

Borrowing Hope

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. DYER LIVING ROOM - DAY

Superimpose:

Brighton, Massachusetts

1965

ADULTS stand around with drinks. The inside of the house is decorated with Christmas decorations.

BILL DYER (40) sits in an easy chair, smokes a cigar, drinks a beer. Handsome. Blue-collar with a thick Boston accent.

YOUNG RICKY DYER (12) zips down the railing from the second floor and comes to a stop in front of TWIN BOYS.

Ricky is slight. Hair skewed. JOE and PAUL MURPHY (12) are identical. Blonde hair and light eyes. The twins head out the front door. Bill motions Ricky over to him.

BILL

Where do you think you're goin'?

RICKY

Nowhere.

BILL

Go see your ma. She's in the kitchen.

The front door opens and JUDGE "CHICKI" ARTESANI and his wife, HELEN (early 60's), come in. Artesani (late 60's) is tall. Handsome. Almost regal. Helen is slight but attractive. She carries a pie.

Ricky dashes into the kitchen to avoid being seen.

INT. DYER HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Ricky walks down the hall towards the kitchen and spots an open beer bottle on a table. Takes a huge gulp. A MAN approaches from behind. UNCLE NUNNI (50's) is rotund. Friendly smile.

UNCLE NUNNI

A little something to go with those cigarettes you been taking from my store?

Ricky smiles. Acts innocent.

RICKY  
Wasn't me Nunni, I swear.

Ricky slides into the kitchen. Nunni laughs.

INT. DYER KITCHEN - DAY

KAY DYER (late 30's) makes drinks at the blender. Petite and pretty. Dressed fashionably.

Ricky comes up behind Kay and throws his arms around her.

KAY  
What in the...Richard!

RICKY  
See ya, Ma!

Ricky tries to leave but Kay grabs him. Looks him in the eyes.

KAY  
Do you know I'm wearing out my  
Rosary beads worrying about you?  
Just be safe. If you're out too  
long you'll miss the desserts.

RICKY  
Okay, Ma. Love ya!

Ricky kisses her and runs out the back door.

EXT. BRIGHTON STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Ricky pulls a pack of cigarettes from his coat.

RICKY  
Got 'em from Nunni's.

The twins pull bottles of beer from their coats. All three boys laugh and take off down the street.

EXT. CHARLES RIVER - DAY

The boys wander along a frozen river. They stop as Ricky pulls the cigarettes out of his pocket. Passes them out.

Paul throws a rock at the river. The rock bounces but doesn't go through.

Joe walks to the edge. Paul throws another rock over his brother's head.

RICKY

Don't you dare Joe! Get away from there.

Joe tip toes out on to the ice. Turns to face his friends. Smiles. Ricky breathes a sigh of relief.

The ice cracks and POP, Joe is GONE in a flash.

Paul SCREAMS, RUNS onto the ice and FALLS through the same hole made by his brother.

RICKY (CONT'D)

No! No, no, no, no! Don't go!

He falls to his knees. Stares at the hole.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Help me! Ma! Help me, Ma!

He bolts in the direction of home.

INT. DYER FOYER - EVENING

The front door flies open and Ricky rushes upstairs. A door slams.

INT. DYER KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Kay is standing at the sink, looks up at the ceiling. Takes off her apron and heads towards the stairs.

INT. RICKY'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Ricky is under his bed, wide-eyed. Tear stained face, breathing hard. Christmas music plays in the background.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. ALLSTON SOCCER FIELD - DAY

Superimpose:

Spring 1967

RICKY DYER (14) squints, high as a kite from sniffing glue and drinking wine.

MIKEY PRINCIPE (15) sits beside him. Mikey puts airplane glue in their brown paper bags that hold their wine bottles. They sniff and drink. Sniff and drink.

They walk across the field, throw their bottles over a fence.

EXT. THE HARVARD BOATHOUSE - DAY

Ricky approaches TWO COLLEGIATE MEN (early 20's).

RICKY

Hey, do you know if this is where I  
come to get the job?

COLLEGIATE 1

What job?

RICKY

I heard they need someone to clean  
up the boats.

COLLEGIATE 2

We can introduce you to Buzz. He'd  
know about a job.

Ricky disappears inside the boathouse as Mikey comes around the corner with two bikes.

Ricky runs out and the two boys jump on the bikes and dart off.

EXT. HARVARD SQUARE BICYCLE EXCHANGE - DAY

Ricky and Mikey come out the door with a fistful of cash.

INT. TRUC HEAD SHOP - DAY

The boys browse the store, Ricky and Mikey steal various items.

INT. HARVARD SQUARE DINER - DAY

Ricky and Mikey stuff their faces with hotdogs at the counter.

EXT. HOLYOKE SQUARE PARK - DAY

Mikey's brother, CURLY (late teens) and PALLADIN (early 20's) relax. Palladin holds a dog leash. They're tripping on LSD.

Ricky and Mikey join them.

CURLY  
Hey, hey little brother. Peace, my  
man.

MIKEY  
Hey Curly. What you got for us?

Curly hands Mikey a bag of weed and a joint. Mikey stuffs the bag in his pants and lights the joint.

RICKY  
What's the leash for?

CURLY  
He's walking his pet alligator.

Mikey takes a huge hit off the joint.

MIKEY  
Is Sweet Virginia still over on  
Hano Street?

CURLY  
Pretty sure.

MIKEY  
C'mon, Ricky. Let's go.

EXT. CENTRAL SQUARE ARMY NAVY STORE - DAY

Ricky and Mikey exit the store. Mikey carries a huge World War II mortar shell under his arm. They cross to a bus stop across the street.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - DAY

The boys walk up to a run down house. Smile at each other. Knock on the door. No one answers. They enter.

INT. COMMUNAL HIPPIE LIVING ROOM - DAY

The room is filled with hippies. They sit in a circle in some kind of drug-induced meditation.

Mikey hands the mortar to Ricky and sneaks upstairs.

Ricky tiptoes into the circle and places the mortar in the middle of the circle. They hippies have their eyes closed.

RICKY

Ahem.

(beat)

I would recommend start you be very still. Don't move. Don't say anything.

The group opens their eyes. Freeze.

Ricky backs out of the circle and runs up the stairs.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

Mikey and Ricky run down the street, pop Black Beauties in their mouth.

EXT. DYER HOUSE - NIGHT

Ricky walks up the steps and meets his mom at the front door.

RICKY

Hey ma. Whatcha doin'?

KAY

Richard.

(beat)

This is the fourth time you've come home late this week. Are you still going to school? I'm worried about you.

RICKY

Nothin' to worry about, Ma.

KAY

Please tell me you'll try to make more of an effort at school.

RICKY

Course, Ma. Love you.

Ricky kisses his mom's cheek and heads inside. Kay stares out at the street and rubs her Rosary beads.

EXT. NUNNI'S MARKET - DAY

Mikey sits on the wall next to a telephone booth. Smokes a cigarette and drinks a beer out of a paper bag. Ricky comes out with Twinkies.

RICKY

Nunni sold the place. Went over to the jail. Captain of the guards. Imagine that?

MIKEY

Now all our boys have someone at Charles Street looking out for 'em. Nunni's one of the good ones. He'll do alright by 'em.

Ricky unwraps the Twinkies and hands one to Mikey.

MIKEY (CONT'D)

What's today? Monday? No. It's Wednesday. Let's go down to Boston District. See who they're locking up. I love those arraignments.

RICKY

Too nice to be sitting in court.

MIKEY

I'm going.

RICKY

I promised Davey Demaz I'd do him a favor.

Mikey finishes his Twinkie. Ricky smiles at him.

RICKY (CONT'D)

I heard Leo got himself a Buick. Where's he at?

MIKEY

He's on Mansfield.

RICKY

I got just the home for her.

MIKEY

I'll see you in court if you boost that thing.

Mikey throws the wrapper on the sidewalk and walks off.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

Ricky walks down Mansfield street. He spots an Impala. Walks past it. Turns around. Jumps in the car.

RICKY

What'd you leave me Leo?

He hot-wires the car and peels off down the street.

EXT. BRIGHTON HIGH SCHOOL AUTOMATIVE GARAGE - DAY

Ricky pulls up. Honks. The garage door opens and Ricky is waved in. The door is pulled down behind him.

INT. BRIGHTON HICH SHCOOL AUTOMATIVE GARAGE - DAY

Ricky cuts the engine. Hops out of the car. He's met by DAVEY DEMAZ (early 20's). Davey gives Ricky a high-five.

DAVEY

Nice wheels.

RICKY

Thanks, man.

Richie opens the hood. Inspects the rest of the car.

DAVEY

You got balls, Dyer. Got the keys?

RICKY

Nah. You can figure it out.

DAVEY

Foster is out sick. He may have let it slide but Smith is here. You better get outta here.

ADAM SMITH (early 40's) and a BRIGHTON POLICE OFFICER (30's) enter the room.

RICKY

Shit.

Ricky turns.

ADAM

Don't you dare! You're expelled.

## BRIGHTON POLICE OFFICER

And Mr. Dyer, you're under arrest.

The officer secures Ricky in handcuffs and hauls him away.

## INT. DYER LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bill Dyer looks out the window. Kay is sits on the sofa.

## BILL

My turn to do the talking. He's been working you. I'm done. He's setting a poor example for the girls.

Kay goes to the foot of the stairs and calls Ricky down.

Ricky lumbers down. Slouches on the couch.

## BILL (CONT'D)

Kicked outta school. Stealing a car.

## KAY

Bill. Please.

Bill puts his hand up.

## BILL

This is it. Not in my house with your sisters watching everything you do. Time to do it somewhere else.

Ricky looks up in shock.

## RICKY

You can't kick me out. It's not that bad.

## BILL

Not that bad? We live next to a judge and you spend more time in his courtroom than you do in school.

## KAY

Please, Bill. Don't do this. He has nowhere to go.

RICKY  
C'mon, Dad. I'll get a job. Turn  
things around.

Bill shakes his head. Stares at Ricky.

BILL  
It's not what you say, Richard.  
It's what you do. And I'll be  
watching what you do. One last  
chance.

INT. MIKEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mikey and Ricky smoke a joint. The room is filthy.  
Overflowing ashtrays, clothes all over the floor.

RICKY  
My old man was ready to throw me  
out. But I'll show him. I'm going  
to make more money than he ever  
has.

MIKEY  
Mine woulda just beat me and sent  
me back to Ma's.

RICKY  
All I need to do now is to make  
some cash. Ya think we can do  
something with the cars we lift?  
Sell 'em like the bikes?

Mikey takes a huge hit and passes the joint to Ricky.

MIKEY  
Yeah. Those VW's would go down  
quick at BU. My buddy knows how to  
do the numbers.

Ricky inhales.

RICKY  
How much do you think we could get  
for some of those?

Exhales.

MIKEY  
Maybe a grand. Fifteen hundred if  
we find one of the geek's with his  
parents money.

RICKY

I'm gonna make me a living. You'll see.

MIKEY

Let's forget about this shit, go down to Marlborough Street and get some real dope. In an hour you'll be saying, "I'm an orphan from fuckin' Charlestown."

Ricky stares at Mikey, smiles as he understands the plan.

EXT. BOSTON CITY STREET - DAY

Ricky and Mikey stand in front of a brownstone on Marlborough Street in Boston. They run up the stairs. Knock.

A DISHEVELED MAN (50's) lets them in.

INT. DISHEVELED MAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

On the couch, A WOMAN (early 20's), nods out on the couch, a needle stuck in her arm. Ricky and Mikey walk past her and into the kitchen.

INT. DISHEVELED MAN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Dishes are piled high everywhere. Roaches run rampant. The room is filthy.

The disheveled man sits at the kitchen table. Throws two bags of heroin on the table. Gives Mikey a syringe and eyedropper.

Mikey sits, mixes the concoction on the spoon, wraps a belt around his arm, and shoots up. Nods out instantly. Ricky watches in awe.

DISHEVELED MAN

(to Mikey)

This guy ever got off before?

MIKEY

Nah, man. Find someone. I'm gone.

The disheveled man leaves the kitchen. The woman addict from the living room enters. She cooks up her own batch, tells Ricky to wrap the belt around his arm.

She sticks the syringe in his arm.

WOMAN  
Boot it slowly.

Ricky watches the woman leave the room. Injects the drug.

RICKY  
Jesus Christ!

He nods out for a few minutes. Runs to the bathroom to puke.

EXT. MIKEY'S DRIVEWAY - DAY

A blue VW sits in the driveway. Ricky is in the backseat carving out the serial numbers. He punches in new numbers using liquid steel.

Mikey comes out of the house, goes to work putting a new tag on the dash.

INT. BOSTON UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALL - DAY

Ricky is decked out with a BU sweatshirt. He pins a card on the bulletin board.

CARD  
"'65 VW Bug for Sale. \$2000. Call  
between 5-6pm."

EXT. BOSTON CITY STREET - DAY

Ricky and Mikey stand next to a phone booth on Kelton Street in Brighton. It rings. Ricky picks it up.

RICKY  
Hello? Yeah. Clean. Runs smooth.  
Wanna see it? Nah, I'm not home  
right now but I'm headed to Kenmore  
Square. Really? You're there too?

Ricky looks at Mikey. They both smile.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I could meet you in half an  
hour. Sure. Right in front of the  
dorms? I take cash only.

Ricky winks at Mikey.

EXT. KENMORE SQUARE, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS - DAY

Ricky hands a BU STUDENT (early 20's) the keys to the VW.  
Takes a wad of cash from him.

RICKY  
She's all yours, man. Take good  
care of her.

Ricky counts the cash. Smiles.

BU STUDENT  
Sure will.  
(beat)  
Hey, you wanna join me and my  
friends for a beer?

RICKY  
Nah, but thanks. Beer's not really  
my thing. I prefer something  
stronger. Good luck.

Ricky pockets the cash and walks off.

EXT. DYER HOUSE - DAY

An orange VW pulls up in front of the Dyer residence. A  
strung out Ricky gets out. Lumbers up the stairs. Bangs on  
the locked.

Bill Dyer answers the front door.

BILL  
Where ya been?

Ricky stares at him. Lights a cigarette.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Get the hell off my porch. It's  
over.

Bill approaches Ricky.

BILL (CONT'D)  
You smell like a bum, you act like  
a criminal, and you scare your  
mother and sisters. You're a  
disgrace. Get the fuck outta here.

Ricky throws his butt. Walks back to his car. Drives away.  
Bill looks after his son with anger and sadness.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

Ricky buys dope from a dealer.

EXT. MIKEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Ricky knocks. Mikey answers, high as a kite.

RICKY  
Son of a bitch threw me out.

MIKEY  
It's about time.

RICKY  
Can I stay here?

MIKEY  
We're brothers.

RICKY  
Just met Eddie. We're all set.

EXT. ALLSTON DRUG STORE - NIGHT

Superimpose:

1970

A white VW convertible is parked on an empty street in front of dark store. The window is broken.

The door bursts open. MIKEY PRINCIPE (18) runs out with an armful of bags. RICKY DYER (17) follows with a watch case and bottles of cough syrup.

The alarm goes off. Ricky dumps the watch case in the back seat. Jumps in the front next to Mikey. The car takes off.

INT. RICKY'S CAR - NIGHT

Ricky smiles in the rearview mirror as the police give chase.

EXT. ALLSTON STREETS - NIGHT

The VW swerves and darts around traffic. A police cruiser speeds behind them.

A traffic light turns red and the VW blasts through it. Cross traffic forces the cruiser to slam it's brakes. It hits a pickup truck.

EXT. ALLSTON ALLEY - NIGHT

Ricky parks the car. Kills the engine. The two men are high, giggling. Ricky exits the car. Grabs the loot from the trunk. Jumps back inside.

INT. RICKY'S VW - CONTINUOUS

Ricky smiles and throws Mikey the bag. Mikey opens it.

MIKEY

Uppers. Downers. Cough syrup.

RICKY

There must be thirty watches there.  
Throw it all together and let's get  
the fuck out of here.

They speed away. Sirens blare in the distance.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT ROOM - DAY

JUDGE ARTESANI sits on the bench. Kay Dyer sits at the back of the court room. Sobs. Ricky stands at the defendant's bench. AN ATTORNEY (early 50's) stands beside him.

MARGIE VANCE (early 40's) argues the case. She's tall, attractive.

ARTESANI

You've been in my courtroom several  
times over the last two years.  
Breaking and entering, larceny,  
driving with a suspended license,  
operating under the influence.  
Probation, what's the deal?

MARGIE

He is in violations of his  
probation from his last offense.  
Month left. I recommend jail.  
Nothing's stopping this kid from  
doing it again.

The judge looks at Kay. She plays with her rosary beads. The judge sighs.

ARTESANI

Clean this up Dyer. I'm gonna give you and additional year of probation. And you're to write a letter of apology to the owner of the car you "borrowed." And get some help, son.

INT. MARGIE VANCE'S OFFICE - DAY

Ricky sits. Margie glares at him.

MARGIE

What am I going to do with you? You belong in jail but nothing scares you. You need help. Get it.

RICKY

I been to programs. And I don't have a problem.

MARGIE

Really? Every time you're here it's drug or alcohol related.

Ricky looks at the clock. Squirms.

RICKY

I need help. I'll go down to Third Nail and check myself in. Okay?

MARGIE

Good. That's good, Ricky. You can turn this all around.

Ricky sighs. Stands to leave.

MARGIE (CONT'D)

Make good on your promises, Richard.

He exits the room.

INT. MIKEY'S CAR - DAY

Superimpose:

1971

Mikey cruises past Oak Square. Ricky is strung out in the back seat, sick from withdrawals.

RICKY

I gotta stop this shit, man. It's really gettin' a hold of me. One more fix, just to get me through. Then I'll stop.

Mikey looks in the rearview mirror. Smiles.

MIKEY

Nah, man. You're good. You just got a bad batch. Let's go see to Mission Hill.

RICKY

Mission Hill? Who the fuck you know over there? I'm gonna start shaking soon.

MIKEY

Let's go to Oz and see the Wizard. You ready, Tinman?

Mikey makes a left.

EXT. MISSION HILL PROJECTS - DAY

Mikey knocks on a door. It opens. A huge BLACK MAN (early 20's) appears. Shaved head, leather vest, bell bottoms.

MIKEY

Looking for Leroy.

INT. MISSION HILL APARTMENT - DAY

The boys stand amidst a GROUP OF BLACK MEN. LEROY CAMBRIA (early 30's) sits on the couch. Sunglasses on. Huge afro. He nods at Mikey and stands.

LEROY

It's Whitey from Allston. What a surprise. What can we do for you?

MIKEY

How about half a brick?

LEROY

You know how we do business, Mikey. Money on the table.

Mikey throws a wad of cash on the table. Leroy throws a bunch of bags of white powder next to it.

Ricky gets to work. Shoots up. His eyes roll in his head and he's agitated.

RICKY  
What the fuck? This ain't dope!  
It's a fucking speedball. My  
heart's gonna explode.

Ricky looks at Mikey. Mikey looks at the money. Leroy looks at the money.

All the men pull knives from their pockets.

Mikey pulls a .357 Magnum from the back of his pants.

MIKEY  
Ricky, grab the money. Leroy, sit  
your ass down. Now!

Mikey and Ricky scramble out of the apartment.

INT. MIKEY'S CAR - DAY

Mikey drives. Ricky is in the back seat, sicker than before.

MIKEY  
We're certainly not in Kansas  
anymore, Toto.

RICKY  
Get me back to Brighton. Let's at  
least try to find some pills. Find  
Demaz.

MIKEY  
Yeah. The Deacon is always good in  
these situations.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - DAY

The car heads towards Brighton.

INT. MISSY SULLIVAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ricky and MISSY SULLIVAN (early 20's) spoon in Missy's bed. She's slight. Blonde, thin hair. Unhealthy looking. She's asleep. Ricky looks at a picture of Missy and her mom on the nightstand.

Missy rolls over. Opens her eyes. Kisses Ricky.

MISSY  
What's wrong, babe?

RICKY  
Just thinking about Ma.

MISSY  
Uh-huh.

RICKY  
And Dad. He taught me how to fish,  
ya know. He's a fly fisherman.  
(beat)  
Those beautiful casts. And I was so  
impatient.

Ricky rolls onto his back. Stares at the ceiling.

EXT. WILDCAT RIVER, JACKSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE (FLASHBACK)

A car is parked in the summer shade on the river.

Ricky is sprawled out on the shore. Soaks his feet and throws  
rocks toward the middle of the river, his rod by his side.

Bill Dyer wades in the water, gracefully lays out his line.  
Ricky throws a rock near Bill.

BILL  
For the love of Christ, Ricky! I'm  
fishing here. You're scaring the  
fish!

Ricky frowns. Picks up his rod. Wads towards his dad. Tosses  
his line in. It tightens within a few seconds and he hooks a  
fish.

RICKY  
I got one!

BILL  
Rod tip up, Ricky! That's it. Now  
reel him in nice and slow.

Ricky reels the fish in. His dad brings the net over, scoops  
the fish up with it. Reaches in the net and lifts the fish  
up. Removes the hook.

BILL (CONT'D)  
It's a Brookie. Look at that color!  
Now give it a kiss and throw it  
back.

Bill smiles. Laughs. Ricky kisses the fish. Winces. Smiles back. Looks up at his dad.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Ya know, ya kiss the fish and  
release him to show your gratitude.

Bill checks the fly on Ricky's line and leans into him. Ricky looks up.

BILL (CONT'D)  
When you start losing your  
gratitude and take more than your  
share, trouble begins, Ricky.  
Trouble will find you.

Ricky looks up at his dad. Throws his line back in.

INT. MISSY'S BEDROOM - END FLASHBACK

Missy looks at Ricky. Sees the pain in his eyes. He looks like the ten-year-old he once was.

MISSY  
You should go see 'em. Your  
parents.

Ricky nods. Stares at the ceiling.

EXT. DYER HOUSE - DAY

Ricky pulls up in a yellow VW. Pulls a television from the back seat. Walks it to the front door. Rings the bell.

DONNA DYER (13) answers the door. His little sister is shocked. Elated.

RICKY  
Hey Donna, I brought you a gift.  
Can ya let me in?

Donna looks over her shoulder. Ricky pushes past her.

INT. DYER LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kay sits on the sofa. Knits. Bill reads the paper in a recliner. Kay stands. Looks at Bill. Back at Ricky. Back at Bill.

KAY  
Richard, what's this all about?

Bill looks up from his paper. Ricky stops in his tracks.  
Smiles at his mother.

RICKY

I been workin' Ma. Just wanted to  
drop something off for ya. I have a  
TV.

KAY

You got a job! Ricky, that's  
wonderful! The candy factory?  
Sear's? Tell me all about it.

Bill puts down the paper and interrupts.

BILL

Kay, you can't see straight. Look  
out the window. I bet there's  
another VW out there. Ask him where  
he got it. The TV is stolen.

Bill stands and steps towards Ricky.

BILL (CONT'D)

Take your goddamn TV and get your  
stealing ass out of my house!

Ricky exits the house.

EXT. DYER SIDEWALK - DAY

Ricky walks back to his car. Donna comes down the steps.

DONNA

I miss ya, Ricky. I took over your  
room. Kathy and Diane didn't want  
it. I listen to your albums.

RICKY

Glad someone appreciates my taste.

DONNA

Dad's really mad. You shouldn't  
come back here again.

RICKY

Wanna do me a favor?

DONNA

Anything.

RICKY

I got a stash in my room. Third ceiling tile from the headboard on the top bunk. Go grab it for me.

Donna runs around to the back of the house. Ricky lights a cigarette.

INT. RICKY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Donna jumps up on the top bunk. Slides the ceiling tile back. Feels around. Withdraws a brown paper bag. Puts the ceiling tile back in place. Jumps off the bed and darts down the hallway.

EXT. DYER SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Donna returns out of breath. Hands Ricky the bag.

RICKY

Thanks, kiddo. Stay outta trouble.

Donna jumps into his arms and hugs him.

DONNA

Ricky...

(beat)

Take care of yourself. You don't look so good.

Ricky smiles. Gives her the peace sign.

INT. MISSY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Missy throws six bags of heroin on the table. Ricky chugs vodka from the bottle and reads the paper.

MISSY

What'cha readin'?

RICKY

The obits. Leo O'Malley died. It's suspicious, they're saying. Wonder if it's a proper funeral.

MISSY

Didn't you go to school with him?

RICKY

Yeah. Fifth grade. He took two bullets in the back. His poor mother. She was friends with Ma.

Missy sits. Looks at Ricky.

MISSY

My first funeral was my aunt Edna. I was six and freaked when I saw her at the wake. She looked empty, hollow. Ya know?

(beat)

Who was your first funeral?

He's surprised by the question. Becomes stone-faced.

RICKY

Paul and Joe Murphy. There was no wake. No bodies. They drowned in the Charles.

He looks away. Looks back at her.

RICKY (CONT'D)

I...I couldn't save them.

MISSY

Shit Ricky. You were there?

Ricky tears up. Looks down. Missy leans back. Lights a butt. Gives him his space.

RICKY

I saw the fear on Joey's face when he went through the ice.

He pauses. Shakes his head. Looks at Missy. Nods.

RICKY (CONT'D)

You were close with your aunt, huh?

MISSY

Nah. She was a bitch.

Missy winks. Ricky smiles. Looks at the clock. Grabs the drugs on the table.

RICKY

I gotta go see Mikey. Love you, doll.

They kiss.

EXT. UNION SQUARE DRUG STORE - NIGHT

A VW bug sits in front. The building is dark and the front window is broken open.

The door bursts open Ricky, Mikey and TOMMY DONOVAN (early 20's) run out, arms full of prescription bottles. The alarm goes off.

They dump their goods in the back seat of the VW. Ricky jumps in the drivers seat. Tommy jumps in the back and Mikey jumps in the passenger. The car peels out.

INT. VW - NIGHT

Ricky shakes. His reflexes are slow. Mikey and Tommy look from Ricky to the rear window.

MIKEY  
Man, you all right?

RICKY  
I'm okay.

Tommy leans forward. Pinches Ricky's ear.

TOMMY  
Snap out of it Dyer. You gotta do  
the right thing here. Get us the  
fuck outta here.

EXT. BRIGHTON STREET - NIGHT

The car goes up on a curb. Sparks fly from the muffler. A siren gets closer in the distance.

INT. VW - NIGHT

Tommy looks out the back window.

TOMMY  
Fuck.

MIKEY  
That was quick. They musta been  
close.

Ricky shakes harder. Turns the car down an alley. Cuts the lights and engine.

Mikey and Tommy inspect the goods.

TOMMY  
Morphine. Methadone.

MIKEY  
Nice, man! Nice. We done good.

Ricky sweats. Shakes.

RICKY  
Give me something. Quick.

MIKEY  
Just give him a little meth. Take  
the edge off enough so he can get  
us outta here.

TOMMY  
I dunno, man. He really shouldn't  
be driving.

MIKEY  
He's fine. Just a pinch.

RICKY  
Yeah, just a pinch. We'll be all  
set when we get back to Mikey's.

Tommy stretches. Takes a deep breath. Leans back in the seat.

TOMMY  
I wanna get the fuck outta here.  
Get outta the projects. I'm  
thinking San Fran. Maybe the Army.  
I don't wanna do this no more, man.

Tommy looks at Mikey. Looks at Ricky. Gives Ricky a the meth.  
Ricky snorts it.

TOMMY (CONT'D)  
Come on, Mikey. We'll all go.  
(beat)  
You're robbing the wrong fucking  
people. Ricky's a fucking mess.  
(beat)  
C'mon, Ricky. Let's blow this place  
and start over.

Tommy looks at Ricky, pleading. Ricky is silent.

TOMMY (CONT'D)  
Fuck you both. I'm walking.

Tommy grabs a bunch of the pills, gets out, slams the door  
and walks away.

EXT. MIKEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT.

The VW pulls up to the curb. Mikey gets out. Leans in the window.

MIKEY

You sure you don't wanna hang?  
What's up with you?

INT. VW - CONTINUOUS

RICKY

I need to stop this bullshit, man.  
It's killing me. Tommy's right.  
(beat)  
Give me a call tomorrow. I'll be  
around.

Ricky gives him the peace sign. Tries to smile. Drives slowly off.

EXT. MIKEY'S SIDEWALK - NIGHT

The VW zig zags down the street, takes a left. Mikey shakes his head. Bounces up the steps.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - NIGHT

A car is upside down on the tracks. Smokes puffs out of the engine. Police cruisers and fire engines surround the accident.

Ricky is shoved into the back of a police car.

INT. ALLSTON JAIL CELL - DAY

Ricky shakes in the corner of his cell. GREG CONCANNON (30's) stands in front of the cell. He's tall, lean. Wears glasses.

GREG

Here's your situation. You're in  
violation here and in Natick.

He looks at his paperwork.

GREG (CONT'D)

And in Roxbury too. You're  
certainly no stranger to this.  
Larceny. Operating to end lives.  
You can be locked up until trial.

RICKY

I can't go away. Get me a personal bail and we'll go to trial. Is my mom in the courtroom?

GREG

Yes. She wants you to get help, Richard. That's what she told me.

RICKY

Yeah. I'll get help as soon as I get out.

INT. ALLSTON DISTRICT COURT - DAY

Judge Artesani presides. Kay Dyer sits in the back. Greg and Margie Vance argue. Ricky sulks in a glass holding cell.

GREG

He's not a flight risk, your honor and he's looking to get treatment. I'm asking for personal bail.

MARGIE

Your honor, he has lied about treatment in the past. This kid is a danger. It's a public safety issue at this point.

Artesani turns from Margie to Ricky. He looks back at Kay.

ARTESANI

This is what I'm going to do, Mr. Concannon. Bail is set at two-thousand dollars. Pick a date for pretrial.

(beat)

Bailiff, take him away.

Artesani looks at Kay.

ARTESANI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Kay. This is a safety issue. He's gotta go.

Kay nods. Bows her head. Rubs her rosary beads.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. CHARLES STREET JAIL - DAY

Superimpose:

1972

Ricky sits in his cell. Hangs his head. DAVEY DEMAZ appears in the doorway. He's more solid now, from prison workouts. Muscular. Bald.

DAVEY  
Heard you came in.

RICKY  
Glad to see you too Deacon. Got any  
butts?

Davey throws him a cigarette. Ricky lights it.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
Where you working?

DAVEY  
I'm not.

RICKY  
You seen Nunni? I wanna get work in  
the kitchen.

DAVEY  
Let's go see Delicious.  
(beat)  
Welcome back brother.

They leave the cell and walk down the tier.

INT. CHARLES STREET JAIL - DAY

Ricky plays cards with DELICIOUS MAYNARD (early 30's) and FRANKIE ALVAREZ (late 30's).

Delicious is muscular. Sweats all the time. Breathes heavy with a gold front tooth.

Frankie is wiry. Tall. Well-respected in jail with a short temper and has deep roots in East Boston.

RICKY  
Hey Delicious, think you could get  
me some Brillo?

DELICIOUS  
Whatta you want with Brillo?

RICKY

Got a furlough coming up and I  
wanna brush my teeth.

DELICIOUS

You're a piece of work, Ricky.

Delicious collects the cards. Leaves the table. Frankie  
slides closer to Ricky. Lights them each a butt.

FRANKIE

You got a furlough coming up?

RICKY

Yup. For a day.

FRANKIE

I need a pair of shoes picked up in  
Eastie. Maverick Square. They'll be  
behind the bar. Dope's in the heel.  
What size are ya? These will be a  
ten.

RICKY

I'm a nine.

FRANKIE

That'll work.

Ricky smiles.

EXT. CHARLES STREET JAIL - DAY

Ricky sits on the steps. Looks towards the Charles River.

BEGIN MONTAGE

- A. Ricky talks in a phone booth on Charles Street.
- B. Ricky and Missy post coitus in bed, smoking cigarettes.
- C. Missy gives Ricky six bags of heroin while he's drinks.
- D. Ricky watches strippers in the Combat Zone, drinks.
- E. Ricky nods out on a city bus.

END MONTAGE

EXT. MAVERICK STREET BAR, EAST BOSTON - NIGHT

Ricky steps off a bus. Heads inside.

INT. MAVERICK STREET BAR - NIGHT

Ricky leans over the bar. Whispers to the BARTENDER (late 50's). The tender points to the back door.

Ricky comes back out a few minutes later with new sneakers on. Sidles up to the bar again. He's sickly looking. Strung out.

BARTENDER  
Rough day there, guy?

RICKY  
I'm alright. Gimme a seven and seven. Got the time?

The bartender points to a huge clock over the bar.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
Shit!

Ricky throws money on the bar. Stumbles outside.

EXT. CHARLES STREET JAIL - DAY

Ricky bangs on the door at dawn. He's a disheveled mess. Shirt ripped. Hair in clumps. Sneakers ripped open at the soles.

The door opens and Ricky falls through the doorway.

INT. CHARLES STREET JAIL CELL - DAY

Ricky wakes up as his cell door is opened. Glances at his sneakers. Confused. Frankie strolls in. Picks up the sneakers. Opens his arms in a hug gesture.

FRANKIE  
You son of a bitch.

Ricky stands. Sways. Hugs Frankie. Stumbles back to bed.

RICKY  
I need to hang here for a while.  
Don't feel so good.

FRANKIE  
I'll tell Nunni you'll be late.  
Good work.

Ricky lays down and closes his eyes.

INT. CHARLES STREET JAIL KITCHEN - DAY

Ricky and Delicious mop the floor. A GUARD (20's) interrupts them.

GUARD  
Dyer, you have a visitor.

Ricky throws Delicious the mop.

RICKY  
Perhaps Missy has come bearing gifts.

DELICIOUS  
You act like you live at the Ritz for fuck's sake.

Ricky dances as he leaves the kitchen.

INT. CHARLES STREET JAIL VISITING ROOM - DAY

Ricky sits in a chair as his sister, DIANE DYER (17) walks in. Diane sits opposite him.

RICKY  
How's Ma?

DIANE  
She's worried about you. We all are. Danny Stoker said you had a furlough but that you never came around.

RICKY  
I had business I had to take care of.

Diane stares at Ricky. Down at her hands. Back to Ricky.

DIANE  
Mikey's dead.

RICKY  
What?

DIANE  
Mikey's dead. He got shot last Sunday. Died instantly.

Ricky is shocked. In disbelief. He looks down at his hand for a minute.

RICKY  
Does...does Tommy know?

DIANE  
I seen Tommy in Brighton. He's  
waiting for you to get out. Mikey  
robbed a security guard. You  
couldn't have saved him.

Ricky stares at Diane. His eyes well up. Looks away.

EXT. ALLSTON STREET - DAY

Ricky and Tommy walk down Western Avenue.

RICKY  
I was guilty at the trial but got  
off with eighteen months probation.  
Better than two years on The  
Island.

TOMMY  
Mikey would've been facing twenty  
if he lived. I can't fucking  
believe he's gone.

They pass in front of a VW dealership. Ricky stops.

RICKY  
I gotta take a piss.

Ricky ducks into the garage. Tommy lights a butt and waits.

INT. VW DEALERSHIP GARAGE - DAY

Ricky comes out of the bathroom. Stops to check the  
undercarriage of a VW on a lift. A MECHANIC (early 40's)  
interrupts him.

MECHANIC  
I'll have this down for you in a  
minute.

Ricky smiles.

RICKY  
Thanks.

Meanders around the dealership like he belongs there.

EXT. VW DEALERSHIP - DAY

Ricky pulls out of the garage with the VW. Honks. Tommy turns towards him.

RICKY  
Get in!

TOMMY  
I thought you went to take a piss?

Tommy hops in.

INT. STOLEN VW - DAY

Ricky drives slowly through Allston.

RICKY  
I'm that good Tommy-boy!

TOMMY  
You have fucking horseshoe up your  
ass.

RICKY  
What's the plan? I say we take  
Brighton Drug tonight.

TOMMY  
Through the roof. None of that  
window bullshit. I had glass in my  
ass for a week.

Ricky smiles.

EXT. BRIGHTON DRUGSTORE - NIGHT

The VW is in front. Ricky and Tommy are on the roof of the drugstore. Hover over a square vent top. Ricky lifts the top. Climbs in. Sirens sound.

TOMMY  
Oh shit. Come back out, Ricky!

RICKY  
Not that easy, bro.

TOMMY  
C'mon!

Tommy disappears over the edge of the roof. Ricky pops his head out of the vent. A light shines on Ricky's face.

POLICE OFFICER

Don't move. Put your hands on your head. On the ground.

Ricky does as he's told.

POLICE OFFICER (CONT'D)

What in the name...Bill Dyer's kid?  
I'm sure you have a good story,  
son?

RICKY

I was just taking the copper.

Ricky smiles. The cop lifts him to his feet.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT HOLDING CELLS - DAY

Ricky sits in one of the cells, crossed-armed and slumped.  
JOHN YELLIN (50's), an attorney, walks in.

JOHN

Mr. Dyer? Can I call you Richard?

RICKY

Sure.

JOHN

I'm Attorney John Yellin. I've been appointed by the court because you're indigent. The prosecution is not pleased with your predicament. They're not going to show you any lenience. They want you to serve.

Ricky straightens up.

RICKY

It was simple, man. I was up there looking for copper. I didn't even take any. My admission was taken under duress.

JOHN

Richard. Pardon the expression but cut the crap. This is serious. You have a suspended sentence at Deer Island.

RICKY

Get me out and I'll go to a program.

JOHN

Ain't gonna happen. The judge wants to reinstate the suspended today. It carries two years. I may be able to terminate your probation if you take a year on a new charge.

RICKY

If you can get the year, I'll take it.

Ricky leans back in the cell. Fidgets. Anxious. John leaves.

INT. DEER ISLAND HOUSE OF CORRECTION KITCHEN - DAY

Ricky looks out into the dining hall. A hundred men crowd on benches around tables. Ricky hands a huge pot of mashed potatoes to CAPTAIN (late 60's).

RICKY

Hey Cap, I'm done here. Boys are fed. I got things to do.

CAP

Take it somewhere else, Dyer. Don't be setting up shop in my kitchen. Have a few beers to go with that suntan.

RICKY

(whispers)  
Don't mind if I do.

Ricky saunters to a closet at the back of the kitchen.

A stash of home brew is cooking in two five gallon pails. He opens one, fills a cup and grabs a chair from the closet. Heads out the back door.

EXT. DEER ISLAND ENTRANCE - DAY

John Yellin stands with his briefcase. Squints into the sun. Spots Ricky in a lounge chair up on the hill, drinking from a cup.

JOHN

Where the hell are we? Bermuda, for Christ's sakes!

He walks into the prison.

INT. DEER ISLAND VISITING ROOM - DAY

Ricky chats with John, clearly buzzed. John clenches his teeth.

JOHN

Looks like I interrupted you.

RICKY

Yeah...privileges. We all got 'em.

JOHN

We got a year but you have an old charge in Roxbury. I don't think we have to go to trial. A few more times and I'll have you down.

RICKY

It's okay here. It's a shit house but I'm surviving.

JOHN

Surviving, huh? You're drunk, Ricky. Haven't you had enough. If you put as much energy into scamming into things like an education, you could be an attorney.

RICKY

Are you a preacher or my lawyer?

John shakes his head and leaves.

INT. DEER ISLAND REC ROOM - DAY

INMATES watch TV. A few lift homemade weights. Others play cards.

MAXWELL WATERS (30's) reads in a corner. He's a Black Panther. Observant. Intense. Ricky pulls up a chair next to him.

RICKY

Maxwell! Remember me? From the kitchen. What'd you get?

MAXWELL

Panthers don't fare do well in Whitey's court. Got two and a half but better than state. My baby went back to Jamaica.

RICKY  
Sorry to hear that. She write?

MAXWELL  
My only refuge is these books. Ask  
me why I'm reading this one.

Maxwell shows Ricky the cover. "The Selected Writings of  
Abraham Lincoln."

RICKY  
Okay. Why are you reading that?

MAXWELL  
Because I can. They can take away  
all of my rights except my right to  
use my mind.  
(beat)  
You should too. They can never take  
away your education.

RICKY  
I haven't read a book since sixth  
grade. They can't take away what's  
not there.

MAXWELL  
Listen to me. An educated man is a  
strong man. And a strong man is a  
respected man.

Ricky thinks for minute, his brow creases.

RICKY  
I don't even know where to start.

MAXWELL  
You can get your GED here at The  
Island. Get the information at the  
admin office.

Ricky raises his eyebrows.

MAXWELL (CONT'D)  
There's a saying: "Take kindly the  
counsel of the years, gracefully  
surrendering the things of youth."  
That's the Desiderata.

RICKY  
Yeah, well, Desdimona sounds pretty  
damn smart. Thanks man.

Ricky looks up at the TV and Maxwell reads.

EXT. TOPEKA STREET METHADONE CLINIC - NIGHT

Tommy leans up against a wall. Sees his target. Approaches him.

An argument ensues. The MAN (early 30's) pushes Tommy. Tommy tries to grab the drugs. The man punches Tommy.

Tommy withdraws a knife. The man back pedals, trips, falls on his back. Tommy jumps on top of him.

Blood seeps through the man's shirt. Tommy looks down.

The knife protrudes from his stomach.

TOMMY

I'm so sorry. So, so sorry.

Tommy grabs the drugs and runs off. The man lies on the ground, helpless.

INT. DEER ISLAND LIBRARY - NIGHT

The library is half filled with inmates. Ricky sits by the back door. A GROUP from East Boston comes in. LARRY SULLIVAN (40's) smokes. Ricky rises. Approaches Larry.

RICKY

Hey man. Think I could get one of those smokes?

LARRY

I'll give you three or four if you sit up front.

Ricky looks around. Nervous. Anxious.

RICKY

I can't do that.

LARRY

Why?

RICKY

What if someone sees me?

LARRY

Kid, you're in jail.

Ricky looks at the butts, then at Larry, takes the cigarettes, and follows him up front.

Larry is at the podium. His audience listens intently.

LARRY (CONT'D)

My name is Larry and I'm an alcoholic.

(beat)

Responsibility. Trust. Truth. Those are words I live by today. But twenty-five years ago that would've been a mouth full of garbage.

Ricky looks around to see if anyone is looking at him. Looks back to the podium.

LARRY (CONT'D)

It was actually in my desperation that I found my way out. I had nothing left to lose when I finally asked for help. I started hanging out with people who wanted a better life and that's what I got.

(beat)

I started hanging out with the winners, not the losers and found out that a good copy is better than a bad original.

INT. DEER ISLAND LIBRARY - LATER

Everyone stands and recites the Serenity prayer as the meeting ends. People shake hands and hug. Larry approaches Ricky.

LARRY

That wasn't so bad, was it? I'll hold a seat for you. Keep coming.

RICKY

I guess I'll see you next week. Thanks for the smokes.

Ricky shakes his hand.

INT. DYER LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kay Dyer puts her coat on. Heads out the front door.

INT. DEER ISLAND PRISON VISITING ROOM - DAY

Kay waits. Ricky enters. Smiles. Kay hugs and kisses him.

RICKY

Ma, I'm saved! I'm going to heaven.

KAY

You look so good, Richard. What have you been doing?

RICKY

I made some changes. I'm doing school stuff. Working on my GED. I can get it while I'm in here. I wanna be something.

KAY

I always had hope. I've never given up on you. I know you can make it.

RICKY

I'm tryin', ma.

KAY

I'll tell your father and sisters the good news. Donna isn't doing too good. She's getting into trouble and dad is furious. Maybe you can talk to her when you get out?

RICKY

Sure, ma. Tell dad I'm working some things out. No more drinking or drugs.

Kay takes her son's hands. Looks into his eyes.

KAY

I will, Richard. I'll come back soon. Love you son. I saw Missy out in the holding area. She doesn't look good, Richard.

Kay stands. Kisses her son. Leaves.

INT. DEER ISLAND VISITING ROOM - DAY

Missy shuffles in. Ricky smiles. She's taken aback. He's radiant. Happy. Clean. Missy is in the throes of withdrawal. Sickly. Pale. Shakes.

MISSY

You look so different.

RICKY

I've been tryin'.

MISSY

You're lucky you're away, Ricky.

She shifts in her chair. Eyes well up.

RICKY

What's going on, babe?

MISSY

It's a mess. Tommy was high and robbed a guy. He knifed him and the guy died. Took a plea for second degree.

(beat)

He got life, Ricky. I'm so sad. Mikey dies, now Tommy's in prison for life.

Ricky looks away. Fumes.

RICKY

No! No, no, no! This shit ain't true. Where'd they take him?

Ricky rubs his head. Missy reaches her hand towards him. He pulls back.

MISSY

It's gonna be okay. When you get out, maybe we'll go away. Maybe Florida or California. I can't take it no more.

Ricky slams the table with his fist. Clenches his teeth.

INT. DEER ISLAND INFIRMARY - DAY

Ricky walks up to the barred window. Feigns pain. Holds his jaw. Talks to the NURSE (late 50's).

RICKY

My tooth is killing me. I can't get over to the dentist or even work. Think I can get something for the pain?

The nurse looks at him. Doesn't believe him.

NURSE

Why don't you tell me what's really going on?

RICKY  
C'mon. Just one Talwin so I can  
sleep.

NURSE  
What's going on?

Ricky sighs. Looks down.

RICKY  
I just found out my best friend got  
a life sentence.

NURSE  
You're doing life on an installment  
plan. Do you realize that?

Ricky sighs again.

NURSE (CONT'D)  
Hang in there, kid.

Ricky turns and leaves, head hung low.

INT. DEER ISLAND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - DAY

Ricky fills out paperwork while a GUARD (early 30's) watches  
him.

GUARD  
Listen Dyer, you gotta be back by  
six. Understood? Stay away from the  
booze. And go see your mother.

RICKY  
I know the rules.

GUARD  
Don't take your time coming back,  
Dyer. This ain't Charles Street.

Ricky turns and walks out the doors of the prison.

INT. ALLSTON GAS STATION BATHROOM - NIGHT

Ricky shoots up. Nods out for a minute. Comes to. Shakes his  
head. Stands. Looks in the broken mirror.

He looks like death. Thin. Emaciated. Sweats.

RICKY  
What the fuck are you doing to  
yourself, man?

There's movement behind him. He spins around. There's nothing there.

When he turns back to the mirror he sees his mother's face over his shoulder. He spins again.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
Ma?

He shakes his head again. Turns back to the mirror. Sweats.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
Jesus. What the fuck was in that  
shit?

He splashes water on his face. Exits the bathroom.

INT. ALLSTON BAR - NIGHT

Ricky drinks in a smoky bar. Nervously checks the mirror. A voice whispers in his head.

VOICE  
You're going to be next if you  
don't stop.

Ricky turns to the patron next to him.

RICKY  
What'd you just say?

THE PATRON (late 60's) turns to Ricky. Raises an eyebrow.

PATRON  
I didn't say nothin', pal.

He looks Ricky over. Shakes his head.

PATRON (CONT'D)  
Maybe it's time you call it a  
night, buddy. And maybe a shower  
too.

Ricky stares at him for a minute. Takes a hand full of pills from his pocket. Pops them in his mouth and chases them with the last of the booze in his drink.

EXT. ALLSTON ALLEY - NIGHT

Ricky shoots up again. Nods out next to a dumpster. A rat crawls up his leg towards his crotch.

Ricky stirs awake. Looks at the rat. Blinks slowly.

RICKY

You're not really there. It's all  
in my head.

(beat)

All of this is in my head.

He reaches towards the rat. It scurries off.

Ricky closes his eyes. A tear drips down his cheek.

EXT. DEER ISLAND PRISON ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Ricky limps to the gates of the prison. Bangs on the door. It opens and he collapses into the arms of a GUARD (late 30's).

INT. DEER ISLAND INFIRMARY - DAY

A DOCTOR (late 50's) look at Ricky's chart. Chats with a NURSE (early 30's). Ricky rests on a gurney in the background.

DOCTOR

Mr. Dyer's case is too severe for  
us. We're not equipped for this  
kind of psychotic break.

NURSE

He told me he met his mother, the  
rat, in an alley.

(beat)

Wherever he got the heroin, it's  
bad stuff. It's going to kill  
someone.

DOCTOR

We're going to transfer him to  
Bridgewater State. Nothing else we  
can do.

NURSE

I'll prepare the paperwork.

The doctor exits. Ricky moans. He's unshaven, squirms. Eyes closed as he thrashes about.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Buildings and barb wire surround the hospital. It's formidable. Old. Dank and dark.

INT. BRIDGEWATER HOSPITAL DAY ROOM - DAY

PATIENTS shuffle around. They're all dangerous. Killers, rapists, people with severe mental disorders.

INT. BRIDGEWATER HOSPITAL CELL - DAY

Ricky lays on the floor naked. Moans. There's a single light on the ceiling and a hole in the floor.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Judge Artesani sits behind his desk. Attorney John Yellin stands before him. The judge looks up and acknowledges him.

ARTESANI

Morning Counsel. What can I do for you?

JOHN

It's Richard Dyer, sir. He's been transferred from Deer Island to Bridgewater.

ARTESANI

Since when is Dyer criminally insane?

JOHN

He had a reaction to some bad drugs on the street. Deer Island couldn't handle it.

(beat)

He doesn't belong there, sir. I'd like to ask for a Revise and Revoke. Get him moved to Mass Mental where he can be treated for his addiction.

ARTESANI

You're essentially asking me to put him on probation. He can walk right out of there.

John sighs. His gaze intensifies.

JOHN

I'm asking you to save his life,  
sir. Mass Mental with terms and  
conditions. He doesn't belong in  
Bridgewater. I know my gut. He has  
a drug problem but he's not insane.

ARTESANI

I happen to agree.

(beat)

Bring it to me in the next session.  
I'll sign off on it. He can leave  
whenever he wants but at least it's  
a helluva lot nicer than  
Bridgewater.

JOHN

Thank you, sir. Hopefully this time  
it'll stick.

John leaves. Artesani turns in his chair. Looks out the  
window. Sighs.

INT. SHERIFF'S CAR - DAY

Ricky sits in the backseat. Two SHERIFF'S (late 30's) sit in  
front. The car pulls up to The Massachusetts Mental Health  
Hospital.

INT. MASS MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITAL DAY ROOM - DAY

Superimpose:

1973

The room is sparse. Clean. Bright. Ricky sits with other  
PATIENTS. He looks better. Clean shaven, brighter. Eyes  
clear.

He looks out the window. Sees a car pull up. A nurse exits  
and walks towards the staff entrance.

RICKY

Time to blow this pop stand.

Ricky throws the blanket on the couch. Heads towards the  
hall.

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS HOSPITAL PARKING LOT

Ricky slides inside the nurses car. Pops the ignition. Hot wires the car. Rolls out of the parking lot.

INT. CONDEMNED BUILDING - NIGHT

BUMS and HEROIN ADDICTS are scattered throughout a burned-out, broken down abandoned house.

Ricky huddles in a corner, sick. Lights a cigarette. Wanders over to people getting high. Waits his turn.

EXT. BOSTON ALLEY - NIGHT

Ricky stumbles down the alley next to the burned-out building. Turns onto a dark street. Checks the door handles on a few cars. Finds one open. Climbs in.

INT. STOLEN CAR - NIGHT

He nods out for a few minutes. Comes to again. Hot wires the car. Turns on the engine on. Nods out again.

EXT. BOSTON ALLEY - LATER

A COP (late 20's) bangs on the window.

COP

Sir!

RICKY

What the...?

COP

Turn off the engine and step out of the vehicle.

Ricky nods out for a second. Snaps awake. Gets out of the car, tries to stand, and crumbles to the ground.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT - DAY

Ricky, in handcuffs, faces Judge Artesani. He shakes. Sweats.

ARTESANI

I'm trying to protect you, Dyer. No more furloughs. Get in there and get clean.

INT. DEER ISLAND PRISON HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nunni helps TWO GUARDS (late 20's) put Ricky in his cell. He's nearly unconscious. They lay him on his side. Ricky whispers to Nunni.

RICKY

Nunni?

NUNNI

I'll make sure Delicious checks in on you.

RICKY

I'm so, so alone, Nunni.

NUNNI

You're safe now, kid. You're safe now.

Nunni leaves. Ricky shivers and pulls the blanket over his body.

BEGIN MONTAGE

- A. Ricky sweats and turns in his bed.
- B. Ricky throws up in his toilet.
- C. Delicious checks on Ricky in his cell.
- D. Ricky sits alone in his cell.

END MONTAGE

INT. DEER ISLAND VISITING ROOM - DAY

Superimpose:

1974

Ricky sits in a chair. Looks haggard. Spent.

STEPHEN BEAM (early 40's), a caseworker from Care About Now, a social services agency that places convicts in work release programs and halfway houses, sit across from him.

STEPHEN

Your attorney sent me to you to talk about options when you get out.

RICKY

Who says I'm getting out?

STEPHEN

The parole boards said you were all set.

RICKY

I'll die out there, man. At least in here, I have my limits.

STEPHEN

You can't hide in here forever. I work to place people in halfway houses. You can get a new lease on life.

RICKY

Not gonna work.

STEPHEN

It's up to us to save ourselves but sometimes we need to surrender to the suggestions of others. Maybe it's time to take a suggestion.

Ricky stares at him.

RICKY

You think I can do this?

STEPHEN

I know you can. I did. And so have millions of others.

RICKY

How?

STEPHEN

Say yes and let the process unfold. The more you let go, the more you'll receive.

RICKY

Huh?

STEPHEN

Forgiveness takes courage, Ricky. Having the courage to forgive yourself takes time. It did for me.

(beat)

Let me know if you'd like to go to Stepping Stone. It's down in Fall River.

RICKY

Can I think about it? Maybe come back and see me next week?

STEPHEN

Deal.

Stephen leaves and Ricky stares off into the distance.

EXT. STEPPING STONES HALFWAY HOUSE, FALL RIVER,  
MASSACHUSETTS- DAY

Ricky sits under a tree. His mother walks up and he jumps to his feet and jogs over to her. Hugs her.

INT. STEPPING STONES KITCHEN - DAY

Ricky and Kay sit at the table. Kay finally breaks the silence.

KAY

I brought you a radio. You can listen to the Sox and Bruins games.

RICKY

That's nice, ma. I'll keep it in my room.

KAY

How's it going, Richard? I'm really proud of you.

Ricky is pensive. Lost.

RICKY

It's the hardest thing I've ever done. I don't know if I can go on.

KAY

What's going on?

RICKY

I feel so alone. There ain't nobody left. I couldn't save 'em. Now I have nothing.

(beat)

But I been studyin again. Taking a few college courses.

Kay interrupts him.

KAY

Richard! That's wonderful!

RICKY

Ya think I can do it, Ma?

She nods. Smiles.

KAY

Richard, I know you are feeling  
hopeless right now but I want you  
to do something for me.

(beat)

Look at me Richard.

Ricky looks up. Kay looks into his eyes and places her rosary  
beads in his hands.

KAY (CONT'D)

I want you to borrow my hope until  
you can get your own.

(beat)

You are going to make it through  
and find out that your deepest  
desperation will bring you to your  
greatest success.

(beat)

Borrow my hope, Richard. Please.

Kay smiles at him. Ricky looks at her with curiosity.

INT. STEPPING STONES BEDROOM - DAY

Ricky kneels on the floor. He looks at the floor, then up at  
the ceiling.

RICKY

Please, God. Please. Just maybe  
it'll work for me. Please, God.  
Keep me on the right path...at  
least for today.

He puts his face in his hands and sobs.

BEGIN MONTAGE

A. Ricky sits in the front row of a lecture hall at  
Northeastern University. Listens intently.

B. Ricky studies for his law classes in the Stepping Stones  
kitchen, books sprawled out on the table and counters.

END MONTAGE

INT. MEETING HALL, FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS - NIGHT

Ricky stands at the podium. The room is crowded. PEOPLE listen intently.

RICKY

I started sniffing glue when I was ten. Was taking LSD and anything I could get my hands on when I was fourteen. Alcohol and drugs consumed my life, as did the crimes that I committed under their influence.

Ricky gazes around the room. Stops speaking as he notices his sister, Donna in the audience. Regains composure. Speaks again.

RICKY (CONT'D)

It destroyed not only my life but took away my friends and some of my family.

Ricky makes eye contact with Donna. Donna nods in agreement.

INT. MEETING HALL - LATER

The meeting breaks up and Ricky makes his way over to Donna. She sees him and smiles.

RICKY

Jesus Christ. What the hell are you doing in Fall River?

DONNA

I came looking for you. I ain't got nothing left. Nowhere to turn.

RICKY

Tell me what's going on.

DONNA

I been locked up, Ricky. Got out of Framingham last month. Been on the street. Can't stay clean. I need help.

RICKY

We need to find you a woman's house. Get you to meetings. I'll talk to my counselor at the house.

DONNA

I'll do whatever you say, Ricky.

(beat)

I heard you, Ricky. I want what you have.

Donna cries. Ricky hugs her. A man approaches Ricky and taps him on the shoulder. Ricky turns around.

LARRY SULLIVAN

Remember me, kid?

Ricky is speechless. He mouth hangs open.

LARRY

Good to hear ya up there.

Ricky finally speaks.

RICKY

What the...? What are the chances?  
What are you doing here?

LARRY

God puts people in each other's  
life for a reason. Got a sponsor  
yet?

RICKY

Um...no, not really.

LARRY

It's a yes or no question.

Ricky looks at his shoes. Sheepish. Reluctant.

RICKY

No.

LARRY

Now you do.

Larry takes a business card from his pocket. Hands it to Ricky.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Call me tomorrow morning at nine  
am. Sharp. We'll start the work  
next week.

Ricky takes the card.

EXT. DYER RESIDENCE - DAY

Ricky walks up the porch steps. Rings the bell. Bill Dyer answers the door. Gestures for Ricky to come in.

INT. DYER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ricky and Kay embrace. Kay leads Ricky to the sofa. Bill sits in his easy chair.

KAY

Oh Richard, you look wonderful.  
Bill, doesn't he look good?

Bill looks at both of them and takes a cigar from his shirt pocket. Lights it.

BILL

I want to know if the rumor is true. First you get your GED, which anyone can get, and now you're telling me you're going to graduate college?

KAY

It's not a rumor. That's the invitation we got.

BILL

I won't believe it until I see it with my own eyes. I wouldn't put it past him to have conned his way through college.

Ricky looks at Bill. Understands his dad's trepidation.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Ricky accepts his diploma. Yellin, Artesani, and Ricky's parents and sisters are in attendance.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Superimpose:

1979

Ricky walks into Judge Artesani's chambers. He's clean-shaven. Sharp. He shakes the judge's hand.

RICKY  
Good to see you.

ARTESANI  
Why Richard, look at you.

RICKY  
I learned a few things since  
getting sober. Was a Big Brother  
for a little while, sold light  
bulbs and vacuum cleaners then got  
my college diploma at Boston State.  
(beat)  
Scholar of the College.

ARTESANI  
Congratulations!

RICKY  
Thanks. But I'm here for another  
reason and I'm hoping you can help.

ARTESANI  
Go on.

RICKY  
I want to go to law school.

Artesani smirks.

ARTESANI  
Don't you want to make sure you're  
off probation first?

RICKY  
I am. I spoke with Yellin. He  
thinks it's a good idea.

ARTESANI  
No surprise there. Of course he  
thinks it's a good idea.

Ricky looks at him sheepishly.

RICKY  
I was hoping you could write me a  
recommendation for my applications.

ARTESANI  
I'm impressed by your  
accomplishments, Richard. I'd be  
happy to write you a  
recommendation.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

ARTESANI (CONT'D)

But I have to warn you, it'll be nearly impossible to become a lawyer because of your record. I never say never but it'll be tough.

Ricky deflates. Sighs. Smiles.

RICKY

I've come this far. I'm not giving up now.

Artesani stares at Ricky. Raises his eyebrows.

ARTESANI

You may be able to get a pardon from the governor. He's big on reform. It's a long shot but it could happen.

RICKY

Thank you, sir. Let me focus on the applications first. One day and one thing at a time. We'll cross that bridge when we come to it.

ARTESANI

Fair enough. Glad to see you're active in the program.

(beat)

And just for the record, Richard, you were never arrested. You were rescued. I hope you realize that.

RICKY

Yes, sir. I understand. Thank you, sir. Thank you for all you've done for me and my family.

Ricky shakes Artesani's hand. Exits the room.

INT. NORTHEASTER LAW SCHOOL PRISONER'S RIGHTS CLINIC - DAY

Ricky walks into a lecture room. A PROFESSOR (60's) looks up from a table scattered with papers.

PROFESSOR

Richard. Here for your assignment?

RICKY

Glad to be here. And looking forward to it, sir.

PROFESSOR

Can't say too many people have ever said that about this place. But then again, we haven't had many ex-convicts here either. You must feel right at home.

RICKY

Let's just say I'm comfortable here.

The professor looks down at the papers. Looks up.

PROFESSOR

You're doing an interview for a disciplinary hearing for murder on Curt Kingston at Walpole.

(beat)

Well?

RICKY

Well what?

PROFESSOR

Do you know the guy?

Ricky smiles.

RICKY

No. Not this one.

PROFESSOR

Good luck. The report is due on Wednesday.

RICKY

Thank you, sir.

Ricky leaves the room.

EXT. WALPOLE STATE PRISON - DAY

Ricky is lead through the kennel cages at Walpole State Prison.

BOBBY HEARD (40's), a notorious bank robber, sees him.

BOBBY

Hey Ricky, what'd ya get?

Ricky points at his briefcase.

RICKY

Bobby, I'm studying to be a lawyer.  
Imagine that?

BOBBY

A fuckin' lawyer. You're a felon.  
Do your homework, Dyer. Felons  
can't be lawyers.

Ricky gives him the finger as he walks by.

INT. WALPOLE VISITING ROOM - DAY

Ricky is lead into the room and meets CURT KINGSTON (40's).  
He's 6'5, 265 lb. Ricky smiles at him. Sits down across the  
screen from him. Curt scowls.

RICKY

My name is Richard Dyer. I'm  
studying to be a lawyer.

CURT

Yeah, so?

RICKY

I'd like to interview you for your  
D hearing before the parole board.  
I'm friends with Bobby Heard and  
Joey Roechel. We did time together.

Curt softens.

CURT

How the fuck did you pull off  
becoming a lawyer?

RICKY

I'm not a lawyer yet. But I got  
sober. Trusted the right people.

Ricky opens his briefcase. Takes out some papers.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Now, lets's take a look at your  
case.

Curt shakes his head. Slides closer to the table.

INT. JUDGE ARTESANI'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Superimpose:

1982

RICKY DYER (29) sits with JUDGE ARTESANI (early 70's).

ARTESANI

Nobody believed you'd actually go through with it. But you did.

RICKY

What can I do to see this through?

The judge ponders.

ARTESANI

You'd have to go before the Parole Board to appeal for the pardon first. But you may have a pretty good case. And then Dukakis would have to sign off on it. Like I told you before, he's big on reform.

RICKY

What happens if I get the pardon?

ARTESANI

It won't guarantee admission to the Bar. Of course, you have to pass it first. Then the Board and, if necessary, the Supreme Court. The Governor may be able to sway them.

RICKY

I'm not stopping now, sir.

The judge shakes his head. Smiles.

ARTESANI

Richard, I don't expect you ever will.

Ricky smiles back.

INT. PAROLE BOARD CHAMBERS - DAY

Superimpose:

1983

Ricky sits before the board of six. They're lined up as a panel in front of him. The chief Parole Board Officer, JOYCE HOOLEY (early 40's) is at the far left.

JOYCE

Good morning, Mr. Dyer. I'm Joyce Hooley. I'm sure you remember me as well as a few others from some of your previous visits here.

Ricky shifts. He's uncomfortable.

RICKY

Yes...um...it's good to be here.

JOYCE

Mr. Dyer, we have been informed that you are seeking a Governor's Pardon. And your goal is to practice law in Massachusetts.

Joyce looks over her papers at Ricky.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

You have over twelve felony convictions. You must have a lot of confidence to attend law school for three years with that record not knowing if you'd ever be able to practice. Is that the kind of courage and conviction that speaks to the rehabilitation process?

Ricky blushes. Smiles.

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE - DAY

Ricky runs up the stairs. Fixes his tie. Darts into the building.

INT. MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Ricky is led into the Governor's office. GOVERNOR MICHAEL DUKAKIS sits at his desk. He stands and shakes Ricky's hand.

RICKY

Governor Dukakis...thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

DUKAKIS

I haven't signed anything yet.

RICKY

No, I'm thanking you for the GED program at Deer Island and the Mass Rehab that paid for my college.

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)

And all the food stamps and housing vouchers that made it possible to put my life back together. I'm forever grateful.

Dukakis sits. Gestures for Ricky to sit.

DUKAKIS

You are most welcome. Those programs are intended for that very purpose so I'm glad to hear our citizens benefiting.

RICKY

Well it's an honor to be here, sir. They told me they could just send me the pardon but I wanted to thank you in person. It means that much to me.

DUKAKIS

Well, they say gratitude is a very important aspect of recovery.

RICKY

It is. And I am.

Dukakis signs the pardon and shows it to Ricky.

DUKAKIS

There you go. Take it out to my secretary. She'll know what to do.

The Governor leans back. Looks at Ricky. Curious.

DUKAKIS (CONT'D)

Tell me, Mr. Dyer. Why the law?

Ricky stares back.

DUKAKIS (CONT'D)

You could have chosen any number of fields. You're smart. You have an exorbitant amount of energy. Why law?

RICKY

Because someone told me I could. That lit a spark that turned into a fire.

DUKAKIS

Son, there aren't too many attorneys out there with experience on both sides of the law. That's an asset. Use it wisely.

RICKY

Yes, sir.

Dukakis stands. Shakes Ricky's hand.

DUKAKIS

Good luck, son.

Dukakis winks at Ricky and escorts him out to the secretary.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. RICKY'S LAW OFFICE - DAY

Superimpose:

1985

Ricky sits at his desk. It's piled high with files. He's on the phone. Looks out the window onto Beacon Street. His Jaguar is parked at the corner.

RICKY

They should have won it. Neely had a hat rick in the third for Christ's sake. Listen, I'll have those files for you in about an hour.

Ricky hangs up the phone. It rings again. He picks it up.

RICKY (CONT'D)

What'd ya forget?

He stops short when he realizes it's not the same caller. There's a FEMALE VOICE on the line from Norfolk State Prison.

FEMALE (O.S.)

Will you accept the charges from inmate Thomas Sullivan?

RICKY

Yes, yes. I'll accept.

There's a click and a moment of silence.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Hello?

TOMMY

Hey Ricky, I guess the boys weren't lying.

RICKY

About what?

TOMMY

You're straight? Really? And a lawyer? How the fuck did you pull that off?

RICKY

Yeah. I'm lawyer because I'm straight. I hear you're still using.

There's an awkward silence. Tension. Tommy's voice is raspy.

TOMMY

Yeah, well I tracked you down. Did you know where I was. Ever come looking for me?

RICKY

How about I come visit?

TOMMY

Now you wanna visit? After fifteen fucking years you wanna come visit now?

RICKY

Jesus, Tommy. Everyone was gone. I had to take care of myself. I had to clean up my own mess.

Ricky stares out the window. Takes deep breaths.

TOMMY

I'm up for parole in six months. I think I need to see you. How did you get straight?

RICKY

I'll be up to see you soon.

Ricky hangs up. Puts his jacket on and leaves the office.

INT. RICKY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ricky sits in the kitchen with a ERIC (3) on his lap. His wife, JUDY (late 30's), stands at the sink, bathes a BABY (1). She has long brown hair. Pretty. Petite. She's pregnant.

RICKY  
Gotta go see a client tomorrow morning.

Judy sighs.

JUDY  
We have the ultrasound tomorrow. Did you forget?

RICKY  
Can you reschedule? I need to leave here by six.

JUDY  
What about your meeting? You never miss that.

Ricky becomes irritated.

RICKY  
I'm not gonna relapse by missing one fucking meeting, Jude. Come on.  
(beat)  
Sorry, babe. I didn't mean to swear. This is a big one. It's personal.

She turns to him. Smiles.

JUDY  
Okay. I support you.  
(beat)  
Promise me you'll call Larry later.

RICKY  
I promise.

Ricky kisses Eric on the forehead. The child smiles.

INT. NORFOLK STATE PRISON VISITING ROOM - DAY

Ricky and TOMMY DONOVAN (early 30's) face each other. Tommy slouches. He's exhausted. Jittery.

TOMMY  
I hear you got married, got kids.

RICKY

I did. Two boys. A third on the way. Keeps me busy.

Tommy stares hard at Ricky. Disdainful.

TOMMY

What the fuck happened to you? The old Ricky woulda been up here every week, fighting for me.

Ricky takes a deep breath.

RICKY

I had to get sober, Tommy. It was killing me. I woulda ended up like Mikey. Or like...

Tommy shakes his head.

TOMMY

Go ahead. Say it. Like me.

RICKY

Tommy...

(beat)

Addiction fucks us up, man. Putting the junk down was the hardest thing I ever had to do. I had to remove myself from my old ways, old friends, I had to...

TOMMY

What ever happened to FUCKING loyalty? We woulda done anything for each other back in the day.

Tommy fumes. THE GUARD (late 30's) in the room inches closer to them.

Ricky takes another deep breath.

RICKY

I needed to be loyal to myself. I wouldn't be sitting on this side of the table if I kept using. I'm here now. Doesn't that count for anything?

Tommy relaxes a little.

TOMMY

So do you do that AA bullshit?

RICKY

I do.

TOMMY

It's a fucking cult.

RICKY

I thought the same thing. When I was doing the stint at Deer Island I had nothing else to do, so I started going to meetings. They brought groups in from the outside, guys like us. And they were all sober.

(beat)

I got a sponsor, did the work, and very slowly, my life got better.

TOMMY

There's no fucking way it was that easy.

Ricky smiles. Chuckles.

RICKY

It was anything but easy. Simple? Yes. Easy? Not at all.

Ricky looks around, unsure of how to go on.

RICKY (CONT'D)

I had to take a look at myself. Really tune in and see what all my character defects are. Do better to try to lessen them.

TOMMY

Who gives a fuck about your shortcomings? You're a fucking lawyer with a house and a Jag, for fuck's sake.

RICKY

I do. They'll always be there. They're part of my DNA. But doing the work gives me the ability to lessen them. And when they do rear their ugly heads, I make it right immediately.

Tommy nods. Inches a bit closer with his chair.

TOMMY

Is that the amends thing I heard about?

RICKY

Yeah. What we have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

TOMMY

Cut the bullshit, man. Speak English, will you?

RICKY

One day at a time, if we do the work, *and* do it honestly, we can be happy and sober.

Tommy nods. Smirks.

TOMMY

Well...you *do* look better. Still not as handsome as me, but better.

RICKY

There's a way out if you're willing to take a few suggestions. That's it. That's all it takes.

TOMMY

I'm listening.

RICKY

You have to get sober. Go to meetings. Get a sponsor. You think you can do that?

TOMMY

I think so.

RICKY

Good. Go to all the meetings this place has to offer. Sit up front. Listen. And one more thing...

TOMMY

Go on.

RICKY

Don't compare. Try to identify. We all have our war stories. They're irrelevant. Listen for the solution. And for the hope.

Tommy looks down at his feet. Back to Ricky. Nods.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Do that and I'll come see you again  
in a month.

Ricky stands. Leaves.

INT. NOROLK STATE PRISON CAFETERIA - NIGHT

Tommy sits in the front row of an AA meeting. Listens to the speaker at the podium. Nods his head in agreement.

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, BOSTON - NIGHT

Ricky drives down what's known as "Methadone Mile." It's jammed packed with homeless people and drug addicts. Tents, shopping carts, and trash overflow from the sidewalks and into the street.

He sees someone he thinks he recognizes. Pulls the car to a stop. Gets out. Walks up to CLAUDIA REEVES (early 20's) nodding out against a chain-linked fence.

RICKY

Claudia?

He shakes her gently. She opens her eyes.

CLAUDIA

The fuck you want?

RICKY

Claudia Reeves, right? I know your dad. Let me take you somewhere. He still live on Mission Hill?

A homeless DRUG ADDICT (late 50's) saunters towards them. Ricky shakes her again.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Claudia, stay with me. Let's get you outta here.

DRUG ADDICT

Why don't you leave her the fuck alone, pig?

Ricky turns toward him. Puts his hands up.

RICKY  
I'm not a cop. Just a friend trying  
to help.

DRUG ADDICT  
She don't need no help.

A FEW OTHER HOMELESS PEOPLE wander towards the trio. Ricky  
backs away, towards his car. Gets in.

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE PHONE BOOTH - MOMENTS LATER

Ricky is on the phone with a POLICE OFFICER he knows.

RICKY  
She doesn't belong there, Matty.  
She's barely twenty-one.

MATTY (O.S.)  
There's nothing we can do.

RICKY  
Can't you at least put her in  
protective custody?

MATTY  
You know the drill, counselor. At  
least she's safe on The Mile.

RICKY  
Safe?

MATTY  
You know what I mean. Safer, I  
should've said. There's people  
around if she OD's.

Ricky sighs. Runs his fingers through his hair.

RICKY  
This system sucks.

MATTY  
Tell me about it, my friend.  
All we can do is take it as it  
comes. One day at a time.  
(beat)  
Speaking of which...I didn't see  
you Monday. You good?

RICKY

Yeah. Had to go see about a friend at Norfolk. Couldn't make it to the meeting.

MATTY

All right. Just making sure. As long as you're good.

RICKY

I am.

MATTY

And I'd know you'd be honest if you weren't.

Ricky pauses. Looks down the street towards where he met Claudia.

MATTY (CONT'D)

You still there?

RICKY

Yeah. I'm here. And I'd be honest. Thanks, Matty. Gotta run.

Ricky hangs up the phone.

INT. NORFOLK STATE PRISON VISITING ROOM - DAY

Ricky and Tommy sit opposite each other, Ricky with legal documents in his hands.

RICKY

I'll be meeting with the parole board in the next month or so. Keep doing what you're doing.

TOMMY

I think I'm starting to get it. The day at a time, thing, I mean. A lot of that book is gibberish but I got a guy who's been trying to explain it to me. Makes me feel better, just hanging out with the guy.

RICKY

That's what we do...pass along what we've been given. It's the most important step.

Tommy nods. Looks Ricky in the eyes.

TOMMY

Thank, man. Seriously.

(beat)

And about before...

RICKY

Don't worry about it. I didn't abandon you, Tommy. I took my life back. And now here we are.

TOMMY

And now here we are.

Ricky stands. Leaves the room.

EXT. BEACON HILL PARK - DAY

Ricky and Larry sit on a bench. Ricky's face is strained. He's stressed.

RICKY

The parole board hearing is tomorrow.

LARRY

You've come this far, Ricky. Continue to have faith.

RICKY

It's just so hard to believe sometimes. I can't fucking believe the way my life has turned out.

LARRY

The absence of profanity will offend no one.

Ricky chuckles.

RICKY

I'm much better than I used to be.

LARRY

All the Promises came true, my friend. And they'll continue to materialize because you're doing what you're supposed to, putting the work in. Maybe pray before you walk in that room tomorrow.

RICKY

You and your fucking prayers.

(beat)

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)  
Sorry. I'll put a buck in the sweat jar.

LARRY  
Two.

Ricky looks at Larry. Smiles.

RICKY  
Of course, there's the fear too.

LARRY  
Pray about them both.

RICKY  
*Both?*

LARRY  
Prayer everything goes well tomorrow. And pray to have the fear removed. It's worked so far, right?

RICKY  
Ever wonder why God causes so much suffering?

LARRY  
He doesn't. He allows it so we can grow. That's all part of the faith.

RICKY  
You sound like a broken fucking record.

LARRY  
That's three bucks now.

They sit silently for a minute.

LARRY (CONT'D)  
Must feel pretty good to see everything you've worked so hard for come to fruition?

RICKY  
It does.

LARRY  
Good. Just don't forget where you came from, Ricky. Don't forget where you were when you surrendered.

RICKY

I'm good. I'm doing everything I'm supposed to be doing.

LARRY

You got to the meeting late on Thursday. Left at the break. Sat in the back.

RICKY

Jude needed help with the boys. She's gonna pop any day now.

LARRY

Judy is quite possibly the strongest woman either of us has ever encountered. She puts up with you, doesn't she? She would've been able to manage for another hour. You've missed two calls to me recently. And we both know Judy will remind you if she thinks you're off.

RICKY

I've been busy.

Larry remains silent. Ricky tenses. Inhales. Exhales.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Okay. Duly noted.

LARRY

Now shut up for a few minutes and let's enjoy the quiet.

The men sit in silence.

INT. PAROLE BOARD CHAMBERS - DAY

Tommy sits before the same panel Ricky had met before. Ricky sits next to him.

Joyce Hooley speaks with Ricky. Closing arguments begin.

RICKY

You see before you a man who has committed murder under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Addiction robbed this man of hope and dignity.

(beat)

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)

Yet I tell you that he is clean and sober. He's fighting his addiction one day at a time.

(beat)

We can improve our future with understanding and compassion. And that's what I'm asking today. I'm asking you to give this man an opportunity to make a difference in his own life...and opportunity at redemption.

Ricky pauses. Turns. Places his hand on Tommy's shoulder.

EXT. NORFOLK PRISON - DAY

Tommy comes out of the gates. Ricky leans against his car. They embrace. Get in the car.

INT. RICKY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

TOMMY

Like old times. Got a smoke?

RICKY

Quit those too.

TOMMY

Where to?

RICKY

To a meeting, of course.

Tommy looks at him, disappointed. Takes a deep breath.

EXT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT - DAY

Ricky stands on the stairs. Takes a deep breath and heads inside.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT - CONTINUOUS

As Ricky walks down the hall, Margie Vance calls out to him. He turns towards the sound of her voice.

MARGIE

Ricky? Is that you? I don't believe it. I heard you were a lawyer.

RICKY

Margie! I'm so glad to see you.  
Never thought I'd say that. This is  
my first time back in years.

Margie hugs him. Shakes her head. Folds her arms.

MARGIE

You've been gone a long time.  
Things good? You look well.  
(beat)  
Listen, there's someone I'd like  
you to meet.

She grabs his arms and pulls him into the courthouse.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JUDGE DONNELLY (late 60's) presides. Reads papers.

Other ATTORNEYS, the DISTRICT ATTORNEY (late 50's), and a few  
PROBATION OFFICERS mill about.

Margie escorts Ricky to the Judge's bench.

Ricky looks up at the painting about the bench. Smiles. It's  
a portrait of Judge Artesani.

MARGIE

Your Honor, this is Attorney  
Richard Dyer. Attorney Dyer, Judge  
Donnelly.

DONNELLY

I've heard about you Mr. Dyer.  
You've decided to return to  
Brighton?

RICKY

I've been over in the juvenile  
court and the...

The judge cuts him off.

DONNELLY

This isn't juvenile court Mr. Dyer.  
We do things differently.  
(beat)  
But we're glad to have you here.  
It's an honor to have you in this  
court.

The judge smiles. Nods his approval.

RICKY  
Thank you, sir.

Ricky and Margie smile at each other. They leave the courtroom.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT ROOM - LATER

Ricky looks over a list on the table. He sees someone he recognizes being led to the cells through the small window on the back door of the court room.

RICKY  
No shit. It can't be.

He turns to the COURT OFFICER (late 30's). Nods. The officer lets Ricky into the room where the defendants are kept.

INT. BRIGHTON COURT HOLDING CELL AREA - CONTINUOUS

Ricky is led to a row of cells. An OLD MAN sits in one. He looks up. Looks down. Ricky leans into the bars to show the old man his face.

RICKY  
Frankie? I can't believe you're still alive.

FRANKIE ALVAREZ (67) stands up and approaches the bars.

FRANKIE  
Ricky? What are you doing here?

RICKY  
I'm your attorney.

FRANKIE  
Well, thank the fucking lord something's going my way today.

RICKY  
It's your lucky day, my friend.

FRANKIE  
Remember the shoes you smuggled into Charles Street for me?

Ricky smiles.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
You made good Ricky.

RICKY  
I got clean. You can still get  
there too, Frankie.

FRANKIE  
Nah, I'm all fucked up. I'm on  
Methadone, pills. I need a detox.

RICKY  
Let me help you.

Ricky smiles.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ricky and the DA stand before the judge. Judge Donnelly looks  
over some papers.

Court officers bring Frankie in.

FRANKIE  
Your Honor?

DONNELLY  
Excuse me, Mr. Alvarez, you may not  
want to say anything without  
consulting your attorney.

FRANKIE  
No your Honor, I just have to say,  
I thought I was hallucinating.

The judge looks at him and sighs.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
I can't believe he's my lawyer. I  
did time with him!

The judge pulls off his glasses. Looks at Ricky. Smiles.

DONNELLY  
Yeah...we get that a lot in here.

The DA clears his throat, clearly perturbed. The judge looks  
in his direction.

DONNELLY (CONT'D)  
Proceed Counselor.

The DA states his case.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

He was caught breaking and entering into an apartment by taking out an air conditioner unit. The police report states he was stuck in the window. I'm asking for ten thousand dollars bail for such a brazen act.

Ricky pounds his hand on the wooden counter.

RICKY

The only brazen act going on here is the high bail. Sir, my client is a sixty-seven year old homeless man plagued by addiction. I propose we assign personal bail with the condition that he complete a detox and twenty-eight day inpatient program thereafter. My office is already making arrangements.

The judge looks from Ricky to the DA.

DONNELLY

Do you have a better plan?

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Um...we think jail time.

The judge looks back at Ricky.

DONNELLY

And you think he can get to a program right from court? Today? As in now? I'm going to give you one shot Mr. Dyer.

Ricky smiles.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT LOBBY - DAY

Ricky looks over some papers. Frankie comes up the stairs.  
Ricky smiles.

FRANKIE

Man, I can't believe you got me out.

RICKY

Let's hope you get some good time under your belt now.

FRANKIE

You inspire me, man. If you can do it, maybe I can too.

The two men leave the court house.

INT. RICKY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Superimpose:

1989

Light fills the kitchen. JUDY DYER (mid 30's) smiles, hums softly. Ricky enters dressed in a suit.

RICKY

I'm running late.

JUDY

Please call when you get settled.

Squabbling from the living room. Judy smiles. Raises her eyebrows. Ricky sighs. Shakes his head.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Boys will be boys. And we got a trio of 'em.

The fighting gets louder. Ricky walks to the entrance to the living room.

RICKY

KNOCK IT OFF BEFORE YOU BREAK  
SOMETHING! JESUS!

He turns to Judy. Her smile is gone. She's disappointed. Ricky goes to her.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Sorry, babe. I'm a little stressed.

JUDY

Did you get to a meeting yesterday?

RICKY

Don't start. You promised.

She puts her hands on his shoulders. Looks at him hard.

JUDY

Don't ya think you're taking on too much? Helping all those people into treatment is enough.

(MORE)

JUDY (CONT'D)

You don't need to be moonlighting as a real estate attorney too. We don't need the money. And you know how I feel about Paul.

He dismisses the warning.

RICKY

I've been sober for years. I don't need a meeting every day, Jude.

JUDY

When's the last time you went to one? Talked to Larry?

He ignores her. Walks back to the living room entrance.

RICKY

You boys behave for your mom. I'll be back in a couple of days.

JUDY

Ricky?

He grabs his bags and exits out the back door. Jude crosses her arms and looks out the window after him.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Ricky sits next to a real estate developer, PAUL HEWSON (early 40's), a sharp dressed, slick-haired, fast talking pompous ass. He hands Ricky some papers from his briefcase.

PAUL

Take these. I want you to have them in case we forget later. It's gonna be a wild few days.

He winks at Ricky.

RICKY

Last time I met with the bank it was business as usual. No drama.

PAUL

Cause you weren't with me. Let's shake some shit up! My girl Nina will be your personal assistant. Why don't you take that wedding ring off?

Ricky rubs his ring. Paul winks, slap Ricky's leg. Ricky begins to sweat.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Bacardi and Coke? Jack Daniels?  
Excuse me, stewardess? Two Jack and  
Cokes.

The STEWARDESS (late 20's) smiles and nods.

RICKY  
Actually, I'll just have a Coke.

Ricky gives a side glance at Paul and wipes the sweat from his brow.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Paul stands in the aisle, flirts with a fellow passenger. A stewardess taps Ricky on the shoulder.

STEWARDESS  
Can you get you anything else, sir

RICKY  
Can I get a coffee and a Bailey's?

STEWARDESS  
I think I have a few in the back.  
Give me a minute.

She returns, hands Ricky the coffee and the small bottle of liquor. Ricky mixes the Bailey's. Takes a sip. Closes his eyes. Sighs deeply. Smiles.

INT. FORT LAUDERDALE AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

Ricky is draped around Paul's shoulders. He's hammered. Paul stumbles along while Ricky leans on him.

PAUL  
I'm dropping you at Nina's. She's a  
gem. She'll have something to sober  
you up.

RICKY  
I don't want no coke.

PAUL  
We got a long week ahead of us, my  
man. Enjoy it.

The two men exit the airport. Hail a cab.

INT. NINA CARPENTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

NINA CARPENTER (early 30's) does a line of cocaine off her coffee table. Sits back. Sniffs. Ricky sits next to her.

SUSIE

Your turn.

Ricky leans down. Snorts his line.

RICKY

Man, I feel so much better. Can't believe how drunk I got off a few drinks.

SUSIE

Just chill for the rest of the night. Go check in. Take a hot shower. Get some sleep. You got a big day tomorrow.

INT. HOTEL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ricky and VARIOUS MEN shake hands. Clap each other on the back. Paul whispers in Ricky's ear.

PAUL

Time to celebrate.

Ricky hesitates. Shrugs.

RICKY

What the hell. I deserve it, right?

PAUL

Sure, do, buddy. Sure do!

They exit the conference room. Paul smiles. Ricky looks forlorn.

BEGIN MONTAGE

A. Ricky and Paul party at a bar.

B. Ricky pours beer on a GIRL (early 20's) in a wet t-shirt contest.

C. Ricky stumbles out of the bar with a GIRL (late 20's).

D. Ricky hails a cab.

E. Ricky and the girl stumble out of the cab and into the hotel lobby.

END MONTAGE

INT. RICKY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Judy makes breakfast. She's edgy. Burns the toast. Spill orange juice. The phone rings. She rushes over to answer it.

JUDY

Ricky?

(beat)

Who is this?

She moves to the window. Looks out.

JUDY (CONT'D)

Where?

(beat)

Okay. I understand. Yes.

She writes on a pad of paper. Hangs up the phone. Looks at the paper. The tears begin.

She opens a drawer. Digs for something frantically. Finds a pack of cigarettes. Lights one, inhales deeply. Closes her eyes.

INT. RICKY'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

A sliver of light dawns on Ricky's face. He's sprawled across a sofa.

A bottle of Jack Daniels, cocaine, heroin, and other drug paraphernalia litter the coffee table.

Judy pushes the door open and enters. She runs to Ricky. Shakes him.

JUDY

Ricky! No, no, no!

She shakes him again. Touches his wrist to feel for a pulse. Collapses on his chest. Sobs.

Ricky's eyes flutter. His arms move. His mouth opens.

RICKY

Judy?

JUDY  
You motherfucker.

RICKY  
Shit.

JUDY  
I just want to go home.

RICKY  
I'm so sorry, Jude. So, so sorry.

He pushes her off of him, rolls over and throws up.

INT. RICKY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Ricky sits on his bed, hunched over. He's sick, despondent.  
Shakes and sweats.

Judy enters and puts a bottle of Pedialyte on the nightstand.  
Grabs the trash barrel full of vomit. Pours it in the toilet  
in the adjoining bathroom.

JUDY  
I called Larry.

Ricky looks up. Nervous.

JUDY (CONT'D)  
He'll be over later.

Ricky nods. Leans over and throws up all over the carpet.

INT. RICKY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ricky and Larry sit at the table, Ricky draped in a blanket.  
He shakes. Larry sips tea.

LARRY  
You got too well too quick.

RICKY  
Huh?

LARRY  
You crushed it, Ricky. Did  
something no one believed you could  
do. Made some money, earned  
respect. But you let it get to your  
head. Got away from your program.

RICKY

I saved a lot of people from doing serious time.

LARRY

No one is denying that. But you left the middle and started hanging on the perimeter.

RICKY

I still go to meetings.

Larry stares at him.

LARRY

When was the last time you sat up front? Got there early and talked to a newcomer?

RICKY

I've been swamped. My case load is fucking huge.

Larry stares at him. Remains silent. Ricky sighs.

RICKY (CONT'D)

You're right.

LARRY

It's not about right or wrong. It's about life or death. You know that. You got more lives than a cat.

Ricky coughs. Wraps the blanket tighter around him.

RICKY

So now what?

LARRY

Same thing.

(beat)

Trust God. Clean house. Help others.

Ricky sighs. He's mentally, emotionally, and spiritually spent.

RICKY

Twelve fucking years down the drain.

LARRY

That's another two bucks in the swear jar.

(MORE)

LARRY (CONT'D)

(beat)

How did you get those twelve years?

RICKY

One day at a time.

LARRY

Bingo.

Larry stands.

LARRY (CONT'D)

Try to get some sleep. I'll be over  
in the morning.

RICKY

I'll meet you there.

LARRY

I'll be over at six. Sharp. You can  
help me set up the hall.

Larry exits the room. Ricky bows his head. Sobs.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT HOUSE - DAY

Ricky shuffles into the hallway. Margie Vance is coming down  
the stairs.

MARGIE

Where ya been, Dyer?

Ricky looks up. He smiles shyly.

RICKY

Been dealing with some demons.

He looks at her. She understands.

MARGIE

How's Judy?

RICKY

My rock.

Margie puts her hand on his shoulder.

MARGIE

Claudia Reeve's probation violation  
hearing is today. I'm asking for  
time.

She smiles. Challenges Ricky. He smiles back.

RICKY

She's going to a treatment program.  
Already spoke to the ADA. Who's on  
the bench? Connelly?

Margies winks. Walks into the courtroom. CHARLIE REEVES (late  
40') approaches him.

CHARLIE

I was just notified about Claudia.  
I'm glad you're here. Thanks for  
doing all you've done.

Ricky shakes his hand.

RICKY

I'm going to help her. I won't let  
her go. She's struggling but she  
can do this. She can change her  
life. We just need to keep her  
alive long enough for her to  
believe it.

CHARLIE

I'll do anything. What can I do?

RICKY

I'll let the judge know you're here  
to support her.  
(beat)  
And have faith.

Charlie shakes his hand and the two men head into the court  
room.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT HOLDING AREA - DAY

Claudia Reeves (mid-20's) is escorted through the dock.  
Gorgeous but ravaged by her addiction.

She's placed in a cell. The door slams shut.

CLAUDIA

Fuck. I can't do this again.

In the next cell, MARK AVERY (30's) moves to the wall between  
his cell and Claudia's. He calls out to her.

MARK

You okay?

CLAUDIA

Is anyone okay in this shit hole?

MARK

Just askin' cause you said,  
"again." This isn't my first time  
either. Who's your lawyer?

CLAUDIA

Richard Dyer. He'll help. It's a  
fucking probation violation. I  
don't even know what happened.

Mark moves closer to Claudia from his cell.

MARK

Well, you're a beautiful woman. I'm  
sure it'll all work out.

(beat)

When you get out, maybe we could go  
for a drink? My number's really  
simple. It's 848-0543.

Claudia looks up at the ceiling. Smiles.

CLAUDIA

What's your name?

MARK

Mark. I have a place in Brighton.  
Call me if you wanna talk after  
this.

Ricky walks in. Past Mark and to Claudia.

CLAUDIA

I just told Mark you're as good as  
they come.

Ricky looks at Mark. Suspicious.

RICKY

You two getting cozy?

Claudia smiles.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Claudia, you gotta go to treatment  
today. That's the only way unless  
you want to do time. You ready?

Claudia nods. Cries. Ricky hands her his card.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Call me as soon as you get out of  
treatment.

(beat)

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)  
I told your dad to have faith. Now  
I'm telling you.

CLAUDIA  
My dad's out there?

She smiles. Takes the card.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT - DAY

Ricky stands before JUDGE HICKEY (late 50'). Margie Vance states her case from the podium.

Claudia stands in the holding cell, handcuffed.

MARGIE  
I'm asking for time, judge. She's a  
month into her probation and went  
out and committed the same  
violation. B&E of a motor vehicle.  
Possession of stolen property.

Ricky interrupts.

RICKY  
Allegedly!

Margie ignores him.

MARGIE  
She had the backpack with the  
owner's computer and ID.

RICKY  
Judge, this is not the issue here.  
This woman is homeless. She's  
helpless. The issue is that this  
woman is under the influence of  
drugs. She's a heroin user but  
she's had some clean time. This was  
a relapse. Her father is here to  
support her and she needs our help.

He looks at Margie.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
All of our help!

Margie shakes her head. Can't help but smile.

HICKEY  
What are you proposing?

RICKY

Let's get her to detox, a program with terms and conditions. Revisit this after she gets clean.

The judge sighs. Signs a piece of paper. Hands it to the CLERK (early 50's).

CLERK

In the matter of the Commonwealth versus Claudia Reeves, you are hereby ordered to inpatient drug treatment for no less than thirty days and are to report to probation no less than twenty-four hours upon release from the program. You will follow an after-care plan of treatment. The case is on for Pretrial on February 24th.

Ricky turns and nods at Claudia. She nods back. Ricky turns and looks at Charlie Reeves in the audience. Charlie wipes tears from his eyes.

Ricky walks to the defense table. Reads who his next client is.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT HOLDING CELLS - DAY

Mark Avery sits in his cell. Ricky approaches.

RICKY

I'm Attorney Dyer. Possession with intent to distribute. Any history of drug abuse?

MARK

No. I just do business with these fucking idiots. If I gotta lie to get outta this, I will.

RICKY

I can't promise you anything.

MARK

I can't go to Nashua Street. People are lookin' for me.

RICKY

How much bail do you think you can post?

MARK

Five grand, maybe ten.

Ricky nods. Stands.

MARK (CONT'D)

So we're good, right?

Ricky gives him the thumbs up as he leaves. Then he raises his middle finger out of view of Mark.

INT. BRIGHTON DISTRICT COURT - LATER

Mark Avery is brought into the holding cell.

A CLERK (late 30's) speaks.

CLERK

Commonwealth versus Mark Avery.

Ricky and the PROSECUTOR (early 40's) stand near the judge's bench. Judge Hickey puts his glasses on and looks at the papers before him. Looks at the prosecutor.

PROSECUTOR

The case is before the Grand Jury.  
My office is planning on indicting  
him.

RICKY

The Commonwealth's case is weak. My  
client wasn't the target of the  
warrant. He's innocent. He has  
roots in the community.

The judge ignores him.

HICKEY

What are you asking for?

PROSECUTOR

Ten thousand dollars bail.

RICKY

That's outrageous! He'll appear,  
judge.

The judge looks at Avery. Sighs.

HICKEY

Okay. Five thousand dollars. Pick a  
date counsel.

The judge slams his gavel. Avery smiles. Ricky looks away in disgust.

INT. WOMEN'S DETOX CENTER - NIGHT

Claudia sits in a circle with other WOMEN. One of them (early 20's) kicks the chair of the WOMAN (late 20's) to her right and nods in Claudia's direction.

Claudia crosses her arms defiantly.

INT. WOMEN'S DETOX SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Two rows of ten cots line the room and beside each are the possessions of each patient. Claudia walks to down the aisle to her bed. Looks at her bag. Notices a small puddle under it. She opens it. Pulls a soaking wet shirt from it. Smells it. Throws the shirt and the bag on the floor.

CLAUDIA  
What the fuck?

Her eyes well up. Shakes. Wipes the tears away and runs from the room.

INT. WOMEN'S DETOX HALLWAY - NIGHT

Claudia punches the woman from the circle. WOMEN gather around.

WOMEN  
Fight! Fight! Fight!

A CASE WORKER (early 40's) runs down the hall. Breaks the fight apart.

INT. WOMEN'S DETOX OFFICE - NIGHT

Claudia sits in the front of the DIRECTOR (late 50's) of the detox.

DIRECTOR  
You were told the consequences of violence when you got here. We have a zero tolerance rule, Claudia.

Claudia looks down. Shakes her head.

CLAUDIA  
They pissed on my stuff.

DIRECTOR

You should've come to us. You made the wrong choice. I'm sorry. You have to leave. Get your stuff and meet me at the front desk. I'll call your probation officer.

Claudia holds back tears.

CLAUDIA

I have nowhere to go.

DIRECTOR

You should've thought about that before attacking Doreen. She's currently at Boston Medical thanks to you.

EXT. BOSTON STREET - NIGHT

Claudia walks. Digs her a business card out of her bag. She looks at the card. Turns it over. Steps into a payphone. Calls the number. It goes to an answering machine.

RICKY (O.S.)

This is Attorney Richard Dyer,  
please leave a message.

Claudia remains silent. Hangs up. Stuffs the card in her pocket and dials another number.

MARK AVERY (O.S.)

Hello?

CLAUDIA

Hey, it's me. The girl in the cell.  
Claudia.

MARK (O.S.)

Oh. Hey.

CLAUDIA

How about that drink? Where do you  
wanna meet?

Claudia listens. Nods. Ends the call. Walks off into the night.

EXT. ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A car pulls up to the front doors. Mark puts the car in park but leaves the engine running.

Runs around to the passenger side, opens the door, hauls an unconscious woman out. Carries her into the hospital.

Runs back out without her, gets into the car and speeds away.

INT. RICKY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Full moon light illuminates the bedside table with a photo on it. Ricky and his dad on a river. Bill holds a fish up. The room is quiet, with only the sound of Ricky and Judy breathing.

A phone ring shatters the silence.

Ricky bolts up. Grabs it.

RICKY

Hello?

He swings his legs onto the floor.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Jesus!

Ricky gets out of bed, starts getting undressed, holds the phone to his ear.

RICKY (CONT'D)

I'm her attorney. I'll be right there.

Ricky slams the phone down. Judy wakes up. Feels the tension. Gets out of bed.

JUDY

What's going on?

RICKY

My client. Claudia Reeves. She OD'd. They need me to come down and identify her.

JUDY

Charlie's daughter? Is she...is she alive?

RICKY

Barely.

Ricky slips his sneakers on and flies out of the room.

INT. ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Ricky runs down the hall to a curtained room. A nurse stands guard. She tries to stop Ricky but he blows right past her.

INT. ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Claudia is connected to life support. Breathing machines and pumps make their mechanical music. She looks unrecognizable except for her long blonde hair.

A YOUNG DOCTOR (early 20's) enters the room. Touches Ricky's arm.

DOCTOR

Sir, you must be Mr. Dyer?

Ricky swings around. Gives him a puzzled look.

RICKY

Are you her doctor?

The doctor nods and puts a hand on Claudia's leg.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry. She came in unconscious.  
Someone left her on the emergency  
room floor. High levels of Fentanyl  
in her blood.

RICKY

Jesus. What...what can you do?

Ricky looks at Claudia's face. Turns to the doctor, eyes pleading.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Please tell me you can do  
something.

DOCTOR

Mr. Dyer, I never lose hope. She  
could come out of this. We have to  
wait and see how strong of a  
fighter she is.

Ricky looks at Claudia.

INT. ST. ELIZABETH'S HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ricky paces the hall. Goes to a payphone. Dials.

RICKY  
 Charlie. There's been an accident.  
 Claudia overdosed.

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
 Oh my God! Not my baby! Not  
 Claudia!

RICKY  
 We're at St. E's. I'm here with  
 her.

There's a click on the phone. Ricky stares into space. Tears  
 well up in his eyes.

EXT. MT. AUBURN CEMETERY, BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS - DAY

The REEVES FAMILY stand at a grave. Ricky stands next to  
 them.

Charlie Reeves steps forward and places a rose on top of the  
 casket. The casket is lowered slowly.

The family holds back tears. Ricky is stoic.

RICKY  
 (to himself)  
 But for the grace of God, there go  
 I.

A GROUNDS STAFF MAN (early 40's) hands Charlie a shovel.  
 Charlie shovels a load of dirt onto the casket. Pauses.  
 Shovels again.

Shovels harder, with more intensity. Shovels even more  
 feverishly. Grits his teeth with one foot in the pile of  
 earth.

He tears up. Unleashes a wail. Grunts in anger and sadness.  
 Stops shoveling. Hangs his head as his family comforts him.

EXT. THE CHARLES RIVER - DAY

The sun sets. Ricky sits on a bench near the spot where the  
 Murphy brothers drowned. Stares out at the water. Larry sits  
 next to him.

RICKY  
 Addiction is so fucking insidious.

LARRY

This is true.

(beat)

Cunning, baffling, and oh so powerful.

The men stare at the water.

RICKY

I'm so tired. So tired of it all. I feel so helpless when I can't save someone.

LARRY

You got step twelve down pat, my friend. But you can't save anyone, Ricky. You can only help. The rest is between them and their Higher Power.

RICKY

I couldn't help the Murphy brothers. I just stood there.

LARRY

Maybe your Higher Power stopped you from going out on that ice so you could help all the people you've helped. Maybe you were supposed to go through all the stuff you did, fight all the demons you fought, so you could do what you're doing.

Ricky sighs. Larry waits for him to continue.

RICKY

I hate being in this much pain. It's exhausting.

LARRY

It can be. Pain isn't optional but suffering is.

Ricky looks at him. Raises an eyebrow.

RICKY

Okay Yoda. Jesus.

(beat)

Fuck.

Ricky looks at him, mad but accepting.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Stop making so much sense.

LARRY

Just passing on what was so freely  
given to me, from men far wiser  
than I'll ever be.

Ricky raises both eyebrows. Nods. Sighs.

RICKY

So now what?

LARRY

Same thing you've been doing all.

RICKY

One day at a time.

Larry pats Ricky on the shoulder.

LARRY

One day at a time, my friend.  
That's all we can do.

They sit in silence as a sailboat drifts by.

EXT. WILDCAT RIVER, JACKSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE - DAY

Ricky and his youngest son, DYLAN (8), stand in the river.  
Judy and their other sons, NOAH (10) and ERIC (12) eat a  
picnic at the water's edge.

Ricky fly fishes.

Dylan throws his spinning rod line in and immediately hooks a  
fish. He screams with excitement.

DYLAN

I got one! I got one!

Ricky looks upstream. Smiles and run through the water. Helps  
him bring in the fish. Holds it out to Dylan.

RICKY

Go ahead, touch her. Give her a  
kiss.

Dylan leans down and kisses the fish. Ricky releases it. It  
swims away. Puts his hand on Dylan's shoulder. Dylan embraces  
him around the waist.

Ricky smiles and looks out over the river.

The sun dapples the water among the rocks, dances on the  
rivulets.

OVER BLACK

*Rick Dyer has been practicing law in Massachusetts and New Hampshire since 1985. He has helped over 500 clients go into treatment rather than jail.*

*He remains sober to this day.*

*One day at a time.*

FADE OUT.

THE END.