

"WHIRLABOUT"

Written by
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"Like a leaf or a feather in the windy, windy weather, we will
whirl about and twirl about, then all sink down together."

... "Whirlabout" words by Emilie Poulsson

"WHIRLABOUT"

FADE IN:

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE — DAY

The WHINE of a lawn mower. A modest, aging house. Weeds choke the flowerbeds. Paint peels from the porch rail.

The mower rounds the corner. BIG LOU PETRONSKY, 74, happily cuts the grass. Completely naked.

A short SCHOOL BUS stops. Children stare through the windows. A horrified TEACHER'S AIDE covers a young Girl's eyes.

Lou waves proudly, then mows on.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN — CONTINUOUS

GRACIELLA, 32, petite, dark, long hair pulled back in a pony tail, apron on, prepares a meal. She hears SHOUTING outside. Closes her eyes. Not again.

She hurries to the window. Neighbors storming the yard, yelling, waving arms.

GRACIELLA

Dios Mio...

HER POV

Lou cuts a swath through the neighbors, like they're not even there.

Graciella drops her head into her hands.

INT. REGENCY BANQUET ROOM — DAY

Applause erupts.

DANNY PATRICK, 43, staring up, owns the room. Funny. Charming. A natural storyteller.

DANNY

It's the critical scene, the fall of Saigon. The helicopter's supposed to swoop in right over us.

(eyes the ceiling)

Fine. No helicopter. We're all dying, you know, wondering, evac or no evac. Rewriting history, maybe.

(holds for laughs)

Finally, we hear this huge clang,

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)
...and that's when we realize
our evacuation helicopter had
been replaced by a Cadillac, from six
scenes later.

The crowd explodes with laughter. Danny throws out his
arms, like, "what's an actor to do?"

His phone VIBRATES on the podium. He glances down.

"TOMMY."

He ignores it.

The phone immediately vibrates again as people move toward
the podium. And again.

Danny's smile fades. Something's wrong.

INT. REGENCY FOYER — MOMENTS LATER

Danny answers.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HOTEL BAR — DAY

TOMMY PETRONSKY, 39, tanned good looks but a little soft.
He wears a tag on his Guayaberra shirt that bears his name
and the words "Pleasure seekers," drinks club soda and
checks his watch. His phone lights up.

TOMMY
Jesus, what took you so long?

DANNY
I'm working. Where are you?

TOMMY
In town. We gotta talk.

DANNY
Why? What's going on?

TOMMY
It's time, Danny.

DANNY
I gotta go.

Tommy tabs his phone, walks off.

INSERT TITLE: "WHIRLABOUT"

INT. REGENCY BANQUET ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A smartly-dressed ladies, MRS. TALMADGE, 58, size zero, intense blue eyes, gray bob, has Danny off in a corner of the room.

MRS. TALMADGE

It wasn't just by chance that we invited you to speak today. We're looking for someone with your experience, talent and your obvious charm to helm our new Midtown Repertory Theatre Project.

Danny's cell VIBRATES. They both stare at his pocket.

DANNY

Sorry.

MRS. TALMADGE

Better get that. Maybe it's a better offer.

(hands him a card)

Call me soon. We'll talk in private.

Danny takes her card, watches her walk off toward a gaggle of ladies near the door. He reaches into his pocket, eyes his phone, as he watches the Ladies watching him.

"Tommy"

INT. PRESTIGE MAGAZINE - DAY

We follow a non-binary SECRETARY, 23, fat folder in hand, along a corridor spotted with Prestige Magazine logos.

INT. ASHLYN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ASHLYN, 36, tall, blonde, jacket open, blouse a tad revealing, leans over her desk, contact sheets scattered before her.

She aims her loupe at a sheet.

ASHLYN

This guy is old school, huh? Contact sheets...

GUSTAVE, 38, black, fashion guru, French accent, dreads in a small bun, angles close to her. Very close, so their arms touch.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)

His work is fabulous. What an eye.

GUSTAVE
Let me peek, too, eh?

She hands him the loupe; he aims it her way instead.

GUSTAVE (CONT'D)
Very fabulous.

Ashlyn seems accepting of the flirtation. A beat. A KNOCK at the door restores order. The Secretary leans inside, hands her the fat folder, eyes Gustave, fakes a smile.

SECRETARY
(to Ashlyn)
Said to make three choices ASAP,
they'll check avails.
(starts off)
Oh, um, Danny's waiting at reception.

ASHLYN
He is?

Ashlyn quickly tabs her cell phone "day planner" app. It pops open: "Lunch. Danny."

ASHLYN (CONT'D)
Shit. Gotta go, guys. Sorry.

INT. CAB - DAY

The Cabbie eyes his rearview as Danny and Ash climb in, Ash on the phone

DANNY
New Yorker.

The cab pulls into traffic. Ashlyn finishes up her call.

ASHLYN
(into phone)
No, not good enough. Tell them we'll
find another vendor who can deliver
on time.

She ends the call with an emphatic button tab.

DANNY
My brother's in town.

ASHLYN
What's he doing here?

DANNY
Convention at the Garden. Said we
needed to talk.

ASHLYN

Really. Huh. Anything exciting happen for you at the brunch?

DANNY

Whatta you mean, exciting?

Ash shrugs. Danny stares off at the hordes of walkers fighting for position along the sidewalk.

ASHLYN

Well, if you're not going to talk to me...

Ash unstraps her briefcase, pulls out the fat folder.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT - DAY

Danny and Ashlyn sit with Tommy.

TOMMY

Bottom line, he ends up in a better place. We're all in a better place.

DANNY

He ends up.

TOMMY

Look, big brother, honestly, it's a win-win.

DANNY

Excuse me, did you just say that?

ASHLYN

How are the twins, Tommy?

DANNY

No, do not try and change the subject.

(to Tommy)

Answer me.

A Waitress approaches, and Tommy signs off on the charge.

TOMMY

Look, you wanna partner in this, do it. Otherwise, Joanie and I are handling the deal.

DANNY

It's not a deal, Tommy. He's our father. You can't just put him away.

TOMMY

He's sliding, Danny. Bigtime. You haven't been around in a while. You don't know. I wish I had more time. I don't. I'm slammed at work. Thank god, too. In this economy.

DANNY

What about Joanie?

TOMMY

No comment.

(checks his big diving watch)
I just wanted to get you up to speed, that's all. Now, I gotta go make nice with the landed gentry.

(kisses Ash's cheek)
How'd you ever marry this knucklehead?

ASHLYN

Thanks for lunch, Tommy.

TOMMY

(to Danny)
You know where I am.

DANNY

(grabs Tommy's arm)
Wait. What's this "no comment" stuff?

TOMMY

Ask Joanie.

Tommy removes Danny's hand, walks off, meets a Convention Crony, shakes his hand too hard, puts his arm around the guy's shoulder and leads him down a hall.

Danny eyes Ash, who digs a lip gloss from her purse.

INT. DANNY & ASHLYN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Outside, a SIREN WHINES. Upscale room. Danny sits on the edge of his bed. Ashlyn's at her closet, hanging up clothing in plastic. She inspects one piece in particular.

ASHLYN

Bastards lost one of my pearl buttons.

(Danny's bemused)
Making such a big deal of this.

DANNY

It's not a big deal?

ASHLYN

(shrugs)

What? You want to go home?

DANNY

Just want to try to, I don't know,
save him, I guess.

ASHLYN

What if you can't?

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

Ash stands near gate 29. She's intently involved in a phone conversation. Danny sits rows away, reads a newspaper. The headline: "Trenton Man Kills Family, Self."

EXT. OAK HILL - DAY

A gray Nissan Versa slows as it passes a depressed part of town, moves past boarded-up storefronts and a police car, lights flashing, stopped beside another cruiser, stripped clean and up on blocks.

INT. DANNY'S RENTAL CAR, MOVING - DAY

Danny makes eye contact with the two Police Officers who stand beside the cruiser. Ash sits beside him.

ASHLYN

Is it just me or is everything dead
around here?

A long beat.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)

You know I'm here for you, not...

DANNY

Not my father.

ASHLYN

I didn't say that. Jesus. I want us
to be okay. Are we okay, Danny?

DANNY

You tell me, Ash. Are we?

Her eyes burn him.

ASHLYN

All I ever do is try to help you.

Danny turns a corner, oblivious to the dog parked right in the middle of the road, sniffing a possum carcass. Dog looks up.

ASHLYN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Danny!

Danny notices, SLAMS ON HIS BREAKS, bangs his forehead on the steering wheel.

The dog scratches himself, strolls off.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)

You okay? You're head's bleeding.

Danny wipes his finger across his forehead. Red.

EXT. DANNY'S OLD NEIGHBORHOOD - DUSK

The Versa passes a house where JIMMY CARBINARI, 44, muscled, mustache, macho man, tosses shingles off his roof. The car catches his eye.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - DUSK

The Versa pulls into the driveway across the street and two doors down from Jimmy's. Danny climbs out, stares up at the rundown, two-story frame house. Ash climbs out, stretches.

EXT. JIMMY'S HOUSE - DUSK

Jimmy, on his ladder now, watches Danny walk up to the front door of his old house. He hustles down the ladder.

JIMMY

No shit. Petronsky.

(calls inside)

Pammie, call Augie, tell him to get his fat ass over here pronto.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

A cluttered room. Upright piano against a wall.

Kicked back on the auto Lay-Zee-Boy, his mouth open, Lou snores.

On the TV: "Cops Reloaded"

Danny sits across from Lou, on the floral couch, leans forward, a beer cradled between his knees. Two Band-aids form an "x" on Danny's brow just above the bridge of his nose. Ash stands at the end of the couch.

ASHLYN
Should just wake him up.

DANNY
No, let him sleep.

Ash walks off. An aggressive KNOCKING at the door.

FOYER

Danny pulls open the door. There stand Jimmy and AUGIE, 43, big boy, bushy beard, wearing a #39 Dolphins Jersey.

JIMMY
Hot damn! It is you.

Jimmy reaches out for a shake. Danny complies.

AUGIE
Good to see you, Danny. I mean, in the flesh. Not on the tube.

Ashlyn looks out over Danny's shoulder.

AUGIE (CONT'D)
Oh...

DANNY
My wife, Ashlyn.

The guys wave. Ashlyn smirks back, quickly disappears.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Look, could we talk later. I'm...
(gestures behind him)

AUGIE
Oh, yeah, sure, sure.

JIMMY
Augie's gonna buy us a few beers.
What's with the head?

DANNY
See ya later, huh?

With that Danny closes the door, presses his bandaids.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

AUGIE
That was kind of weird.

JIMMY
Maybe he's too good for us now.

AUGIE

I hear his old man is pretty bad off.

They walk away, Jimmy not convinced.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ashlyn stands at the counter, watches Graciella eating a plate of chicken with rice and beans. Two additional place settings go unused.

ASHLYN

So, you stay here? Sleep here?

GRACIELLA

Si. You don't want eat?

ASHLYN

What do you think? Should they put him in a home?

GRACIELLA

No.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Danny stands at the old upright piano, lifts the seat, pulls out a faded songbook, sits, flips through it, stops at "Whirlabout", sets it on the tray, plinks at the keys.

WE FOLLOW THE SIMPLE NOTES ON THE PAGE AND THE WORDS: *"Like a leaf or a feather in the windy, windy weather, we whirl about and twirl about, then all sink down together."*

LOU (O.S.)

Damn! I fell asleep. Better get to bed. Pulling a double tomorrow. Momma already up there?

Momentarily startled, Danny steps over to Lou.

DANNY

Sure, Dad. How are you?

LOU

You finish your homework?

DANNY

Um. Yep. All done.

Lou fingers a remote and the Lay-Zee Boy tips him forward and out of the lift chair. Lou rubs his eyes, stands.

LOU

(off Band-aids)

Fall off your bike again, Tommy?

DANNY

I'm Danny.

LOU

How many times have I told you, be
more careful. You only get one--

DANNY

Noggin. I remember.

Danny watches Lou plod his way up the stairs, pulling with
two hands on the rail, Graciella right behind him.

INT. DANNY'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny, at a collage of old photos on the wall: his mother,
a brown-haired beauty, Lou in his police uniform, Danny and
Tommy, skin-and-bones-bronzed-kids, Joanie at a piano
recital, Danny as "Starbuck" in a play, Lou holding up a
prize-winning fish.

Ash walks in, toweling off her hair, sits on the bed.

ASHLYN

So?

DANNY

What?

ASHLYN

Your father.

Danny leaves the photos, sits beside her.

DANNY

Doesn't seem that bad to me. I mean,
he's confused, but okay. Right?

ASHLYN

I don't know.

(a beat)

That girl's pretty strange.

DANNY

Graciella?

ASHLYN

Has a little attitude.

(looks out the window, sighs)

DANNY

Huh... Didn't notice.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Graciella helps Lou eat his morning cereal. She tries to make him do it himself, but he resists.

LOU
No, you Gracie, you!

GRACIELLA
Be big boy, Señor Lou.

Danny and Ash stand and watch. Ash rolls her eyes, heads for the coffee pot on the stove.

Graciella moves a spoonful of Frosty Cheerios to Lou's mouth. Lou grabs her hand, guides it in. Danny sits down with them.

DANNY
Is it good, Pop?

LOU
Oh, yeah...

GRACIELLA
(to Danny)
You want?

ASHLYN
Danny can feed himself.

Danny shoots her a look, walks out the back door.

EXT. PETRONSKY BACK YARD - DAY

Danny sits on the glider that hangs from an old children's swing set frame. Ash walks out, cup of coffee in her hand, sits down beside Danny.

They watch Graciella lead Lou out. He points to a squirrel on the fence. Graciella has a Polaroid camera hanging from around her neck. She steps closer to Lou, snaps a picture of Lou near the squirrel. ZZZZZZ.

ASHLYN
They still make film for that thing?

Danny, distracted, doesn't answer.

Graciella leads a humming Lou over to Danny and Ash. She sits down with him on the grass. They stare over at Danny and Ash. An awkward moment.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)
Think I'll go make some calls.

She strides off quickly. Danny glides toward Lou, back.

LOU

Who are you?

(turns to Graciella)

Who is he?

GRACIELLA

Danny. Your son, Señor Lou.

INT. DANNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Danny stands at the window, looking out into the back yard.
Ash sits at the bureau, brushing out her hair.

He watches Graciella swing Lou on the old loveseat glider,
take a snapshot of him, show it to him.

DANNY

He knows her but not me.

ASHLYN

She's around him. You're not.

DANNY

So, you think if I hung around here
awhile, he'd remember me?

ASHLYN

You're not thinking about staying?

DANNY

No. I mean. What do you think?

ASHLYN

About what?

DANNY

Staying.

ASHLYN

You said you weren't thinking about
it. Right?

Ash finishes brushing, pins back her hair, eyes Danny in
the mirror, waits for an answer.

DANNY

Right.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Danny stands alone, looking out the parlor windows.
Ashlyn, nightgown on, yawning, walks up behind him.

ASHLYN
Couldn't sleep?

Danny shakes his head. Ashlyn collapses into Lou's chair.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)
That bed's ruining my back.

DANNY
Ash, you ever wonder about who's
gonna take care of us when we're old?

ASHLYN
No. We won't need any help.

Danny starts to reply, then goes back to the window.

EXT. PETRONKSY HOUSE - DAY

Tommy's Land Rover pulls up in the driveway. Tommy climbs out, opens the back door.

TOMMY
Okay, troops, unbuckle.

Petite twin girls, TINA and TAWNY, 6, fly out. TAMMY, 31, pregnant, climbs out the other side, uses the car door to brace herself.

Danny reaches for Tina's hand, which she retracts.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Girls, you remember your uncle Danny,
don't you?

Both girls shake they heads, "no."

INT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

DINING ROOM

Tommy and Tammy on one side of a table, twins across from them. Danny sits at one end with Ash, Lou at the other.

Graciella moves in and out quietly removing serving bowls and replacing them with desserts.

The twins giggle as Lou picks up his Jello with his hand and slides it down onto his tongue. Tina hops down from her chair, heads for Lou.

TINA
Pick me up, Gran'pa. I'll show you.

Tammy glares over at Tommy.

TOMMY

It's okay, Tina, Gran'pa can do it.

Tina heads back to her chair. Danny makes eye contact with Tommy and cocks his head toward the kitchen.

EXT. PETRONSKY BACK YARD - NIGHT

Using a twig, Danny pokes at some old charcoal in the brick barbecue. Bricks are missing, the grate rusted.

DANNY

I remember when he built this thing.

Tommy dusts off a decrepit lawn chair and pulls it up. He pulls two cigars out of his jacket pocket, offers Danny one.

DANNY (CONT'D)

(declines the offer)

I sat right there in that chair...

(re Tommy's chair)

... and watched him. Wouldn't so much as let me hand him a brick. It was his anniversary present to Mom. Started at sunup Sunday, finished at sunup Monday. Then he went inside, took a shower, put on his uniform and pulled a 16 hour shift... You smoke now?

TOMMY

Cigars. They make an impression.

DANNY

(pulls up another chair)

On who?

Tommy blows out a cloud of cigar smoke.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Look, about New York.

TOMMY

You gotta admit, he is much worse than the last time you saw him. Hell, he's much worse than last time I saw him.

DANNY

Six weeks is a long time.

TOMMY

Checking up on me?

(no reply)

Right, why would you do that?

DANNY

I left two messages for Joanie.

Tommy looks off, chucks a stick off into the yard.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Hey, did you hear me? Joanie?

TOMMY

Yes, I heard you. I opt not to get in the middle.

DANNY

In the middle of what? A family.
What kind of garbage is that?

TOMMY

Danny, back off, huh? All I said was I didn't want to get in the middle.

DANNY

It's her father, too, right, Tommy?
I mean, correct me if I'm wrong.

Danny spots Graciella at the kitchen window.

TOMMY

Look, you don't believe we're doing the right thing, check with the doctor yourself. I knew this would happen.

DANNY

What?

TOMMY

This. You come back home, try and control the bandwidth, like you always did, like we have nothing to offer.

DANNY

What? Bandwidth? How am I... ? I'm just trying to help him and wondering why Joanie's not.

TOMMY

Like I said before, ask Joanie.

(calls inside)

Tammy, grab the girls, time to go.

(then to Danny)

Do what you gotta do.

Tommy walks back into the house.

INT. DOCTOR'S LOBBY - DAY

Danny and Ash sit and wait, Ash texting away, Danny flipping through a "Health Today" Magazine. DR. HARRIS, 55, black, gray at the temples, opens a door to a hallway.

DR. HARRIS
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick?

INT. DANNY'S RENTAL CAR, MOVING - DAY

Danny and Ash drive along quietly. Ash is trying to get more A/C, fiddling with the knobs.

ASHLYN
This thing can't be on high.

DANNY
Someone goes that fast, without any hope?

ASHLYN
Guess a doctor sees a lot of it, though. Have to believe him. Right?

Danny looks over at her, drives on.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - DAY

Danny's up on a ladder trimming a bush away from the parlor window. He lifts a bucket up onto a rung.

Jimmy drives by in his pickup, slows, watches Danny, who lifts his chin, gets back to work.

Danny begins scrubbing the window. Beyond the swirls of soap he sees

Lou in the parlor, wearing only his Depends, waving at Danny, using the same circular motion, mirroring him. Lou touches his bottom, gasps, and begins throwing a fit. Graciella comforts him.

INT. DANNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ash folds a blouse, lays it on the bed. Danny walks in, stands by the window, spots Ash's cell phone on the dresser, turns it to him, so he can read the display...

ASHLYN
Got anything to wash before we pack up?

DANNY
I'm thinking I should hang out longer here, try'n connect with him.

ASHLYN

You can't make him better.

Danny leaves Ash's phone, focuses on her.

DANNY

But I can try, right? We can try, together.

ASHLYN

You know I have to get back.

DANNY

C'mon, you could take some time off.

ASHLYN

I've got the Summer piece hanging over me already.

DANNY

It's your father's magazine. Tell them you need a leave of absence.

ASHLYN

Please don't minimize my work. Why do you always do that?

DANNY

I don't. I don't mean to.

ASHLYN

What about the theatre project offer? You're just gonna let that slide?

DANNY

How'd you...?

(his wheels turn)

Oh, I see. I get an invitation out of the blue to speak at some club where they never looked at me sideways before. Your father...

ASHLYN

He was trying to help.

DANNY

You told him I needed help.

ASHLYN

What, is that so horrible? You've been complaining about being between things. Right?

Danny, frustrated, walks out.

Ashlyn tosses a top down on the bed, grabs her cell phone.

EXT. OAK HILL CEMETERY - DAY

Danny's rental car pulls up, parks. Danny climbs out, trudges up a sloping grass knoll studded with markers.

Danny stands over a grave marker. "Wife and Mother -- Maureen Petronsky." He pays his respects, turns, walks off.

INT. DANNY'S RENTAL CAR, MOVING - DUSK

Danny drives slowly, glances around. This part of town is a remnant of its former self.

Danny spots an old local Theater, "The Playhouse." He pulls up to the curb.

The windows in the theater are boarded, except where the boards have been torn off and the windows are broken. The "P" is missing from the marquee. It's now "The layhouse."

EXT. THE PLAYHOUSE - DUSK

Danny walks up to the glass door, boarded with plywood, tries to peek inside, kicks something.

The ornate letter "P". Danny picks it up, carries it with him to the car, climbs in, pulls the door closed. A beat.

He pushes the door open again, climbs down and walks briskly right back to the facade and a broken section of window. Danny pushes the "P" through. It CLANKS inside.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Lou's in his chair, just shorts on, sniffing back tears. Ash stands beside the piano bench, bag packed, taps her finger on the piano.

ASHLYN

What are you crying about?

(calls out)

Danny, I'm gonna miss my flight.

Danny walks in, eyes Lou as he gets more worked up.

DANNY

Is he okay?

She shrugs, grabs her bag, snares the keys from Danny's hand.

ASHLYN

I'll return the car.

DANNY

No, I'm gonna drop you.

ASHLYN

What about him? Smells like he needs help and I'm cutting it close as it is.

DANNY

Graciella will take care of him.

Ashlyn passes him on the way to the door.

ASHLYN

No she can't.

DANNY

Why not?

ASHLYN

I let her go. Danny, he doesn't need two babysitters. That's all she was. She left a list of his meds and caretaking needs along with her address on the kitchen table. Send whatever he owes her there.

DANNY

You don't think I'm gonna be able to handle him alone, right?

ASHLYN

I just know we have our own lives to deal with. You wanted to take this on, take it on. Look, I know he's your father, you feel like you owe him. I get it, I do, but there are facilities set up to handle these situations, as much as we hate to admit it. Better than we can.

DANNY

That's why you let her go. So you could prove I can't take care of him, speed up this whole process?

Ash sighs and is out the door. Danny turns to a now sobbing Lou.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Danny walks in, grabs the papers from the table, scans them, sits down, head in hand. Lou SOBS in the bg.

EXT. PETRONSKY GARAGE - DAY

Danny uses a remote to slide up the garage door. There, inside, an unmarked Chevy cruiser, Lou's old car.

EXT. SUNNYLAND NURSING HOME - DAY

Danny sits in Lou's Chevy, gazes out at the scene...

Old people are pushed in wheelchairs by caretakers. On a park bench, a spindly Black Man sits and rocks back and forth, while his Caretaker checks his cellphone.

INT. SUNNYLAND OFFICE - DAY

Danny sits across from MRS. ECCLES, 48, a portly, spunky brunette with Harry Potter glasses. She shows him a folder.

MRS. ECCLES

This is the one I discussed with your sister and brother.

DANNY

You met my sister?

MRS. ECCLES

I did. It's level two care. We feed him, bathe him, change him...

(a beat as Danny grabs a breath)
Okay? The facility addresses disorientation problems with color-coded hallways, secure wandering paths. We're hoping to build a healing memory garden next year.

INT. SUNNYLAND NURSING HOME

Danny walks down a short blue corridor, lined on either side with the elderly, some of whose eyes follow him, others speak to him, others stare off to another reality.

Danny stops at a window. The TV room. A group of elderly sit watching TV. A Man not much older than Danny sits along a wall, talks to himself, a mile a minute.

MISS RED (O.S.)

Clean it up.

Danny turns to the voice. A tall, thin lady, MISS RED, 86, leans against her walker. Her hair, a fiery red wig.

DANNY

I'm sorry?

Miss Red lifts her walker, BANGS it down, takes two baby steps toward him. Seems to take forever.

MISS RED

Your mess. Not gonna clean itself.

She aims her long, curved finger at the floor at his feet.

Danny glances down to see only the pattern on the carpet.

MISS RED (CONT'D)

Clean it!

Danny kneels and pretends to clean. Miss Red grumbles.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - DAY

Danny walks in to find Lou in his recliner, asleep. A BABYSITTER, 17, on her phone. On TV, a Judge Show MOS. The Babysitter blows a bubble, holds a finger up.

BABYSITTER

(into phone)

I know, it's whack. She's like completely psyched about it.

(...)

Can't. Gotta jet. Byeee!

Danny opens his wallet, pulls out some bills. The Babysitter listens, giggles, tabs off her call.

DANNY

How was he?

BABYSITTER

Once he stopped crying, he was cool. We watched some TV. Got a little frisky with me, fell asleep.

DANNY

He got frisky?

BABYSITTER

Yeah, but it's cool. I handled it.

DANNY

(eyebrow raised)

Oh. Wait. What? You had to handle something?

BABYSITTER

Like I said, no worries, it's cool.

DANNY

(hands her some cash)

Okay, thanks.

BABYSITTER

Anytime. You used to date my mom,
huh, when you were like young?

Danny grimaces. The Babysitter lifts an eyebrow, grabs her jacket, stretches, showing off her figure. She heads for the door, turns back.

BABYSITTER (CONT'D)

Oh, I saw your hotdog commercial. It
was cool, in a corny kind'a way.

The Babysitter pops a bubble, giggles, exits.

Danny turns to a SNORING Lou, stares down at his big hand, takes it gently in his, kneels beside the recliner, rests his head against the arm of the chair.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lou sits on his bed, his cassette player at his side. He fumbles through the cassettes on a nightstand.

Danny, jacket on, checks the window lock.

DANNY

Need to go to the bathroom?

LOU

What, again?

DANNY

(re the tapes)

Want me to pick something for you?

LOU

You know I like my music. Right,
son?

Danny snaps to attention. That sounded so clear, so lucid. He gets right in Lou's face, looks him square in the eyes.

DANNY

Dad, what'd you just say?

LOU

I don't want to be sick.

DANNY

(hugs his father)

I know. But you're doing great right
now, huh? The meds are helping.
Dad?

Lou looks up, nods. A beat.

LOU
Who are you again?

Lou goes back to his tapes.

INT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - NIGHT

Danny locks the bedroom door behind him and checks it. He presses his ear to the door and listens.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lou sits on the edge of his bed. He presses a button on the cassette player. Big band version of "Moonlight Serenade".

EXT. JOANIE'S CONDO/DAYTONA BEACH - NIGHT

A three-story place on AIA, just across from the water.

JOANIE PETRONSKY, 38, short brown bob, pulls open the door. Danny's there, hands in his pockets.

DANNY
Can we go somewhere and talk?

JOANIE
Yeah. I guess. Come in.

INT. JOANIE'S CONDO - CONTINUOUS

REGAN, 30, Joanie's lover, tank top, long, blonde hair in a pony tail, tats on both shoulders, yin and yang, walks out from the kitchen, a longneck in her hand.

JOANIE
My brother.

Regan reaches out for a shake. Joanie heads for the bedroom.

REGAN
(eyes Joanie coolly)
Regan. Want something to drink?

DANNY
Danny. No thanks. You can come with us if you want.

REGAN
Thanks! I'll pass.

INT. LOU'S CHEVY, MOVING - NIGHT

Danny drives. Joanie blows cigarette smoke out her window.

JOANIE
We could'a taken my car.

DANNY
You could've returned my calls.

JOANIE
Here we go.

Danny eyes her, drives on.

INT. DENNY'S - NIGHT

Danny and Joanie sit in a booth in a corner, sip coffee.
Joanie spins her cigarette pack in one hand like a card sharp.

DANNY
What happened to Sonya?

JOANIE
She split... two years ago. Can you believe it's a fucking law you can't smoke in public? A law. What are we, fucking two-year olds?

DANNY
When was the last time you saw him?

JOANIE
Let me check my "when hell froze over" calendar.
(a beat)
So, how's show biz?

DANNY
Up and down.

JOANIE
And, what's her name? Ashcroft? She still up?

DANNY
Ashlyn. You know her name. I don't get this attitude of yours. Why are you pissed off at me?

JOANIE
No reason. At him, well...

Joanie fidgets, sips her coffee. Danny sighs.

JOANIE (CONT'D)
Okay, Tommy told you what the plan was. You had to butt in. Why?
(MORE)

JOANIE (CONT'D)

Because you live in New York, you know better?

DANNY

Look, he's my father, too. I want a say in what happens to him.

JOANIE

(under her breath)

Now.

DANNY

I want all of us to do this together, as a family.

JOANIE

Please.

DANNY

(looks around, then firmly)
He's your father, Joanie. He raised you. He wasn't perfect but I think he did a pretty good job. Now it's our turn to make sure he's taken care of.

Joanie simply stares at Danny, then bursts out laughing.

JOANIE

Oh.my.God. Now it's our turn.

DANNY

What? What is it with you guys?
When did you check yourself out of his life? Dammit, Joanie, he's your--

Joanie SLAMS her coffee cup down, coffee flying everywhere, smacks both palms down on the table. Eyes all around rivet on her, but hers fix only on Danny.

JOANIE

Don't you say it one more time, that "father" shit. He's a monster, all right?

DANNY

What are you talking about?

Joanie starts to get up. Danny holds down her arm.

JOANIE

Let go of me.

DANNY

Joanie, tell me.

JOANIE
You want me to tell you?

DANNY
Yes.

JOANIE
That man. That father you're so
concerned about, hurt me, Danny, when
I was just a little girl.

She's fighting back some strong emotion.

DANNY
Hurt you? C'mon, he smacked us all
around a little bit, but --

JOANIE
NO. Do I have to spell it out?

Danny just stares at her.

JOANIE (CONT'D)
He sexually abused me. He raped me.
It started with me sitting on his
lap, him reading me nursery rhymes.
Except it wasn't his lap, it was his
hand. Then he'd come into my bedroom
late at night when everyone else --

DANNY
Stop. Stop it, will you?

JOANIE
He called it our secret game.

DANNY
No. No way.
(a beat)
Why didn't you say something before?

JOANIE
I tried to tell you, my big brother,
but you blew it off. Just like now.

DANNY
What? I did not. When?

JOANIE
I told you I was having nightmares
about him. That's how I disguised
it, tried to live with it, like it
wasn't real, couldn't be happening in
our house. Our safe house. A cop's
house. I told you.

DANNY
What, when we were kids, Joanie?

JOANIE
No, when you were.

A beat. Danny stares off to some other place, time.

DANNY
I don't remember any of that.

JOANIE
I blocked it out, too. Thank God.
But then I'm in counseling wondering
why my life is such a complete bucket
of shit and boom, out it comes.

DANNY
Counseling. It came out in
counseling?

JOANIE
Yes! Repressed memories... came back
out. You know what, fuck you. Fuck
him, too, how's that? I'm outta
here.

Joanie pushes herself out of the booth, grabs her purse.

DANNY
Wait.

She shoves Danny back into the booth, grabs her smokes,
sticks a cigarette between her lips and lights up.

JOANIE
Put him away. Do it.

She storms out, flashing her cigarette. Diners gawk at
Danny.

INT. AUGIE'S SPORTS BAR - NIGHT

Danny sits alone at the bar, drinks from a draft. Place is
empty. Augie, ball cap on, looks up at the clock: 1 a.m.

AUGIE
Closing up, Danny. Ready to go?

Danny tries to stand, but he's past inebriated. Augie
catches him on the way back down to the stool.

AUGIE (CONT'D)
Okay, let's sit awhile, huh?

Augie gets him steady, dashes to lock the door, hustles back.

AUGIE (CONT'D)
What's going on with you, pal? I
never seen you drunk.

DANNY
I have a fucked up life, Augie, very,
very, very fucked up.

AUGIE
You? You got it made in the shade,
man. Big actor. Beautiful wife.

DANNY
Not really.

AUGIE
What's wrong with you?

DANNY
Pal, I don't have one clue.

AUGIE
C'mon, you got it knocked.

Danny eyes Augie very seriously.

DANNY
I've got this picture in my head and
(slaps his palm against his
forehead with each word)
I-can't-make-it-go-away.

Augie pulls Danny's hand down, but Danny slams his mug on the bar, once for each word.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit!

AUGIE
(pushes the mug aside)
Hey, hey, hey. I'm gonna go lock up
the back, then I'm taking you home.

Augie hustles around the bar and into the back. When he returns, Danny's gone, two tens crumpled up on the bar.

INT. LOU'S CHEVY, MOVING - NIGHT

Danny's driving like a maniac. He's swerving over center. Headlights flying at him, HORNS blaring.

One very close call forces him to make a hard right and he spins the Chevy off onto a shoulder. Danny bangs his head on the steering wheel again, this time intentionally.

EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The picture of upwardly mobile Americana. A Colonial style home, stoic columns. A couple of lights on inside. A neatly-manicured, accent-lighted lawn. Lou's Chevy drives up, parks half-on, half-off the driveway, plows over an accent light.

Danny climbs out of the car, stumbles up to the front door, pushes the doorbell, which plays the first ten notes of "Anchors Aweigh." Danny leans on the doorbell, thumb first, and it plays over and over again.

Lights come on in the foyer behind the front door. Tommy looks out through the fanned panes of glass. The door opens.

TOMMY

Danny, what the crap? It's two o'clock.

Danny shoves Tommy back a couple of steps.

DANNY

WHAT'D SHE TELL YOU?!

TOMMY

What? Who?

DANNY

Joanie, about Dad.

TOMMY

Oh.

DANNY

You don't believe that shit?!

Danny's flailing at Tommy, who easily restrains him.

TOMMY

Settle down, man.

DANNY

You guys dreamed this up, huh?

TOMMY

You're drunk, not stupid.

DANNY

Goddamned right, I'm drunk. You best (sic) your ass. You've been against me since I left.

TOMMY

Bullshit.

DANNY

You know what's bullshit? I'll tell you. Joanie sits on some shrink's hand and starts remembering shit that never happened. Now, that... that's bullshit. Isn't it?

(Tommy just stares at him)

ISN'T IT!?

TOMMY

I'm taking you home.

DANNY

The hell you are. HELL YOU... MAN!

Danny staggers off toward his car.

TOMMY

She told me the day my girls were born. Understand?

(Danny stops)

You shouldn't've stuck around, Danny. Should'a gone back to your nice life.

Danny stops, stumbles, and falls beside his car.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny, sobered up some, stands over a sleeping Lou. He looks at Graciella's snapshots, pinned to a wall, the last one, LOU IN THE GLIDER. He looks down at Lou, leans close to him, starts to touch him, stops, walks out of the room.

INT. JOANIE'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door pushes open. Danny reaches in, flips on the light. He stares at the single bed in the corner and the remnants of a little girl's youth on the dresser and hanging from the walls. Stuffed lions. Oompa Loompas. Posters.

Danny closes the door behind him, focuses on the bed. He slowly sinks to the floor.

EXT. SUNNYLAND NURSING HOME - DAY

Danny walks Lou up the steps. Lou peers about nervously. Danny pulls open the front door.

INT. SUNNYLAND NURSING HOME

Danny walks Lou down a corridor. Lou's fidgety. Eyes of other patients follow him. Lou leans closer to Danny.

LOU

That's piss. I know that stink.

Danny nods. They walk on, Lou becoming more and more agitated. He begins to WHIMPER. A body-builder ORDERLY, black, 29, sees what's happening, gently takes Lou's arm, tries to console him. Lou snaps his arm back.

LOU (CONT'D)

No. No.

Danny pulls him aside. Miss Red rests on her walker down the hallway. She spots Danny, Lou, begins CLOPPING toward them, spewing unintelligible profanities. Lou dashes off toward the doors. Danny chases him.

EXT. SUNNYLAND NURSING HOME

Danny spots Lou, who's now attached himself to the Chevy.

LOU

NOOOO!! GRACIE!

Lou's eyes implore.

LOU (CONT'D)

Home. Home.

Danny gazes at Sunnyland for a long beat, then back at Lou.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Lou sits at the kitchen table with a cup of water. Danny sits down across from him, a bottle of pills in his hand. He takes out a pill, hands it to Lou. Lou quickly pops it.

DANNY

Drink.

Lou shakes his head emphatically.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Drink.

Danny makes him drink, sits back down, holds up the pill bottle, reads it.

INT. DANNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Danny's on his cell, staring out the window.

DANNY

(into phone)

Ash. Um, hope you're doing okay.
I'm sorry about everything, you know?
Call me back if you want to talk.
Okay, see ya.

Danny clicks his cell closed, turns to the collage of photos on the wall beside him, pulls off the one of Lou in his Policeman's uni -- a man who's handsome, virile, vigorous.

INT. LOU'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Danny undresses flabby Lou, tub filling with water. Lou, back to us, stands naked before Danny. Danny guides his father into the tub.

LOU

HOT!!

DANNY

Yup. You need cleaning up.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Danny sits, phone in hand, Googles through pages of info on "dementia." Lou sits across from him, feverishly writing on a yellow legal pad.

DANNY

What's all that?

Lou looks over at him, eyes clear and resolute.

LOU

Don't bother me, huh, kid? If I
don't get this report done, my ass is
grass with the chief.

Danny checks the pad: Copious notes on a burglary, detailed, descriptive, legible, lucid.

DANNY

You just wrote all this?

LOU

Let me finish, will ya?

Danny hands him back his pad, and Lou goes back to work. Danny watches, as Lou's writings degenerate into gibberish.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - DAY

Danny's nearly out the door, looks in at the Babysitter.

DANNY

I'll be back as soon as I can. You got my cell, right?

BABYSITTER

Yup, no problem.

DANNY

If you could check on him every half hour or so, and, ya know, go easy on your phone?

BABYSITTER

I'll only use it if it's a total must.

(picks up, hangs up the landline)

DANNY

Wait. Don't you have a cell?

BABYSITTER

I did, until my bitch of a mother took it away. The pictures weren't even that bad. Not like porn or anything, really.

Danny starts to say something, doesn't, heads out.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Dr. Harris strides down the corridor. Danny hurries to keep up.

DANNY

I've been reading. Those new amyloid treatments...

Dr. Harris nods. He's heard this conversation before.

DR. HARRIS

The promising ones? The trials hit some serious complications.

Danny absorbs that, already reaching for the next possibility.

DANNY

Tacrine?

DR. HARRIS

(a faint smile)
You and that Google.

DANNY
I'm just looking for something we
haven't tried.

Dr. Harris stops, softens.

DR. HARRIS
Look, I know.

They continue walking.

DR. HARRIS (CONT'D)
There are medications that can buy a
little time... smooth some of the rough
edges. Sometimes they help more than
we expect.

Danny waits.

DR. HARRIS (CONT'D)
Sometimes they don't.

A beat.

DANNY
Stem cells?

Dr. Harris shakes his head.

DR. HARRIS
Not for him.

DANNY
So what's left?

A Nurse intercepts Harris with a clipboard. He signs it
while thinking. The Nurse disappears.

DR. HARRIS
Keep his world small enough that it
still makes sense to him. Familiar
faces. Familiar places.

DANNY
He always loved being outside.
Hunting. Fishing.

DR. HARRIS
Fishing, not hunting.

Danny nods.

DR. HARRIS (CONT'D)
The point isn't what he remembers.
It's how he feels while he's with
you.

They arrive outside a patient room.

DR. HARRIS (CONT'D)
And don't try to carry this by
yourself.

DANNY
How do you know when it's time?

Dr. Harris takes a long look at him.

DR. HARRIS
Most families wait until they're
exhausted.

Another beat.

DR. HARRIS (CONT'D)
You don't have to.

Harris removes a chart from the rack beside the door.

DR. HARRIS (CONT'D)
We'll keep talking.

He enters the room.

Danny remains in the hallway as doctors, nurses, and
visitors stream around him.

INT. LOU'S CHEVY, MOVING - NIGHT

Danny's driving back quietly. A cell phone CHIRP startles
him. Cell's in his side pocket, and he has to undo his
seatbelt to get to it. He does, just in time.

DANNY
Hello?
(...)
What!?

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

A small crowd has gathered. In the street, two cruisers,
lightbars flashing. Cops keep onlookers back.

Neighbor MR. GRISSOM, 62, black, sits in a wheelchair in
his driveway, a cordless phone in his hand. Jimmy stands
next to him, his wife. A few teens sit on the curb.

A fire truck, HORN BLASTING, pulls up onto the front yard.

Danny's car skids to a stop in front of a Policeman,
OFFICER TYLER, 40s, who cowers behind one of the squad
cars. He holds his hand up to stop Danny, who leans out
the window.

DANNY
I live here. What's going on?

OFFICER TYLER
We got a situation.
(stares at Danny curiously)
Petronsky? Danny Petronsky?

DANNY
Randy?

OFFICER TYLER
Long time. You're back, huh?
(Danny nods)
Okay, pull up over there.

Tyler guides the car behind the fire truck. Danny jumps out and jogs toward the house. Officer Tyler grabs him, yanks him down, right beside the Babysitter.

BABYSITTER
Hey.

DANNY
Great job keeping an eye on him.

BABYSITTER
Back off, dude, okay? He's your problem, not mine. You pay almost nothing and --

DANNY
You're fired.

BABYSITTER
Whatever. I've got my mother, I don't need all this drama.

Two Firemen rush by with a ladder, the truck a shield. Danny hops up to go with them, but Tyler pulls him back, hard...

DANNY
What're you doing?

OFFICER TYLER
What the hell are you -- ! The guy's armed and dangerous, Danny!

DANNY
The guy's my father, Randy. He's what?

OFFICER TYLER
Packing. Maybe you can talk some sense into him.

DANNY

Where is he?

POLICEMAN

Up there.

He points to the roof. Two dormers along the front slant.

ON ROOF:

Lou, dressed only in his Depends, straddles the near dormer, a hunting rifle across his lap. He draws a bead on the moon.

LOU

Wipe that smile off your face!

BACK TO SCENE:

Everyone's now hunkered down.

DANNY

Jesus.

Another POLICEMAN slides in next to Danny and Officer Tyler.

POLICEMAN

(To Danny)

Do you know if he's likely to use the rifle, sir?

DANNY

No. Of course not. It's old; it's probably not even --

A rifle shot CRACKS the calm.

DANNY (CONT'D)

-- loaded.

ON ROOF:

LOU

HAH! Nearly got you.

He CHUCKS the carriage back and takes aim.

The rifle barrel is trained squarely on the FULL MOON'S FACE. Another BLAST!

LOU (CONT'D)

Too damned far. Need bigger ammo.

He lifts his leg off the peak of the dormer and climbs down around toward the front, open window.

DANNY (O.S.)
DAD! STAY THERE. DON'T --

The rifle drops away and slides down the roof until it catches in the rain gutter and hangs by the barrel.

LOU
Dammit all to hell.

Lou grabs the window ledge with one hand and tries to reach for the rifle with his leg, just as

A ladder SMACKS against the gutter.

LOU (CONT'D)
Huh?

Lou looks down as Policemen, Firemen and Danny run across the front yard toward the house.

DANNY
DAD! STAY RIGHT THERE. DON'T MOVE!
OKAY? PLEASE!

Lou hangs on, turns back to the window, starts to cry, opens his hand, lets go, slides toward a Fireman who hustles up the ladder and catches him by his Depends.

ON DANNY'S FACE as he gazes up toward his father.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lou sits on the edge of the bed, sobbing, shaking, a Fireman/Paramedic at his side.

Officer Tyler's on his hands and knees beside the bed. He reaches into a big box, pulls out a jar of peanut butter and hands it to Danny behind him.

OFFICER TYLER
Nothing too dangerous.

Danny adds it to the pile: Coffee, empty boxes of Frosty Cheerios, fishing pole, etc.

Tyler reaches far under, pulls out several 8 x 10 frames. He hands one to Danny.

INSERT: Sepia faded photo of Danny's mother. A serene look. Dark, flowing hair.

BACK TO SCENE:

DANNY
God, I haven't seen this one in years.

OFFICER TYLER (O.S.)
Your old man was a war hero before he
was a cop?

Tyler hands Danny a framed set of medals of valor.

DANNY
Vietnam, some nasty shit.

Tyler stands up, holding an open cigar box, shows Danny.

OFFICER TYLER
Pictures, letters and stuff. Okay,
looks like we're clear, good to go.

DANNY
(to Tyler & the Fireman)
Thank you both. Thanks a lot.

They head out. Danny kneels at his father's side, places
the framed photo of his mother on Lou's lap, pulls the
blanket off the bed, wraps it around Lou.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Officer Tyler stands at the door, ready to leave.

OFFICER TYLER
It's a tough thing when they go like
this. You the sole caretaker?

DANNY
Pretty much.

OFFICER TYLER
You never came back for any reunions.

Danny shrugs.

OFFICER TYLER (CONT'D)
Look, I'm not gonna file anything
unless you want me to.

DANNY
Thanks, Randy.

Officer Tyler starts to leave, turns back.

OFFICER TYLER
A little less luck, this could'a gone
south real quick. Maybe it's time to
think about something else.

Danny closes the door, looks upstairs.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - DAY

Lou sits on his bed, his cassette player in front of him.

He stares at the window where Danny affixes a grille of burglar bars into the opening.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Danny, apron on, sits at the small table across from a grim-faced Lou, who turns a plastic mixing bowl in his hands.

DANNY

I want you to remember Joanie.
Remember Joanie? Do you remember
her? Do you remember anything bad?

Lou suddenly looks angry, his face flushing?

DANNY (CONT'D)

What is it? What's wrong? Are you
remembering?

Lou nods slowly.

DANNY (CONT'D)

It's okay. You can tell me.

LOU

You took my good Lufkin rule. I had
it right here and now it's gone. You
give it back to me or I'll have you
arrested. I mean it.

DANNY

No. I don't know what you're talking
about.

LOU

Sure you don't. Goddamn thief.

DANNY

What about Joanie? Do you remember
anything that happened to her? A
crime. Somebody hurt her. Remember
that?

The doorbell CHIMES.

DANNY (CONT'D)

(to Lou)
Stay-right-here.

Danny heads out. Lou stares into the mixing bowl.

LOU

It used to fold up nice, too. Thief.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - DAY

The doorbell CHIMES again. Danny reaches for the door.

DANNY

All right, I'm coming.

Danny pulls the front door open.

Graciella stands on the stoop, purse around her shoulder.

GRACIELLA

How is Señor Lou doing?

DANNY

He'll be doing better now. Come in, please.

(she steps in)

Look, I'm sorry about my wife, I mean, what she did, the way she did it. You got your money, right?

GRACIELLA

Yes, thank you. Señor Lou?

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Danny stops short, Graciella right behind him. The table where Lou sat is piled with food and refrigerator shelves.

Danny looks around the food pile.

DANNY

Dad!

Lou, in just his underwear now, has wedged himself into the refrigerator, door wide open. He spots Graciella.

LOU

(wide-eyed)

GRACIE!!

Lou's over-excited, tries to extricate himself, but can't.

Danny attempts to assist him...

LOU (CONT'D)

NOOOOO!

Graciella offers Lou a hand.

LOU (CONT'D)

I had a clubhouse in a tree.

GRACIELLA

Wow, una casita arbol! Diga me.
Tell me all about it.

She squats down on the floor, right there in front of the refrigerator, helps Lou unwedge himself.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)

(to Danny)
Get a big capa, uh, como se dice,
blanket. Please.

Danny takes off.

LOU

No girls are allowed.

GRACIELLA

Of course.

Danny returns with the blanket. Graciella handles Lou like a long-lost pal, drapes the blanket around him.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - DAY

Danny walks Graciella to the front door.

DANNY

It meant a lot that you came to see
him. You get to him. I can't.

They look at each other a beat. Danny pulls the door open. Graciella steps outside, turns back.

GRACIELLA

In this country I am criada -- a
maid. In my country niñera.

She turns to walk away.

GRACE

Help him remember... His mind is
going to sleep. Despertarlo. Si?

DANNY

Wait. Stay awhile. I'll make you a
cup of terrible coffee.

Graciella smiles her radiant smile, extends her hand. Danny shakes it, holds onto it a beat too long.

Graciella turns and walks off. Danny's eyes linger on her.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Danny's Googling again. This time scrolling through a Spanish-English dictionary.

DANNY
 "Niñera"-- Children's nurse.
 (pecks on the keyboard)
 "Des-per-tar-lo" -- Wake him up.

He kicks back, thinking.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Danny opens a tall cabinet. A stack of Polaroid film packages. He grabs the top one.

INT. JOANIE'S OLD BEDROOM - DAY

Danny stands in the doorway, snaps a picture.

EXT. PLEASURE SEEKERS - DAY

Lou's old car cruises up, parks. Danny climbs out, looks up at two Bayliner pleasure boats dangling from cranes, so they can be seen from I-95.

INT. TOMMY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tommy's on the phone. He holds up one finger.

Danny's eyes survey the surroundings. A plush room, live plants, photos of pleasure boats, the family. Chamber of Commerce plaques. Back to the shiny, mahogany desk shaped like the hull of a boat, where Tommy sits, captain.

TOMMY
 (cups the receiver)
 Just one more sec.
 (Danny nods, back to phone)
 That's what I'm trying to tell you.
 I have a little 23 and a 35.
 (...)
 Ah, you think it's too big for you
 right now, but Mr. Trotter, may I ask
 you, how big are your dreams?
 (listens, grins)
 And I agree with you 100 percent. If
 I didn't I wouldn't be where I am
 today. Let me put you back through
 to Riley. He'll take good care of
 you. And if he doesn't, you get
 right back on the horn to me, got it?
 (...)

(MORE)

TOMMY (CONT'D)

No, that wouldn't be good, Mr. Trotter, that would be better than terrific. Hold for Riley. He'll take care of you, then we'll circle back.

Tommy, punches a pass through number, hangs up, leans onto his desk, folds his hands in front of him; a confident, proud smile puffs his face.

DANNY

You know, I really think you should have been the actor.

TOMMY

Hey, don't bust my chops, okay?

DANNY

No, I mean it. You're fantastic.

TOMMY

Yeah, except it's not an act.

DANNY

C'mon.

TOMMY

I love my work. My customers. My life. Why should I feel guilty?

DANNY

I didn't say you should.

TOMMY

Yeah, I know you didn't say it.
(checks cell phone texts)
What're you doing here, anyway? If you came to harass me, just go, huh. I've got a business to run.

DANNY

I came to apologize for the scene I made the other night.

TOMMY

You upset the girls.

DANNY

Sorry.

A long beat. Tommy tosses his cell phone onto his desk.

TOMMY

So?

DANNY

I need a favor.

EXT. FISHING COVE MARINA, NEW SMYRNA - DAY

Pleasure boats of all types and sizes docked in the calm waters of the intracoastal waterway.

Tommy helps Lou onto the deck of his 23 foot Hewes, "Pleasure Seeker II", sits him on the cushioned seat next to the Mercury 225, flips Danny the key.

TOMMY

Leave it in the Banda-aid box in the first aid kit in the glovebox on the right. Want me to check you out on this thing?

DANNY

I taught you, remember?
(to a YACHTSMAN walking by)
Excuse me, would you mind getting a picture of the three of us?

The Yachtsman gestures okay.

Danny reaches the Polaroid up to the Yachtsman, who eyes the camera like it's the fossil that it is, pulls Tommy over to Lou. They pose beside him. The Yachtsman SNAPS a photo.

TOMMY

You know I think this is a stupid idea, right?

DANNY

Yup.
(Yachtsman hands back the camera)
Thanks a lot.

The Yachtsman tips his captain's hat, moves on.

TOMMY

You talked to Joanie and you wanna go fishing with him? That's really on the margins.

DANNY

(tucks the camera/photo away)
Hey, Tommy, don't talk about him like he's not here.

TOMMY

I wasn't, was I, Dad?
(nothing)
(MORE)

TOMMY (CONT'D)

You checked out the, um, place.
When are you gonna take him?

Tommy hops out, unloops the tie-downs. Danny CRANKS her.

DANNY

I'm not, Tommy. I'm gonna stay with
him, keep him at home. I decided.

TOMMY

You decided! Jesus Christ!

LOU

Jesus Christ.

TOMMY

You can't. DON'T GO OUT! WAIT!

DANNY

Can't hear you. What?

Danny guns the engine, pulls away, leaving a ticked-off Tommy at the dock alone, as he watches his boat quickly making way for open water.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE CREEK - DAY

An inlet off the intracoastal. At the helm, Danny steers the boat into a secluded area. The boat slows, settles, quiets.

DANNY

Our old place, Dad, remember?

Danny hops down and walks around to where Lou, wearing his life vest, sits. Danny reaches for a fishing pole.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Okay, you ready?

LOU

(off the life vest)
Can't I take it off, Tommy, please?

DANNY

No, you gotta wear that.

Danny hands him the pole. Lou looks at the pole in his hands, fingers the reel, watches the tiny mirror lure flash in the sunlight.

Lou walks to the side, glances behind him, flips the reel's bail back, and sends his fishing line and lure flying cleanly out into the water. Lou grins back at Danny.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Good one.

(after a beat)

Tell me about you and Joanie, Dad.

Lou slowly reels in his lure with a little jigging action, leans over and inspects it.

LOU

Nothing doing.

DANNY

We'll try again.

Lou repeats the cast, caught up in the mechanics of it.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Remember Joanie, Dad? Tell me about you and little Joanie.

Danny pulls a snapshot out of his shirt pocket. Joanie as a child. Then the Polaroid of Joanie's old bedroom.

Lou turns solemnly to the pictures, then to Danny, just as his pole arcs, pulls, and his reel SCREAMS. Lou SHRIEKS in delight, falls against the gunwale, nearly into the water.

Danny catches him by the belt. The pictures float off.

Lou reels in a two foot redfish. Danny nets it, pulls the fish out, holds it up, shows Lou, who's jumping up and down.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Look at the spots on that one, huh?
Under the slot, too.

LOU

Now we're talkin'!

Danny pulls the Polaroid camera from his tote, snaps one of his father, and another.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny pins the fish snapshot on Lou's wall. Lou's already asleep. Danny tiptoes out.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Danny sits at the kitchen table, nurses a cup of coffee. It's quiet, only the electric TICK of the stove clock. In Danny's hand, Graciella's address on a Post-it.

EXT. GRACIELLA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Graciella stands before a bay of torn up, graffiti-ridden mailboxes. She opens a small envelope, pulls out a colorful party invitation.

INT. JOANIE'S CONDO - DAY

Joanie sorts through mail, notices the same size envelope, sets it aside.

INT. TOMMY'S OFFICE - DAY

Tommy's kicked back in his leather chair, reading his invitation. He takes a Polaroid snap out of the fold of the card: LOU WITH HIS REDFISH.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

A birthday party in progress for Lou. In attendance -- neighbor Mr. Grissom, Danny, and Graciella, who hands Lou a package. Danny seems distracted. Graciella notices.

GRACIELLA

Maybe I wait?

DANNY

No, go ahead. Please.

They watch as Lou pulls out a floppy fishing cap. Danny looks over at Graciella, mouths "thanks."

Lou smiles, pull his new cap on. His cell CHIRPS. Danny hops up, tabs his phone, heads for the kitchen.

Graciella straightens Lou's cap.

GRACIELLA

Muy bonito. Muy macho, jefe.

Lou shows off for Mr. Grissom.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Danny sits at the kitchen table, eyes the refrigerator.

DANNY

(into phone)

Yes, sure I do.

INT. DANNY & ASHLYN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ash is on her phone, flipping through a magazine.

ASHLYN

They want an answer, Danny. I didn't know what to tell them. Since I don't even know when you're coming back, if you're coming back at all.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

DANNY

I'm coming back. You know that. I just can't come back right now, okay?

Graciella's almost in the kitchen now, senses her intrusion, backs out. Danny's eyes follow her.

ASHLYN

What do you want me to tell them?

A loud LAUGH from the other room.

DANNY

I'm gonna have to get back to you, Ash. Something going on here.

ASHLYN

Sorry I bothered you, okay?

DANNY

Don't say that. You're not both --

She hangs up. Danny sighs.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR

His fishing cap on inside out now, Lou bearhugs Graciella. Danny leans in the doorway.

GRACIELLA

Cake, okay?

Lou nods happily.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN

Graciella strikes a match and reaches across the kitchen table to light a 7 and 5 candle on top of a small birthday cake. She knocks one of the candles over.

GRACIELLA

Ay...

DANNY (O.S.)

It was really nice of you to come.

Graciella turns, not the least bit startled by the voice.

GRACIELLA
You invited.

DANNY
So, what country?

GRACIELLA
Como? What?

DANNY
You said in this country you're a
maid. What country are you a kids'
nurse in?

She turns to him, surprised.

GRACIELLA
Time to birthday cake.

Finished lighting candles, Graciella hands the cake to
Danny, walks out in front of him.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR

Danny presents the cake. The doorbell CHIMES. Danny hands
the still lit cake to Graciella.

Danny pulls open the door. There stands Tommy, gift bag in
his hands.

TOMMY
I'm soloing. Is that okay?

DANNY
You bet. Just in time for cake.

Together they walk back into the parlor.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Look who's here, Pop. It's Tommy.

Lou spots Tommy, waves him closer. Tommy steps right up to
Lou, bends to him. Lou snatches the gift bag, starts
digging through it, ignoring Tommy. Danny notices.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Open it later, okay? The cake's
almost on fire. T, get that light?

Tommy backs away, switches off the lamp beside him.

MR. GRISSOM
(holding up a beer bottle)
Here's to my good neighbor Lou
Petronsky.

Graciella holds the cake in front of Lou. Lou's very excited. They all clap and sing, "Happy Birthday."

GRACIELLA

Un deseo, Señor Lou. A wish.

Lou looks into the burning candles. A beat. Slowly, Lou's great big smile fades.

LOU

How many am I?

DANNY

You're seventy-five, Dad. That's a big one.

Lou looks around at everyone in the room, begins to sob.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

The Petronsky brothers stand on the stoop.

DANNY

Look, I know you think I'm screwed up for all this. You're probably right.

TOMMY

Just not so sure about your strategy. I mean, risk/reward vis a vis Joanie.

DANNY

Yeah. Well. Anyway, it probably didn't seem like it, but it meant a lot to him you were here.

TOMMY

I wonder what it's like, ya know, forgetting so much, who people are, who you are, what you did...

DANNY

I don't know.

Tommy nods, walks off slowly.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Hug the kids for me.

Tommy waves "okay" behind him.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Danny pulls the door closed. Graciella's ready to leave.

DANNY

Niñera... mucho bueno.

Graciella offers a hint of a smile, passes him on her way to the door. Then, without turning back...

GRACIELLA

Gracias.

With that, she's out the door, leaving Danny alone.

INT. PETRONSKY BATHROOM - DAY

Danny bathes Lou, who wears his fishing hat. Danny awkwardly washes his father, who just sits, staring straight ahead. He's somewhere else.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Danny's washing dishes, checks his to-do list on the counter.

DANNY

Almost time for your next pill, Pop.

He turns, notices Lou playing with something under the table.

DANNY (CONT'D)

What do you have?

Lou furrows his brow. He pulls out a tattered, old snapshot of a young boy, shows Danny.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Where'd you get that?

Lou then pulls out Graciella's wallet.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Where'd you get that?

LOU

Gracie's purse...

(behind his hand)

... when she wasn't looking.

EXT. PALMETTO APARTMENTS - DAY

Lou's Chevy parks beside a beat up red Ford Fiesta.

With Lou riding shotgun, Danny climbs out, locks the doors, walks up to the rundown apartment complex, knocks on #119. RAMON, 10, skinny, buzzed hair, pulls open the door.

RAMON

What do you want?

(yells behind him)

Oye, un hombre blanco y feo!

DANNY

I speak a little Spanish ya know.

RAMON

Oh, yes? Say something in Spanish to me, payaso.

Graciella strides up, as Danny looks in at the spare furnishings, two more children, an Elderly Lady and a Young Woman, Rosa, standing at a table.

Graciella is a mess, unlike we've seen her before.

GRACIELLA

Ramon, ahora mismo, chico!

Ramon finally vacates the portal. She steps outside, pulls the door closed behind her, crosses her arms.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)

What? Why you come here?

DANNY

I'm sorry, did I catch you at a --

GRACIELLA

You no come here, comprende?

Danny reaches into his jacket pocket.

DANNY

I thought you might be missing this.

Shows her the wallet. She softens, tears up.

GRACIELLA

(mutters in Spanish)

I look everywhere.

DANNY

My father got into your purse at his party. Sorry. Are you okay?

Danny reaches out for her shoulder. Graciella turns to go back inside.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Wait.

She stops, her back still to him.

GRACIELLA

Como?

DANNY

I have something else.

GRACIELLA

What? What something else, huh?

DANNY

I want you to move in, for you to take care of my father. I can't do it. I'm terrible at it. You're a pro. That's obvious.

GRACIELLA

No, su esposa, your wife, she don't want me. So, goodbye, eh?

She steps back inside, closes the door behind her.

INT. GRACIELLA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Graciella stands facing the closed door. All the others inside her place are staring at her. She turns to them. They go on about their business.

Graciella turns back to the door, moves her eye closer to the peephole, just as a KNOCK startles her. She opens the door.

There stands Danny with Lou.

LOU

Gracie!

Lou lifts Graciella up in a bearhug.

INT. GRACIELLA'S ROOM/PETRONSKY HOUSE - DAY

Graciella sets her suitcase on the bed. Danny stands in the doorway.

DANNY

You'll be okay in here?

GRACIELLA

I was already.

DANNY

If you see me doing anything wrong with him, just tell me. Right?

Graciella nods. Danny walks on down the hall.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Danny sips coffee, stands at the window, and watches Graciella and Lou in the back yard. Lou's trying to climb an old Oak. Graciella stops him, talks to him seriously. They walk back toward the house. Danny opens the door.

GRACIELLA
You can drive us?

EXT. A WOODED PARK - DAY

Graciella, Polaroid around her neck, strolls with Lou hand-in-hand. Danny follows behind. Graciella points.

GRACIELLA
Alla, Señor Lou!

Lou looks up into the trees, breaks away, running. Danny and Graciella catch up. They all gaze up at a weathered, but well-constructed treehouse, one story off the floor of the woods, cradled in the spreading tree trunk.

LOU
Wow.

DANNY
(to Graciella)
Thank you.

GRACIELLA
Okay?

DANNY
Well, we know heights are no problem
for him. What do you think?

GRACIELLA
I think yes.

With Danny's assistance, Lou steps up onto the first rung.

DANNY
Careful now, Dad.

LOU
I have a clubhouse.

DANNY
I know.

Danny follows Lou up, looks back at Graciella. She nods.

LOU
No girls!

GRACIELLA
Of course.

DANNY
I'll come back down for you.

Lou looks back as Graciella snaps a photo.

LOU

Okay, c'mon.

Danny assists Lou, as Graciella starts her ascent.

INT. A TREEHOUSE - DAY, LATER

Lou's asleep in a fetal position in a corner.

Danny eyes Graciella as she takes her hair out of a pony tail, runs her hand through it, before tying it back up.

DANNY

How'd you know about this place?

Graciella shrugs.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Was that your family back in your apartment?

GRACIELLA

No.

A beat.

DANNY

What about the boy, what was his name, Ramon?

GRACIELLA

Not to talk about my family.

She steers her dark eyes in his direction. He lets it go.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

1. Graciella pulls a load of clothes out of a washing machine.
2. Danny carries groceries into the kitchen where Graciella and Lou are sitting, drawing.
3. Lou asleep in his bed, his cassette player on his chest.
4. Graciella removes another Polaroid film pack.
5. Danny walks by the hallway bath, listens to the sound of the shower running, moves on.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Danny sits with Lou, as Lou shows him his fish drawings, one after another. Lou's speech is becoming more garbled.

LOU

That's Gracie's favorite right there.

They watch a HUMMING Graciella walk by and up the stairs.

Danny looks at Lou's hand, a string tied around his thumb.

DANNY

What's on your thumb?

Lou proudly turns his hand over, shows Danny. A small ivory castanet. Lou CLICKS it quietly.

LOU

Gracie gave it to me.

DANNY

You like Gracie, don't you? You're happy she's back, huh?

LOU

She's back all right.

Danny's eyes drift back over toward the stairs.

INT. LOU'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Graciella bathes Lou. He's holding his castanet, CLICKING.

GRACIELLA

No, only you need something.

She takes his castanet away, begins washing his chest down with soapy water. Lou's eyes are all over her. They both look down. A big grin cracks Lou's face.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)

Oh, Señor big boy otra vez, eh?

Lou nods. Without looking, Graciella moves her soapy hand down Lou's chest to his stomach and below. Her hand gently glides up and down. Lou's eyes close. Graciella looks away, as her hand works even harder.

Lou begins a rhythmic moan. Graciella looks up. Danny's standing in the doorway, shocked.

An awkward moment. Danny walks out.

INT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - NIGHT

Graciella closes Lou's door, walks quickly toward her room.

Danny's two steps down on the stairway. Grace spots him, stops at the landing. Their eyes meet for a long beat.

She walks on.

Danny follows her to her room. But she beats him there and ducks inside. Danny stops the door from closing.

INT. GRACIELLA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

DANNY
I gotta talk to you.

She turns away from him. He grabs her by the arm. She swats his arm away, wheels to him.

GRACIELLA
Don' you touch, eh!

DANNY
I'm sorry.

GRACIELLA
What, you want fire me now?

DANNY
No. I don't want to fire you.

GRACIELLA
I help him feel better. Okay? Eso
es. I try help. I bad person.
Fine.

DANNY
I never said that.

GRACIELLA
Go out now, please.

DANNY
No.

Graciella crosses her arms.

DANNY (CONT'D)
There's stuff going on with my
father.

Danny pulls a chair closer, sits down, looks up at her.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Graciella. Look. This is very hard
to talk about.

GRACIELLA
Yes?

DANNY

Okay, my sister says when she was a kid, my father... did things to her.

GRACIELLA

Señor Lou? Did something bad? He hurted her? How he hurted her? He beated her?

Danny stares at her.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)

Sex ways?

DANNY

That's what she says. I'm trying to find out more about what happened. You're helping me find ways to get inside him, to --

GRACIELLA

Oh... Ya lo veo. I here to fix your mystery for you?

DANNY

No. No.

GRACIELLA

You no tell me this. Your brother no tell me.

Danny rises, reaches for her, but she pulls away.

DANNY

I'm sorry. I'm telling you now. I wasn't going to. Then I saw you in there with him.

GRACIELLA

You know why I leave my country? No because of comunistas or big America dream. I leave because mi esposo, he hurted my son, beating him. Beating me. Maybe here is no good for me, also.

She turns to him, a tear rolling down her cheek.

Danny reaches out for her, but she backs away, motions for him to go. He hesitates, walks out. WE HEAR Lou's CASTANET CLICKING.

INT. DANNY'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny stands before the photos, staring blankly.

EXT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - NIGHT, LATER

Danny KNOCKS softly at Graciella's door.

DANNY
Graciella?

GRACIELLA (O.S.)
Vete!

Danny moves on.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Graciella sets food down on the table for Danny and Lou.
She quietly moves about the kitchen, fixes herself a plate
and carries it toward the door.

DANNY
Will you eat with us?

GRACIELLA
No.

She walks out. Lou CLICKS his castanet, to no avail. His
face drops. Danny dabs at his food.

INT. GRACIELLA'S ROOM/PETRONSKY HOUSE - DAY

Graciella sits on her bed, the picture from her wallet in
her hands. Outside she hears Danny coaxing Lou. She walks
over to the window,

watches Danny and Lou in the back yard. Lou's CLICKING
away, sitting sullen. Danny's trying to talk him into
casting a fishing lure into a bucket.

When Lou looks up to Gracie, she backs away from the
window.

INT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - NIGHT

Danny hesitates, KNOCKS on Graciella's door.

INT. GRACIELLA'S ROOM/PETRONSKY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She's sitting on her bed beside a packed suitcase.

DANNY (O.S.)
Graciella, I'm sorry. You're right.
Someone should have told you. But
that was a long time ago. Forty
years. That's no excuse, I know.

INT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Danny listens at the door.

DANNY

My father's not feeling well. I think it's mostly that he's afraid you're mad at him. He's like a kid, you know? He needs you, not me. You.

INT. GRACIELLA'S ROOM/PETRONSKY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Graciella stares over at the door.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny sits on the edge of Lou's bed, Lou's eyes fixed on the ceiling, the castanet in his hand. Danny holds a spoon in one hand and a cereal bowl filled with Cheerios in the other.

DANNY

You gotta eat something today.
(Lou resists)
C'mon, it's your favorite.

LOU

Not you.

GRACIELLA (O.S.)

Let me do.

Danny looks up. Graciella stands in the doorway. Danny hands her the cereal.

LOU

Gracie!?

Graciella sits down on the bed, presses her palm against his forehead, takes his pulse.

GRACIELLA

Un poco temperatura, si, Señor Lou?

She offers him a spoonful of cereal. Lou opens up, takes in the Cheerios. Danny watches.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Danny's at the stove, when Graciella walks in.

GRACIELLA

He's asleep.

DANNY

I made us some dinner. Pasta, okay?

Graciella nods, notes the table covered for the first time with a tablecloth, set with two settings, wine glasses, a bottle of red wine. Danny drinks a glass of wine at the stove, turns to her, with a colander of noodles.

GRACIELLA

I help.

DANNY

No way. You do enough. Sit.

Graciella sits. Danny ladles some penne onto her plate, pours her some wine, heads back to the counter and the HUMMING microwave, which he opens and pulls out a bottle of sauce. He instantly burns his hand.

DANNY (CONT'D)

That was stupid, huh?

He shakes his hand, makes a beeline for the ice box.

GRACIELLA

No ice, sink.

Graciella gets up, runs some cool water in the sink. She motions him over, looks at his hand.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)

Okay, under.

Danny puts his hand under the water. Graciella holds it there for him. Their hands together under the water.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)

Tell when no more burns.

Danny looks over at her. She moves her eyes toward the window, looks back. His eyes still on her.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)

Still?

Danny shakes his head. Graciella turns off the water, uses an oven mitt to grab the sauce, moves to the table, and pours the sauce over the noodles.

LATER

Danny pours the last of the wine into Graciella's glass.

DANNY

A toast.

GRACIELLA
For to what?

DANNY
To you staying.

GRACIELLA
I say this?

Danny lifts his toast, aims his gaze right into her eyes.
She sips without toasting.

DANNY
You really are a beautiful woman.

GRACIELLA
You drink too much. Bed for me now.

DANNY
C'mon, stay up a while.

Graciella rises, his eyes all over her. She carries the
dishes to the sink, walks out of the kitchen.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - DAY

Danny sits at the old upright piano, PLINKS at the keys.
Graciella walks down the stairs.

GRACIELLA
Okay, go back to New York now. I
stay, work like before.

DANNY
What if I tell you --

The doorbell RINGS.

GRACIELLA
Ya voy yo.

As Danny plinks away, Graciella goes for the front door,
and comes back with Jimmy and Augie.

GRACIELLA (CONT'D)
The visitors, Señor.

Jimmy and Augie walk in. Graciella takes off for the
kitchen. Jimmy's eyes follow her off.

JIMMY
What a bod on that one. Any more of
those in the kitchen, Señor Danny
boy?

DANNY

I see nothing's changed in your world, Jimmy.

JIMMY

What's that supposed to mean? What'd I say?

AUGIE

I don't know. You okay, Danny?

DANNY

Yeah, Aug. I'm okay.

AUGIE

Thought we'd check in on you. You were pretty messed up last time...

DANNY

Yeah. Hope I didn't tear up your --

AUGIE

No sweat. Just wanted to say, "hi."

A long, awkward beat, as they all stand there.

JIMMY

Let's go, Augie, huh? I told you.

DANNY

Look, guys, things are just a little different right now for me.

JIMMY

A little?

AUGIE

Stop in some time, huh?

DANNY

Yeah, sure.

Jimmy and Augie head out. Graciella walks back in.

GRACIELLA

Gone so fast. Por que?

DANNY

Because I didn't ask them to stay.

GRACIELLA

Old friends, si?

DANNY

Yeah. So?

GRACIELLA
Not way to treat friends.

Danny reaches out for her hand. She resists at first, then lets him take it. He draws her hand closer to his face, until it's finally near his lips. He softly kisses the back of her hand, from the tips of her long, thin fingers down.

She lets her eyes fall closed. He pulls her closer to him, her hand between their faces, slowly draws her hand down, until their faces touch. Danny tastes her lips, his hands in her hair.

She's moaning lowly, but finally pulls away, dashes up the stairs.

INT. DANNY'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny sits up in bed. Can't sleep.

INT. GRACIELLA'S ROOM/PETRONSKY HOUSE

Graciella lies on her side, stares at the moon in her window.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

Graciella serves Lou and Danny pancakes. Lou pours tons of syrup out on his, until Danny makes him stop. He glances over at Graciella, who quickly turns back to the stove.

INT. PETRONSKY BATHROOM/LOU'S BEDROOM - DAY

Graciella bathes Lou. Danny walks in, watches a beat.

DANNY
Everyone being good in here?

Graciella burns him with a look.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Graciella, can I see you a minute?

LOU
NO!

GRACIELLA
Señor Lou, one minute only?

LOU
Okay. One-Mississippi...

Graciella leaves him counting, meets Danny in Lou's bedroom.

GRACIELLA

Yes?

DANNY

About what happened last night. I
just want you to know that...

Her eyes, boiling with energy, passion. He can't resist,
and pulls her toward him. She lets it happen.

Danny pins her against the bed, pushes her down, and is on
top of her, kissing her. She pulls his head down onto her
neck. In her sightline: Lou's photos and drawings.

GRACIELLA

Okay, enough.

Danny lets her up, but she reels him in for one more kiss,
before she retreats into the bathroom. Danny sighs.

EXT. A HOSPITAL LOUNGE - DAY

Tommy and Danny sit alone in near-empty lounge. Tommy
hands him a pink cigar.

TOMMY

Don't worry, it's candy. Won't kill
ya, but your teeth'll probably rot
out.

Danny sticks it in his shirt pocket.

DANNY

Three girls, man-oh-man.

TOMMY

Three girls. Four, you count Tammy.
(beat)
So, you got the maid back, huh?

DANNY

Yeah, Tommy. Did you know she was a
nurse back in Cuba?

TOMMY

Uh-uh.

DANNY

She's something.

TOMMY

For him, right, she's something?

DANNY

Oh, yeah, yeah. The old man was in a total funk 'til she came back. He's better now, much better.

JOANIE (O.S.)

Well, bully for him.

Danny turns to see Joanie. She kisses Tommy on the cheek.

JOANIE (CONT'D)

Way to go, stud. Nurse said you were down here. Tammy's asking for you.

TOMMY

(hustles off)

Duty calls.

JOANIE

So, you're in for the full pound, huh?

DANNY

Guess so.

JOANIE

What a shit you are. What a goddamned unfeeling, self-centered shit.

The few in the lounge turn to watch.

JOANIE (CONT'D)

Turn your asses back around. At least pretend you've got your own lives.

Like sheep, they turn back to their food and conversation.

JOANIE (CONT'D)

(to Danny)

You had to butt in. You couldn't let it go, huh? Why, what's in it for you? You want the house? Fine. Take it. You want to live off his pensions? Go for it.

Danny pulls her off to one side of the room.

DANNY

Hey, you want to rant at somebody, rant at him. You know what you'll find out? Your father, the one you hate so much, is gone. He's gone, Joanie.

(MORE)

DANNY (CONT'D)

You want to put him away, but the man you hate so much is already dead. Talk to him. Scream at him. Get it out of your system, but don't you dare, don't you dare make me an accomplice to what happened to you.

Joanie stiffens, tries to fight back emotion, stands frozen and vulnerable before her brother, pushes a single tear away.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry about what happened to you and that I wasn't with it enough, or, I don't know, too self-centered to see it. It makes me so sad for you, Joanie. It really, really...

His own emotions overcome him, and Joanie embraces him.

PRE-LAP: DOORBELL

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Lou sits in his chair, lowly talking back to the TV.

DANNY (O.S.)

Dad, guess what? You've got a visitor.

Joanie walks into the room with Danny, sits on the piano bench. Lou looks around Danny to his daughter.

LOU

I caught a fish.

JOANIE

Yeah?

(sotto)

That's not all you caught.

DANNY

Tell him things.

JOANIE

Like what?

DANNY

Talk to him, Joanie. This is your chance. You want me to go?

Joanie, growing more emotional by the second, shakes her head vehemently. Danny bids her closer. Joanie moves to the hassock, right in front of Lou, checks that Danny's close by.

DANNY (CONT'D)
You remember Joanie, Dad, don't you?
Your little girl? Played the piano.

Lou eyes Joanie. Confusion in his eyes.

LOU
Uh-huh.

Lou reaches out his huge hand. Joanie pulls back.

LOU (CONT'D)
I locked you up once?

Joanie begins sniffing, fighting it off.

LOU (CONT'D)
I locked her up.

DANNY
No. No, you didn't. She's my
sister. She's Joanie.

Lou grabs Joanie's shaking hand. She begins to sob.

JOANIE
Daddy?

LOU
I like Gracie better.

Joanie pulls away from him, runs for the door.

DANNY
Graciella!

Graciella, at the ready, comes flying down the stairs.

GRACIELLA
(to Danny)
Go, go!

Danny takes off after Joanie.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Joanie's sitting out on the front lawn, sobbing. Danny
sits down beside her.

JOANIE
I'm sorry. I can't...

DANNY
It's okay. I get it.

JOANIE

God.

DANNY

You all right?

JOANIE

No, but what else is new?

DANNY

First mom, now him.

JOANIE

Yeah. Yeah.

(a beat)

Danny, what if Mom didn't die in her sleep? What if she found out what he did and -- ?

Joanie's really coming unglued now, falls back on the grass.

DANNY

No. It was a heart attack. No way. He wasn't that stupid. She didn't know.

JOANIE

But what if she did?

Danny lies down beside her, takes her hand, and together they stare up at a big starry sky.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Tommy sits on the sofa, a big book in his lap. Lou's in his chair. Danny and Graciella walk in.

DANNY

We're gonna take off.

(to Tommy)

You sure you're okay with this?

TOMMY

Yeah, you said he liked pictures. I got some super ones here.

DANNY

Okay. Great.

EXT. THE PLAYHOUSE - NIGHT

Graciella looks around suspiciously, then watches Danny as he huddles over the padlock that secures the old theater's front doors. What he's doing is hidden. He glances back.

DANNY

Don't look at me!

GRACIELLA

Okay, okay.

Graciella turns away stiffly. Danny goes back to the door, a grin on his face. The lock CLANKS open.

DANNY

C'mon! I got it.

GRACIELLA

(struts up to the door)

You very bad...

Danny pulls the door open. They duck inside. The door closes behind them.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Tommy sits close to Lou, shows him a page from the big photo album. We see each photo.

TOMMY

I call this my fishing section. See this one? That's me and Danny in our first real boat. That's Mom, you know, in that funny hat she used to wear in the sun. That's my big boat, the 35 footer. Stellar. Master offers an offset double berth forward. Sealand Vacuflush electric--
(notes Lou's confused look)
Anyway, that's the little one you and Danny took out. And that's you, with your fish.

Lou touches the photo, looks up at Tommy.

LOU

I caught a fish, Danny.

INT. THE PLAYHOUSE - NIGHT

A flashlight beam guides Danny and Graciella in through the mess and down the middle aisle. Danny pulls her along, kicking clutter out of the way as they go.

They make their way to the stage. Danny rakes his jacket sleeve across a spot on the stage, blows off the spot, then lifts Graciella up so she sits right on the cleaned spot.

DANNY

Wait right there. Don't go anywhere.

Danny, the beam projecting before him, hops up on the stage and trots upstage.

The beam disappears. BANGING around backstage.

The beam finds her suddenly. She turns to its source.

Danny tiptoes across the stage. He carries a mirror from one of the dressing rooms, sets it down upstage, leans it against the torn backdrop, lays the flashlight on the floor in front of it.

The light projects downstage, around Graciella and out into the seats. Danny sits down beside Graciella, wraps his arm around her, pulls her closer. A beat.

DANNY (CONT'D)

You might not believe this, but I actually made it rain once in this theater.

GRACIELLA

Of course, that's what happened.

DANNY

It was a nice place once. A great place.

GRACIELLA

"Grandeza se disuelve como un sueño, bondad crece como un árbol."

DANNY

That sounds beautiful, but please don't make me Google it.

GRACIELLA

(grins)

It goes like, um, greatness fades like a dream, but goodness, eh, grows like the tree.

A moment, as Danny eyes her like a precious treasure.

DANNY

Where'd you get that?

GRACIELLA

My father. A periodisto, um, newspaper writer, of the people. Muy determinado, serio, importante. Too important.

Danny understands.

DANNY

What about Ramon?

GRACIELLA

My cousin Rosa's little boy. Un
mocososo. A brat, yes?

DANNY

Maybe he's just bored, huh? You said
you had a son in Cuba.

After some consideration.

GRACIELLA

In Cuba I had a son. Si.

DANNY

Where is he?

Grace turns to him slowly, a tear dropping from her eye.

GRACIELLA

He's gone now four year.

DANNY

Gone?

GRACIELLA

In a small boat with many people at
night when the waves come, he's gone.
Our motor muerto. Hizo a la deriva.
Drifting, yes? For many days. When
the storm comes. Mi hijo pequeño, mi
Galeno, mi vida, close by. Then...
the big wave. Take him from me.

DANNY

God.

Graciella wipes off her eyes. She hops off the stage and
walks out through the sea of wrecked seats.

EXT. THE PLAYHOUSE - NIGHT

Graciella rubs her arms, waits by Lou's Chevy. Danny
closes the theatre door behind him, uses a key to lock it
up, turns to Graciella, shows her the key.

DANNY

I know the owner.

Graciella can't help but smile.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I'll take you home now.

GRACIELLA
No. Somewhere else.

DANNY
Yeah? Where?

EXT. DAYTONA BEACH - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Lights flash along the strip. People, cars and motorcycles jam the main drag. Lou's Chevy part of the traffic.

INT. THE SONRISA CLUB - NIGHT

The place is crammed tight with people. Hot, salsa band kicking butt. Dancers crowd the floor.

Graciella leads Danny into a frenzy of dancers.

DANNY
(shouting over the din)
Can you do this stuff?

GRACIELLA
(lifts her arms gracefully)
Of course.

She takes off, showing Danny a side of her he's never before seen, a sexy blending of the latest Salsa and old Mambo. Graciella runs her hands through her long, brown hair, beckons Danny to join her.

Danny tries, but quickly gives up, choosing to watch her strut her stuff.

A Waitress walks by with a tray of beers. Graciella, without missing a beat, snatches one, takes a drink, and dances on.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

Danny carries a sleeping Graciella up the steps to the house.

Tommy meets him at the door.

TOMMY
Man, am I glad to see you.

DANNY
Why? What happened?

TOMMY
Better let me take her.

Danny shakes his head, "no way."

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Trust me, you want me to take her.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Tommy hustles Graciella through the parlor and up the stairs. Danny steps inside and spots Ashlyn, her bags still packed.

ASHLYN

You son of a bitch.

DANNY

What are you --

ASHLYN

What are you is the better question, don't you think? I took the weekend off. I came to surprise my husband, who hasn't called me in a week. Surprise.

Danny approaches her cautiously. When he's close enough, she slaps the living snot out of him.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)

You couldn't wait to get me out of here, could you?

Tommy sneaks by quickly, photo album in tow. Danny shoots him a look. Tommy shrugs, mouths, "Surprise, sorry." And he's out.

DANNY

(back to Ash)

It's not like that. It happened. That's all. My father needed her.

ASHLYN

Your father!! How dare you! After all I did for you. You bastard. You lying, cheating bastard. Are you screwing her, Danny? God knows, you don't screw me anymore!

GRACIELLA (O.S.)

Dios!

They turn to see Graciella stumbling down the stairs.

ASHLYN

Get rid of her, before I do.

Danny hustles over to Graciella. She's still tipsy.

GRACIELLA
Lo siento. I bring the trouble.

DANNY
No. It's not your fault.

ASHLYN
Shouldn't be. I had the bitch kicked out.

DANNY
Hey!

Danny leads Graciella back up the stairs. Ashlyn's pacing.

GRACIELLA
I do it. I terrible person.

Graciella plods up the stairs, death grip on the bannister.

ASHLYN
So, you're gonna let her stay here?

DANNY
She lives here.

ASHLYN
Oh, my God, I can't believe what I'm hearing. This isn't happening. Jesus.

From OS a continuous CLICKING now joins Graciella's sobs.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)
What the hell's that?

She covers her mouth, like she's going to puke. Danny tries to assist her, but she bats him away, and continues batting him until he backs off. She's crying now, too.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)
Call me a cab, Uber or something.

DANNY
Ash...

ASHLYN
Call me a ride out of here right now or I'll tell border patrol about your little friend. Tommy said she didn't have paper one when he hired her. Guess he got her cheap, huh? What does she charge you, anyway?

DANNY
C'mon, Ash.

ASHLYN
Make the goddam call!

DANNY
I'll take you wherever you want to go.

Danny tries to console her again, and she kicks the crap out of him, heads for the door, turns back.

ASHLYN
YOU-WILL-NOT. Just so you know, I've been fucking Gustave --

DANNY
Yeah, I do know. Already. I saw the texts.

A long moment.

ASHLYN
Oh. Well, okay. We're even. If you think there's anything left between us, and if you want to try and save that anything, whatever it is, come home, we'll work on it.

Danny shakes his head slowly.

DANNY
I do want to, but I can't. Not yet.

ASHLYN
When?

Danny shrugs.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)
Well, when you decide, let me know. I have a life, too, and I will live it whether or not you decide to be a part of it. You decide, yeah? Now, get me a ride out of here.

With that she walks up the stairs. Danny draws a deep breath.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

Danny watches Ash chuck her purse into the back seat of a car and climb in. The Uber drives off.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Danny sits in his father's chair, wide awake.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lou tosses fitfully, eyes closed. Finally, he sits up.

INT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lou, in his pajama shorts, bathrobe, walks down the long hallway, a snapshot in his hand, stops at a door, opens it.

He looks into Joanie's old bedroom. ON HIS FACE, a sudden sorrow. That look quickly fades, and is replaced by confusion.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

Lou tromps across the front yard.

EXT. JIMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lou stands in front of the house, looks up at two small bicycles on the front porch. He trudges up the walkway to the front door, tries to open it. It's locked.

LOU

Stand back.

He removes his bathrobe, balls it up around his fist, punches his fist through an amber glass panel bordering the door, reaches inside, pushes open the door, and is in.

WE PULL BACK: The neighborhood is serene, asleep. Until a CHILD'S SCREAM cracks the quiet, and morphs into a RINGING.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

The LANDLINE RINGS. Danny's asleep in Lou's chair. Disoriented, he goes for it, knocks it over, retrieves it.

DANNY

(into phone)

Yeah?

INT. JIMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jimmy's wife Pammie sits on the sofa, holding her sniffling 8 year-old daughter in her arms. Danny stands with Jimmy at the base of the stairs.

DANNY

Where is he?

Jimmy points up.

HALLWAY

Jimmy and Danny climb the stairs. Danny eyes Lou's bathrobe, picks it up. Lou's passed out at the end of hallway in his PJs. He's snoring loud and deep. The door next to him ajar.

JIMMY

That's my kid's room. She screamed bloody murder, thought it was a bear. I couldn't wake him up.

DANNY

He didn't... ?

Jimmy shakes his head.

DANNY (CONT'D)

His head's all messed up, ya know?

JIMMY

Uh-huh. But you better keep a closer eye on him, Danny. This kinda shit can't happen again.

Danny tosses Lou's bathrobe across him, a note falls out of the bathrobe pocket.

DANNY

(picks up the note)

Wake up!

Lou awakens, rubs his eyes. Danny helps him up. Lou looks around, stares at Danny blankly.

LOU

Where are we, Tommy?

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

Danny holds Lou by the arm as they march up into the yard.

Across the street, Jimmy and Pammie stand on their porch.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Danny sits on the piano bench, the note in his hands. He's sobbing, tries to wipe away the pain and the tears but he's unable to.

INT. LOU'S BATHROOM - DAY

Danny, gray bags under his eyes, in the same clothes from the night before, bathes Lou, who wears his fishing hat again.

LOU

Gracie.

Lou grabs his castanet off the ledge, starts CLICKING.

DANNY

She's sleeping in this morning, okay?

He takes the clicker away from Lou, sets it on the sink.

LOU

Gracie!

DANNY

Shh. Shut up.

LOU

Uh-oh.

Danny looks down into the water, which is changing colors.

DANNY

Shit! Get up! Get up!

He lifts Lou up. Lou resists, holding onto the faucets.

LOU

All suspects are innocent until
proven guilty in a court of law.

DANNY

WHAT?! LET GO!

LOU

Stop it, Tommy!

DANNY

I'm not Tommy, dammit!

Danny slaps Lou in the face. Lou lets go. Danny helps him out of the tub and into his bathrobe, removing his fishing hat and tossing it onto the sink counter.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Now get in your bedroom. Go on!

Lou sheepishly heads out of the bathroom. Danny straightens up the bathroom.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - LATER

Danny towels off his hands, as he walks in.

Danny looks around, runs out of the room, into the hallway.

DANNY (O.S.)

Dad, where are you?

INT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Danny runs along, checking doorways, including Graciella's. She's half on, half off the bed, sound asleep in her clothes from last night.

EXT. PETRONSKY GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Danny looks inside Lou's old car, underneath, runs out.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Danny's frantically searching the house, when Graciella staggers down the stairs into the mess of flipped furniture.

GRACIELLA

Where's your wife?

DANNY

She's gone, okay? I think my father's gone, too!

GRACIELLA

She took him?

DANNY

Huh? NO. I can't find him.

GRACIELLA

Llame la policia?

DANNY

Cops? No, not yet.

GRACIELLA

Por que no?!

DANNY

Because I...

She runs for the phone, dials 9-1-1.

Danny runs out the front door.

EXT. DANNY'S OLD NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

Danny's out in the middle of the street.

DANNY

Lou!

Danny starts running down the street, notices Jimmy's pickup in his driveway. He runs up the steps to the front door of Jimmy's house, notices the broken glass on the porch, KNOCKS.

Jimmy pulls open the door, wearing only some funky boxer shorts, an electric toothbrush hanging out of his mouth.

JIMMY

What now?

DANNY

(catching his breath)

He's gone. Did he come back here?

JIMMY

No. Listen, go back home. I'll get Augie, we'll go out looking. Go on.

DANNY

(starts off, then)

Jimmy, thanks.

JIMMY

Just go, huh!

PRE-LAP a POLICE SIREN.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - DAY

A police car in the driveway. Danny and Officer Tyler stand on the front porch.

Augie drives up in his cherry El Camino, leans out the window.

AUGIE

No sign of him. I'm gonna go round up some more guys.

Augie backs the El Camino out, passes Jimmy's pickup going the other way. They TOOT.

OFFICER TYLER

We'll get some air coverage out as soon as we can. Any other family who might have taken him?

Danny shakes his head, looks up at the setting sun. Graciella walks out.

GRACIELLA

I call Tommy.

WE PULL BACK

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

More cars parked in front of the house. The old neighborhood is filthy with searchers.

A helicopter flies overhead.

DETECTIVE MIKE ROBISON, 59, black, stands with Danny.

ROBISON

I'll do whatever it takes. You know that, right?

DANNY

Yeah, Mike.

ROBISON

Petro taught me everything I know. I would never've made detective without him in my corner. Not in this town. He ever get over you going to New York and not joining the force?

DANNY

(thinks about it)

Yeah. Yeah, I think he finally did.

Danny's distracted by Tommy's Land Rover pulling up. Robison heads over to Officer Tyler.

Tommy climbs out of the Rover, runs up.

TOMMY

What happened?

Danny breaks down.

DANNY

I hit him, Tommy.

The helicopter flies over again, blades THWOPPING. Tommy looks hard at Danny.

TOMMY

You hit him?

DANNY

I had my reasons.

Danny turns away. Tommy scratches his cheek.

TOMMY

What could make you hit him, Danny?
Huh?

(Danny just shakes his head)
I'll help you look.

DANNY

Thanks... That cop over there. He's coordinating.

Danny points to Officer Tyler.

TOMMY

Randy Tyler? They let him be a cop?

Tommy heads off to Officer Tyler.

DANNY

Tommy. Call Joanie, too. Maybe she'll --

TOMMY

I did, Danny. Let it go, huh?

Tommy walks off.

INT. PETRONSKY PARLOR - NIGHT

Every chair and couch is occupied by someone asleep. WE PUSH past them, into

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - DAY

The room is cluttered with people. Graciella pours coffee for all in need.

Robison leans over Danny, who hasn't slept and looks like it, his head slumped against the counter.

ROBISON

You get that snap for me?

Danny pulls a Polaroid out of his shirt pocket, hands it behind him.

ROBISON (CONT'D)

Polaroid? No shit. He looks different.

DANNY

When was the last time you saw him, Mike?

ROBISON

Jeez, it's been a while. Not since...

(a beat)

Okay, I'll get some copies made.

Robison hustles out. The PHONE RINGS.

Graciella grabs the phone, speaks quietly into it, covers it with her hand.

GRACIELLA
Danny?

DANNY
Who?

GRACIELLA
Your wife.

She hands him the phone. Danny hesitates. She gestures for him to talk.

DANNY
(into phone)
Ash?

While he listens, his eyes stay on Graciella, who speaks to a volunteer, but cheats a look back his way.

DANNY (CONT'D)
(into phone)
No, he's still gone.
(...)
How'd you find out?
(...)
Tommy did? That's good.
(...)
Yeah, I will. Thanks.

Graciella walks out into the parlor. Danny's eyes stay on her, until she's out of sight. He turns back to the phone.

DANNY (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Yup. See ya.

Graciella, now standing in the doorway, walks off.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - DAY

The search continues. Police cars cruise by. Tommy passes out fliers. Danny meets Jimmy and Augie at the sidewalk.

JIMMY
You wanna come with us? We're gonna head over to the river district.

DANNY
No, better stick close, just in case.
I owe you guys.

AUGIE
No you don't.

Augie and Jimmy climb into Jimmy's pickup, drive off.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

1. A flier, enlarged from Lou's fish photo, with the words: "Missing. Disoriented. Call this number" is stapled to a telephone pole.
2. Another flier goes up in a storefront window.
3. Tommy knocks on a door, shows the homeowner the flier.
4. Dogs sniff one of Lou's shirts.
5. Danny sits on the stoop on his cell phone. MOS. The sun is setting again. He looks up at it.

EXT. PETRONKSY HOUSE - DUSK

Danny's talking to Robison at his gray Crown Vic, when Graciella runs up to them.

GRACIELLA

Danny, um, um, ay, casita arbol!

Danny's eyes explode.

DANNY

The treehouse!

EXT. A WOODED PARK - NIGHT

Floodlights guiding their way, dogs BARK, as they're led along by their K-9 COPS. Danny's close behind, followed by Graciella, Tommy, and Officer Tyler, all with flashlights.

They're all running toward the treehouse tree. The dogs stop at the base of the tree, BARKING, leaping up.

Tyler has the dogs pulled back, starts up the tree.

DANNY

Randy, let me go.

GRACIELLA

No, me.

DANNY

Yes, yes, Graciella goes first.

Tyler climbs down. They help Graciella up onto the steps.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Careful.

The floodlight on her, Graciella climbs the tree, closer and closer to the top.

She pulls a flashlight out of her back pocket, lays it up on the landing just over her head.

She climbs up onto the landing, shines the light inside.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

As Danny climbs up behind her, Graciella's flashlight finds a couple of wine bottles, a long, dark bundle in one corner. She moves closer to it, shines the light...

A HOMELESS MAN, bearded, filthy, shields his eyes from the light. Graciella falls back into Danny's arms.

INT. PETRONKSY KITCHEN - NIGHT

Danny sits at the table, spent. Robison sits down across from him.

ROBISON

I want you to prepare yourself. The longer this thing goes on, the less chance we're gonna find him okay. Ever thought about a home for him?

Danny storms out. Graciella takes his seat.

ROBISON (CONT'D)

What'd I say?

INT. LOU'S CHEVY, MOVING - NIGHT

Danny drives around, searching, his eyes closing, popping back open.

MONTAGE:

Volunteers, including Jimmy, Augie, and Tommy continue canvassing, showing the fliers. Some people seem to recognize him, others definitely not. Police cars glide up and down streets, stop kids on bicycles, joggers, drive on. Graciella serves food and coffee to exhausted volunteers.

EXT. PETRONSKY BACK YARD - DAY

Danny, carrying a plate of sandwiches, walks out into the yard, where Tommy sits on an old glider, smoking a cigar. Danny hands him a plate.

DANNY

Graciella said you didn't eat.

TOMMY
Where's this thing going with you
two?

Danny looks away, shakes his head.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
I'm just asking.

DANNY
I don't know, Tommy.

They eat the sandwiches.

TOMMY
She makes a mean baloney and cheese.

DANNY
Need to show you something.

He pulls the note from his shirt pocket and hands it to
Tommy, who reads, then looks up at Danny.

TOMMY
Ma?

Danny nods sullenly.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Joanie seen this?

DANNY
No. And she won't, okay?

THUNDER CLAPS overhead, and a rain starts to fall. Tommy
lowers his face into his hands and cries softly.

TOMMY
Shit, man. Shit.

INT. DANNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Danny's drying off. Graciella sits on the bed, watching
him.

DANNY
I shouldn't have hit him.

Danny sits down on the bed beside her, stares straight
ahead.

INT. LOU'S CHEVY, MOVING - NIGHT

Danny's driving along slowly, eyes peeled in the heavy rain.

Tommy's Land Rover flies up behind him, HORN BLARING, LIGHTS FLASHING. Danny slams on the brakes, climbs out.

Tommy meets him at the back of the Chevy. They stand in the driving rain, both immediately soaked.

TOMMY

They found him!

DANNY

Yeah?

TOMMY

He's okay, Danny.

Tommy hugs his brother.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Now what?

Danny simply stares at him.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - NIGHT

Everyone's standing outside. A light rain continues.

A cruiser drives up. A POLICE OFFICER climbs out, opens his back door, helps a cold and filthy Lou out. Danny and Tommy drive up.

Graciella rushes to meet him. Together they run to the cruiser and the Police Officer.

POLICE OFFICER

He was living in a dog house couple
of miles from here. Said the thunder
scared him and the roof leaked.

They walk Lou back into the house, the Police Officer, leading him toward the waiting friends, neighbors, and volunteers.

LOU

"Bad boys, bad boys..."

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Graciella tucks Lou in as Danny watches. She turns to Danny, hands him something.

GRACIELLA

From his albornoz, um, bathrobe.

Danny opens the crumpled-up photo.

They walk out together, leaving Lou alone to sleep.

INT. PETRONSKY KITCHEN - NIGHT

The place is a wreck now. Graciella tends to the mess, while Danny, totally spent, sits at the table holding the photo.

DANNY

So, he does remember.

GRACIELLA

Como?

DANNY

He carries his guilt with him, some kind of penance. He remembers what he did. He knows.

WE PUSH INTO THE PHOTO IN DANNY'S HANDS: Joanie, 8, at the piano.

INT. DANNY'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

With Graciella asleep beside him, her arm draped across his chest, Danny lies wide awake, the photo of Joanie and his mother's note in the same hand.

INT. LOU'S BATHROOM - DAY

Graciella bathes Lou.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Danny takes the Joanie photo over to the night stand, sets it there, picks it right back up and puts it in his shirt pocket. He pulls out the note from the same pocket, reads it again.

DANNY

(sotto)

You thought you got away with it...

(then)

Graciella, um, I'll be back later.

GRACIELLA (O.S.)

Okay.

Danny hurries out of the room, the note in his hand.

EXT. OAK HILL POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Danny pushes his way past the front desk.

DANNY

Where's Robison? Where is he?

An Officer tries to restrain him, but Danny shakes him off.

ROBISON (O.S.)

Danny?

Danny wheels to the voice. There stands Robison, a cup of coffee in his hand. He waves Danny his way.

INT. ROBISON'S OFFICE - DAY

The note's on Robison's desk between them. Robison's sitting on the edge of the desk, but Danny's pacing.

DANNY

Just tell me she didn't commit suicide. Tell me. He told us it was a heart attack, but it wasn't, was it? Huh? She had pills, strong pills for the migraines...

(Robison looks away)

You were his partner. You helped him cover it up, you knew there was a note, you son of a bitch!

ROBISON

He told me there was a note but he never showed it to me.

Danny hands him the note, and Robison reads it, looks up.

ROBISON (CONT'D)

Jesus. No. I never saw this. But, look, he didn't want to mess you kids up, that's all. Sure I went along with it. He was protecting you.

DANNY

Was he protecting my little sister? Huh, was he?

Robison slowly shakes his head.

DANNY (CONT'D)

So, what are you gonna do about it?

ROBISON

What, like arrest him? Danny, that was 30 something years ago, and a note wouldn't be enough.

DANNY

Should I drag my sister in here?!

Robison shrugs.

ROBISON

You want to put them both through something like that?

The cold reality of that question momentarily stuns Danny. He finally just snatches the note from Robison's hand, and kicks the piss out of a trash can on his way out of the office.

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark, save for the moonlight in the window. Lou sleeps soundly, too soundly. The door pushes open.

Danny steps into the room, quietly closes the door behind him. He glances around the room. Lou's drawings are taped all over the walls. His fishing cap hangs from his bed post. Danny stands bedside, looks down at his father.

LOU

I'm not asleep, if that's what you think.

Lou sits upright in bed. Danny flips a switch by the door. Light fills the room. Lou rubs his eyes.

LOU (CONT'D)

Tommy?

DANNY

I'm Danny.

LOU

(nods)

I want some Cheerios, okay? I'm hungry. The frosty ones.

DANNY

Okay. In a minute.

LOU

One-Mississippi. Two Mississippi.

DANNY

I need to talk to you about something.

(Lou counts to himself)

What happened to mom, Dad? What happened?

LOU
Five Mississippi. Six Mississippi.

DANNY
She killed herself, you bastard.
That's what happened. She thought it
might stop you and she sacrificed
herself. It was in the note, "Maybe
now you'll stop hurting Joanie."
What about that, huh? WHAT ABOUT
THAT?!

Lou stops. His face freezes in mid-count. Danny holds Lou
squarely by the shoulders, looks deep into his eyes.

DANNY (CONT'D)
Okay, I know you're in there
somewhere. You have to be. This is
your chance, old man. Do you have
anything to say for yourself? Do
you?
(Lou nods)
Okay, go ahead. Go ahead.

LOU
Eleven Mississippi. Twelve Miss--

Danny shakes Lou hard, lets him go.

DANNY
Shut up! Shut up!

He throws Lou back against his bed, stands over him, his
hand ready to strike. The old man cowers.

INT. PETRONSKY HALLWAY - NIGHT

Danny sits on the floor, leans against Lou's bedroom door.

LOU (O.S.)
Cheerios. The frosty ones!

INT. LOU'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Danny dresses Lou, haphazardly. Lou stands.

LOU
Can I take my hat, Tommy?

DANNY
Yeah. Take your goddamned hat.

LOU
Goddam hat.

Lou grabs his fishing hat from his bedpost, sets it crookedly atop his head, picks up his cassette player.

 LOU (CONT'D)
My music?

 DANNY
No, no music.

Danny takes the player away from him, sets it on the bed.

 LOU
Okay, let's go.

They exit. Danny pulls the door closed behind them.

INT. DANNY'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Graciella, asleep, wakes to the sound of Lou's Chevy CRANKING. She pushes up to see out of the side window...

... where Lou's Chevy backs down the driveway.

EXT. A HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Lou's old car drives along slowly, pulls up to Sunnyland. The car sits and smokes at the entrance.

INT. LOU'S OLD CHEVY - CONTINUOUS

Lou's whimpering. Danny looks over at him.

 LOU
 (mumbles))
No. Not here.

The old man's shaking his head, continues mumbling to himself, frantic, a mile a minute. Can't make it out. Danny waits a few long beats, sizing up his father, throws the car in reverse and backs it onto the highway.

EXT. A HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Lou's Chevy drives away toward a brightening sky.

INSERT SHOT: A GLOVE BOX DROPS OPEN. A first aid kit turns in Danny's hand.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE CREEK - NEAR DAWN

Tommy's Hewes plows out across open amber-toned water, heads into their fishing spot. ENGINE GROWLING.

Lou, life vest on, holds a fishing pole in his lap, hums and sings to himself.

LOU

"What'cha gonna do? What'cha gonna
do when they come for you?"

He jiggles the lure that's hooked to the rod's line guide.

At the boat's helm, Danny, alone, pulls off his jacket,
tosses it behind him and maneuvers the boat into the belly
of the creek. First hints of a red sky sunrise.

The ENGINE dies off. Stillness. Danny climbs around to
Lou, who hops up onto the deck, heads right for the side of
the boat. Danny stands beside him.

INT. TOMMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tommy and Tammy lie asleep. The room is deadly quiet,
until the PHONE RINGS.

Tommy rolls over in bed, knocks the phone off the receiver,
fumbles for it, finds it. Groggy as hell, he listens.

TOMMY

What? Graciella?

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE CREEK/BOAT - DAY/DAWN

Lou stands at the side of the boat, dancing a lure out onto
the water in the middle of the creek. Danny sits off to
one side and watches him, rubs his eyes.

INT. JOANIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Joanie, little girl, pj's on, sits up in bed in her dark
room. The door pushes open.

JOANIE (V.O.)

He would come to me late at night...

Lou enters, walks quietly toward Joanie's bed.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANOTHER NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Now sitting on the side of Joanie's bed is MAUREEN, 40s,
open bottles of pills and whiskey in her lap, her gaze
fixed on the pills. She dabs away tears and slowly looks
up until she's staring straight ahead.

The note in her hand drops, floats to the floor, as if in
water, lands on her feet.

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE CREEK/BOAT - DAY/DAWN - BACK TO PRESENT

Danny pushes himself away from the seat where Lou had sat. He steps quietly toward his father, takes him by the shoulders and turns him around, so they're face to face.

Danny takes Lou's pole away and drops it at their feet. Slowly, he unlaces Lou's life vest, which was only haphazardly put on.

LOU
I hate this, don't you?

DANNY
Yeah.

Danny lifts the life vest away from Lou. Lou bends to pick up his fishing pole.

Danny's foot stomps onto the rod. Lou looks up at Danny, rises, so they're face to face again.

Danny puts his hand on his father's shoulder, turns him away from him, hard. Lou fights to turn back.

Danny uses both hands and forces Lou to face the port side of the boat and the water.

Slowly, with one hand, Danny grabs Lou by his belt and lifts. His other hand pushes against Lou's shoulder.

Lou flies off the boat into the water with a heavy SPLASH.

Lou flails in the water for a few seconds, then makes eye contact with Danny, who stands stock still.

Their eyes locked for a long beat.

Danny makes for the console, where he guns the engine, pulls the boat away, his back to the flailing Lou.

CLOSE ON DANNY: Tears pour down his cheeks. He mumbles to himself, fights not to look back, but he can't help himself and finally turns around.

Lou's head bobs, slowly sinks below the settling water and doesn't come back up.

Danny guns the engines, takes off and away. He SCREAMS and swiftly cuts the wheel hard to port, sending the boat back toward Lou.

He kills the engine. The boat drifts toward the spot where Lou went in.

The boat's still drifting when Danny jumps off the side and swims frantically toward Lou's cap which floats alone.

UNDER THE WATER

Danny swims hard and fast toward a sinking Lou and pulls him toward him. They whirl together under the water, as Danny struggles to swim up with Lou in his arms.

AT THE SURFACE

Both heads thrust up and out of the water. Danny GASPS.

Lou's eyes are closed.

Danny swims toward the boat, Lou in tow.

AT THE BOAT

Danny lifts Lou up and over the gunwale.

Danny climbs up and pulls Lou onto the deck.

He holds Lou close to him, both arms around him, squeezes hard against his chest. Again. Lou's head sags.

DANNY (CONT'D)

C'mon. C'mon!

Danny flips Lou over on his stomach.

He turns Lou's head to the side, presses against his back, hard, does it again, again, again, finally pulls up on Lou's arms, pushes again.

Lou expels water violently, gags, coughs. He's back.

Danny cradles his father in his arms.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Okay?

Lou spits more water out, his eyes roll, settle. He focuses, looks up at Danny...

LOU

Okay, I'll wear it.

Danny gulps down some emotion, picks up the life vest.

DANNY

Okay. Good. Good.

Danny helps Lou into the vest, laces it up haphazardly for him. He grabs his jacket from behind and rolls it up behind Lou's head.

DANNY (CONT'D)

You rest...

(pushes Lou's head down gently)
... right here. I'll take us home.
You hungry for some breakfast?

LOU

Frosty Cheerios.

DANNY

I know.

LOU

You're a good boy, Danny.

Danny nods, smiles, looks deep into Lou's eyes a beat, jumps up toward the helm, grabs the wheel, glances back at Lou who talks to himself, and CRANKS the engine.

The front end lifts slightly. The boat pulls away.

Lou rubs his head, frowns, sits up, glances back behind him.

His best hat floats farther behind.

LOU (CONT'D)

My best hat...

He fusses to unlace his vest. It's tied loosely and is quickly off.

Danny feels the wind pushing hard against his face.

Lou stands at the side of the boat, life vest in his hands.

ENGINE GROWLING. Danny looks ahead, closes his eyes, enjoys the wind, the first traces of sun on his face. He laughs.

DANNY

Hey, you called me "Danny."
(turns back)
You haven't --

The back deck is empty.

Danny's stares blankly.

DANNY (CONT'D)

POP!

Danny swings the boat around, KILLS THE ENGINE, picks up the life vest, looks around in a frenzy.

DANNY (CONT'D)

POP!

Danny spots the hat floating nearby. Without hesitation, he dives over the side and into the water.

UNDER THE WATER

Danny swims hard, down, stops, tumbles, looks in all directions, swims deeper.

IN HIS HEAD, A BRAIN WORM: The plinking of piano keys and the melody of that song from his childhood -- Whirlabout, and children's voices singing the lyric, *"We whirl about and twirl about, then all sink down together."*

Danny's fighting to hold his breath.

AT THE SURFACE

Calm. The hat turns in a gentle breeze, then blasts skyward in... Danny's hand. He shoots up out of the water, gasps for air, short deep breaths, then disappears back under.

The "Pleasure Seeker II" drifts silently nearby, empty. The rising sun paints the transom with a pink light.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

Tommy's boat. Danny, his jacket around him, stands alone on the deck, stares out across the water.

Tommy sits on the seat where Lou had been belted in, his face in his hands.

A Police Boat anchored nearby, between them and the shore.

Two Policemen stand on its deck. They lean over the side.

A SCUBA DIVER #1 pushes up alongside, his torso out of the water, grabs the side of the boat, pulls his mouthpiece out, shakes his head.

Another SCUBA DIVER #2 pops up, shakes his head, gestures that he's going back down.

Scuba Diver #1 nods, reinserts his mouthpiece, disappears under the water. Scuba Diver #2 follows.

The Policemen look over at Danny...

... who stares back over the stern of the boat.

EXT. OAK HILL CEMETERY - DAY

Mourners, including a Priest, Tammy, Augie, Jimmy, Robison, Tyler walk away. Mr. Grissom rolls away, leaving Danny and Tommy to stand over the fresh dirt of Lou's grave. A green tent covers the spot.

Cemetery Workers linger in the distance, ready to work.

Tommy picks up a clump of dirt, lets it siphon through his fingers, drizzle back to the earth below.

TOMMY
(without looking up)
Both gone now.

DANNY
Yeah.

TOMMY
Kind'a gives you a more alone
feeling.

DANNY
Three of us still here.

The wind whips through the tent.

TOMMY
(glances up and around)
Looks like rain again.

Danny nods.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
You know this isn't what I wanted,
right?

DANNY
Sure, Tommy. Sure I do. Nobody
wanted this.

TOMMY
I feel bad Joanie didn't come.
Whatever happened. It's not right.

Tommy breaks down, drops his head onto Danny's shoulder.

DANNY
She's here. Joanie's here.

TOMMY
(looks around)
Where?

Danny shakes his head with a small smile.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah, right.

DANNY

Let's go, huh?

Danny grabs Tommy by the shoulder, pulls him close. They turn together and walk away from the tent. Tammy strides up to take Tommy's arm, walks him away.

TOMMY

(to Danny)

See ya at the house?

DANNY

Okay.

Danny stands alone, watches Tommy and Tammy walk away, past Graciella who sits on a nearby bench. Robison walks over.

ROBISON

Terrible thing. An accident like that.

DANNY

Yeah.

ROBISON

But, accidents do happen. Things go wrong all the time. Life's not perfect. Something we all just have to learn to live with.

Danny looks over at him. Robison's dark eyes, hard, unblinking. The Cop turns, walks off, leaving Danny alone.

Graciella strides up, meets Danny. They walk down the pathway through the markers toward the parking lot.

EXT. CEMETERY PARKING LOT - DAY

Cars exit slowly. Danny closes the Chevy's passenger door for Graciella.

DANNY

Gimme a minute, okay?

GRACIELLA

Of course.

EXT. OAK HILL CEMETERY

Danny walks slowly up the pathway toward the tent where Joanie now stands alone, her back to him. Danny steps quietly toward her. She doesn't turn, puts a tissue away. Danny slips his arm around her, pulls her close to him.

They stand together, silently, a beat.

DANNY

You actually punched out Carl Krueger for calling me a pussy when he heard I was taking piano lessons? I knew about that, ya know.

JOANIE

Yeah. So?

DANNY

Thanks.

Joanie rests her head on his shoulder.

DANNY (CONT'D)

I wanted to tell you something.

JOANIE

Hey, the kid was a complete train wreck. Somebody had to put him in his place.

DANNY

No, I wanted to tell you this. That last day, in the boat, I confronted him about what he did to you...

Joanie turns to him.

DANNY (CONT'D)

... for just one second. It was like this light came on inside him. I swear, Joanie, he came all the way back. He understood me, ya know? And through all of it, everything exploding in his head, all the mess of memories and confusion, he said, he said he was sorry.

Joanie looks into his eyes, deep. A beat.

JOANIE

You are so full of shit.

DANNY

It's true, Joanie. Swear to God, on Mom.

JOANIE

(whispers)

Thank you.

He puts his arm around her, pulls her close. They stand together over the grave, holding each other.

EXT. PETRONSKY HOUSE - DAY

Danny carries a suitcase toward the red Ford Fiesta parked in his driveway. Graciella follows him. He opens the back door, tucks the bag inside, waves to Rosa at the wheel.

Graciella opens the passenger door, starts to climb in.

DANNY

You know I have to do this, right?

GRACIELLA

Of course.

Danny pulls her close to him, kisses her on the back of her hand, tries to find her eyes, but they turn away from him.

Graciella, too emotional to say anything, climbs into the Fiesta. Danny pushes the door closed. She doesn't look at him again. The Fiesta smokes as it backs down the driveway and putters off. Danny watches it go.

INT. DANNY & ASHLYN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Danny sits on the sofa in the dark, as Ashlyn walks in, shopping bags slung over her arm. She struggles with them and her purse, before she finds the switch. She turns to find Danny and is startled.

ASHLYN

Jesus, you scared me. Why didn't you call to let me know you got in okay?

Danny shrugs. She walks over to him. He stands to meet her. She pecks him on the cheek.

ASHLYN (CONT'D)

So, we've got some things to work through.

DANNY

Thought you'd come down for the funeral.

ASHLYN

I thought about it. I did.

She starts off toward her bags on the table, pulls out a couple of shoe boxes.

Danny walks over to the window, looks out to the sea of lights in windows on Broadway.

DANNY

I'm not staying, Ash. And I'm sorry.

ASHLYN

So, that's it?

Danny shrugs, nods.

DANNY

This was never going to work. We both know that. I was never the guy for you.

ASHLYN

I thought you were, once.

DANNY

I'm not sure I ever did. I don't know, it was like I was always trying to catch up to you... and I never could.

Ash pulls her earrings out, sits.

ASHLYN

Well, I did run track in school.

They both let out a laugh.

DANNY

I don't want you to hate me, but you probably should.

ASHLYN

Probably?

She reaches out her hand. Danny sits beside her, takes it.

A SIREN WHOOPS below, as traffic and horns mount. They stare at each other, then out the window, as Danny rubs her hand.

EXT. THE PLAYHOUSE - DAY

To the glowing bulbs of The Playhouse theatre marquee. Though the buildings are still run down around it, The Playhouse has been restored.

ON THE MARQUEE: Children's Theatre Presents "Pilgrim Parting" Saturday, 4 p.m..

The front door pulls open...

INT. THE PLAYHOUSE - DAY

... and we're following a Stage Hand who's toting a can of paint through the renovated lobby, into the theater hall, down the center aisle to the stage where a line of 9 young actors, most dressed as Pilgrims, a couple as sailors, stand before a backdrop of town, sea and sky.

Trunks, driftwood dress the stage.

Augie and Jimmy paint finishing touches on the backdrop. The Stage Hand sets the paint can down between them.

THE AUDIENCE

Danny sits on the back of a chair, book in hand. Graciella, pregnant, notepad in her hands, reading glasses on, right beside him.

DANNY

(to his actors)

Okay, let's pick it up with Sailor Humphrey's entrance. This is our big finish, guys, so everybody's gotta concentrate real hard. Last time without an audience. Make it count, and have fun.

ON STAGE

SAILOR HUMPHREY, a rosy-faced 8 yr-old, jogs off, stage right, drops his cap, kicks and retrieves it. Others laugh.

DANNY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Okay, okay. Now, places, everyone.

THE AUDIENCE

Danny looks down at Graciella. She pats his knee, takes his hand. A simple gold band shines on her left ring finger. They both look toward the stage.

ON STAGE

The kids cheat looks toward Danny. Stage right, Sailor Humphrey picks up a small trunk.

DANNY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And... action.

Sailor Humphrey struts out onto the stage, right up to MASTER JONES, a black boy, 9, in Captain's attire.

SAILOR HUMPHREY

"So, they caught up with you, did they? Just as I said they would."

MASTER JONES

"Our passengers are not sailing with us after all.

(to all)

Goodbye, and God bless this colony.

(to Humphrey)

Come lad, we sail at once."

Humphrey and Jones exit. The others move upstage to watch them go, leaving only Priscilla (Tawny), John Alden (Ramon) and ELDER BREWSTER, a tubby 10-year-old..

Tina, dressed in her Pilgrim attire, glances back at her sister, waves, turns back to the view the parting. Tawny pulls John Alden aside.

TAWNY (PRISCILLA)

"Oh, John, they're going home, back home to England. We're left behind."

RAMON (JOHN ALDEN)

(in broken English)

"No, not left behind. This is your home now, Priscilla. Our home, for always. "

DISSOLVE TO:

THE AUDIENCE

A crowd now in attendance. Opening day.

In the first row, Augie, Jimmy, their wives, Joanie and Regan, Tommy and Tawny, and front and center pregnant Graciella, her head on Danny's shoulder. A radiant smile on her face. Danny mouths the words with Ramon.

ON STAGE

RAMON (CONT'D)

"Captain Standish has promised a proper salute from our guns."

ELDER BREWSTER

"Not without a prayer for those who go and for those who stay. Let us bow our heads."

The actors bow heads, while a kid-powered Mayflower crosses behind them all, right on cue.

ON DANNY -- beaming, as Graciella smiles up at him.

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WE PULL BACK TO TAKE IN THE ENTIRE CROWD, and...

FADE OUT.