, flicking at the toys, the plants, fingers drumming on the bookcases, glancing at the psychologist, who only waits, eyes warm, understanding, her quietness beginning to reach Danny by its very contrast to his own turmoil. Finally he slows down, takes a deep breath, swings the "County Property" stamped metal chair around and straddles it, fingers tapping on the back as he stares at her. Smiles suddenly.

DANNY

I'm kinda wired, you know?

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

DR. FOREMAN
(smiles back)
Do you want to talk?

CAMERA MOVES IN on his face as he stares at her, humming a little, chewing the inside of his cheek, then:

DANNY
I guess.

76 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DANNY'S CELL - DAY

76

Danny is sitting on the bed, fists clenched tight, face sullen, rhythmically banging his head against the wall behind him, teeth buried in his lower lip. HEAR OVER:

DR. FOREMAN'S VOICE
Danny Caldwell, juvenile. Eleven days in detention, I saw him yesterday and this morning.

CAMERA HAS MOVED IN CLOSE on Danny, on the tears on his face.

77 INT. COUNTY JAIL - CARUSO'S OFFICE - DAY

77

ON Dr. Foreman as she looks up from the file, Caruso, checking the jail log, face impassive.

DR. FOREMAN
Al, this kid is a time bomb, sitting up there, he's got to be around some people, something.

Caruso looks at her with a faint smile. It's an old routine between them, making deals for the inmates, and she usually gets the best of him. But he likes her, respects her, even if he's not too impressed by her profession.

CARUSO
Wendy, he'll be out in two days...

DR. FOREMAN
No, three days... tomorrow I'm at Mar Vista State, I can't finish the work-up. You know how long three days is to a child? He's completely isolated. We don't find him something to do, I'll have to file a report...

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

CARUSO
(eyebrows raised)
That a threat?

DR. FOREMAN
You know me better than that.

Their eyes meet, Dr. Foreman giving him some silence.
Finally:

CARUSO
I can put him in the kitchen with
Faye. That do you?

DR. FOREMAN
Faye will be perfect.

78 INT. COUNTY JAIL - KITCHEN - DAY

78

ON the two hundred and fifty pounds of redhead that is
BIG FAYE, in her sixties, twinkling eyes peering from
rolls of fat.

BIG FAYE
You don't haveta cook, okay? I'm
the best damm cook in the entire
state, so you won't be doin' no
cookin'. You clean up the stoves,
you clean the counters, the faucets,
the pans, the sinks an' the utensils,
but you don't cook. Got it?

CAMERA MOVES TO INCLUDE Danny, hands in his pockets,
nodding. His eyes flick from Big Faye to Caruso as:

CARUSO
The law says I have to keep you
separate from the adult inmates.
The shrink says I have to give you
something to do. So you won't talk
to anybody, understand? One word
from you, I hear about it from Faye,
you're back in your cell. Any
questions?

Danny shakes his head, and just for an instant, Caruso
sees the frightened child under the brash exterior, the
child willing to do anything to please. Then it's gone,
the sullen look back. He frowns slightly, nods at Faye,
goes out. Faye points to two huge sinks piled high with
dishes, grins at Danny.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

BIG FAYE

I got one thing to say. You give me any trouble, I'll break both your legs. You know how to wash dishes?

(as he nods)

Well, thank God for small mercies. Go to it.

CUT TO:

79 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - KITCHEN

79

Sandy is cleaning up dishes, tight, not looking at Frank, as:

SANDY

I want Danny back! I want him out of that place! I don't want to think about anything else until he's home!

FRANK

What is it with you? You feel good me knowing you're supporting us all?

SANDY

How can you leave when he's still in there?

He stares at her.

FRANK

I have to go. We gotta try... we gotta start over, Sandy, there's nothing for us here. Look, we'll get another house, near the family...

SANDY

But it's your family, Frank! I want so stay here! And I want Danny home!

CUT TO:

80 INT. COUNTY JAIL - KITCHEN/CANTEEN - DAY

80

Perhaps forty FEMALE INMATES, in drab gray prison dress, file past the serving hatch, holding out their plastic trays for servings dished out by Big Faye and two Trustees. Behind them, Danny washes more dishes, eyes reddened, trying to ignore the laughter and comments of the Women.

(CONTINUED)

1ST INMATE

(laughing)

Faye's got herself a new cutie,
whatcha gonna do, have him for
breakfast?

BIG FAYE

(chuckles)

Hell, he wouldn't even make an
appetizer...

2ND INMATE

Dressed kinda fancy for washing dishes,
ain't he? Hey, kid, you gonna go
party after work?

3RD INMATE

Looks like he got his daddy's pants
on, you ask me.

2ND INMATE

Yeah, he is kinda skinny. Hey, boy,
turn around, let's get a look at you,
huh?

teeth gritted, washes the same plate for the third
time, stifles the impulse to turn. The Women are laugh-
ing as:

BIG FAYE

He ain't allowed to talk to you
bums, Caruso's orders, so lay off
him, starting now.

4TH INMATE

Oh, Faye, I just can't take my
eyes off him. He is something!
Be a love, turn him around just
once, so we can get a peek...

BIG FAYE

Hey, Danny boy... give the nice
ladies a big smile, huh?

At the mention of his name, someone starts a chorus of
"Danny Boy," whistles, laughter, and then somebody else
bangs a tray on the counter, yells:

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

5TH INMATE

Turn around! Turn around!

Several others take up the chant, banging their trays in time, and Faye, suddenly realizing things are getting out of hand, crosses to Danny, jerks him around:

BIG FAYE

(quietly)

They don't mean nothing, just play along, keep your mouth shut.

There is scattered applause from the Women as Danny faces them, white with frustration, stands pinioned under Faye's massive hand, gazes into the thronging, laughing crowd, his eyes meeting those of:

82 A GIRL

82

apparently not much older than Danny, staring at him, not joining in with the other Women. She looks a little like Karen, the gray prison dress hanging on her. For a moment, something passes between them, a recognition, a flash of understanding, of empathy. Then she is shoved aside by an older inmate, laughing raucously, and is lost to Danny's sight. Faye ruffles Danny's hair with her free hand, and he tries to twist away, which elicits howls of laughter from the Women. Then she lets him go.

BIG FAYE

Okay, you've had your look, I gotta meal to get goin' here... let's move it...

83 DANNY

83

staring down at the hot, greasy water, swallowing rage.

84 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - BOYS' BEDROOM - NIGHT (MOS)

84

ON Sandy, in the doorway, staring at Danny's bed. Jeff has crawled in, is sleeping with his head jammed into the pillow, bottom up in the air. Steve is sprawled across his own bed. Mechanically, Sandy straightens the blankets, goes out, CAMERA FOLLOWING her into:

85 FRANK AND SANDY'S BEDROOM

85

Frank coming out of the bathroom in T-shirt and shorts, wiping the toothpaste from his mouth with a towel. They stare at each other across the room, then Frank looks away, pulls back the covers and gets into bed. Sandy's arms go around herself, holding tight.

86 INT. COUNTY JAIL - LOBBY - DAY

86

ON Steve and Jeff, looking slightly forlorn, sitting together on a bench, Steve's eyes on the uniformed Sheriffs at the desk, Jeff's on his mother, disappearing through a door marked "Authorized Personnel Only. Check with Desk Before Entering." Jeff turns and punches Steve, hard.

87 INT. COUNTY JAIL - VISITING ROOM - DAY

87

Sandy's hand shakes visibly as she lights a cigarette, looks up at Danny, re-reading a one page letter, the envelope lying on the table between them.

SANDY

How is she? She called to let us know she'd gotten home safely, I told you that. She's a nice girl, Karen... it's a shame they won't let your friends visit...

Danny is chewing the inside of his cheek, staring at Karen's letter. He swallows, struggling for control, forcing a blank expression as he folds the letter, tucks it into his pocket, reaches for Sandy's cigarette pack and takes one out.

DANNY

She's doin' okay. Goin' out for mat maid when wrestlin' starts. She's fine. So anyway, like I said, bein' in the kitchen's a damn sight better'n settin' up in that god-awful cell...

SANDY

Sitting. Sitting in the cell. And stop cursing, Danny. And since when did you smoke?

DANNY

Ah, Big Faye slips me one now an' again, you know? She's the cook... she's a definite space cadet.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DANNY (CONT'D)

So Dad's leaving for Ohio tonight,
huh? You goin' with him?

SANDY

No, honey. I'll be here, don't
worry.

DANNY

Two more days.

SANDY

I'm not supposed to tell you, but
Jeff and Steve have a party planned
for you, and Jeff made you the
cutest gift...

(faster)

... a dog or a cat or a hippo, I
don't know, but he tore up all this
newspaper and made glue from flour
and water oh, what do you call that,
you used to do it when you were
little, in kindergarten...

DANNY

(watching her)

Papier mache.

SANDY

Right, papier mache, you should've
seen the kitchen, it looked like
something out of a Marx Brothers
movie, you remember how you used to
love those movies on TV...

DANNY

Mom, will you quit talkin' like
I'm dead or somethin'! Jesus!

Fighting back tears, she stares at him.

88 INT. CALDWELL APARTMENT - FRANK AND SANDY'S BEDROOM 88
- NIGHT

Sandy sits, arms tight around herself, watching Frank
take shirts, socks, etc., from the chest of drawers
to the open suitcase on the bed.

SANDY

He's... he's so different, Frank.
He doesn't even sound like Danny
any more.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

FRANK

Maybe this whole thing's got him to growing up. Listen, he'll be back tomorrow. He'll settle down fine.

(at her expression)

I know, I know! It's been longer than we thought but I don't feel like that's my fault, Sandy!

But he does, and she knows it, feels the same way. She crosses to him, takes the underwear he is holding, starts folding it neatly, breaks the strained silence.

SANDY

I've been making deals with myself, Frank. Like when we were kids? If Danny comes home tomorrow I'll stop smoking. If you get the job in Akron...

She breaks off, not crying, just refolding the undershirt for the fourth time, staring at the suitcase. Frank turns from the closet, looks at her.

FRANK

What?

SANDY

(whispers)

... I'll stop being afraid. Oh, Frank, I don't want to leave here. I've lived here all of my life.

(a breath)

Hold me tight, please. I'm so scared.

She buries her face in the undershirt, Frank moving behind her, arms around her, lips in her hair, unable to find the words, unable to admit that he's scared too, aware only that he is barely hanging on to the last threads of control of his life.

CUT TO:

89 EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

89

Sandy APPROACHES CAMERA from the parking lot, looks up to see Corky hurrying toward her, the inevitable stack of files under one arm. He falls into step with her, talking quickly, and she stops, face alarmed.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

SANDY

Judge Halloran's sick? Does that mean we have to wait longer?

CORKY

No, there's no problem, Judge Bennet will sign the release papers, it's just a formality.

She glances at him quickly, alarm fading, and they move on toward the courthouse.

90 INT. COURTHOUSE - JUDGE BENNET'S CHAMBERS - DAY

90

ON JUDGE BENNET, the antithesis of Halloran. Sleeder, ascetic, controlled, reading steadily through the typed-up reports, without expression. Finally he looks up at Sandy, puts the papers in an orderly pile:

JUDGE BENNET

Is Mr. Caldwell joining us?

SANDY

(nervous)

No, he had to go out of state, a ... a business trip. He kept waiting, the date changed so many times he had to leave.

JUDGE BENNET

(moment, then)

Mrs. Caldwell, I see from the background report that you are employed...

SANDY

That's right, yes. It's just until Frank, well, until things get straightened out.

JUDGE BENNET

And Mr. Caldwell is returning...?

SANDY

He thought Thursday, the weekend at the latest.

JUDGE BENNET

And who will be supervising Danny and the other children?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

Sandy stares at him. Glances at Corky. Back to Bennet.

SANDY

Well, I will. I mean, I'll take the time off, I just hadn't thought...

JUDGE BENNET

(frowns, then)

You must understand releasing Danny to your custody entails strict enforcement of the court's order...

(taps paper)

Judging from the evaluation... he requires both parents, particularly Mr. Caldwell, to supervise him at all times.

SANDY

No, Danny does what I tell him...

JUDGE BENNET

I'm sorry, Mrs. Caldwell, I can't take the responsibility for your son's release until your husband comes home.

Sandy stares at Corky, who won't look at her, back to Bennet.

SANDY

You mean you think he's better off in jail? This is crazy! It's cruel ... you haven't the right...

JUDGE BENNET

I'm sorry...

CUT TO:

91 INT. COUNTY JAIL - JUVENILE SECTION DAY ROOM - DAY

91

Danny stares at Sandy, looks away, blinking very fast.

DANNY

So when's Dad coming home?

SANDY

(near tears)

I'm going to call him tonight, honey.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

SANDY (CONT'D)

I'm going to tell him to come back right away... and Corky's trying to get in touch with Judge Halloran to see if...

(she breaks off,

swallowing)

Danny, I'm sorry, honey, I know I promised...

Danny is chewing the inside of his cheek, nods several times.

DANNY

Yeah, I know, Mom, it's not your fault.

(a breath, then)

Hey, it's alright, listen, don't call Dad, it's a couple more days, I can handle it. No, really Mom, I can. It's okay... don't cry, please, don't cry.

Awkwardly he puts an arm around her, comforting.

92 INT. COURTHOUSE - DR. FOREMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

92

Danny sits in front of Dr. Foreman's desk. Perfectly still. Absolutely silent. No tapping feet, no drumming fingers. No expression. He glances at the clock, gets up and heads for the door. Looks back at Dr. Foreman. Very calm:

DANNY

You know what? I'm never getting out of here. Never. There's other people think that too, you know, like my girl, she knows. First week I had three letters, second week two... I haven't heard from her this week. She knows. I'm in here for good.

DR. FOREMAN

Danny, that's silly, you know it is. Karen's probably busy with her new school, new neighborhood.... You'll hear from her.

He smiles his sweet, startling smile.

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

DANNY

You think?

Then he shakes his head. No way. Goes out.

93 INT. COURTHOUSE - OUTSIDE DR. FOREMAN'S OFFICE - DAY 93

Danny turns from closing the door, stares down the hall. Two Men wearing prison blues, handcuffed to each other, are being escorted into the elevator by a Guard. A Second Guard with an OLD MAN, also in prison uniform, is hurrying to catch the elevator. Further down the hall, a Trustee mops the linoleum. Clifford leans nonchalantly against the wall, waiting for Danny.

94 DANNY 94

looking, suddenly feeling that this is where he belongs.

95 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - DAY 95

Paper streamers, party cups, a cake, pop. The door opens and Jeff and Steve erupt from behind the sofa, yelling. Trail off as Sandy walks in, closing the door quietly behind her, leaning against it.

STEVE

Where's Danny?

SANDY

They wouldn't let him come, Steve.
Not until your father gets back...
they wouldn't let him...

She stops, sinks down at the kitchen table, face in her hands.

JEFF

(plaintively)

Is Danny ever coming home?

STEVE

Who cares?

He pushes past his brother, runs into the bedroom, slams the door.

96 INT. COUNTY JAIL - KITCHEN/CANTEEN - DAY

96

The male inmates are filing past the service hatch, Danny helping Faye serve. She glances at him a couple of times, because today his manner is very different. He's angry. Slopping eggs, sausage and hashbrowns onto the plastic trays, causing a couple of muttered protests from the men. But nobody responds until STREMSER, a big, tough-looking blond, stops for his serving.

STREMSER

Hey! Watch what you're doin'!

Danny doesn't say a word, gives Stremser a murderous look and slops more hashbrowns onto the tray:

STREMSER

(continuing)

You punk!

Danny slams down the ladle and is over the food bins, hands going for Stremser's throat, the big man staggering back, the men scattering, Danny sinking a fist into his belly, Stremser recovering, hitting him back as they topple into tables, chairs flying, Danny fighting silently, viciously, the Men around them backing away, talk stopping. There is an eerie HUSH in the room, the only SOUND the instake of breath, chairs falling, tables crashing as Danny, smaller but just as tough, gives as good as he gets from the bigger, softer man.

97 BIG FAYE

97

moves to the alarm button, pushes it. The SHRILL OF THE BELL cuts across the room as Danny, nose bleeding, a cut above his eye, sinks to the floor, out cold, only seconds before Stremser lurches back into a table, knocks himself out. Hear OVER:

CLIFFORD'S VOICE

Listen, kid, this's got nothing to do with me, you know. The Man gives an order, I do what I'm told.

DANNY'S VOICE

(mumbles)

I can handle it.

98 INT. COUNTY JAIL - BASEMENT - DAY

98

CAMERA TRACKING Danny, walking in front of Clifford down the long, darkened corridor.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

Hands shoved in his pockets, he walks almost jauntily, wiping at the blood on his face with one shoulder, but hips swinging, head up. Until they round a corner, and he stops, almost gagging at the smell emanating from two small doorways under a high steel staircase. Clifford opens one up, grimacing at the odor, and Danny's composure vanishes as he stares at the four foot high by five foot long hole, glances quickly at Clifford.

CLIFFORD

Come on, man, get in there.

DANNY

I want to see Caruso.

CLIFFORD

He's off for the weekend, you know that. Deputy Russell's in charge...

DANNY

Russell, who's he? Clifford, don't put me in there, give me a break, call Caruso at home, Clifford, please...

Clifford is unable to deal with it, shoves Danny inside, Danny falling to his knees, swinging around, too late as Clifford slams the door on him, rams home the bolts.

DANNY'S VOICE

Clifford! Let me out! Let me out, please! Oh, God, I can't breathe! Clifford!

A moment of hesitation where it seems almost as though the Guard will open the door and take the consequences, but he's been a guard too long, and he turns away, walks quickly down the long hall, trying to block out the anguished cries, the POUNDING on the door from behind him.

99 INT. COUNTY JAIL - THE HOLE - DAY

99

Pitch black. Danny scrabbling desperately at the door, his cries trailing away as nobody responds.....

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

... and, hunched over, he squats down, eyes gradually adjusting to the dark, seeing only the excrement-smearred walls, the concrete floor, the miniscule grating that is a stair tread from above the only source of air. He buries his head between his knees, hands over his ears, and sobs. HOLD A LONG MOMENT, then:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

100 INT. COUNTY JAIL - BASEMENT CORRIDOR - DAY 100

On the elevator, Caruso, unbuttoning his overcoat, exiting even before the doors are fully open, grim-faced, angry. DeVries and Clifford are behind him. CAMERA FOLLOWS them down the corridor, Caruso moving fast, FOOTSTEPS ECHOING. Throughout, hear OVER:

CARUSO'S VOICE

(reading)

Burston, no problems. Leckie,
refused food Saturday, ate
normally Sunday. Caldwell...

(beat)

Caldwell. Fighting in canteen,
forty-eight hours in solitary!

101 AT THE HOLE 101

Caruso stops, listening. At first there is only the HUM OF THE FURNACE, the SOUNDS OF THE BUILDING, and then, faint, hear:

DANNY'S VOICE

(a broken sing-song)

... Mom... Dad... Mom... Dad...
Mom... Dad...

Then DeVries swings open the door, revealing:

102 DANNY 102

curled in the fetal position in the cramped space, filthy, hair matted, the split eye swollen, dried blood covering his shirt and pants. He covers his good eye with his arm, scuttles away from the light.

103 CARUSO 103

retches at the smell and the sight, turns on Clifford.

CARUSO

Goddamn you, that's a child.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

CLIFFORD

I tried to tell Russell it was a kid, he said to do like I was told.

CARUSO

(tight)

I want Russell in my office in a half-hour. And if he's home, get him in here anyway.

White-faced, Clifford turns away. Caruso looks back at Danny, his normally soft voice harsh:

CARUSO

(continuing)

Danny. Get out of there. Come on, let's go.

Danny doesn't move for a long moment, hiding his head, his body beginning to tremble, the shaking becoming so violent that his teeth chatter, but other than that he comes no nearer, either unable to or unwilling.

CARUSO

(continuing)

Danny, this is Mr. Caruso. Get out of there, you hear me?

A movement. Danny edges toward the light, squinting under his hands, DeVries instinctively moving to help him up, Caruso holding him back with:

CARUSO

(continuing)

Come on, come on, let's go, we haven't got all day, let's do it!

Danny, still shaking, tears coursing through the dirt on his face, teeth sunk into his lower lip, forces himself to move out of the hole, grabbing the door for support as he pushes upward, blinking, sways, a small sound like the moan of a sick child in his throat, and Caruso moves fast, catches him just as he starts to fall, swinging him up into his arms as though he were a two year old, starts off toward the elevators with:

CARUSO

(continuing)

DeVries, get Faye up to the staff sickroom, get the medical kit and about a hundred gallons of hot soapy water... goddamn, Caldwell, but you stink...

CUT TO:

104 EXT. GREYHOUND STATION - DAY (RAIN)

104

Sandy, Jeff and Steve peer through the glass door at the big silver buses wheezing in and out of the station, AIR BRAKES HISSING. Not many people get off. In the depressing terminal waiting room one or two old men sleep in the warmth, a teenage girl stares dully at a coin TV, a young couple look at each other, hands clasped, the man reaching over, wiping a tear from the woman's face. Then Steve darts forward, through the doors into the icy rain outside with:

STEVE

There he is!

Sandy picks up Jeff, CAMERA MOVING TO the doors as Frank enters, Steve clinging to him, Jeff reaching out his arms. Frank pulling Sandy close, hustling them back into the warmth of the room with:

FRANK

I got it. I got the job.

Steve whoops, Sandy swallows, holds on to Frank as:

FRANK

(continuing)

... start in ten days. It's alright there, more built up than I remember but there's a real nice neighborhood. Alec and Jenny are looking for a place for us to rent, we can stay with them for a while...

He breaks off, all of them heading for the front entrance, looks around as, half-laughing:

SANDY

Ten days! A week to move! Frank!

FRANK

Where's Danny?

As the laughter fades from Sandy's face...

CUT TO:

105 INT. COURTHOUSE - OUTSIDE COURTROOMS FOUR AND FIVE
- DAY

105

where the usual Monday morning bedlam goes on, Mike Raines and Corky waylaid by a FAT WOMAN in stretch pants, accompanied by her thirteen-year-old son.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

105

FAT WOMAN

What time we see the judge?

MIKE

You were supposed to be here at
eight this morning...

FAT WOMAN

(shrugs)

Jimmy was sleepin' 'til eleven, I
was waitin' for him to wake up.

A YOUNG LAWYER and a WELFARE WORKER argue across a
small woman with a half-dozen pre-school kids hanging
around her.

WELFARE WORKER

You know what your client is, Tony?
She's a rabbit turning out kids
for the agencies to take care of.
This is nuts!

YOUNG LAWYER

Susan, I'm Legal Aid, not Family
Planning, can we get on with it?

106 CORKY

106

grits his teeth at the sight of Frank and Sandy as they
exit the elevator, look around, spotting him, shoulder-
ing their way toward him. He's not looking forward to
this.

CORKY

Mrs. Caldwell, Mr. Caldwell...

FRANK

I gotta tell you, what you did,
keeping Danny in here because I
was gone...

(shakes his head)

That judge oughta be shot.

Sandy moves closer to him, Frank takes a deep breath,
then:

FRANK

(continuing)

Well, I'm back. Where's Halloran?

Corky has guided them to a recess in the hallway, turns
now.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

CORKY

I might as well say this straight out. There was some trouble over the weekend... Danny picked a fight with another inmate in the canteen Saturday. Mike's already spoken to Judge Halloran...

FRANK

(explodes)

What is this? What happened this time, some other guy make a pass at him? What are you people doing to my kid? He's been in more trouble since he was here than he was at home!

He shoves Corky up against the wall, ignoring Sandy's restraining hand.

FRANK

(continuing)

Listen, you, I want my boy out, and I want him out now.

MIKE'S VOICE

I'm sorry, Mr. Caldwell, it can't be done.

107 INT. COURTHOUSE - JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT - DAY 107

A few people, most of the staff in court with cases. Mike is on his way too, late, confronted by Frank.

FRANK

What you telling me it can't be done? This is my kid you're talking about, my kid, I got some rights in this...

(breaks off, moment)

I want to see the judge. Now.

MIKE

He'll be happy to talk to you, but you'll have to wait until lunch recess...

HALLORAN'S VOICE

I understand exactly how you feel, Mr. Caldwell...

108 INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM FIVE - DAY

108

Halloran sits on the edge of the defense table, Sandy and Frank listening, Mike checking over some files by the door. Frank is winding down. This is still a judge.

FRANK

I don't know if you do, Your Honor,
it's getting real hard on everyone...

HALLORAN

Please, try to see it from our point of view. We're not perfect, we make mistakes too, but Danny's a very angry boy, which isn't to say that that's abnormal for his age... adolescence is a tough time for everybody, especially parents. Danny has no control over his temper, Mr. Caldwell. Something doesn't go his way, he's disappointed, frustrated... he blows up. He's injured one man and attacked another.

FRANK

I tell him that, I tell him he's gotta learn to handle his temper...

HALLORAN

(nods)

That's exactly what we're trying to do too. And it's why I want Danny to stay here until the trial... he has a good relationship with Dr. Graham, our psychologist, I really think it's the best thing for him. Of course, if you'd like to discuss it with her... please go ahead.

Frank and Sandy exchange a look, Frank chewing on the inside of his cheek. Sandy looks at Halloran:

SANDY

Judge Halloran, my husband has a job in Ohio, we're moving out of state, well, right away. Will Danny...

HALLORAN

Mrs. Caldwell, we're not trying to steal your son.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

108

HALLORAN (CONT'D)

I simply feel that he should remain in a structured environment... especially if you're moving... until we're able to well, redirect his emotional patterns a little. Otherwise... well, pathological criminal behavior often begins this way.

She nods, not liking it, but hearing the voice of reason. Moves to Frank, slips an arm through his as:

FRANK

(beat, then)

Can we see him?

HALLORAN

(rising)

Of course you can... probably better to leave it until tomorrow, visiting hours are over for today.

(shakes Frank's hand)

I appreciate your cooperation, Mr. Caldwell. Mrs. Caldwell...

CUT TO:

109 INT. COUNTY JAIL - HALLWAY - DAY

109

CAMERA TRACKING Caruso and DeVries as they head toward Caruso's office:

CARUSO

I can't put him back in the kitchen, there's no way. Just leave him in the dayroom for now, he can have his meals in there. And get Doc Foreman over, I want her to see him.

He walks into his office, closes the door. DeVries steps behind his desk, picks up the phone.

110 IN CARUSO'S OFFICE

110

he's on the phone too:

CARUSO

This is Caruso. Have Mike Raines call me the minute he's out of court.

CUT TO:

111 INT. COUNTY JAIL - JUVENILE DAYROOM - DAY 111

ON the door as it opens, DeVries holding it for Dr. Graham, who frowns, looking at:

112 DANNY 112

sitting quite still in an upholstered chair, staring into space. Unmoving. He is showered, in clean clothes, a gauze pad over one eye, his face puffy, bruised from the fight. Dr. Graham drags a chair over to his, reaches for his hand. It's as though she isn't even there.

113 INT. COUNTY JAIL - OUTSIDE CARUSO'S OFFICE - DAY 113

Caruso walks TOWARD CAMERA, stops at DeVries' desk, checks over the telephone call book, scowls. DeVries comes across the hallway:

CARUSO

Mike Raines call yet?

DeVRIES

Ten minutes ago. He's back in court until five.

He looks at Caruso, waiting for it. A moment, then, quiet:

CARUSO

I want that kid out of here, DeVries. It's enough.

CUT TO:

114 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DANNY'S CELL - NIGHT 114

Danny lies flat on his back, staring up at the ceiling, hands folded across his chest. He is absolutely still. CAMERA MOVES TO INCLUDE the judas hole, the curtain slid aside, Caruso looking in.

115 INT. COUNTY JAIL - JUVENILE DAY ROOM - DAY 115

SHOOTING PAST Frank and Sandy TOWARD Danny, the gauze removed from his cut eye, the swelling black and blue. He is very still, staring at the small transistor radio on the table between them. Very quietly:

(CONTINUED)

DANNY

That's great, Dad. I mean about the job.

Across the room DeVries watches Frank and Sandy deliberately pushing aside Danny's lack of enthusiasm, ignoring the pall of defeat slowly settling over him.

FRANK

Alright, now today's the 22nd, I've cleared it with the mill, I'll be back on the first, we'll head out of here right after the trial's over.

Danny stares at the radio, turns it over in his hands.

DANNY

Right.

SANDY

Uncle Alec says the schools are very good, Danny, and your cousin Mike's in the same grade as you, remember? You always used to like him, you'll have someone your own age to take you around...

FRANK

Listen, Danny, you've gotta stay out of trouble in here. Mr. Raines says you gotta work with the doctor, talk to her, be as helpful as you can, you know?

DANNY

Yes.

(beat, then)

So you're all leaving Monday?

FRANK

Monday.

SANDY

Honey, don't look like that. Your dad'll be back for you...

FRANK

Danny, I know it's a mess, but you'd have behaved yourself, you'd be out of here now and coming with us.

Sandy gives him a look, Danny glancing up from one to the other.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED: (2)

115

DANNY

Will you come and say goodbye?

CUT TO:

116 INT. COUNTY JAIL - JUVENILE DAYROOM - ON DANNY - DAY 116

face pressed against the barred window, staring out, not waving. CAMERA MOVES TO HIS POV, TO the street below, where the Chevy, loaded to the gills, a twenty-six foot U-Haul truck behind it, is pulling out from the curb, Steve leaning out of the car, waving, Sandy's arm waggling, Frank hitting the U-Haul horn.

117 DANNY 117

watches until they are out of sight, turns back into the room. Caruso watches him from the door. Their eyes meet for an instant, then Danny looks away, reaches for the radio, turns it on, puts a cigarette in his mouth and walks to Caruso, avoiding his eyes, waits for a light.

118 EXT. COUNTY JAIL - LATE DAY 118

Caruso exiting the building, pulling on his overcoat, striding across the walkway toward the courthouse.

119 INT. COURTHOUSE - JUVENILE PROBATION DEPARTMENT - LATE DAY 119

P.O.s putting on their coats, leaving for the day. Heads turn curiously as Caruso enters, cuts straight across the room and into:

120 MIKE RAINES' OFFICE 120

Mike swivelling around from his file-laden desk as Caruso comes in:

CARUSO

Mike, I don't care what Halloran's ordered, I want Danny Caldwell out of my jail.

Mike looks heavenward, exasperated, annoyed:

(CONTINUED)

120 CONTINUED:

120

MIKE

Oh, please, we've been over this every day this week! His parents are leaving the state! What do you want to do, put him out on the street?

CARUSO

I run a prison for adult men and women, not a bunch of children! Now I get these kids a couple of days, a week... Danny Caldwell's becoming a permanent fixture!

121 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DANNY'S CELL - NIGHT

121

The radio lies on the bed, CAMERA MOVING UP to Danny, dancing at the far end of the cell, lost in the music we cannot hear, his motions frenetic, almost absurd as he spins around, arms waving, fingers clicking, shaking his head. CONTINUE TO HEAR:

122 INT. COURTHOUSE - MIKE RAINES' OFFICE - LATE DAY

122

MIKE

You got any suggestions where I should put him? You tell me, I'll send him and forty-three other kids I got nowhere else for, so I gotta leave them on the street or with parents who can't handle them or families that abuse them! There is no place to put Danny Caldwell! You wanna send him to Marywell? They're jammed like sardines up there, the Health Department's closed down Bourney Juvenile and there's no money to clean it up or build another facility!

CARUSO

I work for the county jail, I'm no babysitter for the Juvenile Probation Department!

MIKE

You work for the city, the county, the state, half the taxpayers in America'll tell you these kids are as much your responsibility as mine!

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

122

CARUSO

How often you get over to the
Juvenile Section, Mike, huh?
You just put them there. I hear
'em talking to themselves because
they got nobody else to talk to.
I see fifteen year old punks
wetting the bed because they're
so damned scared of what's gonna
happen to them tomorrow...

123 INT. COUNTY JAIL - DANNY'S CELL - NIGHT

123

CAMERA PANS the graffiti, the jonny-pot, the cracked
linoleum. CONTINUE TO HEAR OVER:

CARUSO'S VOICE

... and nobody's gonna tell me I
get paid to take care of kids whose
parents can't handle them, who turn
'em over to the state to be
punished because they don't know
how! I want Danny Caldwell out! I
don't care how you do it, I want
that kid out of my jail and put
someplace else!

During this, CAMERA HAS MOVED to the radio, lying on
the floor alongside the neatly folded blanket, the
bed turned over, Danny lying face down on the blood-
stained mattress, eyes closed, face white, a ragged
gash in one forearm, the rusted bedspring torn from
the bed still clutched in his other hand. There is
a small, very peaceful smile on his face.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

FADE IN:

124 EXT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - NIGHT

124

Mostly dark. Lights on in the emergency department, an aid truck heading out, lights flashing, into the deserted street.

125 INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

125

Four tables in the trauma room, a couple of NURSES at a station, a surgical resident checking X-rays, an internist working with a Nurse on a crying baby. CAMERA FINDS Caruso in the waiting room, pacing back and forth. Checks the wall clock: 11:20. Looks up as the emergency room surgeon, DR. MARVIN KANE, early thirties, small, exhausted, appears through the swinging doors marked "O.R. Hospital Personnel Only." He crosses to Caruso, pulling off his green o.r. cap.

KANE

He'll be okay, Al... he's had five units, we stitched up the artery. It's good you got him when you did...

(grins)

... What the hell did you do, beat him with a rubber hose?

CARUSO

You got any coffee around here?

Kane gestures him to follow, CAMERA TRACKING them down the hallway toward the emergency room office, which is a closet behind the nurses' station. As they walk:

CARUSO

When can I see him?

KANE

He's in recovery now, probably sleep a coupla hours...

He stops at the coffeepot, pours two polystyrene cups full of some viscous liquid, hands one to Caruso, a glimmer of humor in his eyes. He's never seen Caruso worried about a juvenile before. Pats his arm.

KANE

What's he in for?

CARUSO

Who the hell knows.

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

125

During this, the RADIO-MONITOR UNIT on the nurses' desk has SQUAWKED into life, the VOICE of a paramedic heard OVER:

PARAMEDIC'S VOICE

Unit Four to Base... come in.

NURSE

(into mike)

Base to Unit Four... come in,
whatcha got?

PARAMEDIC'S VOICE

Bringing in three, Carol... all kids,
one head injuries, looks bad, second's
internal, girl went through the
windshield, bit through her tongue...

KANE

(leans over to mike)

Did you get the tongue?

PARAMEDIC'S VOICE

Sure did, Doc.

The Nurse takes the mike as Kane edges past Caruso, grabs a bite of a wilted sandwich. Through a mouthful:

KANE

I tell you, some nights I think
every kid in this town is on
self-destruct.

Caruso nods, touches his shoulder in thanks, gets out of there, CAMERA TRACKING him down the hall, sipping his coffee with a grimace, stopping to watch as the aid truck pulls in, PARAMEDICS out, rear doors open, two gurneys, unloaded, a police car parking alongside the aid car... the cop helping out a fourteen-year-old girl, eyes wide with fright, a bloody bundle of guaze held over her mouth. The Nurse helps her into a wheelchair, the cops stepping aside to let them pass, nodding to Caruso, who stands staring after the kids on the gurneys.

126 INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - RECOVERY ROOM - NIGHT

126

Caruso watches through the glass plate in the double doors. Danny, still unconscious, oxygen mask in place, glucose drip in one ankle, plasma drip in the unhurt wrist, lies on a gurney.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

He looks very small, very pale, the fading bruise over his eye seeming cruel somehow. Hear over:

DR. FOREMAN'S VOICE

... you put an impressionable sixteen-year-old boy in jail, with what he sees as no possible way out... what do you expect?

127 INT. COURTHOUSE - MEETING ROOM - DAY

127

ON Dr. Foreman, voice calm, but an ominous glint in her eye as she looks from Halloran, sipping water, to Corky, watching her, to Mike Raines, staring at his notepad with a frown. Each has a much-scribbled upon pad in front of them, and there are several cigarette ends in Halloran's ashtray. Caruso sits at the end of the table, listening quietly.

DR. FOREMAN

His parents have left the state, he has no contact with kids his own age. Is it any wonder he feels helpless?

She takes a breath, looks over at Mike as:

MIKE

Wendy, you're making it sound like this is Andy Hardy we have here. There's an assault and battery charge against Danny...

DR. FOREMAN

He may not be Andy Hardy but he's not Charles Manson, either!

MIKE

(overlap)

... and you can't blame the cops for putting him in the tank. What're they gonna do, throw him back out on the street at one o'clock in the morning?

CORKY

If his father had come down and picked him up that night, we wouldn't be sitting here talking about this now.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORKY (CONT'D)

With a caseload of eighty kids, I don't make such a great parent either...

HALLORAN

Will Danny be out of the hospital in time for the trial, or should we reschedule it?

They all look down the table at Caruso, listening, watching.

CARUSO

(quiet)

He'll be out Friday.

DR. FOREMAN

Is three days enough for the probation department to get its act together, or is this child going to have to wait...

Mike slams his fist down on the table, turns on her.

MIKE

Danny Caldwell is potentially dangerous, Wendy! He's assaultive, he's resistive to treatment...

DR. FOREMAN

He doesn't need treatment, he needs to go home!

MIKE

He needs to be punished! He beat up two men and who knows how many more before we got him! You want to send him back to the street so he can beat up some more people?

DR. FOREMAN

Danny had no record of violence before he came into this system!

MIKE

I want the troubled kids taken off the streets and taught to behave like reasonable human beings instead of animals! They need guidance, rules, a structure, discipline!

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED: (2)

127

DR. FOREMAN

Putting a child in jail doesn't turn him into a responsible adult, Mikel. We took Danny Caldwell off the street! We isolated him and brutalized him and we destroyed his belief in himself as a human being!

There is a short silence, nobody meeting anybody's eyes. Halloran clears his throat, takes a deep breath.

HALLORAN

I think we're all aware of the inequities in the juvenile justice system, Dr. Foreman. But we do the best we can with what we have to work with. The question is, what can we do to ensure that this kind of thing doesn't happen again. Al?

He looks over at Caruso, who has been following his exchange without expression.

CARUSO

(softly)

I'd have thought the question was has anybody managed to reach the boy's parents yet.

MIKE

(a moment, then)

Yes. I spoke to the father's sister an hour ago. Apparently they broke down on the road somewhere... they can't be contacted.

CARUSO

Thank you.

CUT TO:

128 INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - DANNY'S ROOM - DAY

128

Caruso sits by the bed, watching Danny, tired, subdued. After a silence:

DANNY

I just wanted out. That's all. I wanted out.

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

128

He turns his head, stares at Caruso a long moment.
Then, with a ghostly return of the old Danny:

DANNY

(continuing)

What d'you care anyway?

Caruso nods, hesitates, about to say something, doesn't.
Gets up. But Danny has seen the effort, grins weakly.

DANNY

(continuing)

Thanks for coming by, Mr. Caruso.
See you in jail.

CARUSO

(smiles)

Behave yourself, punk.

He goes out. Danny stares after him, and then his
eyes close.

CUT TO:

129 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - DAY (AKRON, OHIO)

129

Larger than the older house, in a bigger yard, on a
street of variegated styled houses. There is a sense
of neighborhood here; kids play in gardens, the Good
Humor Man drives his ice-cream truck along the street,
Winnebagos are parked behind the garages. The Cald-
wells' Chevy is in the driveway of Eleven-Seventy-
Three. Hear over:

JEFF'S VOICE

It is so our house.

STEVE'S VOICE

No, Jeffy, we're only renting it
until we find a nicer one.

JEFF'S VOICE

I like it here.

130 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - DAY

130

A chaos of unpacked boxes, furniture, curtainless win-
dows, Jeff and Steve finishing up bowls of cereal at
the table, Sandy cleaning the refrigerator, Frank on
his back on the kitchen floor, tinkering with the in-
nards of the dishwasher.

(CONTINUED)

The paintwork is fresh, the carpeting new, there's even a sunporch, separated from the living room by colonial-style French doors, overlooking the backyard. The TV is ON.

STEVE

Mom, where's Danny gonna sleep?

JEFF

Danny doesn't live here. We do.

He puts his cereal bowl in the sink, crosses to the TV. Sandy, who has heard what he said, picks him up off the floor, hands him his jacket, turns OFF the TV.

SANDY

Out, both of you, there'll be a lot less watching TV around here from now on... Jeff, do as you're told. Steve, rinse off your dishes and take Jeff outside.

Grumbling, the kids do as they're told, Sandy looking after them, then around the room with a kind of amused horror. There is something more controlled about her, the anxiety gone from her voice, and she pushes back her hair with a smile as Frank closes up the dishwasher motor, gets up, putting his tools away.

SANDY

(continuing)

Will this ever look like a house?

Frank reaches down, hits the cycle button on the dishwasher. Hear the WATER BEGINNING TO RUN, the MOTOR HUMMING. He looks at Sandy and they both laugh, arms going around each other, holding on, looking over the chaos together.

SANDY

(continuing; laughing)

Ten days to move. You're crazy.

FRANK

(moment; then)

I know it's been tough on you. I don't have to tell you...

SANDY

(kisses him)

No, you don't. I'm glad we came...

She breaks off as the PHONE RINGS.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED: (2)

130

SANDY

(continuing)

That'll be Jenny, she's the only
one with the number... can you
get it, hon, I have to finish
cleaning...

She goes back to the kitchen, wringing out a cloth at
the sink, hits the dishwasher button with a grin, turns
it off, starts back to the refrigerator, only half-
listening to:

FRANK

(on the phone)

Hello? Yeah, hi, Jen. No, we
got in about seven... hey, thanks
for getting the phone turned on...
What?

CAMERA MOVES IN on his face as he listens, whitening,
sags back against the wall as:

FRANK

(continuing)

He what? Oh, my God. Is he...?
When did it happen?

131 SANDY

131

has looked around, is rising slowly, the happiness fading from her face, forcing her expression to remain neutral as Frank listens, nodding, takes a pencil from his coverall pocket and writes on a box top.

FRANK

I'll call him right now. Thanks,
Jenny. Sure, I will. Goodbye.

He hangs up, stands very still a moment, staring at the phone, looks across at Sandy.

SANDY

(flat)

It's Danny. What now?

FRANK

He's in the hospital. They said
he tried to kill himself.

132 SANDY

132

color draining from her face, sways a little, backs up against the counter, holding on to it, staring at Frank across the room. HOLD A MOMENT ON the two of them, separated, stunned.

CUT TO:

133 INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM FIVE - DAY

133

ON Danny, hair washed and shining, the bruise faded, still pale, very still, listening to:

MIKE'S VOICE

Your Honor, this is in the matter of the trial of Daniel Richard Caldwell, charged with driving without a license, driving while intoxicated, two counts of assault and battery. Case number 4407B12.

There is a different feeling about the courtroom today. Halloran's easy-going air is absent, Mike is totally immersed in his duties, Corky, Frank and Caruso sit at the back, all very still, Marni shoots an occasional glance at the defendant, and Andy Barnes has a stack of law books in front of him, small pieces of paper sticking out of each one. The title of the top book is "Cruel and Unusual Punishment: the Plight of Children in Jail."

HALLORAN

Ms. Blake?

Marni rises, glances over her file.

MARNI

Your Honor, the State requests that the court rule only on the charges of drunk driving and driving without a permit...

HALLORAN

Reason?

MARNI

(flushes)

We've been unable to locate the victim of the first assault. We're willing to drop the charge...

HALLORAN

Mr. Raines, the second assault?

(CONTINUED)

MIKE

Witnesses' accounts vary, Your Honor... Mr. Stremser returned to prison routine almost immediately...

ANDY

(rising)

Your Honor, regarding the drunk driving and driving with no permit charges, may the defense request the court consider time served?

HALLORAN

Certainly, Mr. Barnes. I think forty days detention is more than reasonable punishment in this case. Court rules accordingly.

(gavel)

Danny, you're free to go.

Danny nods, doesn't move. Corky touches his shoulder, Mike turns off the tape recorder, Marni and Andy gather their papers and books. Halloran gets up, turns toward his chambers door, stops, because Frank is up at the back of the room, taking a step forward, clearing his throat.

HALLORAN

(continuing; polite)

Mr. Caldwell?

FRANK

Yes, Your Honor... I've been sitting here listening, and I've been looking at my boy Danny, and I tell you, something's wrong here.

(hesitates; then)

Danny was never a bad kid, but he never did like rules... you gotta have rules for things to run right. Him getting drunk and running into that police car... well, that's not like him being late home, or sassing his mother, that's breaking the law. I figured it was time for him to straighten up, it was time to get his attention, and being in jail just might do that.

(moment; then, quiet)

I was wrong.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FRANK

(looks around at
them)

You got a lot of important people in this room... a judge, and probation officers... lawyers, and you're all here for Danny. You've had him pretty close to six weeks now, and I'm looking at him and I don't figure he's learned a whole lot from being here... except, well, he doesn't want to go on living.

HALLORAN

(gently)

Mr. Caldwell, everyone here has done their best for Danny.

FRANK

I'm not looking to lay blame, Your Honor, I guess you all did what you could to help.

He stops, almost unable to go on, not caring about the attention riveted on him, his eyes on Danny, who sits quietly, staring at his hands. A moment of silence, then Frank clears his throat again, looks around the room.

FRANK

(continuing)

But I'm his father. And... and I'm gonna take my boy home.

He crosses the room to Danny, lays a hand on his shoulder. Danny gets up, not looking at Frank, moves to Caruso, who rises. They look at each other a long moment, then Danny sticks out his hand, Caruso taking it.

CARUSO

Goodbye, Danny. Good luck.

DANNY

Thanks.

He holds Caruso's hand a moment longer, then turns toward Frank, expressionless once again, precedes him out of the room. Marni is the first to move, quietly heading for the door, Andy after her. Corky stares at the floor, Halloran coughs loudly, disappears into chambers.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: (3)

133

Mike Raines stands very still, looks up to find Caruso watching him. Caruso nods once, then walks out. HOLD ON the room a moment, then...

CUT TO:

134 EXT. CALDWELL HOUSE - DAY (AKRON, OHIO)

134

The front door opens as Danny and Frank get out of the car, Danny stretching, looking around, appearing very cool, his nervousness betrayed by his instantaneous reaching for a cigarette from his shirt pocket as Sandy runs to him, her arms around him, Steve and Jeff after her, more slowly, Jeff staring at Danny, Steve looking at him warily.

135 INT. CALDWELL HOUSE - DAY

135

Finishing up a tour of the house, Danny following them all along the hallway. He looks tense, ill at ease, Steve and Jeff staring at him constantly, looking away quickly when he glances back, Sandy picks up Frank's abstractedness, the heartiness hollow, false. The living room is pleasantly in order now, the pictures of Danny and Steve ranged along the top of the bureau between Frank's bowling trophies. As they walk in, Danny lights up his cigarette, offers Sandy one, but she shakes her head almost shyly.

SANDY

I quit.

She waits for his reaction, but he only nods, staring around the room.

SANDY

(continuing)

Do you like it?

DANNY

Sure. Looks nice.

SANDY

Isn't the kitchen lovely, there's a garbage disposal, and an ice-maker... oh, and the dishwasher works.

She smiles, reaching out for him, and for a moment there is a flicker of a smile in his eyes, until:

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED:

135

STEVE

(quickly)

That's my job now, I do the dishes,
don't I, Mom?

JEFF

An' I put out the garbage.

Danny looks at the table, set for dinner, and the pans
of vegetables on the stove.

DANNY

Looks real nice...

FRANK

(moves to sunporch)

And here's your room, Danny...
your own room at last, huh? Your
mother'll make curtains, we thought
we'd wait until you got home...

Danny doesn't look at him, only crosses to the French
doors, CAMERA FOLLOWING, stares around his room. His
bed is against the wall, the nightstand beside it, a
chest of drawers. He turns, sees what Frank and Sandy
want him to see:

136 A STEREO

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on brick and plank shelves, the albums set out beside
it, headphones on top of the plastic cover. Danny
looks at it, Sandy moving to show him.

SANDY

It's a better one than the old one,
Danny, see, it's got a special
balance control, the man said it
had Dolby sound, whatever that is
... here, honey, you know more
about it than I do...

She tails off as Danny nods, takes a deep drag on his
cigarette, looks around for an ashtray, Sandy handing
him one quickly.

SANDY

(continuing;
nervous laugh)

Well, say something, do you like
it, really?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SANDY (CONT'D)

If you don't like it, we can move
Jeff out of the small bedroom...

DANNY

No, no, it's great. Real nice.
Thank you, Mom. Thanks a lot.

He kisses her cheek, a perfunctory kiss, his attention
wandering, his hand grinding the cigarette butt over
and over in the ashtray as:

SANDY

Oh, Danny, it's so good to have
you home. We're going to put it
all behind us, forget it happened.
Any of it...

FRANK

Well. I guess you'd probably like
a little time for yourself, huh...
get used to being home. Your
mother's got your favorite dinner
on...

He is reaching for Steve and Jeff, moving them out of
the room, Sandy waiting for a moment, trying to
establish the old rapport, unsure why this is all
going wrong, desperately seeking for her son. Not
finding him in the quiet, expressionless stranger
beside her. Frank touches her arm, gestures for her
to leave Danny alone, and she moves into the living
room, CAMERA WITH her, Jeff and Steve heading for the
TV, Sandy forestalling them.

SANDY

No, no, Jeff... you and Steve help
me get dinner on the table. Frank,
the roast's ready to carve...

looking across the living room at Danny, standing in
the sunporch, gazing out over the garden.

138 DANNY

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as he turns to look at Frank, one of the French doors swinging half closed as he stands alone in the sun-room, the BABBLE OF CONVERSATION from Sandy and the boys becoming inaudible, muffled, distant, and Danny looks INTO CAMERA, through the glass pane of the French door, his face sad, feeling separate, bereft, and totally alone. FREEZE FRAME.

FADE OUT.

THE END