

**A Family to call my own**

By

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Inspired by true events

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OVER BLACK:

SUPER: "FIRST THEY IGNORE YOU, THEN THEY LAUGH AT YOU. THEN THEY FIGHT YOU, THEN YOU WIN." "MAHATMA GANDHI"

SUPER: "INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS"

SUPER: "1994"

FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

CODY DEVLIN, 7, scruffy, messy, looks like he came out of a Smith Family commercial, walks the streets, checks the rubbish bins.

A TEEN-AGE GIRL wearing a designer track suit, walks her dog. They pass Cody.

The dog GROWLS at the boy.

The girl corrects the dog and continues on.

Cody watches as the young lady and her dog make their way down the street.

Cody rummages through the rubbish bins.

Stopping at one, he lifts the lid, picks through it. He finds a pizza box. Opens the box to find two slices of pizza.

Cody checks if he is alone, grabs both pieces and runs away to a nearby unit building.

Cody trips, loses both pizza slices.

Cody looks around, finds the two pizza slices on the neighbours' front lawn.

Cody picks the slices up, continues his way into a ground-floor apartment.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dirty, unkempt. Garbage in the kitchen; unwashed dishes piled in the sink.

Cody takes one slice and gives it to his sister MONTANA, 5. She grabs the slice from him and eats it.

Cody's father OSCAR, mid 30s, a throwback to a 1970s pool guy, is passed out on the couch. On the coffee table lies a blackened metal spoon, a syringe and a tourniquet.

Cody's mother ALISON, late 20s, overwhelmed, rundown, takes a bite of Cody's pizza slice.

Alison switches on the television, presses play on the VCR. A child's programme comes on.

Cody and Montana both take a seat in front of the television, stare at the programme in a trance-like state.

Alison enters the master bedroom.

INT. MASTER BED ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alison sits on the edge of the bed, tightens a rubber tube around her arm. Picks up the syringe on the bedside table.

Alison releases the rubber tube and lies down on the bed.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

Cody in the lounge room plays with Montana, They play with finger puppets made from toilet roll tubes.

Oscar sits on the couch, heats some heroin on the spoon.

Alison enters the room.

ALISON

Do you have to do that in front of the kids? Take tha' shit to the bedroom.

OSCAR

Shut up, they don't know what this is. They're not paying any attention.

ALISON

Get it outta here, before I fuckin' toss it out. Talk about a bad example.

OSCAR

Get off my case, how could Montana have any idea? She's only five.

Alison picks up the syringe and takes it over to Cody.

ALISON

(to Cody)

Hey Cody, do you know what this is?

CODY DEVLIN

That's Dad's special medicine, and Mummy's too.

Oscar grabs the syringe from Alison. Cody continues the game with Montana.

ALISON

See idiot, he thinks it's medication, take it to the bedroom.

Oscar gathers up the syringe and the spoon.

OSCAR

Fine, if it shuts you up? I can never get any peace around here.

INT. JACKSON HOUSE - NIGHT

A modest three bedroom fibro home. With a touch of seventies decor, but modern appliances.

HEATHER JACKSON, late 50s, chubby grandma complete with tuck shop arms, a poster girl for the school of hard knocks, takes a seat by the phone.

HEATHER JACKSON

That's right Detective, I know for a fact that they both take drugs. They have two kids.

DETECTIVE #1 (V.O.)

How long has this been going on?

HEATHER JACKSON

At least two years, that I know of anyway. What can be done about it?

DETECTIVE #1 (V.O.)

Why? Did you wait two years to tell somebody about this?

HEATHER JACKSON

I had my suspicions before, they're family. I live by myself. My husband died six years ago.

DETECTIVE #1 (V.O.)

We can send a car over, check on the welfare of the children. Other than that there is not much else we can do.

HEATHER JACKSON

You have to understand they can't know it was me who called you. Their father was not always like this.

DETECTIVE #1 (V.O.)

How so?

HEATHER JACKSON

He had a good job with Medicare. He was a manager. Got caught stealing  
(MORE)

HEATHER JACKSON (CONT'D)  
cash, lost his job. The loser got  
involved with drug dealers.

DETECTIVE #1 (V.O.)  
Mrs. Jackson that is vital  
information we should have been  
told about.

Heather gets up, paces the room. Runs her fingers through  
her hair.

HEATHER JACKSON  
I can't rat out my own family, but  
the kids need to be checked on.  
Look I have to go.

DETECTIVE #1 (V.O.)  
That's fine Mrs. Jackson. We will  
send a car over and check on the  
children. Okay?

HEATHER JACKSON  
Fine, I have to go now.

Heather hangs up the phone.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Two POLICE OFFICERS stand outside the Devlin apartment.

OFFICER KNIGHT mid 30s, solid build, a street smart cop.

Oscar is with them, dressed in a long sleeve jumper.

OSCAR  
What seems to be the problem  
officers?

OFFICER KNIGHT  
We had some concerns for the  
welfare of some children. That  
there may be taking of illegal  
substances.

OSCAR  
Oh yeah, who told you that?

OFFICER KNIGHT  
We're not at liberty to say. May we  
come in?

OSCAR  
Ah no, no you can't... the kids are  
asleep and I was just about to go  
to bed myself.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
Right, well this won't take a  
minute. Rather warm to be wearing  
that jumper tonight.

OSCAR  
What's it to ya? I have a cold.  
That okay with you?

The door to the apartment opens a little. The other officer  
peeks in. Oscar SLAMS the door shut.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
Unfortunately I do need to visually  
check that the children are okay.  
Can you bring them here, please?

OSCAR  
Fine. I'll wake the kids. Get this  
over with.

Oscar enters the apartment.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Oscar is met by Alison.

OSCAR  
That bitch mother of yours has  
called the cops on us.

ALISON  
Get rid of them. We can't have them  
snooping around here.

OSCAR  
I tried. They want to check on the  
kids.

Oscar enters Cody's and Montana's bedroom.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Oscar wakes Cody.

CODY DEVLIN  
I don't want to get up.

OSCAR  
Shut up, listen boy, say nothing to  
the cops okay.

Oscar and Alison return to the front door with Cody and  
Montana.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The front door opens.

OSCAR  
 (to Police Officer)  
 I hope you're happy now? See happy  
 kids; Happy wife, Happy life.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
 Sorry to do this. Say little fella.  
 You look really tired.

Oscar squeezes Cody's hand tight.

CODY DEVLIN  
 Yes.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
 Do you get a lot of visitors?

CODY DEVLIN  
 Sometimes, sometimes very late at  
 night.

OSCAR  
 Ah, he's a little confused; little  
 man's been dreaming again.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
 Oh my mistake, you have a good  
 night then.

The officers turn and leave. Oscar SLAMS the door shut.

EXT. PRIMARY SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY

Cody takes a seat on a bench. Other children play games or  
 are in groups talking amongst themselves.

A teacher is on Playground Duty.

Cody dressed in his uniform, his pullover frayed at the  
 edges. A small hole in one side. Cody takes a bite from his  
 sandwich.

A group of boys in a huddle nearby to Cody, GIGGLE and point  
 at him.

An older boy IAN, 10, rough-looking, a try-hard badass in the  
 making, walks up to Cody with two other BOYS.

IAN  
 Hey poor kid, who said you could  
 eat here?

CODY DEVLIN  
 Get lost, I can eat wherever I  
 like.

IAN  
No, you can't. I'm the boss around  
here, dumb kid.

Ian KNOCKS Cody's sandwich out of his hand, stomps on it.

CODY DEVLIN  
That was my lunch, I'm telling a  
teacher.

IAN  
You're doing nothing, unless we say  
so, get it poor kid?

Cody makes an attempt to get up, but Ian pushes him down.

CODY DEVLIN  
Leave me alone!

IAN  
Why? What are ya going to do about  
it poor kid?

BOYS  
(chant)  
Poor kid! Poor kid!

The boys point at Cody

Cody gets up, takes a swing at Ian. He misses. Ian PUNCHES  
Cody in the stomach, he cries.

CODY DEVLIN  
LEAVE ME ALONE!

A teacher turns toward Cody, makes their way over.

IAN  
Come on guys, let's leave the cry  
baby. See ya poor kid.

Ian and the other boys turn and leave, LAUGH as they go. The  
teacher kneels down beside Cody and comforts him.

INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

At a table sits Oscar.

With him is TERRY, late 40s, muscle-bound jock, in a Golds  
gym tee-shirt. A goon for hire.

And ROY, late 30s, a Bikie, fat build, dressed in his Gang  
colours. Not the sharpest tool in the shed.

Two beers are on the table.

ROY

You're already a month in the rears. I can't give ya any more breaks.

OSCAR

So it's just like that then, can't or won't help a guy out. I have two kids to think of.

TERRY

Oh boo hoo. Everyone has a sob story. Pay what ya owe us, or we may's have ta find some other arrangement.

OSCAR

If the Dosh is not there, it's not there. I can't make it appear out of thin air.

Roy glances out the window at his Harley parked in the street.

ROY

Look I have the authority to make a last chance deal. Come work for us. We take the first twenty-five percent.

OSCAR

Twenty-five is a bit rich.

TERRY

You're in no position to wheel and deal, my friend.

OSCAR

Suppose I have no choice?

TERRY

That would be a correct assumption, It's a take or leave it one-time offer. If I was youse, I would take it.

ROY

We will provide the stock. Prepackaged. Ready to go. We get a few clients for ya. Then the rest is up to you.

Terry takes a sip of his beer.

TERRY

It's not all bad. The first two weeks you keep one hundred percent.

(MORE)

TERRY (CONT'D)

Consider it a gift, just to get ya  
self settled in.

OSCAR

Thanks fellas. You mind if I keep a  
little stock for my own use?

Roy and Terry glance at each other. Roy nods in agreement.

ROY

Not the smartest of moves dipping  
into your own shit, but sure.

TERRY

Don't try any funny shit either; we  
know what goes on in this town.  
You're our bitch now.

OSCAR

Yeah sure thing.

Terry and Roy get up without paying for the drinks.

TERRY

First delivery of stock in three  
days.

ROY

Nice doing business with ya.

Terry and Roy leave. Oscar scrounges around for cash in his  
pockets to pay for the drinks.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

A Police officer stands with SOFIA CATALANO, mid 40s, Italian  
descent, a career government lackey dressed in an office suit  
with a Child Welfare ID badge. She holds a document.

Sofia KNOCKS hard on the door.

A moment later Alison answers the door.

SOFIA CATALANO

Mrs. Devlin, my name is Sofia  
Catalano. I'm from the Child  
Welfare Agency. I have a court  
order to inspect the home on the  
grounds of suspected child neglect.

ALISON

What the fuck, you just can't barge  
in here!

SOFIA CATALANO

I'm afraid so, Mrs. Devlin. Stand  
aside or the officer here will  
arrest you.

Alison steps aside as the Officer and Sofia enter the home.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alison follows behind the Police Officer. Sofia removes a note pad and pen, takes notes.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Where are the children?

ALISON  
How can you even do this? Is this  
even legal?

Sofia hands over a copy of the court document to Alison.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Everything is explained in the  
document, which is your copy to  
keep. The children Mrs. Devlin?

Alison reads the document.

ALISON  
Cody is at school. And I was  
feeding my daughter when you barged  
in here.

Sofia removes a camera from her coat pocket and takes photos of the apartment in its unkempt and dirty state.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Okay I have seen enough, Mrs.  
Devlin. I have to say this is  
unacceptable for a home with  
children.

ALISON  
Who are you to judge me? Or how we  
live? Not everyone can live the  
high life like you, fat cow.

Sofia makes a note of Alison's aggressive nature.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Mrs. Devlin you have thirty days to  
make this home livable.

ALISON  
Or what? What are you gonna do?  
Write more notes in that book? Well  
write this, you fat mole. Go fuck  
ya self.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Failing to comply will result in  
the removal of the children into  
government care. Until such time  
(MORE)

SOFIA CATALANO (CONT'D)  
 you and your husband are deemed  
 fit.

Sofia and the Officer make their way to the front door.

ALISON  
 Don't even think, you fat cow, that  
 you can take my kids away from me.  
 Get the fuck outta my home.

SOFIA CATALANO  
 Thirty days, Mrs. Devlin. Good day.

The officer and Sofia leave. Alison SLAMS the door shut.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Cody dressed in his school uniform walks alone. He drags a large twig behind him as he goes.

Cody approaches a cross street. Out from behind a tree appears Ian.

Cody crosses to the other side of the street. Ian follows.

IAN  
 Hey poor kid, where ya going?

Cody ignores Ian, walks faster.

IAN  
 Hey, don't think you can get away,  
 stupid poor kid.

CODY DEVLIN  
 Leave me alone. I've done nothing  
 to you.

IAN  
 Gimme ya lunch money, OH wait. You  
 don't have any.

Ian laughs at Cody.

CODY DEVLIN  
 Go pick on someone else, idiot.

IAN  
 What did you call me?

CODY DEVLIN  
 Nothing, forget about it.

IAN  
 No, I won't. Gimme that stick.

CODY DEVLIN  
 No. It's mine.

Ian grabs the large twig from Cody. Cody runs away. Ian chases Cody, hits him with the twig as he goes.

Cody makes a run for his apartment. Makes a break from Ian, and loses sight of him.

Cody bumps into PATRICK, 9, the boy next door. Not one to boast of his good lot in life.

PATRICK  
Hey watch it kid.

CODY DEVLIN  
Um, sorry about that. Ian is after me.

PATRICK  
Why is he after you?

CODY DEVLIN  
He hates me. He always teases me.

Ian appears from around a side street. He charges at Cody with the twig raised.

Cody runs away. Patrick stands his ground, takes up a defensive stance. With one PUNCH to the nose, Ian falls.

Ian gets up; blood flows from his nose. He grasps his nose CRYING, tears stream down his face.

IAN  
Why did you do that for? I did nothing to you.

PATRICK  
And he did nothing to you, leave him alone. Don't let me see you around here, got it?

Ian drops the twig and backs away from Patrick.

IAN  
When I get home, I'm telling. We're going to sue you.

PATRICK  
Go ahead. I'm not afraid of you. I'll tell your parents what you did.

Ian turns and runs away while he holds his bloody nose.

PATRICK  
Hey kid, he's gone now. You can come out.

Cody appears from behind a tree, walks up to Patrick. The two boys shake hands.

CODY DEVLIN

I'm Cody. Thanks for that.

PATRICK

I'm Patrick, but my friends call me Pat.

CODY DEVLIN

Nice to meet you Pat.

INT. CHILD WELFARE OFFICES - DAY

Sofia is in her office with area manager DANIELLA POWERS, 50s.

DANIELLA POWERS

Can you catch me up on the latest case you're working on?

SOFIA CATALANO

I have one case, two kids, Cody and Montana. Drug dependant parents.

DANIELLA POWERS

Look hate to bring this up, but the other case officers are concerned that you are only working one case at the moment.

SOFIA CATALANO

So what's it to them? I still do my share of case load around here.

DANIELLA POWERS

They feel that you're neglecting the other cases, over this one.

SOFIA CATALANO

Get them in here. I'll straighten them out quick smart.

DANIELLA POWERS

Not going to happen, if I feel that you're taking a personal interest, I'll have to take you off the case.

SOFIA CATALANO

It won't be a problem, I can remain objective.

DANIELLA POWERS

See that you do.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cody, Alison and Oscar are at the dinner table. Alison cuts Montana's food, then hands the fork over to her.

Cody sculpts mashed potatoes with his fork.

ALISON

Some fat bitch was over today from child welfare, pretty much said we live in a pig sty.

OSCAR

Your bitch mother keeps blabbing to anyone who will listen.

ALISON

They said they'll take our kids if we don't get this place cleaned up.

Oscar glances around at the unkempt and dirty conditions.

OSCAR

It wouldn't hurt you to clean up a bit either.

ALISON

I have enough to do around here, with looking after two kids, I don't see you lift a finger to help.

OSCAR

I'm at work all day. I'm too tired by the time I get home.

ALISON

I don't think selling drugs all day long can be considered work.

OSCAR

Why didn't you just throw the bitch out any way?

Cody stops playing with his food, watches his parents argue.

ALISON

She had a copper with her.

Oscar gets up and rushes to the master bedroom.

ALISON

Don't worry idiot, they didn't find your precious stash.

Oscar returns to the dining room.

OSCAR

No more of this shit. I'm going over to see your mother tomorrow and sort her out for good.

CODY DEVLIN

Mummy, can I go now? I'm not hungry any more.

ALISON

Sure, get ready for bed okay.?

CODY DEVLIN

Okay, can I visit my friend Pat tomorrow?

ALISON

Okay, just get ready for bed.

Cody leaves the table. Alison clears the dishes and drops them into the sink with other unwashed dishes.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY

Well-kept and clean two-story home with all the modern conveniences.

Patrick and Cody play a game of Cricket. Cody bats in front of a set of plastic stumps.

Patrick bowls with a tennis ball.

PATRICK

Hit the fence on the full is a six.  
Over the fence is out.

Cody holds the bat incorrectly. Patrick walks up to Cody.

CODY DEVLIN

What's wrong?

PATRICK

Hold the bat this way. With your hands like this.

Patrick takes the bat and shows Cody the correct way to hold the bat and swing the bat.

CODY DEVLIN

Sorry about that.

PATRICK

Haven't you ever played before?

CODY DEVLIN

No, we can't afford-- I mean we don't have a back yard at my place.

PATRICK  
That's okay. You ready now?

Patrick bowls to Cody. He misses, is bowled out by Patrick.

PATRICK  
Yes, got 'im first ball. Can you believe that?

Cody throws the bat down and walks away.

CODY DEVLIN  
I don't like this game. It's too hard.

PATRICK  
Hey don't do that. That's my good bat. I need it for school matches.

CODY DEVLIN  
Can we do something else?

Patrick picks up the bat and leans it against the stumps.

PATRICK  
I suppose so, what other games do you like?

INT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Patrick's mother, KIRSTY, late 30s, a tall drink of water, sporty mum, opens the fridge and takes out a tray of sandwiches and a bottle of Lemonade.

She turns to the kitchen cabinet, takes out two cups, pours a drink each for Cody and Patrick.

Kirsty carries the tray out to the back yard.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Kirsty places the tray onto a outdoor table and chairs.

KIRSTY  
Take a seat boys, lunch time.

Cody and Patrick take a seat at the outdoor table.

PATRICK  
My mum makes the best sandwiches ever.

KIRSTY  
Thanks, Pat. Cody, you go first. How many would you like?

Cody grabs a hand full of sandwiches and a glass of lemonade. He quickly eats two of them.

Kirsty and Patrick glance at each other.

KIRSTY  
You're a hungry boy. Don't they  
feed you at home?

Kirsty joins the boys at the table.

PATRICK  
I met Cody the other day, Mum. He  
was being chased by a bully.

KIRSTY  
Is that right Cody? How did you get  
away?

CODY DEVLIN  
It was Pat. He hit Ian in the nose.  
Blood came out everywhere.

KIRSTY  
You did? I told you not to do that.  
Those Karate lessons don't give you  
a licence to hit other kids.

PATRICK  
But Mum, he was hitting Cody with a  
stick.

KIRSTY  
Is that true Cody?

CODY DEVLIN  
Yes, he was beating me up. He would  
have killed me.

KIRSTY  
A little dramatic But don't do it  
again.

Kirsty gets up and takes the empty tray back into the house.

CODY DEVLIN  
Thanks for the food.

KIRSTY (O.S.)  
Pat come here and help me wash up.

PATRICK  
Oh Mum do I have to?

KIRSTY (O.S.)  
Yes, get in here young man.

PATRICK  
I have to go help, but you can play  
out here if you like. We can play  
another game after.

CODY DEVLIN

Okay. I would like that.

Patrick leaves for the kitchen, Cody takes the remaining sandwiches and stuffs them into his pants pockets.

INT. SHOPPING CENTRE - FOOD COURT - DAY

A hive of activity with shoppers.

Oscar takes a seat at a table. A short distance away is the male toilets. Oscar glances up at a security camera.

Oscar has a milk shake cup in one hand with a straw. He takes a sip through the straw.

Oscar's mobile phone BEEPS. Oscar reads the text message.

Oscar leaves the table, makes his way over to the male toilet, milk shake in hand.

INT. SHOPPING CENTRE - MALE TOILETS - DAY

Oscar waits by the hand basins, washes his hands. A MALE, 20s, enters.

The male hands over a fifty-dollar note.

Oscar opens the lid of the milk shake cup and removes a small foil packet. Passes it to the male customer. The male leaves.

Oscar replaces the milk shake cup lid and leaves.

INT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

Cody and Patrick play Shooter Video Games. Several games are open, spread out on the floor.

PATRICK

This is my favourite game; you get to blow stuff up.

CODY DEVLIN

This is really cool. I like this game.

PATRICK

I love it too. You want something to eat?

CODY DEVLIN

Sure, what have you got?

PATRICK

Not sure, but Mum can get something for us.

CODY DEVLIN  
That's okay. I can get something.

PATRICK  
How many times have you come here  
now?

CODY DEVLIN  
Um... I think four times now.

PATRICK  
(yells)  
Mum, can you get some cookies?  
Please.

No answer from Kirsty.

CODY DEVLIN  
Probably can't hear us. I'll go.

Cody makes his way over to the pantry. Finds a jar of cookies. And a unopened packet of Tim Tams. Cody checks on Patrick.

Cody takes off his coat and wraps the packet of Tim Tams in his coat.

KIRSTY  
Cody, what are you doing?

CODY DEVLIN  
(startled)  
Ah, .. Nothing, I was just getting  
some cookies.

KIRSTY  
Open your coat.

Cody opens his coat and the packet of Tim Tams falls to the floor.

CODY DEVLIN  
Sorry, I'm sorry.

Patrick makes his way over.

PATRICK  
What's going on Mum?

Cody stares at Kirsty.

KIRSTY  
Nothing, silly mum I dropped a  
packet of biscuits. Here take a  
cookie and go back to your game.

Patrick takes a cookie, heads back over to the lounge room.

KIRSTY

Cody take a seat. What is going on here? Do you get enough food at home?

CODY DEVLIN

Sometimes, we don't have a lot at home.

KIRSTY

What do you mean sometimes? How long have you being doing this?

CODY DEVLIN

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to take them, please don't tell my mum.

KIRSTY

I'm not angry at you, how do you manage?

CODY DEVLIN

I go out looking for food, a lot of people waste so much.

KIRSTY

Oh my god. Why don't I take you home and we can have a talk with your mum?

CODY DEVLIN

Um... okay.

Kirsty grabs a set of car keys, and makes her way with Cody to the front door.

KIRSTY

(to Patrick)

Cody has to go now, say goodbye. Your father will be home in a few minutes. Tell him I'll be back in an hour.

PATRICK

Okay mum, bye Cody see ya around.

CODY DEVLIN

By Pat. See ya.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

Kirsty and Cody stand at the front door, Kirsty KNOCKS.

KIRSTY

Must be no one home?

Cody takes out a key from his pants pocket, opens the door.

Cody and Kirsty enter the apartment.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Kirsty sees the condition the house is in.

CODY DEVLIN

My mum must be out at the shops.

KIRSTY

That's okay I'll wait until your mum gets home. Is your place always like this?

CODY DEVLIN

Most of the time, Mum and Dad are sleeping all the time. Or Dad is at work.

KIRSTY

What kind of work does he do?

CODY DEVLIN

Um... I don't know for sure. I think he sells stuff.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The pile of dirty dishes is still in the sink. A cockroach scurries over them. Kirsty sees the baby sippy cup in the sink.

KIRSTY

You said you have a sister?

CODY DEVLIN

Montana. She's five years old.

Alison enters the kitchen.

ALISON

Who are you? And what are you doing here with my son?

KIRSTY

My son Patrick and Cody are friends; I was just dropping Cody off.

ALISON

So what right does that give you to be snooping around here?

KIRSTY

I wasn't snooping around. Cody thought you were out, so he let himself in.

ALISON  
Cody go to your room.

CODY DEVLIN  
But Mum I want to--

ALISON  
I said go.

Cody leaves.

KIRSTY  
I'm sorry if I have upset you, but  
it looks like you could use some  
help around here.

ALISON  
I don't need help we can manage on  
our own.

KIRSTY  
I caught Cody taking food from my  
pantry.

ALISON  
My boy is not a thief. Be careful  
what you say around here.

KIRSTY  
I don't care about that. Do you get  
enough to eat?

Alison breaks down, cries. Kirsty moves over, comforts her.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Kirsty walks Alison over to the dining room table, and they  
both take a seat.

ALISON  
We may not have a lot, but we get  
by on what we do have.

KIRSTY  
There's no shame in admitting you  
need help. I didn't mean to impose.

ALISON  
Look no problem, thanks for  
bringing Cody back. You seem like a  
good person, but the thing is my  
husband he--

KIRSTY  
No need to explain. I think I know  
where you're going. The offer is  
still open.

ALISON

Um... okay.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is a lot cleaner. Alison places clean dishes in the kitchen cabinet.

Oscar is passed out on the couch. Two long neck beer bottles are on the coffee table.

Alison makes her way to the lounge room, takes a seat on the couch. Exhausted she drifts off to sleep.

LATER

Alison wakes to the SOUND of GLASS SMASHING. As Oscar SMASHES the beer bottles against the wall.

OSCAR

What the fuck is this shit doing here? Where did you get the money for all this?

ALISON

I went shopping, cleaned up a little.

OSCAR

Well about frigging time on the clean-up, but that still does not answer the question on all this food.

ALISON

I told you. Are you deaf?

OSCAR

With what? Did you touch my money? You better not have, bitch.

ALISON

No, a friend of Cody's. His mother came by to help me out.

OSCAR

Who said you could agree to that? We don't need charity. Who is this bitch? Thinks she can just walk in here.

Alison points to the document from child welfare on the fridge door, held in place with a fridge magnet.

ALISON

Don't forget idiot. We have the child welfare coming back in two days.

Oscar steps up to Alison and PUNCHES her in the face. Alison falls to the floor; Oscar stands over her. Alison cries and, tries to guard herself.

OSCAR

Don't you call me an idiot, I'm not an idiot. Where does this bitch live?

ALISON

One street over, number fifteen.

OSCAR

I'm going to sort this bitch out, then I'll sort you out. Don't you ever THINK you can go behind my back and get away with it.

Oscar HITS Alison again, then leaves. Alison lies face down, WEEPS.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Oscar makes his way over to Patrick's house, kicks their rubbish bin over as he arrives. BASHES on the front door.

Kirsty opens the door.

OSCAR

Listen you stupid bitch we don't need your help.

KIRSTY

Who are you? You have no right to speak to me that way.

OSCAR

I'm Cody's father, and we don't need you fucking snobs stickin' ya noses in where it's not wanted.

KIRSTY

Get off my property before I call the cops.

Oscar gets in Kirsty's personal space, jabs a finger at her.

OSCAR

Don't even think of calling the cops. You have no idea who you're messing with.

Kirsty pushes Oscar back.

KIRSTY

Don't think you can come to my home and threaten me. I'm not afraid of you.

OSCAR

You better get afraid. Next time I won't be so restrained. Cody and that bastard son of yours are never to see each other again.

KIRSTY

Get the fuck off my property, you asshole.

Kirsty SLAMS the door shut.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Cody waits. Patrick joins him.

PATRICK

Hey.

CODY DEVLIN

Hey, my dad says I can't be friends with you anymore.

PATRICK

Your dad is crazy. He came to my house last night and had a go at my mum.

CODY DEVLIN

My dad's not crazy. The special medicine he takes makes him do bad things.

PATRICK

You mean drugs? I still want to be friends, how about you?

CODY DEVLIN

Sure, I still want to be friends.

The school bus arrives. Patrick gets up and signals for the bus to stop.

PATRICK

We can meet at the park or shopping centre.

CODY DEVLIN

What if our parents see us?

The bus comes to a stop, opens its door. Patrick gets on.

PATRICK

They won't. I'll come by your place tonight.

The bus closes its doors and drives off.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Patrick waits on the street. He carries a football with him.

Cody leaves the apartment with a garbage bag in one hand, places the garbage bag in a rubbish bin, then meets Patrick on the street.

PATRICK

What took you so long? I've been waiting for ages.

CODY DEVLIN

My dad, he won't leave me alone.

PATRICK

Feel like a game of kicks?

CODY DEVLIN

Sure, I can't believe they won't let us be friends.

Patrick moves a few paces from Cody, kicks the ball to him.

PATRICK

I know right. It's not our fault our parents don't like each other.

Cody kicks the football back to Patrick.

CODY DEVLIN

Parents can be so dumb sometimes. You want to hang out at the shops tomorrow?

PATRICK

Okay, but I have a Footy game on in the morning, say after lunch?

Patrick kicks the football back to Cody.

Oscar opens the door to the apartment and sees the boys playing.

OSCAR

I thought I told you not to see that bastard kid again.

PATRICK

He's not doing anything wrong. We're just kicking the Footy about.

OSCAR

Cody, get back in here now.

Cody passes the ball back to Patrick and heads back inside.

OSCAR

Piss off ya bastard kid. Don't come here again.

Patrick turns and walks away.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

Sofia Catalano and a Police Officer stand in the lounge room. Sofia has her note book with her. With them is Alison.

ALISON

Go ahead you fat mole, you won't find anything wrong.

SOFIA CATALANO

Mrs. Devlin the use of insults or foul language will not look favourably on you. Shall we start?

ALISON

Go ahead. Your majesty.

Alison and Sofia make their way through the apartment room by room.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - MASTER BED ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alison enters the bedroom first; a syringe is on the bedside table. The Police Officer waits outside the room.

SOFIA CATALANO

I have to say it is a much better improvement on the last time I was here.

ALISON

Thank you.

Alison stands between the bedside table and Sofia.

SOFIA CATALANO

Everything looks okay to me.

Sofia turns her back to Alison, makes some notes in her book. Alison takes the syringe and quietly places it into her track suit pants pocket.

ALISON

Okay glad to hear it.

SOFIA CATALANO

You have to maintain a suitable place for children Mrs. Devlin. Any further breaches and we will take the children.

ALISON

We had a bit of a rough patch but we are over that now.

SOFIA CATALANO

We did do some checking on your husband, his last tax return was filed over two years ago, but you told us he was working.

ALISON

He is working. He's self-employed.

SOFIA CATALANO

Very well Mrs. Devlin but be aware your husband still needs to file a tax return every year. You will be hearing from the tax office.

ALISON

I'll be sure to tell him.

SOFIA CATALANO

Good, you will receive a full report in the mail in about a week from now.

They all make their way to the front door. Sofia opens it.

SOFIA CATALANO

Good day Mrs. Devlin.

Sofia and the Police Officer leave. Alison closes the door.

ALISON

Fuck you, fat cow.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTRE - DAY

Cody takes a seat outside a department store. He checks his watch, looks around.

Two TEENAGE BOYS and a GIRL harass shoppers, ask for cigarettes and alcohol.

They approach Cody.

MALE TEENAGER # 1

Hey kid, waiting for your mummy?

CODY DEVLIN

No, my friend Patrick. He's running late.

MALE TEENAGER # 1

Waiting for your boyfriend, queer kid.

The teens laugh. Girl whispers into the other boy's ear.

CODY DEVLIN  
Leave me alone.

MALE TEENAGER # 1  
Hey we're sorry, just having some fun. Hey how would you like to make some money?

CODY DEVLIN  
What would I have to do?

MALE TEENAGER # 1  
All you have to do is grab a bottle of beer while we distract the store manager.

CODY DEVLIN  
That's stealing. I won't do it.

MALE TEENAGER # 1  
Were not really going to steal it, we will give it back. It's just a prank.

CODY DEVLIN  
Are you sure? That does not sound right to me?

MALE TEENAGER # 1  
Sure, it's okay, nothing will go wrong.

CODY DEVLIN  
Um... Okay.

They all leave for a nearby bottle shop.

MALE TEENAGER # 1  
All you have to do is take the beer. We will do the rest. Got it?

INT. BOTTLE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Cody makes his way over to the beer bottles on the shelf. The girl lowers the zipper on her jacket to reveal more cleavage.

The male teenager gestures to Cody to take the beer bottle off the shelf.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTRE - DAY

Patrick arrives at the centre, dropped off by Kirsty. Patrick is still dressed in his Football uniform.

Patrick enters the Shopping Centre. He spots Cody in the Bottle shop.

INT. BOTTLE SHOP - DAY

Patrick walks up to Cody, takes the beer bottle from Cody's hand, and returns it to the shelf.

Patrick walks with Cody out of the Bottle shop.

The other teenagers see this and run out of the bottle shop empty handed.

PATRICK

What do you think you're doing?  
That was a dumb thing to do.

CODY DEVLIN

It was just a prank, they were  
going to give it back.

PATRICK

Oh my god, you have no idea. They  
were just using you. You can be so  
gullible sometimes.

CODY DEVLIN

Am not, I wanted to show them I  
could do it.

PATRICK

You need to think for yourself.  
Don't believe everything people  
tell you. Okay?

CODY DEVLIN

Okay, you still want to hang out?

PATRICK

Sure, I think we can still make the  
next session of a great movie I  
wanted to see.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cody sits on the couch as Alison stands in front of him.

ALISON

What were you thinking stealing  
from a bottle shop?

CODY DEVLIN

I didn't steal it. Patrick came and  
he stopped me from doing it.

ALISON

Well good job he did stop you. He  
is the kind of friend you need.

CODY DEVLIN

I'm sorry, but they tricked me.

ALISON

You're lucky. What if the police had caught you? You'd be in a lot more trouble now.

Alison takes a seat next to Cody.

CODY DEVLIN

I didn't mean to. Those other kids were nice to me.

ALISON

It's time you learned that not everyone is nice, or wants to be your friend.

CODY DEVLIN

What will Dad say about this?

ALISON

He won't know. We will just keep this between us okay?

Cody hugs his mother.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - PUBLIC PHONE - DAY

Cody has a piece of paper with a telephone number written on it. He dials.

CODY DEVLIN

Hello Nana, I need to talk to you about something.

HEATHER JACKSON (V.O.)

Sure, what is it?

CODY DEVLIN

Can Montana and I come stay with you?

HEATHER JACKSON (V.O.)

I would love that very much, but your parents would have to say yes.

CODY DEVLIN

Can you make them say yes? I hate it here.

HEATHER JACKSON (V.O.)

I will do my best Cody, but your mum and I have not spoken to each other for some time now.

CODY DEVLIN

Please Nana. There must be something you can do. Dad is bashing Mum up all the time.

A brief pause takes place.

CODY DEVLIN  
Nana you still there?

HEATHER JACKSON (V.O.)  
Yes I'm still here. I love you and  
Montana a lot. I will do whatever I  
can to help. Okay?

CODY DEVLIN  
Okay, I love you too. Bye, Nana

HEATHER JACKSON (V.O.)  
Bye Cody.

Cody hangs up the phone.

INT. JACKSON HOUSE - DAY

Heather VACUUMS the lounge room carpet. The door BELL RINGS.

Heather switches off the vacuum and opens the door.

HEATHER JACKSON  
Alison what brings you here?

ALISON  
I don't want you coming over or  
contacting us anymore.

HEATHER JACKSON  
What, why?

ALISON  
You know why, it was you who called  
the cops on us. We almost lost the  
kids because of you.

HEATHER JACKSON  
What else do you expect me to do? I  
know what you and Oscar do. The  
drugs. Those kids need a stable  
home.

ALISON  
They're my kids and no one is  
taking them away from me. You got  
that?

HEATHER JACKSON  
Come in okay? We can talk about  
this.

Alison stays out of the home.

ALISON

Oscar does what he can to provide for us.

HEATHER JACKSON

Ha some provider. You must think I'm stupid. I see the bruises around the arms and face. He's been hitting you hasn't he?

ALISON

Only once. He said he would never do it again. But that changes nothing. You're not to come near us or see the kids ever.

Tears well up in Heather's eyes.

HEATHER JACKSON

You really are a nasty bitch. I don't know were I went wrong.

ALISON

Forget it. You're not going to guilt me into backing down. You're dead to me.

Alison turns and walks away.

INT. SUPERMARKET - MANAGERS OFFICE - DAY

Alison dressed in her best clothes takes a seat. On the desk in front of her are a job application and a one-page resume. With Alison is the STORE MANAGER, 50s male, life has sucked this guy into a rut.

STORE MANAGER # 1

I see here you have some experience working retail before?

ALISON

Yes, when I left school for about a year and a half.

STORE MANAGER # 1

But you have not worked much since then?

ALISON

No, I got pregnant, had a son then a daughter. Taking care of two kids, well you know how it is?

STORE MANAGER # 1

Yes, it can be difficult. We can offer you a casual position as that is all we have at the moment.

ALISON

Great, that would be okay with me.

STORE MANAGER # 1

It will only be Thursday nights and weekends. Will weekends be a problem for you?

ALISON

No, weekends are fine. When can I start?

STORE MANAGER # 1

This Thursday, on the four to ten shift, then eight to six on the weekends.

ALISON

Okay, thanks.

Alison stands and shakes hands with the Store Manager.

STORE MANAGER # 1

Our head cashier will contact you and arrange for a training day.

ALISON

Okay thanks again.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Oscar makes his way home with his milk shake cup in one hand. He opens the lid. The cup is full of foil packets.

Oscar arrives at his apartment building, searches his pockets for his key. He is unable to find it.

OSCAR

Fuck, forgot my key.

Oscar rings the DOOR BELL. Cody opens the door. Oscar enters the apartment.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

CODY DEVLIN

Hi dad.

OSCAR

Hi boy, your mother home?

CODY DEVLIN

Nope, still at work. But Monty is asleep now.

OSCAR

She left you and Monty home alone?

CODY DEVLIN  
Work called. Mum had to go.

Oscar makes his way to Montana's room, then to the Master bed room. Returns without the milk shake cup.

OSCAR  
Did she think to get a baby sitter?

CODY DEVLIN  
No one was here. I can do it Dad.  
I'm old enough.

OSCAR  
Not at seven you're not. Get ready  
for bed. You have school tomorrow.

Cody leaves for his bed room. Oscar takes a seat on the couch. Slips off his shoes and lies down.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Alison dressed in her work clothes arrives at the apartment building, takes out her key, opens the door, makes her way inside.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - LOUNGE ROOM - SAME

The lights are out. Alison switches on the lounge room light.

OSCAR  
Turn that fucking light off. What  
kind of a parent are you? Leaving  
the kids without a baby sitter.

ALISON  
I had no choice. Work rang, I had  
to go in early. At least I have a  
legal job.

Oscar springs to his feet and STRIKES Alison in the face.

OSCAR  
You bitch, you never learn to shut  
that mouth.

ALISON  
Don't you ever hit me again! I have  
had it with you!

OSCAR  
What are you gonna do? Run to  
mummy?

Alison backs away raising an arm in defence as Oscar STRIKES Alison again. Alison slumps to the floor.

ALISON

I'm sorry, please stop.

OSCAR

Don't ever leave the kids alone  
again, you stupid bitch!

Oscar leaves. Alison gets up, rubs her face with one hand.  
Takes a seat on the couch. Lies down. Curls up. Cries.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Mostly deserted as it is a overcast and grey day.

Cody and Patrick walk along the Wave Run up. Cody kicks up  
sand and water as he goes. They both carry a towel each.  
Patrick carries a Boogie board under one arm.

PATRICK

Hey don't do that. It's annoying.

CODY DEVLIN

What's it to ya? I don't need you  
telling me what to do.

PATRICK

No need to get agro with me. What's  
bothering you? Haven't said much  
all day.

CODY DEVLIN

Some kids beat me up again at  
school. I wish I could fight back.

PATRICK

Why don't you take Karate classes?  
You can come to my Dojo.

CODY DEVLIN

My parents can't afford it. Only my  
mum works.

PATRICK

I can teach you. It would be fun.

CODY DEVLIN

Hey that's a great idea. Can we  
start now?

PATRICK

Sure, let's move over to that wall.

Cody and Patrick make their way over to the Sea wall, place  
their towels and the Boogie board to one side. Patrick and  
Cody stand and face each other.

CODY DEVLIN

What do we do first?

PATRICK

Say someone wants to hit you. You can block it like this.

Patrick shows Cody how to block. Then Cody has a go.

CODY DEVLIN

Like this?

PATRICK

That's it. This is how you punch.

Patrick shows Cody how to punch as well as how to kick.

CODY DEVLIN

This is so cool. What else can you show me?

Patrick takes Cody by one arm and throws him over his shoulder. Cody lands on his back in the soft sand.

PATRICK

I think that will be enough for today. But you must practice every day and get faster.

The boys gather up their belongings and make their way off the beach toward a nearby bus stop.

CODY DEVLIN

Next weekend we can do this again. I can't wait.

PATRICK

Can't do it, my Family is moving to Perth. My Dad has a new Job.

CODY DEVLIN

It's not fair. When will I see you again?

PATRICK

Um not sure. We can still be friends.

CODY DEVLIN

What's the point? You were never a real friend anyway.

Cody runs away across the street and disappears into a crowded shopping arcade.

PATRICK

Cody wait.

EXT. PRIMARY SCHOOL - YARD - DAY

Cody walks with his bag over his shoulder, when from behind the bag is knocked off.

Cody turns and is confronted by Ian.

IAN

Hey poor kid it's just you and me,  
no buddy to protect you this time.

CODY DEVLIN

What is your problem? Why are you  
always after me?

IAN

I don't like you, that's the only  
reason I need. It's payback for the  
bloody nose.

Ian takes a swing at Cody. Cody blocks the blow with his arm.

Ian tries to hit Cody again. Again he blocks the punch.

Cody takes a defensive stance as other SCHOOL CHILDREN gather in a circle.

SCHOOL CHILDREN

(chant)

FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!

CODY DEVLIN

Someone get a teacher. I need some  
help here.

IAN

No one to help you now. No poor kid  
makes a fool out of me.

Ian punches again. Cody bats the blow away. Grabs Ian by the arm and FLIPS him over his shoulder. Ian HITS the ground with a THUD.

A TEACHER comes running in and breaks up the fight.

CODY DEVLIN

He started it. I did nothing wrong.

TEACHER

Both of you with me to the  
Principal's Office.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

Cody and Alison take a seat at the dining table.

ALISON

And you're sure you did nothing to provoke this boy?

CODY DEVLIN

Mum, I did nothing wrong. He just hates me. The kid's a psycho nut.

ALISON

And where did you learn to protect yourself like that?

CODY DEVLIN

Um... a friend showed me. It's no big deal.

ALISON

It was that Patrick kid wasn't it? You know your father will go nuts if he finds out?

OSCAR

Finds out what? What has he done now?

ALISON

How long have you been standing there? I didn't hear you come in.

OSCAR

Door was unlocked. What is this all about?

Alison gets up and makes her way over to Oscar.

ALISON

I said I can handle this. Cody was suspended from school for fighting.

Oscar steps over to Cody, raises his hand to hit him. Alison stops him.

ALISON

ENOUGH. You're not going to hit him or anyone ever again.

OSCAR

Oh we'll see about that.

Oscar STRIKES Alison on the face. Alison hits back. Oscar HITS alison again.

CODY DEVLIN

Stop it. Leave Mum alone

Cody gets up and races over to Oscar, pushes him away from Alison. Oscar pushes Cody aside.

Cody gets up, runs into the kitchen.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

In the kitchen sink is a large knife and a fry pan. Cody takes a moment, takes the fry pan.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - SAME

Oscar has straddled Alison. They wrestle. Cody STRIKES Oscar on the head with the fry pan. He rolls off Alison.

OSCAR  
You little shit.

CODY DEVLIN  
I hate you, get out of here.

Cody helps Alison to her feet. She takes the fry pan.

OSCAR  
You fucking ungrateful bastard.  
After everything I have done for  
you.

Alison swings the fry pan at Oscar, HITS him on the arm.

ALISON  
Get the fuck out of here, come near  
me again and I'll call the fucking  
cops.

OSCAR  
This is not over bitch.

ALISON  
Yes it is over, you're over, we are  
not afraid any longer.

Alison takes another swing at Oscar with the fry pan. Cody joins his mother side.

OSCAR  
You're dead. You hear me? Both of  
ya.

ALISON  
GET THE FUCK OUT, get out.

Oscar makes his way over to the front door, leaves. Alison SLAMS the door shut.

Alison drops the fry pan, drops to her knees. Cries. Cody hugs her.

Alison kisses Cody on the forehead, squeezes him tight.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

Alison plays with Montana when the door BELL RINGS. Alison picks up Montana, makes her way over to the front door.

ALISON  
Who could that be Bubby? Lets go see.

Alison opens the door to a man in a suit.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

The man is DETECTIVE MELFI, late 20s he produces an ID badge.

DETECTIVE MELFI  
Hi, I'm Detective Melfi. Is Oscar Devlin home? I have a few questions for him.

ALISON  
He don't live here anymore. What's it about?

DETECTIVE MELFI  
It's in relation to allegations of Drug dealing.

ALISON  
Like I said he no longer lives here, and I don't know where he is.

DETECTIVE MELFI  
If you hear from him, can you get him to contact me? I just have a few questions.

The detective hands Alison a business card.

ALISON  
Sure I can do that.

DETECTIVE MELFI  
Thanks.

The detective leaves.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

Alison places Montana in her play pen. Then makes her way to the master bedroom.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - MASTER BED ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alison gathers up all of the drug paraphernalia and foil packets, takes them to the kitchen.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Alison opens the foil packets and empties them into the sink, turns on the tap to wash the white powder away.

Alison opens a cupboard below the sink and takes out a garbage bag, places all of the drug paraphernalia into it.

Alison leaves the kitchen, returns a moment later with more syringes and burnt metal spoons. Tossing them into the garbage bag. Turns the tap off.

Alison ties the bag up, carries the garbage bag to the door.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - DAY

Alison makes her way to the building rubbish bins, opens the lid of a bin, tosses the garbage bag inside. SLAMS the lid.

INT. MOTEL - ROOM - NIGHT

Basic two star motel, basic furnishings and a double bed. A set of house keys are on the bedside drawer.

Oscar is with Terry and Roy. Terry smokes a cigarette. Oscar takes a seat on the end of the bed. Roy stands by the window.

TERRY

We should go after that slag. Show that bitch she can't do this.

OSCAR

As much as I would love to see that. I don't want to have my kids taken away.

TERRY

We have to do something. She can't get away with this.

ROY

Forget about that. We have a bigger problem. You left all your stock in there. What are ya gonna do?

OSCAR

I don't know, can you set me up again? I can operate out of here.

TERRY

Not gonna happen sport. What about the cash?

OSCAR

I don't think she would have found it. I had about forty Gee stashed around the place.

TERRY

You dumb fuck, and you had to start bashing the misses didn't ya? What kind of a bloke does that?

OSCAR

I wasn't thinking straight. I can call her find out what she knows.

Oscar stands. As he does he grabs his side with one hand over the area of his liver.

TERRY

You all right there?

OSCAR

Yeah. It's nothing, just a pain I've had for the last few days.

ROY

Go see the doc about it then.

OSCAR

Can't. I'm wanted by the cops.

ROY

It's just one fuck up after another with you.

Roy takes a peek out the window.

TERRY

(to Roy)

What are you doing that for? Ya making me nervous when you do that.

ROY

Just keepin' an eye out; never know who's watchin'.

Oscar dials the phone.

OSCAR

(into phone)

Look hang on don't hang up. I just called to see how the kids are doing.

ALISON (V.O.)

They're fine. You didn't really call about the kids.

OSCAR

Sure I did. I'm still their father.

ALISON (V.O.)

I threw it out, all of it. That's what ya called about wasn't it?

OSCAR  
You had no right to do that.

ALISON (V.O.)  
You had no right to bash the shit  
outta me, but ya did it anyway. We  
are staying here, you better not  
ever show up here again.

The line goes dead. Oscar hangs up the phone.

OSCAR  
She hung up on me. She threw out  
all of the stock. But she mentioned  
nothing about the cash.

Terry stubs out his cigarette.

TERRY  
Right then let's get over there and  
get our money.

OSCAR  
Take my keys, I don't think she  
would have changed the locks yet.

Terry picks up the house keys; they both leave. Oscar takes a  
seat on the bed. Holds his side as he does.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Terry and Roy watch the apartment building from a distance.  
The lights of the apartment go out.

Roy is on his mobile phone.

TERRY  
Lights are out, let's go.

Roy hangs up the phone, places it in his pocket.

ROY  
Oscar told me where to look. Get  
in, get out.

TERRY  
Fine, can we go already?

ROY  
Yeah. Yeah, but don't do anything  
stupid.

They exit the car.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Terry removes the door key from his pants pocket. Carefully  
he opens the door.

They make their way in the dark to the lounge room.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - LOUNGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Terry steps on an unseen object, stubs his toe.

TERRY  
Damn it, damn kid.

ROY  
(whispers)  
Shut it, idiot.

They make their way over to the couch. Terry kneels down, runs his hand along the middle seat cushion.

Terry finds a slash in the cushion, reaches inside.

TERRY  
(whispers)  
Nothing here.

Roy takes the cushion, checks for himself, then places it back on the couch.

Terry rises to his feet. They make their way to the kitchen.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Roy opens the kitchen cabinet below the sink. He feels around for a plastic sandwich bag held in place by gaffer tape. The bag is empty.

Terry sniffs the air.

TERRY  
(whispers)  
Something's burning.

They follow the smell outside to the building parking garage.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - GARAGE - SAME

Terry and Roy open the garage door. Empty except on the bench at the back is a large metal bucket.

Terry and Roy make their way over to the bucket they look inside to find the drug stash burning.

Pinned to the back board is a note. Roy removes the note and reads it.

ROY  
I have the money, you dumb fucks  
you can have what's left of the  
drugs. P.S. The cops are on the  
way.

Terry and Roy run back to the car.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Terry drives while Roy is on the phone.

ROY

Look what else can I say? That bitch knew we were coming. Burned the stock, took all of the money.

OSCAR (V.O.)

You can't come back here, you'll lead the cops here.

ROY

You screwed us for the last time, we won't forget this.

TERRY

You're not gettin' away with this ya know, once the heat is off we will be back to settle the score.

ROY

He's right ya know. Consider ya days numbered.

Roy hangs up. Throws the mobile phone onto the car dash.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Three black four wheel drives pull up two houses down. Five Tactical Response Group Police Officer's exit from each vehicle.

Armed with M4 Assault Rifles, they move in on foot, in a Tactical formation to a home. One Police Officer carries a portable battering ram.

The police officer with the battering ram and three others take up a position at the front door.

The remaining police officers take up positions at the rear of the house and on the street.

Three of the officers stack up with their rifles at the ready. The fourth with the battering ram waits beside the door.

The signal is given. The officer with the battering ram SMASHES the DOOR IN.

TACTICAL OFFICER # 1

POLICE, SEARCH WARRANT.

In one fluid movement the four officers enter the home, weapons raised.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

The home is a clandestine Meth Lab with the Lab equipment needed for mass production of Crystal Meth occupying every room except two bedrooms.

The first officer enters the lounge room and dining room.

TACTICAL OFFICER # 1  
POLICE, SEARCH WARRANT. Clear.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - BEDROOM - SAME

The second and third officers enter one of the bedrooms. They find the room empty.

TACTICAL OFFICER # 1  
Bedroom clear.

TACTICAL OFFICER # 2  
(into cuff mike)  
House is clear, all clear.

TACTICAL OFFICER # 1  
Someone tipped them off. No matter.  
We'll get 'em next time.

INT. MOTEL - ROOM - DAY

Oscar is unconscious on the floor. Two PARAMEDICS work on him. One of the Paramedic's draws up into a syringe Narcan. Injects the drug into an Intravenous catheter while the MOTEL MANAGER stands by the open door.

PARAMEDIC # 1  
Five mikes of Narcan going in now.

PARAMEDIC # 2  
Right. Vitals are a little low. How long was he unconscious for?

MOTEL MANAGER # 1  
Don't know. Came by to inspect the room, found him like this. So I called you guys.

Oscar opens his eyes.

PARAMEDIC # 2  
Welcome back, you had a drug overdose, we gave you a drug to reverse the effects.

OSCAR  
What, why did you do that for? I was just sleeping.

PARAMEDIC # 2  
It's our job. We keep people alive.  
We have a habit of doing that.

PARAMEDIC # 1  
We just saved your life. You need  
to come to the hospital for further  
observation.

Oscar sits up and slides away from the paramedics. Attempts  
to remove the IV line from his arm. The paramedics stop him.

PARAMEDIC # 2  
Take it easy sport, pull that out  
and you will bleed to death.

PARAMEDIC # 1  
Come with us, you can get further  
treatment at the hospital.

OSCAR  
No, no I don't want to go, you  
can't make me go.

PARAMEDIC # 1  
No, we can't make you go, all I can  
do is strongly advise you that you  
should go.

OSCAR  
Then I won't go. That okay with  
you?

PARAMEDIC # 1  
Okay, but you are going against my  
advice. Suit yourself.

OSCAR  
You can all fuck off now!

The paramedics gather up their equipment and leave.

MOTEL MANAGER # 1  
You ungrateful bastard. Pack your  
shit up and get out. I'm not having  
druggies ruin my business.

The manager closes the door.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Alison and Cody sleep. Montana climbs down from her bed.  
Makes her way to the front door.

MONTANA  
Daddy, come home.

Montana reaches for the door knob. Turns it. The door opens. Montana makes her way out onto the street.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Montana makes her way down the empty street. Comes to a crossing. Montana steps out onto the road. A SQUEAL of car BREAKS. The DRIVER stops just short of hitting Montana.

The driver exits the car. Walks up to Montana, picks her up.

DRIVER # 1

What is a little girl doing out on the street by herself? Where do you live little one?

Montana points to her apartment.

MONTANA

Mummy home.

The driver takes out a mobile phone from the car and calls the police.

EXT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - NIGHT

Officer Knight and a probationary constable are with Alison. Alison holds Montana in her arms.

OFFICER KNIGHT

We seem to be making repeated calls to this address Mrs. Devlin. Any idea how your daughter made it out onto the street?

ALISON

I'm so sorry she must have gone looking for her father, but we are separated now.

OFFICER KNIGHT

We are obligated to report this to child welfare, and they will be coming by later today. Or tomorrow at the latest.

ALISON

They can't take my kids away. I asked my son to lock the door before we went to bed last night.

OFFICER KNIGHT

It's not the responsibility of a child to make sure the home is secure Mrs. Devlin.

ALISON

I know but with everything that has  
being going on, it has been  
overwhelming.

OFFICER KNIGHT

In the future take greater care in  
how you secure your home Mrs.  
Devlin. You're lucky this time.

ALISON

Thanks, I'm so very sorry. It won't  
happen again.

OFFICER KNIGHT

Make sure it doesn't. Good night  
Mrs. Devlin.

The officers leave.

INT. CHILD WELFARE OFFICES - BOARDROOM - DAY

Sofia and Daniella powers look at a white board. On it is a  
picture of Cody, Montana, Alison and Oscar as well as an  
enlarged street directory map with a highlighted area of the  
Devlin Apartment location.

SOFIA CATALANO

In a few minutes myself and two  
police officers will be heading  
over with a court order.

DANIELLA POWERS

Are you sure you have just cause to  
do this? What evidence do you have?

SOFIA CATALANO

I can't wait any longer. We wait  
and those kids are as good as dead.  
Look at the case file.

DANIELLA POWERS

You have made this a personal  
issue, I'm not sure you're still up  
to the task.

SOFIA CATALANO

Yes, I have a personal family  
history, with drug addiction. My  
brother died of an overdose. I, we  
all have a duty to stop that.

DANIELLA POWERS

Look, just don't get too deep into  
this case. I'll sign off on it, but  
stay within the law.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Two police cars and a unmarked car come to a stop outside the Devlin apartment. Sofia Catalano exits the unmarked car, a document in hand.

SOFIA CATALANO  
(to Police officer )  
When I issue the Court order take  
the children and place them in my  
car.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
Okay. Hate days like today.

They arrive at the front door. The officer RINGS the DOOR BELL. No answer. A second time. Still no answer.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Not good, hopefully they're still  
here.

The officer RINGS the DOOR BELL a third time. No answer.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
What would you like for us to do?

SOFIA CATALANO  
We have no choice. Force entry.

The officer leaves for his car, returns with a hand held battering ram. With a powerful BLOW to the door frame, the Officer SMASHES the DOOR open.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The officers and Sofia enter the apartment to find Alison on the lounge room floor unconscious a empty beer bottle and sleeping pills on the coffee table.

OFFICER KNIGHT  
(into radio cuff mike)  
Campsie ten we need paramedics at  
this address, female unconscious,  
breathing, she has consumed  
sleeping pills and alcohol.

The officer rolls Alison onto her side and clears her airway. Cody enters the room. Montana trails behind him.

SOFIA CATALANO  
We're sorry but you will have to  
come with these nice policemen.

CODY DEVLIN  
No, I'm not going, get out of here.

Officer Knight moves in to pick up Montana, but Cody makes an attempt to stop him. Officer Knight carries away Montana. She cries and screams.

MONTANA

Mummy, Mummy help me Mummy.

CODY DEVLIN

Let her go.

Cody punches the officer in the back. He ignores it and continues on to the car.

A second officer takes Cody by the hand. Cody breaks free and runs outside.

SOFIA CATALANO

After him, don't let him get away.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

The officer catches Cody and carries him to the car. Cody kicks and punches the officer as he is placed into the car.

Cody attempts to get out. Police officer restrains him.

Sofia approaches and kneels down beside Cody.

SOFIA CATALANO

Your mum cannot take care of you any more. She is very sick and needs help.

CODY DEVLIN

I don't care, I want to stay. I can take care of my mum.

The noise and commotion have drawn the attention of the neighbours. They watch it all. Sofia takes a seat in the back with Cody and Montana.

Officer Knight drives them away. As they leave, an ambulance arrives at the apartment.

INT. COURT ROOM - DAY

Sofia Catalano sits for the defence. The Magistrate is yet to appear.

In the public gallery of the court is Heather Jackson.

A door opens. The court BAILIFF enters the room. Followed by DAVID WILLIAMS, late 50s, rotund, a cross between Perry Mason and Winston Churchill.

BAILIFF

All rise the honourable justice Williams presiding.

Everyone in the court rises to their feet, bows to the judge before resuming their seats.

DAVID WILLIAMS

This hearing is to determine the welfare of Cody Devlin seven years old and Montana Devlin five years old. It is my understanding that the mother of the children is not present.

Sofia rises to her feet.

SOFIA CATALANO

That is correct your honour, their Mother Alison Devlin is in hospital recovering from a drug overdose.

DAVID WILLIAMS

And the father of the children a Mr. Oscar Devlin whereabouts is currently unknown at this time.

SOFIA CATALANO

That is correct your honour, a warrant for his arrest on alleged drug dealing is still outstanding.

DAVID WILLIAMS

I have before me a statement of facts from the Police, stating among other things that police attended the Devlin residence on several occasions.

SOFIA CATALANO

That is correct your honour.

DAVID WILLIAMS

And warnings were issued by child welfare services.

SOFIA CATALANO

That is also correct your honour.

DAVID WILLIAMS

Very well then as Mrs. Devlin is in no position to care for the children, and their father is wanted by the Police, it is the decision of the court that the children are placed into government care until a suitable home is found for them.

Justice Williams lowers his Gavel onto the bench.

DAVID WILLIAMS  
Court is adjourned.

BAILIFF  
All rise.

Justice Williams exits the court to his chambers.

INT. MASSEY FAMILY HOME - LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

The four bed room home situated near a beach. An open contemporary look.

Sofia Catalano is with Cody and Montana. Montana clings tightly to Cody.

NICK MASSEY And ERIN MASSEY, both in their late 40s. The go-to couple for foster parenting.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Nick, Erin, when I heard that you were selected as the Foster Parents for Cody and Montana, I knew they would be in good hands.

NICK MASSEY  
Thanks Sofia. From what we have read about them so far, I'm sure we can turn things around for them.

SOFIA CATALANO  
That sounds great. Cody this will be your new home for you and Montana.

CODY DEVLIN  
No, I don't want to stay here, I'll run away; and you'll never find me.

A boarder collie dog bounds into the room along with LAUREN MASSEY, 12, happy-go-lucky kind of kid, a dog leash in hand.

SOFIA CATALANO  
Hello Lauren, I see that you've had a big walk?

LAUREN MASSEY  
Hi Sofia, we sure did, we went all the way down to the beach and Skipper and I played fetch.

SOFIA CATALANO  
That sounds like a lot of fun.

ERIN MASSEY  
Can I get you anything Sofia?

SOFIA CATALANO

No thanks, I have a full day ahead.  
Still, have two more placements  
after this.

ERIN MASSEY

Makes me wonder, just because you  
can have kids, doesn't mean you  
should.

SOFIA CATALANO

If everyone thought like you guys  
did, I would be out of a Job.

ERIN MASSEY

Cody and Montana will make number  
four for us. It's hard work, but we  
love it.

NICK MASSEY

Having Skipper is a great ice  
breaker.

Montana plays with the dog.

NICK MASSEY

Loz this is Cody and Montana.  
They're going to be staying with  
us. Can you show them to the new  
bedroom?

LAUREN MASSEY

Sure come on Cody, Montana you can  
come play with me, we have a lot of  
cool stuff you can have a play  
with.

CODY DEVLIN

I hate you and I hate it here, I  
want to go back to my real home.

LAUREN MASSEY

Come on Cody will you at least have  
a look at my big Teddy Bear?

MONTANA

Teddy bear, turn my turn.

CODY DEVLIN

Well okay, but after that we're  
going.

The children leave for the bedroom as does the dog.

ERIN MASSEY

So sad, but here close to the beach  
and with Loz and Skipper, I'm sure  
(MORE)

ERIN MASSEY (CONT'D)  
 we can give them the love and  
 support they have missed out on.

EXT. MASSEY FAMILY HOME - BACK YARD - DAY

SUPER: "THREE MONTHS LATER"

Cody runs away from Nick who stands at one end of the back yard. Cody takes his frustration out on the garden furniture.

NICK MASSEY  
 Cody stop that, you are in need of  
 a time out young man.

CODY DEVLIN  
 No, you're not my dad I don't have  
 to do what you say.

NICK MASSEY  
 Cody I'll give you till the count  
 of five to stop.

CODY DEVLIN  
 I can do whatever I like, who are  
 you to stop me?

NICK MASSEY  
 One, two, three, four...

Cody rips plants out of the ground, tosses them at Nick.

CODY DEVLIN  
 You care more about your stupid  
 plants than me.

NICK MASSEY  
 That's not true, you know that.

Nick rushes over to Cody, grabs Cody with both arms and restrains him. Cody attempts to break free but settles down.

Nick releases his hold on Cody, kneels down to be eye level with Cody.

CODY DEVLIN  
 I'll run away again. I've done it  
 before. You know I will do it.

NICK MASSEY  
 Enough Cody, we know how much you  
 are hurting inside when you act out  
 like this. You're not mad at us,  
 but the people who hurt you.

CODY DEVLIN  
 What would you know? My dad hates  
 me.

NICK MASSEY

That's not true, your father is having a very difficult time as is your mum. That is why you and Montana came to live with us.

CODY DEVLIN

When will all this stop?

Nick hugs Cody.

NICK MASSEY

I don't know. I just don't know.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Nick and Erin drive around the streets. In the back is Montana. Erin looks at every street.

ERIN MASSEY

How far do you think he went this time?

NICK MASSEY

Not sure, last time I found him two suburbs over, he was ready to board a train.

ERIN MASSEY

Thank god the Nolan's were home to stay just in case Cody shows up at home.

NICK MASSEY

I just don't know what to do with him. We've had difficult children before, but...

ERIN MASSEY

I know dear, but Cody is just so messed up, I hate to say it. What else can we do?

NICK MASSEY

We can't give up. I think we can get through to him.

ERIN MASSEY

Look what he is doing to our home. The other children don't want anything to do with him. He needs the kind of care that we can't provide.

Nick pulls over and parks the car. Lets the engine idle.

NICK MASSEY

So just give up on him, just because he is a handful, give up on him just like every one has before.

ERIN MASSEY

I love you, but look what it has done. You look drained. I can't go out. We have to accept that we will not win every battle.

NICK MASSEY

I know that. Failing means we have to hand them both back. They may not keep them together next time around.

At the corner Cody appears in the headlights of the car.

ERIN MASSEY

There he is.

Nick drives up to Cody. Cody makes a break for it. But Nick speeds up and cuts Cody off. Rolls down his window.

NICK MASSEY

Get in.

Cody opens the car door and takes a seat next to Montana.

ERIN MASSEY

Were just glad you're okay. We will talk about this when we get home.

Cody leans his head against the car window.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Sofia Catalano is with Cody and Montana. Montana plays with her toys on a rug.

Sofia checks her watch.

CODY DEVLIN

What's the time now?

SOFIA CATALANO

Three thirty, where could they be?

CODY DEVLIN

There not going to show up, are they?

SOFIA CATALANO

We will wait ten more minutes, then we will have to go.

CODY DEVLIN

They do this over and over, I'm sick of it.

SOFIA CATALANO

I know, but sometimes it takes a lot to happen to get people together.

Sofia packs up the rug and toys.

CODY DEVLIN

Well they can forget it. I don't want to see them. Can we go now?

SOFIA CATALANO

I'm sorry Cody, but we can try again for another day.

Cody takes Montana by the hand.

CODY DEVLIN

Don't bother. They were never coming.

INT. MASSEY FAMILY HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

At the dining table are the Masseys and Heather Jackson. On the table is a plate of biscuits and a pot of tea.

Nick pours a cup for Heather and passes it over to her.

HEATHER JACKSON

Thanks for that, you have a lovely home.

NICK MASSEY

Thanks, we try to keep it as open and inviting as possible.

Erin passes over the plate of biscuits. Heather takes one, dunks the biscuit in her tea, then takes a bite.

HEATHER JACKSON

The reason I came is that I think it would be in the best interest of the children if they lived with me.

NICK MASSEY

We can see exactly where you're coming from, you're family after all.

HEATHER JACKSON

Yes I am, I'm all they've got. They should be with family first.

NICK MASSEY

We are here to help you; not work against you. You need to meet us half way on this.

HEATHER JACKSON

I have done everything I possibly can. Time and time again. Feels like I'm bashing my head up against a wall here.

ERIN MASSEY

As one mother to another, I know what you're feeling. Having the children taken away like that can be so hard to deal with.

HEATHER JACKSON

So you know, do you? You know what it's like to have a drug addict for a daughter? A wife-bashing, drug dealing son-in-law?

ERIN MASSEY

No, but we--

HEATHER JACKSON

But nothing, if I have to I will take you to court to get them back.

NICK MASSEY

Let's not get carried away here, you're welcome to come and visit anytime you like, but all this court talk is not good for anyone.

HEATHER JACKSON

Not good for who? You or the children? Look don't get me wrong you have done a great job, you're a Godsend. But I feel that the time has come for them to be with me, with family.

NICK MASSEY

Until there is a change in the situation by the courts then that is how it will be.

Heather places her cup on the table, and rises to her feet.

HEATHER JACKSON

If that's what it's going to be then. See you in court.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Heather Jackson shares a table with her lawyer, GAIL KENNEDY, late 40s, robust build, a no-nonsense woman, who takes a sip of her coffee.

HEATHER JACKSON

What are my chances of winning?

GAIL KENNEDY

I would have to say not so good, from my experience in these matters the court does favour younger, working couples.

HEATHER JACKSON

That's not fair, how can they do that? I'm family for God's sake.

GAIL KENNEDY

I'm afraid so Mrs. Jackson; the judge needs to be convinced that you're going to be able to take care of the children long term.

HEATHER JACKSON

I'm no spring chicken like I was, I get that. But I can give those kids what has been missing in their lives.

GAIL KENNEDY

What's that?

HEATHER JACKSON

Hope, a chance to start over again.

INT. CHILDREN'S COURT - COURT ROOM - DAY

David Williams takes his seat at the bench, the Court Bailiff rises to his feet.

BAILIFF

All rise, court is now in session.

All rise to their feet and bow, then resume their seats.

DAVID WILLIAMS

I have reached a decision in the matter of custody of Cody Devlin and Montana Devlin.

David passes over printed copies of his ruling to the court Bailiff, then hands a copy each to the two lawyers.

DAVID WILLIAMS

Having heard both arguments, and taking in all the facts of the  
(MORE)

DAVID WILLIAMS (CONT'D)  
matter, in cases such as these  
finding an solution is never an  
easy task.

David turns a page.

DAVID WILLIAMS  
The welfare of the children must  
always come first. Therefore I have  
reached the decision that Cody and  
Montana remain in full care with  
the Masseys.

Heather rises to her feet.

HEATHER JACKSON  
No YOU CAN'T do this, they're  
family. You bastard you have  
destroyed this family.

DAVID WILLIAMS  
Council control your client.

Heather resumes her seat, slumps forward, sobs.

DAVID WILLIAMS  
Partly my decision was reached on  
the fact of Mrs. Jackson's advanced  
years, and the fixed income of the  
aged pension.

HEATHER JACKSON  
No, please oh god please don't do  
this.

DAVID WILLIAMS  
Council please.

Gail Kennedy consoles Heather .

HEATHER JACKSON  
You must reconsider.

DAVID WILLIAMS  
However as the Masseys have  
indicated to this court that they  
are unable to continue to foster  
the children I have accepted their  
request and hereby order that the  
children be placed with a new  
foster family.

David BANGS the gavel on the bench.

BAILIFF  
All rise.

Everyone rises to their feet. David exits the court room.

EXT. PARK - PLAY GROUND - DAY

Cody and Montana play on the playground equipment, while Alison and Sofia Catalano watch nearby.

Sofia takes a sip from her coffee.

ALISON

That bastard deserves everything he gets after what he did to us. He can rot in hell for all I care.

SOFIA CATALANO

You came here to tell Cody? I'm not sure if that is such a good idea.

ALISON

He should know, doctors think he may not have long. With all the drugs he took over the years.

SOFIA CATALANO

I'll think I will take a short walk to give you guys a little privacy.

Sofia takes a few steps away from Alison.

ALISON

Cody come here, please, I have something to tell you.

Cody climbs down from the playground, makes his way over.

CODY DEVLIN

What is it Mum?

ALISON

It's about your dad, he can't make it today because he is sick.

CODY DEVLIN

That's what he says all the time, I don't care if he never comes again.

Alison takes a knee and places an arm around Cody.

ALISON

No, that's not it, he has cancer, he is dying of cancer. He had to move to the Gold Coast for treatment.

CODY DEVLIN

He can just hurry up and die.

ALISON

Listen to me, I know he has done some very bad things, so have I but  
(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)  
you need to go see him. Before it's  
too late.

Alison wipes away a tear.

CODY DEVLIN  
Can I go play now?

Alison takes a moment.

ALISON  
Sure go play.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY DEPARTMENT - DAY

Oscar is in a large chair. On either side of him are other cancer patients receiving treatment. With Oscar is a nurse who inserts a cannular into Oscar's arm.

Oscar has lost all of his hair and a lot of weight. He has become gaunt in appearance.

A doctor JAMIE RAMSAY, mid-30s, slim build, dark hair, ice cool, unflappable, checks Oscar's chart.

DR JAMIE RAMSAY  
Oscar because of your long term  
narcotics use, the treatment is not  
progressing as well as we would  
have liked.

OSCAR  
What choice do I have now?

DR JAMIE RAMSAY  
There is a chance of a liver  
transplant, but we have to wait for  
a donor to become available.  
Failing that it is a case of  
palliative care.

OSCAR  
So this is it then, all these years  
of wasting my life, and this how it  
all FUCKING ends.

DR JAMIE RAMSAY  
I'm sorry Oscar, but if this does  
not work now. The cancer will  
spread and eventually kill you.

OSCAR  
Well then you fuckin' doctors  
better do the shit you do best and  
get me the fuck better.

DR JAMIE RAMSAY

Please Oscar I can understand your frustration. It frustrates me to no end that I can't do more to help you.

The nurse steps back and opens the valve to the intravenous bag of fluid.

OSCAR

So this shit you have dripping into my body has to work. It's the last shot I have.

DR JAMIE RAMSAY

Yes I'm afraid so Oscar. I need to continue my rounds but I will be back to check on you.

OSCAR

Fine forget about me. I'll just die quietly here.

The nurse and Jamie leave. Oscar glances up at the IV bag suspended by a pole.

INT. CHILD WELFARE OFFICES - DAY

Sofia Catalano is in her office with a middle-aged couple. KYLE HUGHES, mid-40s, has an almost priest-like air about him, not much will shock this guy. PHOEBE HUGHES, mid-40s, a calming influence, very motherly.

Phoebe reads over a document.

SOFIA CATALANO

Congratulations to you both, after the exhaustive vetting process we can finally say that you're going to be foster parents.

KYLE HUGHES

We are just over the moon about this. Our daughter Rebecca will be stoked about this.

PHOEBE HUGHES

We knew this is just right for us, and our family. It is something that we have thought about doing for a long time now.

SOFIA CATALANO

That is great, we have a brother and sister Cody and Montana, we think they will be perfect for you.

PHOEBE HUGHES

That sounds great, just one question I see here that Cody is eight and Montana is six. We were under the impression that we would get an infant?

SOFIA CATALANO

Ah.. Not sure how you got that impression but looking over your application the department thought it would be best to place you with older children.

KYLE HUGHES

I get that. It was just our hope we could experience the raising of an infant again.

SOFIA CATALANO

I can certainly understand that, however we are not running a child market here, if you prefer we can delay the final approval. Give you more time to think it over.

Kyle glances over at Phoebe.

KYLE HUGHES

No we would be happy to at least meet Cody and Montana.

SOFIA CATALANO

Good. It's all settled then. We will call you when we have arranged a visit.

INT. CHILD WELFARE FACILITY - DORMITORY - DAY

Sofia and the Hughes' have the room to themselves. Cody stands at his bed while Montana jumps on hers.

SOFIA CATALANO

Monty stop that, come here, please.

Montana continues to jump on the bed.

MONTANA

No, I want to keep playing.

SOFIA CATALANO

I said come here please.

MONTANA

No, go away fat lady.

Phoebe takes a step forward.

PHOEBE HUGHES

Let me try, I have something that might work.

Phoebe approaches Montana.

CODY DEVLIN

She doesn't like strangers. It upsets her.

PHOEBE HUGHES

That is understandable, would you mind if I talk to her?

CODY DEVLIN

You can try, but I don't think it would do you any good.

Phoebe takes Montana by the hands and stops her jumping on the bed, takes Montana in her arms. Phoebe whispers into Montana's ear.

Montana hugs Phoebe.

CODY DEVLIN

What did you say to her?

Phoebe whispers into Cody's ear, and he gives Phoebe a hug.

INT. HOSPITAL - ONCOLOGY DEPARTMENT - DAY

Cody and Montana are with MAGGIE, late 60s, the world owes her for the hard life she has had. The Mother of Oscar. Oscar sits in his chair as he waits for the latest round of treatment to finish.

Montana climbs onto Oscar's lap, wraps her arms around him.

OSCAR

Monty look how big you have grown. You're a big girl now.

MONTANA

Daddy come home with us. We miss you.

OSCAR

I would if I could, but Daddy has to stay here.

CODY DEVLIN

Dad can you come with us to the theme park? They have a lot of cool rides.

OSCAR

We will see what the doctor has to say.

CODY DEVLIN  
It's not fair. I hate it here.

OSCAR  
Mum would you mind taking Monty for  
a walk?

MAGGIE  
Sure, Monty come with Nana.

Montana leaves with Maggie.

OSCAR  
Cody come here, I have something I  
need to tell you.

CODY DEVLIN  
Sure Dad, what is it?

OSCAR  
Son the truth is the doctors say  
that I'm dying and I don't have  
long to live.

CODY DEVLIN  
How long did they say Dad?

OSCAR  
Not long, I'm so sorry for  
everything I ever did. When the  
drugs and booze get a hold of you,  
they grab hold like a vice.

CODY DEVLIN  
Why did you do it?

OSCAR  
Because I was selfish. Greedy. Once  
the drugs got their hooks into me  
all I could think of was my next  
hit, getting more money for my next  
hit.

CODY DEVLIN  
We hardly know you.

OSCAR  
All I can do is say I'm sorry. I am  
the worst father two kids could  
have. All I ask is that you forgive  
me.

CODY DEVLIN  
I don't think I can do that. You  
have done so much to hurt us.

OSCAR

I get that, I deserve that. Either way I'm still proud of what you have become.

CODY DEVLIN

No thanks to you. I can make it on my own.

OSCAR

After I'm gone, I will make sure you get what little I own. Take care of your sister too.

CODY DEVLIN

Whatever, can we talk about something else now?

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

A single story four bedroom. Spacious and open. Modern decor.

Cody and Montana arrive with Sofia Catalano. Cody has with him a garbage bag. Sofia carries a garbage bag.

Cody drops his garbage bag on the floor, reveals its contents of a few old clothes.

SOFIA CATALANO

Cody pick that up, please.

Cody gathers the bag up and slings it over his shoulder.

PHOEBE HUGHES

Welcome Cody, Montana this will be your home for as long as you like. You too, Montana.

Montana makes her way over to the couch, climbs up and lies down, places her head on the arm rest.

KYLE HUGHES

Poor child, she must be exhausted.

SOFIA CATALANO

Yes it has been a long drive for her. Had to make a toilet stop on the way here.

PHOEBE HUGHES

Oh my, we can put her down in a minute. The rooms are made up ready for them.

SOFIA CATALANO

The children don't own much in the way of clothes, I'm afraid.

KYLE HUGHES

Not a problem we can take them  
clothes shopping later.

In one bedroom of the house a CELLO plays, the piece of music  
is Rondo by Boccherini.

SOFIA CATALANO

We have a musician in the house?

KYLE HUGHES

Yes, that is our daughter Rebecca,  
I can bring her out here to meet  
you if you like?

SOFIA CATALANO

No, that's okay. Let her play. She  
is very good. What is that piece  
she is playing?

CODY DEVLIN

That's Rondo by Boccherini.

PHOEBE HUGHES

Yes it is Cody, how did you know  
that?

CODY DEVLIN

My teacher played it for me once at  
School.

PHOEBE HUGHES

You like music Cody? Would you like  
to play?

CODY DEVLIN

Yes I like music; can I have a  
turn?

PHOEBE HUGHES

Yes of course you can.

Cody follows the sound of the cello.

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - BEDROOM - SAME

Cody KNOCKS on the DOOR, it opens to REBECCA HUGHES, 17 years  
old, attractive, social butterfly.

REBECCA HUGHES

Hello, you must be Cody. I have  
heard a lot about you. Was my  
playing bothering you?

CODY DEVLIN

No, I like it very much. Can I have  
a turn?

REBECCA HUGHES  
 Sure take a seat, have you ever  
 played the Cello before?

CODY DEVLIN  
 No, I want to learn.

Cody takes a seat. Rebecca hands the bow over to Cody. He  
 tries to play, only makes noise.

REBECCA HUGHES  
 No, like this, you must be gentle  
 and soft. Don't press too hard.

Rebecca takes Cody's hand and guides him on the correct  
 method on how to play.

CODY DEVLIN  
 Like this? Am I doing it?

REBECCA HUGHES  
 That's it, see this is a C note and  
 this one is a G note. Listen to how  
 they sound different.

CODY DEVLIN  
 This is fun, when I grow up I want  
 to be a famous Cello player, just  
 like you.

Rebecca blushes and takes back the bow from Cody.

REBECCA HUGHES  
 I have to keep practicing some  
 more, but you can stay if you want.

Cody sits down in the Cello case.

REBECCA HUGHES  
 You can sit on the bed if you like.

CODY DEVLIN  
 I like it in here, it feels nice  
 and safe.

REBECCA HUGHES  
 Okay, whatever makes you happy.

Rebecca resumes practice. Replays the Rondo by Boccherini.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - CHILDREN'S CLOTHING SECTION - DAY

Located next to the toy section of the store.

Cody and Montana along with the Hugheses pick out clothing  
 for them each.

Cody hands over a pair of shorts and a T-shirt to Phoebe.

Montana wonders off to the toy section of the store.

CODY DEVLIN  
I like these, can we get them?

PHOEBE HUGHES  
Of course we can, we need to try  
them on first.

KYLE HUGHES  
Where did Monty get to?

CODY DEVLIN  
I'll get her.

Cody makes his way over to the toys. He finds Montana has opened a toy from its package and plays with it.

CODY DEVLIN  
Monty put that back.

Cody takes the toy from her. Montana squeals. Cody hands the toy back.

Cody takes a look at all the toys. He makes his way over to a toy fire engine and plays with it. Presses the buttons for the SIREN and the FLASHING LIGHTS.

Cody opens the box, places the toy on the floor and pushes it along the ground.

Montana reaches over to another toy opens the box, plays with that too.

Kyle arrives in the toy section to find the floor strewn with played toys. Cody and Montana stop and glance up at Kyle.

CODY DEVLIN  
We were just playing.

KYLE HUGHES  
You know you're not meant to do  
that? What are we going to do with  
all these toys now?

CODY DEVLIN  
I don't know. We could get them.

KYLE HUGHES  
We came here to get you clothes not  
toys. It's like you never had any  
before.

Phoebe arrives with a stack of clothes in her arms.

PHOEBE HUGHES  
What's going on? I could use a  
little help here.

CODY DEVLIN

No, we never did have any toys of our own.

KYLE HUGHES

Tell you what, you can pick out two toys each then we will have to go okay?

Kyle takes some of the clothes from Phoebe.

CODY DEVLIN

Yay thanks, come on Monty come pick out a toy with me.

Montana makes her way over to Cody. They make their way to the other side of the toy shelves.

PHOEBE HUGHES

We don't have the budget for this right now. You should have told me first.

KYLE HUGHES

The kid's never had a toy in his life. How could I say no? We can manage.

PHOEBE HUGHES

Fine, but next time work with me on this okay?

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - LOUNGE ROOM - NIGHT

Cody and Montana run around the house playing tips, laugh as they go. Cody catches up to Montana and tips her on the shoulder.

CODY DEVLIN

I got you, you're it. You'll never catch me.

MONTANA

Yes I will, I'm faster than you.

The PHONE RINGS.

PHOEBE HUGHES (O.S.)

Can someone get that, please?

The PHONE RINGS. Cody and Montana continue their game. Phoebe emerges from the laundry with a basket of wet washing under one arm.

PHOEBE HUGHES

Okay, okay coming, kids can you take a break from that?

Cody and Montana continue the game.

CODY DEVLIN  
But we're playing.

PHOEBE HUGHES  
(on the phone)  
Ah ha, yeah it is... I see. Can you  
hang on a minute?

Phoebe places the phone down. Places the wash basket to one side, stops the game.

CODY DEVLIN  
What? We're doing nothing wrong.

PHOEBE HUGHES  
I know that sweetie but I have  
something important to tell you.

Phoebe picks up the phone again.

PHOEBE HUGHES  
(on the phone )  
Sorry. I'm back... On Thursday. And  
the funeral is next Wednesday at  
St. Peters at one. Okay got it.  
Thanks... No, no it won't be a  
problem. Bye.

Phoebe hangs up the phone.

CODY DEVLIN  
Who was that?

Phoebe takes Cody to the couch and sits him down.

PHOEBE HUGHES  
That was your Nana Maggie. It's  
about your dad.

Tears well up in Phoebe's eyes.

CODY DEVLIN  
What about my dad?

PHOEBE HUGHES  
He died, last Thursday. I'm so  
sorry.

Cody stares blankly ahead.

CODY DEVLIN  
I want go to my room.

Phoebe hugs Cody, consoles him.

Cody gets up and makes his way to his bedroom. Slams the door shut.

Behind the door, a CELLO plays. At first it is rough and random notes. Progressively the playing becomes more normal and natural.

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - BED ROOM - NIGHT

Phoebe KNOCKS on the door, but no reply is given. Phoebe enters the room.

Cody glances up at Phoebe. Tears stream down his face. Phoebe takes the Cello from Cody, places it and the bow to one side.

Phoebe hugs Cody as he weeps.

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

SUPER: "TEN YEARS LATER"

Cody is now eighteen years old, a strapping young man, with blond hair. A solid, lean build.

Montana is now sixteen years old, thin build, rebellious.

Rebecca is now twenty-seven-years old.

Cody rushes into the room, drops his school bag on the floor.

KYLE HUGHES

Hey don't leave that there  
someone's going to trip over that.

CODY DEVLIN

Sorry Dad, I'm running late for my  
Cello lesson.

Montana is on the phone, talks as she eats an apple.

MONTANA

Like yeah whatever, such a dork. I  
can't stand Tyson. So annoying, he  
has a nice butt though.

HANNAH (V.O.)

Would you go out with him?

MONTANA

(giggles)  
Maybe, I think so.

Phoebe enters the room with shopping bags full of groceries. PLONKS them down on the kitchen bench.

PHOEBE HUGHES

Monty can you get off the phone  
please? You just saw Hannah one  
(MORE)

PHOEBE HUGHES (CONT'D)  
hour ago. I think you can go longer  
than that without having to gossip.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
Who's that?

MONTANA  
Just my mum, she can be a real  
bitch sometimes.

Phoebe takes the phone and hangs up on her.

MONTANA  
What the hell? I was talking to  
her. Such a bitch.

PHOEBE HUGHES  
This bitch need some help out at  
the car. Then go set the table.

Montana rolls her eyes, follows Phoebe.

MONTANA  
What ever.

Cody rushes through the house. Carries his Cello in its case.

KYLE HUGHES  
No running in the house. You need  
to manage your time better.

CODY DEVLIN  
Okay, okay sorry.

KYLE HUGHES  
What about dinner?

CODY DEVLIN  
No time. I'll get something on the  
way home.

Cody rushes out the front door.

INT. UNIVERSITY - MUSIC HALL - DAY

Rebecca takes a seat in front of the Music Department Dean,  
MR. ABERCROMBE, along with the SENIOR LECTURER and DEPUTY  
LECTURER. All three have a notepad and pen, take notes.

MR ABERCROMBE  
Rebecca this is the final part of  
the Audition, what is the piece you  
have chosen to play?

REBECCA HUGHES  
Bach suite number six in D major.

MR ABERCROMBE

Very well, go ahead.

Rebecca steadies herself closer to the sheet music on the stand in front of her. Plays the prelude to the piece.

Rebecca plays with skill and natural talent and passion beyond her years.

MR ABERCROMBE

Okay, that is enough.

REBECCA HUGHES

Something wrong?

MR ABERCROMBE

On the contrary, you have a rare gift. Only a hand full of people in the world can do what you just did.

REBECCA HUGHES

Thanks. Do I... do I get the scholarship?

MR ABERCROMBE

Well, officially I can't say, however you should have a current passport.

REBECCA HUGHES

A chance to study in Europe. Would be a dream come true.

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kyle places the last of the dirty dishes in the dish washer. He turns the dishwasher on. Phoebe takes a bottle of red wine from the kitchen bench and two wine glasses.

They both take a seat at the table. Phoebe pours the wine.

PHOEBE HUGHES

What a day. Monty. I could have strangled her.

Kyle takes a sip of his wine.

KYLE HUGHES

Yep I saw that. Cody running around like a blue arse fly. At least the running away has stopped.

Phoebe takes a sip of her wine.

PHOEBE HUGHES

I was thinking of taking Cody to see Alison on the weekend.

KYLE HUGHES

I don't think that would be such a good idea. She is too unpredictable now.

PHOEBE HUGHES

She's is his mother still. He has a right to see her.

KYLE HUGHES

He has no connection with her now, with the alcoholism. She barely manages to stay off the drugs.

PHOEBE HUGHES

I know but I would like to take him, it might be good for her to see how much Cody has improved over these years.

KYLE HUGHES

And what? Rub it in her face that you did a better job than her as a mother?

PHOEBE HUGHES

No, it's not that, it could be a way to motivate her.

KYLE HUGHES

The only motivation she gets comes from a bottle.

INT. DEVLIN APARTMENT - LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

Cody takes a seat on the couch. Alison stands, smokes a cigarette. She fidgets with it. Alison is dressed in her work clothes.

CODY DEVLIN

Mum can you stop that? You're making me nervous.

ALISON

Fine can't let my boy become nervous now can we? No, we can't.

CODY DEVLIN

At least you're off the drugs now. Only replaced it with the booze.

ALISON

Yeah ya mother's pretty fucked up, thanks to ya bastard of a father.

CODY DEVLIN

You can't blame him entirely. You played your part. But look that's not why I'm here.

ALISON

Then why are Ya here? To tell me what a shit mother I am?

CODY DEVLIN

Mum can you stop with the martyr routine? Every god damn time.

ALISON

Then what? Spit it out boy.

CODY DEVLIN

The family I live with now, they think that I should change my last name. Montana's too.

ALISON

No way, you're not seriously considering it. Your father and I may have been total screw ups, but your still my son and daughter.

Cody gets up from the couch.

CODY DEVLIN

You can't stop me. I have changed so much over these last few years. Devlin has lost any meaning to me.

ALISON

All meaning, Oh well the name Devlin has no MEANING. You ungrateful shit.

CODY DEVLIN

Fine, look I don't need this. I didn't have to come here. I did it for you.

ALISON

Well piss off then, who needs an ungrateful brat anyway?

Cody makes his way to the front door, opens it.

CODY DEVLIN

I thought you had changed, but I guess I was wrong.

Cody leaves the apartment, closes the door behind him.

INT. STORE MANAGERS OFFICE - NIGHT

Montana dressed in her school uniform, is with the store manager BARBARA, late 50s, a head for business, a heart of compassion. On her desk is a skirt and top.

BARBARA  
Why did you do it?

MONTANA  
Because I wanted it, why else would I take it?

BARBARA  
I know your father. Luckily for you I'm not going to call the police.

MONTANA  
He's not my real dad. My real dad's dead.

A KNOCK on the office DOOR.

Barbara opens it.

BARBARA  
Come in Kyle, we caught Montana here attempting to steal the skirt and top.

KYLE HUGHES  
Monty why would you do such a thing? We raised you to know better than that.

MONTANA  
Can we get out of here?

KYLE HUGHES  
Why aren't you at school?

MONTANA  
I hate it there, so I skipped class.

BARBARA  
There were some other boys with her, but they got away.

KYLE HUGHES  
Barb, thanks for not calling the Police. Who were the other boys? Did they put you up to this?

MONTANA  
They put me up to it. I didn't want to do it.

Barbara opens the door of her office.

BARBARA

You're a lucky girl to have such an understanding father, but next time I will call the police.

KYLE HUGHES

Get up Monty we're going home to have a long talk about this. Thanks again Barb.

BARBARA

Forget about it, a good talking to will set her straight.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Cody is with Montana. Montana has a soft drink can in one hand. Cody carries his Cello in its case.

CODY DEVLIN

It was Tyson who put you up to it to steal the clothes wasn't it?

MONTANA

So what if it was? It's none of your business what I do.

CODY DEVLIN

I have to make it my business when you start doing shit like this.

MONTANA

You can't tell me what to do. I'm not a kid anymore.

Montana takes a sip from her drink.

CODY DEVLIN

You don't get it. We have to do the right thing. They can send us back.

MONTANA

No they can't idiot. We're practically their kids.

They approach a house with rose bushes growing out front.

CODY DEVLIN

I think you need to start behaving more your age. At least you dumped Tyson.

MONTANA

He was a jerk, and so are you.

They both arrive at the house with the rose bushes. Montana pushes Cody into the rose bush, then throws her drink at him before running away.

EXT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - BACK YARD - DAY

Kyle rakes up leaves when Phoebe enters.

PHOEBE HUGHES

We have a problem with Monty. She pushed Cody into a rose bush. The poor boy is covered in cuts.

KYLE HUGHES

Send Monty out. I'll have a chat with her.

Phoebe leaves to get Montana.

Kyle rakes the last of the leaves into a pile. Montana arrives.

KYLE HUGHES

Monty what is the meaning of all this aggression lately?

MONTANA

Cody is annoying me; he thinks he can tell me what to do.

KYLE HUGHES

He's your brother. He's a little more responsible than you are. You need to pay attention to him and us.

MONTANA

I'm sick of everyone telling me what to do. I can do my own things. I don't need a baby-sitter.

KYLE HUGHES

Okay, you want to be treated like a grown up, part of being a grown up means taking responsibility for your actions.

MONTANA

It's not my fault.

Montana kicks the pile of leaves, sends leaves everywhere. Montana does it again.

KYLE HUGHES

Stop that.

Kyle takes hold of Montana gently by the arm to stop her.

MONTANA

You're hurting me. Stop it.

KYLE HUGHES

No, I'm not, you are going to rake up the leaves, then you can go to your room until you're ready to say sorry.

MONTANA

Go to hell.

Montana brakes away from Kyle. Runs out of the yard.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Near empty.

Montana walks alone. The silence broken by BARKING DOGS. A HOMELESS MAN begs for change. Montana ignores him.

A moment later the homeless man follows her. Montana glances back. The homeless man gains on her.

Montana quickens her pace, scans the street for someone else, no one is around.

HOMELESS MAN

Think you can't see me? Girly. Youse an me are gonna have some fun.

MONTANA

Get away from me you CREEP, fuck off.

HOMELESS MAN

Oh yeah me boys are gonna get some tonight. Yes sir ree.

The homeless man grabs Montana, pulls her down. Unzips his pants.

Montana PUNCHES and KICKS. The homeless man gets on top of Montana, he lowers himself onto her.

Montana continues to fight.

MONTANA

HELP, SOMEBODY HELP ME.

Montana kicks out her foot, strikes the homeless man in the groin. In agony the homeless man rolls off Montana. Montana scrambles to her feet, runs.

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - LOUNGE ROOM - NIGHT

Kyle is on the phone when Montana bursts into the room. Tears stream down her face.

KYLE HUGHES  
Something is wrong. I'll call you  
back.

Kyle hangs up the phone. Montana hugs kyle.

KYLE HUGHES  
What is it? What's wrong?

MONTANA  
I so angry with you, I went out  
there was this homeless guy he  
tried to...

KYLE HUGHES  
Did he hurt you? We should call the  
police.

MONTANA  
No, I'm okay now I got away before  
he did anything. I'm so sorry.

KYLE HUGHES  
Forget about it, you're okay now,  
you're safe with us.

Montana dries her eyes.

MONTANA  
I'm sorry for the things I said,  
it's just--

KYLE HUGHES  
That's okay, we love you no need to  
go on. Why don't you get ready for  
bed? And I'll come up and see you  
in a bit.

MONTANA  
Okay.

Montana makes her way to her bedroom.

INT. HUGHES FAMILY HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Montana dressed in her Pyjamas and under the bed covers. The bedside lamp is on. A KNOCK on the DOOR.

MONTANA  
Come in.

Kyle enters the room, takes a seat on the bed.

KYLE HUGHES

All settled?

MONTANA

Yeah, don't think I'll be able to sleep tonight.

KYLE HUGHES

Try not to think about it, he can't hurt you. We need to think about where your life is going.

MONTANA

Can it wait? I'm feeling tired.

KYLE HUGHES

No, you were lucky tonight, but next time you may not be so lucky. Your life is spiralling out of control.

MONTANA

You never let me do anything, so of course I'm going to do it anyway.

KYLE HUGHES

That will have to change, we need to start building some trust here between us.

MONTANA

Why? Should I? You don't trust me, I need something more than a lecture now.

KYLE HUGHES

Okay, we can give you a little more freedom, but in exchange we want something from you.

MONTANA

Like what?

KYLE HUGHES

Like, for starters, be more wise in who you choose as friends, also tell us when you go out.

MONTANA

Fine I can do that. Anything else?

KYLE HUGHES

We think it would be a good idea if you considered coming to church with us.

MONTANA

What, I don't want to go to boring old church.

KYLE HUGHES

I'm not going to force you to go, but give it a try.

MONTANA

Okay, but if I don't like it I don't want to go.

KYLE HUGHES

That is fine, get some sleep okay.

Kyle leaves the room, Montana lies down and switches off the bedside lamp.

INT. CONSERVATOIRE DE PARIS - ADMINISTRATION OFFICE - NIGHT

Rebecca makes a phone call home. The phone RINGS several times.

KYLE HUGHES (V.O.)

Hello, who's there?

REBECCA HUGHES

Dad it's me, I can't talk long.

KYLE HUGHES (V.O.)

Hey, how are you Becky? We all miss you.

REBECCA HUGHES

I miss you guys too. The last couple of month's have been hectic, but I love it here.

KYLE HUGHES (V.O.)

That is great, we're so proud of you.

REBECCA HUGHES

Thanks dad, I'm on a short break now, just letting you guys know I'll be home in a week.

KYLE HUGHES (V.O.)

Anything wrong?

REBECCA HUGHES

No, the semester is coming to an end. So I'll come home for a bit.

KYLE HUGHES (V.O.)

That is great honey, we can't wait to see you.

REBECCA HUGHES  
 Can't wait either, I have to go  
 now. Chat soon okay.

KYLE HUGHES (V.O.)  
 Okay, bye love you.

REBECCA HUGHES  
 Love you too, bye.

Rebecca hangs up.

INT. SYDNEY OLYMPIC PARK AQUATIC CENTRE - POOL - DAY

The venue is busy with patrons. An inflatable obstacle course operates in the competition pool.

Cody lifeguards, paces back and forth around the dump pool. Observes the swimmers.

Two young men move around the water one on the shoulders of the other. Cody BLOWS his WHISTLE at the boys. Then gestures to them to get off the others shoulders. They comply.

A young male life guard BRAY, early 20s,, cheeky larrikin, makes his way to Cody. They fist bump and high five each other.

CODY DEVLIN  
 Hey mate I thought I would never  
 get out of here on time.

BRAY  
 Any probs so far?

CODY DEVLIN  
 A few unruly lads, but nothing too  
 bad.

BRAY  
 Awesome dude, enjoy your night.

CODY DEVLIN  
 Thanks mate, see ya.

Bray takes over the life guarding. Cody makes his way to the duty room.

EXT. SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT

A large crowd of well-dressed patrons mingle outside. At one end a news crew with a reporter films a piece to the camera. Politicians and celebrities file into the venue.

INT. SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT

On the main stage a Symphony orchestra performs Brahms Symphony number two.

In the front row of seats is the Hughes seated next to the Australian Prime Minister.

Cody has the principal cellist position, next to him is Rebecca. The Symphony reaches the Cello solo. A spot light shines down onto Cody performing the solo to the Symphony.

The solo comes to an end. The audience rises to a standing ovation. Cody acknowledges the ovation, then continues the symphony with the orchestra.

OVER BLACK:

SUPER: "TODAY THERE ARE MORE THAN FORTY-THREE THOUSAND CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN AUSTRALIA"

FADE OUT.

THE END