

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"A Children's Story"

by

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BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"A Children's Story"

FADE IN:

EXT. ALLEY - LOWER MANHATTAN - DAY

In a gritty industrial area near the Bowery, ten year old KIPPER, one of the children from the underground, is rummaging through boxes of discarded mechanical parts behind a toy factory. He finds several spare rollerskate wheels, pockets them, and continues searching until he finds — a skateboard. With the skateboard under his arm, he hurries off.

2 ANGLE - VACANT LOT

2

As Kipper emerges from the alley he sees a BOY about his age dashing across a large vacant lot. In the distance we SEE two MEN pursuing him. The boy looks terror-stricken. He races around a corner.

Kipper follows him. He finds the boy hiding beneath a parked car, his face scraped and bruised...

KIPPER

(to the Boy)

They're gonna find you. Come on.. !

BOY

(out of breath)

Get away!

KIPPER

Follow me... Hurry!

The Boy scrambles out from under the car. FOLLOW as he and Kipper rush into another alley. They slip behind a dumpster and find a small metal door opening down to a coal chute. They crawl down the chute.

THE TWO PURSUERS

The men pound around the corner, look around — they move down the alley. They start checking the dumpsters.

MAN #1

He's here, somewhere...

Kipper and the Boy hide In the coal bin of the abandoned building as we HEAR the pursuers searching around above in the alley.

KIPPER  
(whispering)  
Who're those guys chasing you?

BOY  
They're from Waverly.

KIPPER  
Waverly. .?

BOY  
The foster home — Waverly Hall.  
You heard of it?

Kipper shakes his head...

BOY  
They whack you and pretend they're  
helping you. It's e slime pit.  
(Indicating men in  
alley)  
They catch me, I'm dead meat...

KIPPER  
What do you mean?

BOY  
Kids even disappear...

KIPPER  
Disappear..?

BOY  
(agitated)  
That's what they're trying to do  
to me.  
(listening for sounds  
of the men)  
Think they're gone?

KIPPER  
(confused)  
I don't know...

The boy a arts to climb out of the coal bin. .

KIPPER  
Where're you going, now?

(CONTINUED)

BOY  
(exiting)

Far away from Waverly.

The boy scurries up the chute and disappears. Suddenly we HEAR YELLS and SHOUTS O.S... The boy tries to dodge them but they grab him and drag him off kicking and yelling...

KIPPER

He watches this, deeply distressed...

CUT TO:

Vincent is showing Father a diagram he has drawn for a new water purification system in the tunnels...

VINCENT  
(indicating)  
Our conduits then cycle the water through the filters at this point...

FATHER  
And that would be sufficient..?

VINCENT  
Our water would be more pure than New York City tap water...

Kipper enters, still quite disturbed by his encounter with the boy from Waverly...

FATHER  
Kipper, you're late for your lesson.

KIPPER  
I know... I'm sorry...

VINCENT  
(to Kipper)  
What's Father teaching you, now?

KIPPER  
Chess...

VINCENT  
(to Father, chiding)  
Training another student to beat you?

(CONTINUED)

FATHER

(smiles)

No — to beat you.

Vincent and Father chuckle. Kipper stands there with a troubled expression.

FATHER

(noticing)

Kipper takes the game quite seriously.

VINCENT

(sensing)

Kipper, what's troubling you?

KIPPER

(a beat)

Something that happened.

VINCENT

(gently)

Tell me...

KIPPER

A kid was being chased, and I helped him hide...

VINCENT

Who was chasing him?

KIPPER

Two men — from this place called Waverly.

VINCENT

Waverly..?

KIPPER

It's a foster home. He said bad things happened there, kids got whacked — kids even disappeared.

(looking at Vincent)

I wanted to bring him down here.  
I wish I could've...

VINCENT

What happened to this boy?

KIPPER

The men grabbed him. They dragged him away...

(CONTINUED)

FATHER

(to Kipper)

Do you think this boy was telling the truth?

KIPPER

(slowly nods)

He looked real scared.

Vincent looks at Kipper, proud of the boy's compassion..

CUT TO:

5 INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

5

Cathy comes home from a late night at work, her arms full of legal briefs and investigation reports. FOLLOW as she enters her bedroom, dumps the workload on her bed. .. She steps out on the terrace from a breath of night air. On her small outdoor table she finds e book — a very old copy of Shakespeare's Sonnets. Inside the book is a message which reads: "Until then.. ."

Cathy checks her watch, quickly puts her coat back on and hurries out...

CUT TO:

6 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

6

Cathy walks alone through Central Park. The atmosphere is quite menacing but Cathy doesn't seem frightened.

7 OMITTED

7

B EXT. NEAR DRAINAGE DUCT - NIGHT

B

TWO PREDATORS

Two muggers start tracking her, waiting to make their move...

CATHY

She reaches a deserted area of the perk — moves down a gulley end enters a large drainage duct, disappearing into darkness...

THE PREDATORS

Confused but unable to resist, they hesitantly follow her Into the drainage duct.

9 INT. DUCT - NIGHT

9

It's pitch black inside the duct. The predators peer in. Looking for their prey. She seems to have vanished. Suddenly we HEAR a terrifying SNARL, SEE a FLASH of TEETH. The predators run for their lives...

CUT TO:

10 AN ADJACENT TUNNEL - DIMLY LIT

10

Cathy is waiting... Vincent appears...

CATHY

Vincent...

They move toward each other. They embrace somewhat tentatively, each aware of the strange, deep under currents.

VINCENT

It's good to see you...

CATHY

(heartfelt)

I was thinking about you a lot today. I hadn't heard from you, I was hoping.

VINCENT

(smiles)

I felt it...

CATHY

(exuberant)

Things have been going well at work. It seems like all I do now — but I'm enjoying it...

VINCENT

(happy)

Good...

CATHY

The book, the sonnets -- thank you...

VINCENT

There's one you should read —and remember...

CATHY

Which one?

(CONTINUED)

VINCENT

You'll find it...

CATHY

(heartfelt)

You give me so much.

VINCENT

(softly)

Because you let me..

CATHY

And I have something for you...

She takes out an exquisite hand carved antique ivory rose. She gives it to him. . . He takes it, gazing at it, already treasuring it..

CATHY

My mother gave it to me when I was little...

VINCENT

(touched)

It's beautiful...

CATHY

It's very old... She brought it back to me from China, from a trip she took.

VINCENT

(marveling)

From China...

CATHY

I used to daydream about all the places this rose had traveled, all the hands it had passed through. . . I treasured it — it's something from very long ago end far away...

VINCENT

Now, I'll treasure it... Thank you...

Down the tunnel we HEAR a distant CLANGING of pipes and the sound of escaping STEAM. .. They both react.

VINCENT

I wish there was more time. . Catherine, there's something important I must tell you...

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

What is it?

VINCENT

The children below talk of a place called Waverly.

CATHY

Waverly Hall — the foster home?

VINCENT

Yes...

CATHY

It's supposed to be a very good one.

VINCENT

No — Catherine, children are being hurt there.

CATHY

They are..? Are you sure?

VINCENT

I believe they are... These children have no one to protect them.

(urgently)

We can't let them hurt the helpless ones...

CATHY

We won't... I'll look into it right away.

VINCENT

They need to feel safe..

CATHY

Vincent, I'll do whatever I can...

VINCENT

Be careful, Catherine...

They quickly embrace, exchange a parting look.. . Vincent disappears down a tunnel...

CUT TO:

Cathy is in the midst of a heated discussion with JOE MARTEL, a sharp young Deputy D.A. We FOLLOW them as they move from Cathy's cubicle through the office area to Joe's office, going at it...

JOE

An anonymous tip?!

CATHY

(holding her ground)

Somebody reliable with access to information..

JOE

Waverly's supposed to be a model place, one of the good ones.

CATHY

Supposed to be...

JOE

(harrassed.)

I can't let you go snooping around some foster home, right now. I'm juggling seven cases, all going to trial. Right now, I need you on the Talsky case...

CATHY

You don't need me on that anymore. All that's left is just paperwork...

JOE

We go to trial next week. There's gonna be press coverage. I may need you to keep an eye on witnesses.

CATHY

Joe, it's all routine. I could do it in my sleep.

JOE

(lightens up)

Yeah? What would you be wearing? Maybe something silky and filmy, and transparent...

(shakes his head)

Naw, probably not...

(CONTINUED)

CATHY  
 (shakes her head,  
 teasing)  
 Probably not...  
 (dogged)  
 Look, Joe, this is important. I wouldn't be asking if  
 it wasn't. I've got good reason to believe there're  
 serious problems at Waverly Hall. Joe, we're talking  
 about kids. Do you hear me? It can't wait...

JOE  
 Alright, alright — I hear you. Go ahead, check it out  
 — but do it fast, huh?  
 (heading into his  
 office)  
 We got plenty of work here,  
 already...

CATHY  
 (pleased)  
 Okay... Thanks...

JOE  
 (turning back)  
 Buddy of mine in undercover, said he saw you walking in  
 the park last night. What're you crazy?!

CATHY  
 (shrugs, moving off)  
 Just out for some fresh air.

He shoots her an incredulous look.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. WAVERLY HALL - DAY 12

Waverly Hall is a clean, well-maintained foster facility for 100  
 children, ages six through twelve...

Cathy enters...

13 INT. WAVERLY HALL - RECEPTION AREA - DAY 13

Cathy enters, looks around. A pleasant-looking RECEPTIONIST  
 immediately rises to intercept her.

(CONTINUED)

RECEPTIONIST

Can I help you?

CATHY

(banding her a card)

I'm Catherine Chandler — with  
the District Attorney's office.

RECEPTIONIST

What can we do for you?

CATHY

I'd like to take a look around.

RECEPTIONIST

Do you have an appointment?

CATHY

No, I don't...

RECEPTIONIST

Well, let me see if Mr. Guffey  
is able to...

VOICE

(O.S.)

If you'd like a tour of the facilities, I'll be glad  
to show you around.

ANGLE - MR. GUFFEY

A big, red-faced man in his mid-40's strides toward Cathy.  
He's the typical bureaucrat...

MR. GUFFEY

(extending his hand)

I'm Richard Guffey, the  
administrator...

CATHY

(shaking his hand)

Catherine Chandler...

He ushers her down a corridor.

MR. GUFFEY

This way...

(matter-of-fact)

You're with the District  
Attorney's office?

CATHY

That's right...

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

MB. GUFFEY

What brings you here, Miss  
Chandler?

CATHY

Well, at the moment we're simply  
making a general survey...

MR. GUFFEY

I know there've been some problems in various foster  
facilities around the city -- I think you'll find  
Waverly the exception. We truly try to do the best we  
can for the children.

CATHY

You have a good reputation.

NB. GUFFEY

As I said, we try.

14 INT. CHILDREN'S DORMITORY

14

He leads her into a dormitory room with a dozen beds. It's clean  
and functional. A few kids sit on their beds playing quietly. The  
children seem very well-behaved.

MB. GUFFEY

This is a typical dorm room.  
Everything clean and ordered.  
We stress that.

CATHY

I can see...

HOLD ON one of the children in the room — a nine-year old BOY.  
He looks up at Cathy. He stares at her with big beseeching eyes.  
He doesn't avert his gaze. It's haunting. . . Cathy notices the  
boy looking at her — as Guffey leads her out.

15 INT. CORRIDOR

15

MOVING with Cathy and Guffey...

CATHY

(to Guffey)  
I'd like to see a classroom...

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

GUFFEY  
(nods)

This way...

FOLLOW as they move around a corner.

GUFFEY

(continuing)

We're limited to ages 6 through 12. So they're out of here before they become major monsters... We get the occasional tantrum or a runaway situation, but for the most part it's uneventful...

As children pass, all seems quite normal...

16 INT. CLASSROOM - CATHY'S P.O.V. - THROUGH WINDOW IN THE

16

A classroom of 4th graders watch a teacher write multiplication tables on a blackboard. They sit quietly.

MR. GUFFEY  
(O.S.)

I guess you could say we run a tight ship.

CATHY  
(O.S.)

It looks that way. They're remarkably well-behaved. How do you do it?

ME. GUFFEY  
(O.S.)

Structure. We give them

structure.

17 INT. CORRIDOR

17

As Cathy and Mr. Guffey continue down the corridor, we SEE the Boy from the dormitory who stared at Cathy.

MR. GUFFEY

I think kids need a sense of structure, especially these kids,...

The Boy continues to pin her with his eyes. As he approaches and is about to speak with Cathy, an older girl, about twelve, pulls him away. Cathy takes all this in...

(CONTINUED)

MR. GUFFEY

Let me show you the play area...

CATHY

I'd like to talk to a few of the children.

MR. GUFFEY

(covering)

Alright, I'll get some together...

CATHY

No, I'd rather just walk around for a few minutes.

(beat)

Do you mind?

MR. GUFFEY

Of course not. Miss Chandler we're not perfect, but compared to the squalor and depravity these kids come from, Waverly's a positive force..

CATHY

Thanks for the tour, Mr. Guffey.

MR. GUFFEY

No problem...

As Cathy walks off down the corridor we SEE Guffey exchange "a look" with a hard-looking young CUSTODIAN. The Custodian ambles down the corridor following Cathy..

18 INT. CORRIDOR/DORM ROOM

Cathy goes down the hall looking for the Boy. She checks the dorm room. It's empty...

CUT TO:

19 INT. PLAYROOM

Cathy kneels beside a six year old GIRL who's playing with an old, second-hand doll...

CATHY

What's your dolly's name?

GIRL

(shy)

Suzie...

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

CATHY

Where does Suzie live?

The Girl shrugs, doesn't reply, continues playing with the doll...

CATHY

Does Suzie live here with you?

GIRL

(shakes her head)

She lives with her Mama and  
Daddy and sister. But she comes  
here to play with me, sometimes.

CATHY

Does she have fun when she comes  
here?

GIRL

(looking at Cathy  
intensely)

You know I'm not 'sposed to talk  
to strangers...

A beat.

CUT TO:

20 OMITTED

20

21 INT. CORRIDOR

21

- FOLLOW as Cathy moves down the corridor. She's still looking for the Boy. As she rounds a corner. . . He's standing there — with those eyes.

CATHY

(to the boy, urgently)

What...? Did you want to tell  
me something?

BOY

(flat, somber)

They took Peter. He didn't run  
away -- they took him...

CATHY

Who? What do you mean?

BOY

They made him disappear...

(CONTINUED)

CATHY  
What's your name?

BOY  
Eric.

Suddenly a band ENTERS FRAME and pulls him off... It's the same older Girl that interrupted them before.

GIRL  
(to the boy)  
You crazy?! Come on..!

CATHY  
Wait..

BOY  
(calling back to Cathy)  
She's my sister...

CATHY  
What's your last name..?

GIRL  
(to her brother)  
Shut-up, Eric...

As the two children move off down the corridor, they pass the Custodian who's taking it all in..

Cathy watches them go in deep frustration..

CUT TO:

22 INT. D.A.'S OFFICE - DAY

22

Cathy stands in her cubicle in the midst of a heated telephone conversation...

CATHY  
(into phone, controlling herself)  
I don't know his last name.  
His first name is Eric. .  
(beat)  
That's right, I want to bring him to the District Attorney's office  
— to ask him some questions... (more)

(CONTINUED)

CATHY (Cont'd)

(getting angrier)

No! I can't go out there — I've been out there. That's the point. I want to talk to him away from Waverly.

(beat)

When can I have that transfer order?

(beat)

Tomorrow?! Let me talk to your supervisor.

(beat)

When will she be back?

Joe Martell pokes his head in, listens..

JOE

(muttering)

Bureaucracy In action.

CATHY

(into phone)

Alright, tomorrow first thing...  
I'll be there to pick it up...

She hangs up, turns to Joe.

CATHY

(steaming)

The rules designed to protect the child from being moved are the same rules which prevent the child from being moved to safety.

JOE

(ironic)

Sounds perfectly logical...

CATHY

Unless you're a kid stuck in a home and being abused. He has to wait. It's infuriating...

JOE

What are you gonna do?? The wheels don't move any faster...

(beat)

Have you got the evidence files on Rockne?

She hands him a large folder...

(CONTINUED)

CATHY  
 (gathering her things,  
 suddenly weary)  
 I'm taking off...

JOE  
 Hey, you've only put in twelve  
 hours today. .!

CATHY  
 Night...

He watches her exit with grudging respect.

JOE  
 Look, if I can do anything...

CATHY  
 (turning)  
 Actually, you can.  
 (beat)  
 Don't be so cynical all the  
 time.

JOE  
 Ah, okay... Anything else?

CATHY  
 (dead pan)  
 Plenty — let's see how that  
 works, first..  
 (walking out)  
 Night, Joe...

CUT TO:

23 INT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - EVENING

23 23

A black tie cocktail fundraiser for the public library is being held in the rotunda. A string quartet plays. .. New York's elegant and elite are in attendance. Everyone is beautiful, everything is perfectly lovely...

ANGLE - CATHY

She stands with her "date" — an amiable but boring Investment banker named GREG WALTON. She looks beautiful but seems preoccupied. She's among a group of old acquaintances, people from her "previous life". She feels disconnected — she's thinking about the boy at Waverly.

WOMAN FRIEND

Cathy..?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Cathy turns, looks at the woman blankly...

WOMAN FRIEND

I asked how the job was going?

CATHY

Sorry, Margaret. It's going fine.

MAN FRIEND

(teasing)

As she prowls the mean streets, battling evil and corruption wherever it rears it's ugly head.

CATHY

Something like that..

Greg puts an arm around her, pats her shoulder.

GREG

(earnestly)

I think what she's doing is terrific. It's something she's passionate about.

CATHY

I knew I could count on Greg to defend my honor...

WOMAN FRIEND

(raising her glass)

Well, here's to passion wherever you find it!

MAN FRIEND

Do me a favor. When you find it let me know..

Laughter...

CUT TO:

24 THE STRING QUARTET

24

As the music plays, a small Boy and Girl each no more than six, both dressed in miniature formal attire, are doing a waltz.

CUT TO:

They stand alone for a moment watching the children dance... Cathy has a faraway look.

WOMAN FRIEND

What's up with you and Greg?

CATHY

(flat)

Nothing.

WOMAN FRIEND

Nothing? Really? He seems like a really nice person...

CATHY

(nods)

He's a really nice person...

WOMAN FRIEND

So...?

CATHY

So... That's about it.

WOMAN

No chemistry, huh?

CATHY

(shakes her head)

No chemistry...

WOMAN

No way around that one — too bad.

- Cathy nods...

WOMAN

(continuing)

I mean, where are all the great guys? Before I got divorced they were everywhere. What happened? They all go underground?

Cathy smiles to herself. .

CUT TO:

26 INT. CATHY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

26

She sits on the edge of the bed and takes Vincent's book of Shakespeare's *Bonnets* from the night table. When she opens the book she DISCOVERS a tiny flower pressed between the pages. The flower marks the Twenty-ninth Sonnet. FOLLOW as she rises now, with the book, and goes out on her terrace. Standing on the terrace with the city lights illuminating her, Cathy begins to read — as we HEAR VINCENT'S VOICE:

VINCENT

(V.O.)

When In disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
 I all alone bewep my outcast state,  
 And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
 And look upon myself, and curse my fate,  
 Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
 Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
 With what I moat enjoy contented least;

DISSOLVE TO:

27 EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - NIGHT

27

Vincent stands on the highest tower of the bridge, gazing out at the city which stretches before him, a carpet of light — which leads to Catherine, connecting them and keeping them apart.

VINCENT

(V.O.)

Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
 Haply I think on thee — and then my state,  
 Like to the lark at break of day arising  
 From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
 For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings  
 That then I scorn to change my state with kings...

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

25 INT. WAVERLY HALL - DAY

25

Cathy walks up to Mr. Guffey and hands him a copy of the transfer order.

CATHY

It's a transfer order from Special Services.

GUFFEY

(reading, guarded)

Yes, I see — you want to move a boy named Eric, no last name.

What's this about?

CATHY

I'm not free to discuss that...

GUFFEY

Well, we've got a few Erics.

CATHY

This one has a sister here...

GUFFEY

(shakes his head)

Then we've got a problem.

CATHY

What kind of problem?

GUFFEY

(looking her in the eye)

Eric and his sister ran away last night.

A beat — Cathy now knows that something strange and awful is going on — and it's slipping her grasp.

CATHY

Where are they?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

GUFFEY

(shrugs) -  
I've got people out looking for  
them, now.

CATHY

Have you notified the police?

GUFFEY

I notified Special Services...

CATHY

(a beat)

Where's the phone?

Guffey gestures toward the Reception desk. Cathy walks over, picks up the phone and punches out a number...

CATHY

(into phone)  
Special Services, please...

(p a u s e)

This is Catherine Chandler from the D.A.'s office. Have two children from Waverly Hall, a brother and sister, been reported missing in the last twenty-four hours?

(pause)

Thank you...

She bangs up, frustrated.. Guffey stands there with an impassive smirk.

CATHY

(cool)

I'll be 'back...

She exits...

CUT TO:

29 OMITTED

29

30 INT. DETENTION ROOM - DAY

30

It's a dimly lit windowless room the size of a broom closet. Eric sits stoically on a mattress on the floor. . . Now the door is unlocked. Guffey enters.

He stands ominously over the boy...

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

GUFFEY

You're being transferred.

ERIC

To where?

GUFFEY

A home that suits you better.  
 You don't like it here, so we'll  
 find someplace else...

ERIC

Where's my sister?

GUFFEY

She's being transferred too.  
 Let's go...

Gripping the boy's shoulder, Guffey guides him out of the room.

31 INT. BOILER ROOM

31

As Guffey and Eric move through the boiler room, we get a GLIMPSE of Eric's sister, Ellie. She's taken out of an adjacent detention room by the young Custodian and a swarthy man in designer jeans. He's a Hungarian named NAJ — the leader of a pick-pocket ring.

GUFFEY

(yelling to Custodian)  
 I told you to wait!

ERIC

(calling out)  
 Ellie..!

ELLIE

(calling back)  
 They're splittin' us up)

Eric tries to break away from Guffey but the large man easily throttles him, picking him up and carrying him off...

ERIC

(yelling)  
 Let go! Ellie. ..!

(CONTINUED)

3]. CONTINUED: 31

ANGLE - ELLIE

She tries to break free from the two guys but they shove

the girl down a narrow hallway and hustle her off...

CUT TO:

32 INT. WAVERLY GARAGE - DAY. 32

Guffey, carrying the boy under his arm, flings him into the back of a windowless van. He then climbs behind the wheel and drives out..

CUT TO:

33 INT. HALLWAY 33

The Custodian and Naj MOVE Ellie down the hallway. She's frightened but determined not to show It.

ELLIE

Where you takin' me? Where's he takin' my brother?

NAJ

Hey, hey — cool down. Nobody's gonna hurt you, nobody's gonna hurt your brother — long as you 'behave yourself. Okay?

CUSTODIAN

Right, nobody's gonna hurt you...

NAJ

But I don't want no scenes on the way over. You make It hard for me — you're brother's dead. And I'm not kiddin'...

34 EXT. WAVERLY - REAR ALLEY - DAY 34

FOLLOW as they exit Waverly through the rear service entrance. Perked in the alley we SEE a beat up Cadillac...

ELLIE

Where're we going?

NAJ

It's another place for kids. You'll like it, I promise...

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

They slide into the front seat of the car, Ellie in the middle.  
They drive off..

CUT TO:

35 INT. D.A.'S OFFICE - JOE MARTEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Cathy sits across from him. The atmosphere is tense...

JOE

The boss wants you full time on  
the Talsky case.

CATHY

(upset)

Jo. . .

JOE

I don't want to hear anymore about  
it. I got enough goin' on here...

CATHY

(adamant)

Joe, I want a search warrant...

JOE

(blowing)

Forget it! What have you got? Where's your probable  
cause? Did you see any bruiser? You got any  
corroborating witnesses?

CATHY

(frustrated)

I've got the word of a kid.

JOE

Who ran away! You don't even have  
the kid. You got nothin'...

CATHY

(firm)

I'm not giving this up. I'll go back on Talsky, but I'm  
not giving this up.

JOE

(warning)

It better not interfere...

(banding her documents)

Here's a list of witnesses to be notified and  
prepped for tomorrow..

CUT TO:

It's an old, ominous looking brick building on a side street In Brooklyn. Holding Eric by the arm, Guffey leads him up the steps. A few unruly looking kids stare from the front windows.

GUFFEY

Maybe you'll learn to appreciate  
Waverly.

Eric doesn't respond. He's withdrawn inside his sullen shell.

CUT TO:

Naj and the Custodian usher Elite down the steps to a large basement area. The apace has been divided into makeshift rooms using plywood and blankets. In a common area we FIND a group of tough-looking kids ranging from 7 to 17, lounging on torn furniture and watching T.V. Ellie looks around, disoriented, terrified.

NAJ

(to the group)  
This is Ellie. She's stayin' with  
us.

A few perfunctory glances from the group.

NAJ

Hey Deb — help her get settled.  
Take care of her...

- DEB, a waif-like 15 year old girl comes forward. Despite her diminutive appearance, she has a husky voice..

DEB

(to Ellis)  
Come on, I'll show you where we  
sleep.

Ellie doesn't respond. She looks around trying to figure the place out...

NAJ

(to Ellis, forceful)  
Go with her...

He pushes her toward Deb...

CUT TO:

38 INT. BROOKLYN FOSTER FACILITY - DAY

38

Guffey leads Eric down a hallway. A slovenly MATRON joins them...

GUFFEY

(to Matron)  
He's a problem.

MATRON

Well, he'll have to do some thinking about that...  
He'll have to decide bow he's going to act here.

They reach the door at the end of the ball. The Matron opens the door, Guffey shoves Eric Into the room. The door is slammed shut and locked.

CUT TO:

39 INT. BASEMENT - HELL'S KITCHEN - DAY

Deb shows Ellis into a partitioned area which contains several cots...

DEB

You from Waverly?

ELLIE

Yeah...

DEB

We got some other kids from  
Waverly...

(pointing to cot)  
You can sleep on that one..

ELLIE

(scared)

What Is this place?

DEB

It's not so bad — if you can learn quick and don't  
make too many mistakes. Sometimes we have fun...

Now Naj enters. .

(CONTINUED)

NAJ

(to Ellis)

That's right... We're sort of a family here. Families hang together, look out for each other. Nobody's gonna hassle you, we won't let 'em... But you gotta look out for us.

(now threatening) And don't even think about makin' trouble here, 'cause you don't ever want to see me get mad.

(indicating Deb)

De'b nods in agreement. Naj abruptly walks out — then Deb shrugs and walks out. Elite is left sitting alone on the cot in this very strange place...

CUT TO:

40 INT. BROOKLYN FOSTER FACILITY - DAY

40

— Eric sits on a wooden bench in the tiny detention closet alone and hopeless...

CUT TO:

41 INT. COMPUTER DATA CENTER - DAY

41

Cathy and Edie are huddled over the computer.

CATHY

(urgently)

What else have you got on Richard Guffey?

EDIE

Nothing — he's Mr. Clean.

CATHY

Gotta be something else... Are we tied into the Child Welfare files? Can we get a list of the kids at Waverly?

EDIE

Let me try. .

She punches some keys...

42 INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN 42  
 The screen flashes: "Sealed Documents — Entry Denied"  
 43 BACK TO SCENE 43

EDIE

All those Child Welfare files are sealed.

CATHY

(desperate)

Edie, I've got to find that boy.  
 I don't think those kids ran away.  
 I don't know what happened. to  
 them, but I feel responsible.  
 Will you help me on this one?

EDIE

Sure, on this one — anything.

CATHY

I need to get into those sealed records. It's the only way to track those kids.

EDIE

Next to impossible, there's no way...

CATHY

(smiles)

But if anybody can figure out a way.

EDIE

(shaking her head)

I knew sooner or later you'd be the end of me...

CUT TO:

44 EXT. TINES SQUARE - DUSK 44

Cathy walks the mean streets looking in futility for some sign of Eric...

INTERCUT - FACES OF THE STREET CHILDREN -- HARD, HOPELESS  
 -AND RAVAGED

As she walks, her sadness weighs heavy for these tragic young faces...

DISSOLVE TO:

45 INT. CATHY'S APT. - BEDROOM AND TERRACE - NIGHT

45

She sits at her dressing table, staring into the mirror, near tears. .. FOLLOW as she slowly moves through the darkened bedroom, and out to the terrace. As she passes through the french doors.

VINCENT

(O.S., softly)

Catherine.

She turns and finds him standing beside her..

VINCENT

Catherine, don't lose heart...

CATHY

(embracing him)

Vincent...

(fighting back tears)

The children I was trying to help. .

(shakes her head)

I don't know what happened to them. I'm afraid I did more harm than good. I feel like I've failed them, and you

VINCENT

But you haven't — you haven't failed. You haven't given up and you won't, will you?

CATHY

(shakes her head)

I know there're terrible things going on at Waverly. If I can find that boy, I can begin to unravel it...

VINCENT

(rage rising)

The ones who prey on the children steal everybody's hope.

Cathy nods...

VINCENT

Don't give up, Catherine, remember. .

Re starts to go. .

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

CATHY  
Vincent, the sonnet — it's wonderful. I'll remember that, too.

VINCENT

Shakespeare knew everything...

Vincent disappears in the shadows.

CUT TO:

46 INT. DEPT. OF SPECIAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN - CORRIDOR - DAY

46

Cathy and Edie walk the corridor outside the File Bank. A wall clock reads 12:05. Workers are coming out of the office with their brown bags on their way to lunch.

EDIE

(checking clock)

One thing you can count on working for the city — twelve o'clock comes and everyone runs to stuff their face...

CATHY

(checking office)

Looks pretty empty. Let's do it...

EDIE

(glancing back)

This gets me fired, I'm moving in with you...

CATHY

Deal.

EDIE

Indefinitely. .

Edie enters the file bank. Cathy hangs back.

47 TNT. FILE BANK

47

Edie talks to the FILE CLERK at the front desk. .

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

EDIE

(displaying a computer  
read-out)

It's police top priority. Homocide wants these names  
verified by two this afternoon.

FILE CLERK

(grumbling)

I'm the only one here right now.

EDIE

Well, I'm really sorry but I got a feeling that if  
Homocide thinks it's important, it must be some heavy  
duty - business.

FILE CLERK

(miffed, takes read-out)

Alright, alright..

As Edie and the File Clerk disappear in the file bank, we SEE  
Cathy walk calmly into the office and down an adjacent aisle of  
files...

48 INT. FILE BANK - AISLES

48

Cathy pulls open a file drawer marked "Waverly". .. She locates  
a folder marked "current enrollment". Inside the folder she finds  
a roster of names...

49 INSERT - ROSTER

49

She locates Eric and the Ellie on the roster, discovers  
their last name is Pierson. There's no other information  
about them.. . In examining the roster she finds the same  
notation beside several names: (BYH - TRANSFER);  
(INVESTIGATION TERMINATED); (RUNAWAY).. .

50 BACK TO SCENE

50

We HEAR Edie and the File Clerk talking, coming close. Just as  
they round the corner, FOLLOW as Cathy moves around a far corner,  
down the next aisle and out the door of the office. . .

CUT TO:

51 EXT. STREET - PAY PHONE - DAY

51

Cathy stands by Edie who punches a number...

CATHY

BYH — It's some kind of abbreviation or code.

EDIE

(into phone)

Hi, sorry to bother you —it's Edie again. I know we didn't have any luck but I just remembered I've got some court records on those names with some initials or letters — BYH. Does that help you at all?

(looking at Cathy) Brooklyn Youth House? What's that? A foster facility. .? Okay, thanks again.

She bangs up turns to Cathy...

EDIE

(offering a low five)  
Who's magic?

Cathy slaps her hand.

CUT TO:

52 EXT. TIMES SQUARE - STREET - DAY

52

We SEE a middle-aged Couple, clearly out-of-towners, checking a street map, as we HEAR.

NAJ

(O.S.)

Alright, look — those two over there. Here it comes..

We SEE a group of Poor Kids of varying ages approach the Couple. They hold a large paper sign that reads "Help us —we need food."

NAJ

(O.S.)

Keep your eyes open, it's gonna happen fast. Bobby holds up the sign, right in his face. .

One of the kids holds the sign up to the man's face while the other three surround him, tugging at his sleeves. .

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

NAJ  
(O.S.)

And. everybody goes to work.

CLOSER ANGLES

As all this is happening, one of the kids lifts the man's wallet, while another rifles the lady's purse..

NAJ  
(O.S.)

Okay — it's all over. And then  
Dab takes the drop...

As the Man attempts to bat the paper away from his face, the kids scatter, handing off the stolen articles to Deb who's walking in the opposite direction...

NAJ  
(O.S.)

Everybody does their job,  
everybody works together.

Dab is now walking TOWARD CAMERA

53 REVERSE ANGLE - COFFEE SHOP

53

We SEE Naj and Ellie seated in the window of a cheap coffee shop viewing the action on the street.

64 INT. COFFEE SHOP

54

- Deb enters. She slides into the booth with Naj and Ellie.

ANGLE - UNDER THE TABLE

Deb bends over the man's wallet and woman's billfold. to Naj. Naj suddenly grips her wrist and squeezes hard. Dab registers the pain.

NAJ  
(scary)

You sure you didn't forget  
anything?

Dab reaches into her jeans and hands him the ladies watch...

DEB  
(fighting tears)  
I was comin' to it... It was in  
the other pocket.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

64

NAJ

Just makin' sure...

(to Ellis)

I see everything, nothing gets around me. I got eyes in  
back of my bead. Remember that...

ELLIE

(quietly)

I'll remember...

Naj stares at her, looking intimidating.

CUT TO:

55 TNT. BROOKLYN FOSTER FACILITY - DETENTION CLOSET - NIGHT

55

Eric stands against the door, kicking at it... Suddenly the door  
is flung open, throwing him off-balance. The Matron enters, jabs  
at him with a mop handle, knocking him against the far wall.

MATRON

We don't put up with that kind  
of stuff, here.

A beefy older man, her HUSBAND stands behind her...

ERIC

Let me out...

MATRON

(laughs)

Let you out?!

The Matron steps back — her HUSBAND sets down a tray of food.  
Eric stares at the pathetic meal. The door is locked again.

CUT TO:

66 EXT. WAVERLY HALL - ALLEY - NIGHT

56

Naj and Guffey are standing by the rear entrance. Naj's car is  
parked in the alley. Naj hands Guffey an envelope...

GUFFEY

How's she doing?

NAJ

She's a tough one, doesn't talk  
much -- but smart, I think...

(CONTINUED)

GUFFEY

I thought it might work for you.  
No known relatives.  
(now checking envelope)  
How much Is in here?

NAJ

Three thousand...

GUFFEY

I told you the next one would be  
five.

NAJ

Five thousand. .?

GUFFEY

(irritated)  
It's getting too risky. I got  
all kinds of people on my back...

NAJ

For the next one, I'll give you  
five.

GUFFEY

I want five for this one.

NAJ

(moving off)  
Alright, alright.

As Naj moves to his car HOLD on a space between buildings...  
As we MOVE IN we SEE two burning eyes within the shadows.  
It's Vincent...

CUT TO:

57 INT. BROOKLYN FOSTER FACILITY - ENTRANCE AND T.V. ROOM - 57  
-NIGHT

It's after dinner. Some of the kids are watching T.V. It's quiet.  
There doesn't appear to be any adults around... Cathy enters the  
darkened T.V. room...

CATHY

(quietly)  
I'm looking for Eric Pierson.

The kids turn, look at her.

BOY #1

Never heard of him...

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

BOY \*12  
Eric.. .?  
(to Boy #1)  
What's the new kids's name?

BOY #1  
(distracted)  
I don't know...

CATHY  
Where is the new kid?

BOY \*12  
(smirking)  
In detention, down the ball...

BOY #1  
Locked up...

Cathy moves off — down the hallway..

58 INT. HALLWAY

FOLLOW AS Cathy moves down the hall, checking doors. The door at the end of the ball is locked...

CATHY  
(tapping softly)  
Eric..?

ERIC  
(O.S., through the door)  
Yeah..?

Now a thick hand grips Cathy's arm. It's the Matron... MATRON  
(startled)  
What's this?! What are you doing?

CATHY  
I want to see Eric.

MATRON  
Who are you??

CATHY  
Unlock the door.

ANGLE - SOME OF THE KIDS

They stand in the hall watching.

(CONTINUED)

MATRON

I think you better leave.,. -

Cathy holds her ground. Eric starts pounding on the door.

MATRON

(pushing Cathy)  
Get out. . Now!  
(calling out)  
Nick..!

Cathy suddenly breaks the Matron's hold, grabs her wrist, steps behind her and subdues her in a hammer lock.

CATHY

I don't like to be pushed...

Cathy reaches into the Matron's pocket and takes her keys. The kids in the hall watch, loving it...

CATHY

Which key..?

She applies more pressure to the Matron's arm. The Matron yelps in pain...

MATRON

The square one...

Cathy unlocks the door. Eric appears, sees Cathy — he almost smiles...

ERIC

(in disbelief)

• It's you...

CATHY

Eric, get in the car, out In front. .

Eric runs out. Cathy still controlling the Matron in the hammer lock, guides her down the hall toward the front door. .  
Suddenly, the Husband appears at the end of the hell. He rushes toward them. Cathy shoves the Matron into the Husband, momentarily tangling them up. She dashes out, past the kids, who silently cheer...

59 EXT. BROOKLYN FOSTER FACILITY - STREET - NIGHT

59

As the Matron and Husband chase after her, Cathy hops into the car beside Eric. She starts the car and they drive off — leaving the pursuers behind. .

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

60 OMITTED 60

FADE IN:

61 INT. TUNNELS - VARIOUS SHOTS, QUICK DISSOLVES... 61

CAMERA MOVES along lengths of steam pipe of varying diameters as we HEAR a message being TAPPED IN CODE... At certain points along the way we SEE HANDS tapping on the pipes, relaying the message down. . . At the final terminal point, we FIND KIPPER with his ear to the pipe. He listens carefully, then runs off..

~ 62 INT. VINCENT'S CHAMBER 62

Vincent is finishing a pencil drawing of Naj based on his observation In the alley. Kipper runs in.

KIPPER

Vincent..! She's in the park  
she's waiting there...

VINCENT

(teasing)

Kipper, why the big smile? Who's  
she come to see? Me or you?

He rises quickly and exits...

CUT TO:

63 INT. TUNNEL - CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT 63

Cathy stands alone In the dimly lit tunnel off the Park. She checks Eric who sleeps nearby, wrapped in a blanket... When she turns she FINDS Vincent standing at the end of the tunnel. .

CATHY

Vincent...

She goes to him. .

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

CATHY

I've got the boy. I found him...

VINCENT

I knew you would.

CATHY

They've separated him from his sister. They'll be looking for him. If I take him back, I'm afraid I'll lose him again. Vincent, I can't take that chance...

VINCENT

He'll be safe with us.

CATHY

(relieved.)

Good. I was hoping.

As Vincent moves toward the sleeping boy, Cathy clasps his arm.

CATHY

No, wait. I'm afraid that...

VINCENT

(looking at her)

That he'll be afraid?

CATHY

(embarrassed)

He's been through a lot. I don't know.

VINCENT

It's alright. . . Wake him..

Vincent steps back as Cathy wakes Eric...

CATHY

Eric..?

The boy opens his eyes...

ERIC

(sleepy)

What..? What are we gonna do?

CATHY

We're going to a safe place, where no one can hurt you.

(CONTINUED)

ERIC

You going, too?

CATHY  
(nods)

We're going with a friend of mine. Someone very extraordinary. I want you to meet him. His name is Vincent.

Vincent now appears from behind Cathy and kneels down beside Eric.

VINCENT  
(softly)

Eric.

Eric stares at Vincent, at first shocked. Then, as he looks, he stares into Vincent's eyes and realizes they are smiling at him... Eric's usually sullen eyes are then filled with startled fascination.

ERIC  
(studying Vincent's  
face)

What is that? Is it real?

VINCENT

It's real...

Eric reaches out, touches Vincent's face...

Cathy watches the two of them, greatly moved...

ERIC  
How'd you get like that?

VINCENT  
I don't know. I don't think I ever will. I never knew my mother or father.

ERIC  
So you were born like that?

VINCENT  
(smiles)  
Well, it didn't happen because I was bad.

They both chuckle.

DISSOLVE TO:

64 INT. TUNNELS — VARIOUS SHOTS QUICK DISSOLVES...

64

Vincent, Cathy and Eric make their way through the tunnels, Into the world below (possible matte shot)...

ERIC

Where are we going?

VINCENT

Deep below the city — to a world of tunnels and chambers as old as the city.. . It's a forgotten place — but it's a place where people have always found safety...

ERIC

How will I find my way back?

VINCENT

Don't worry, you won't have to do it alone.

ERIC

What about my sister. .?

CATHY

We'll find her...

DISSOLVE TO:

03 INT. FATHER'S CHAMBER

65

Vincent and Cathy stand by as Father talks to Eric...

FATHER

(to Eric, gently  
probing)

Vincent tells me you might want to stay with us.

ERIC

(nods, shyly)

Maybe...

FATHER

Eric, we only want those here who want to be here. No one will force you to stay, no one will ever keep you from leaving.

ERIC

Right now, I don't have anywhere else to go.

(CONTINUED)

FATHER

If you want to stay above, we have friends above who will help you.

ERIC

(looking around)

Can I stay here — for awhile?

FATHER

Yea, you can stay for awhile.

ERIC

And my sister, too?

FATHER

(nods)

Yes, of course, but there are some promises you have to make and keep.

ERIC

What kind of promises?

FATHER

To give help and support those in the community who need it —and to trust those who offer it to you

ERIC

(nods)

I promise that.

FATHER

It's a very important promise. It's how we exist...

ERIC

What about not telling anybody about this — keep it a secret?

FATHER

(smiles)

Eric, even if you did tell the secret — who would believe it? And even if they did, could they ever find the way down..?

ERIC

I'll keep it a secret anyway.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

FATHER

Good...

(smiles)

Then welcome.

VINCENT

(coming forward,  
clasping Eric's  
shoulder)

Welcome, Eric.

Cathy smiles, her eyes welling...

CUT TO:

66 INT. BASEMENT - HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

66

Naj is demonstrating a pickpocket technique to the kids by using a mannequin dressed in a business suit. Attached to the mannequin are a number of silver bells. Naj moves about deftly running his hands over the mannequin applying pressure without ringing the bells... Among the group watching we SEE a few young men whose job it is to maintain control over the kids...

NAJ

You hear any bells ringing? No bells! The bells ring it's all over. You go to jail! I don't want to hear those bells —don't want to hear them...

He produces a wallet, a money clip, a checkbook and a passport...

ANGLE - ELLIE end DEB

The two girls watching...

DEB

Naj is so amazing...

ELLIE

(flatly)

I'm not gonna do this, I don't care. .

DEB

(looking at her)

You'll do it.

CUT TO:

67 OMITTED

67

68 INT. BASEMENT - HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

68

Ellie stands beside the Mannequin, staring at the floor, as the group watches...

NAJ

(losing patience)

The coat pocket on the right side. Do it..!

Ellie doesn't respond — doesn't move.

NAJ

Do it, Ellie.

She shakes her head, close to tears...

NAJ

Do it.. !

Ellie now reaches for the pocket — one of the bells tinkles. . .

Naj smacks her with a long wood switch.

CUT TO:

6P INT. TUNNELS - VINCENT'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

69

But for a few oil lamps, lights are out. All is still... CAMERA finds ERIC — he's tucked in bed, still awake, thinking of his sister.. . Now, Vincent comes and kneels beside the bed..

VINCENT

(whispering)

Sleep well, now...

The boy starts to cry. Vincent puts a hand on Eric's shoulder. .

VINCENT

Eric, we'll find your sister.

ERIC

And we can both stay here?

VINCENT

For as long as you like.

ERIC

Okay... Good...

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

VINCENT

You're safe, and you're with  
friends. Now rest...

CUT TO:

70 TNT. BASEMENT - HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

70

Ellie stands beside the mannequin, clutching herself in terror as  
Naj harangues her.

ELLIE

(exhausted, weeping)  
No more... Please...

NAJ

(furious)

I own you! I bought you! Get it through your head.  
You're mine — and you better be glad about that.  
'Cause without me you got nothin' . Without me you got  
the chickenhawks on the street. . . Wanna be selling  
your body, booked on drugs??

ELLIE

(shakes her head)  
I don't want to be here  
either.

NAJ

You got nothin' else! Do it..!  
The pocket..!

She shakes her head... Naj's face contorts as he raises the wood  
switch and brings it down hard...

CUT TO:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

70A TNT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - CATHY'S CUBICLE - DAY 70A

Cathy's on the phone, talking to the N.Y.P.D. Runaway Division.

CATHY

(Into phone)

Ellie Pierson.

(pause)

Twelve year old, blonde hair,  
green eyes...

(p a u s e)

About five feet...

Joe Martel enters...

CATHY

(Into phone)

Hold on, please..

JOE

(hurriedly)

That matron from the Brooklyn Youth Home caved in.  
She's talkin' a blue streak. We've got what we need to  
bring Guffey In for illegally transferring kids and  
for child abuse.

CATHY

Great...

JOE

(acknowledging)

Good instincts..

CATHY

(pleased)

Thanks...

JOE

'Course cockroaches have good Instincts, too. That  
doesn't necessarily make 'em prosecutors..

(CONTINUED)

70A CONTINUED:

70A

He walks out. She goes back to the phone.

CUT TO:

7]. TNT. TUNNELS — VINCENT'S CHAMBERS

71

Vincent shows the drawing of Naj to Kipper, Eric and some of the other tunnel kids...

VINCENT

Have you ever seen this man?

KIPPER

(studying drawing)

I think I have...

BOY #1

Around Times Square, maybe...

Eric stares at the drawing, incredulous.

ERIC

He took my sister. That's the guy who took my sister from Waverly.

VINCENT

(to Kipper and the other  
denizens)

See if you can find him. If you do, find out where he lives —you know bow.

Kipper and the others agree...

ERIC

Can I go, too?

VINCENT

(shakes his head)

Not yet — first, you have to learn the way...

(indicating boys)

They'll be our eyes and ears...

KIPPER

(to Eric)

We'll find her. We know all the places to look.

(CONTINUED)

71. CONTINUED:

71

BOY #1

And we can get anywhere at top -  
 speed. We know all the -  
 shortcuts,

KIPPER

(moving off)  
 Okay..!

VINCENT

Take great care up there.

The boys take off down the tunnels..

CUT TO:

72 INT. TUNNELS

72

At a point where several tunnels converge, the boys head in different directions.

73 EXT. N.Y. STREETS - SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS - DAY

73

- A) KIPPER, emerges from a hole in a broken brick wall.
- B) BOY #1, climbs up from the grating beside a building.
- C) BOY #2, appears from behind a dumpster in an alley.

74 EXT. N.Y. STREET CORNER - DAY

74

THE THREE BOYS, converge around a black street corner saxophonist, they show him the drawing, the Saxophonist nods knowingly...

75 EXT. N.Y. STREETS - SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS - DAY

75

- A) KIPPER, hits the sidewalk near Broadway and 42nd St. looking for Naj...
- B) BOY #1, stations himself near a donut stand, scanning passerby...
- C) BOY #2, moves through a video arcade checking out the crowd...

Naj comes out of a record store and beads down the street... As he moves along, Deb and a few of Naj's other kids fall in alongside of him... They all bead off, PAST Boy #1 who's busy swiping a half-eaten donut left on the counter. After Naj has passed, Boy #1 turns and signals across the street.

77 ANGLE - ACROSS STREET

77

We SEE Kipper tracking Naj from the other side of the street.  
CUT TO:

78 EXT. ALLEY

78

Naj and his kids amble down an alley and descend the basement steps..

79 ANGLE - KIPPER

79

He checks them out from across the street, then moves on.

CUT TO:

80 OMITTED

80

81 EXT. D.A.'S OFFICE AND STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

81

Cathy exits the building on her way home. As she moves down the sidewalk one of the Tunnel Kids dashes up alongside her, presses e. message into her palm and then runs around a corner. .  
. Cathy stops at the corner, unfolds the message, reads — and then hurries off.

CUT TO:

82 INT. CATHY'S BASEMENT NIGHT

Dressed in jeans and boots, and carrying a flashlight, Cathy pushes aside a stack of boxes revealing a floor grate. She lifts the grate and lowers herself into the sub-basement.

83 INT. SUB-BASEMENT NIGHT

83

FOLLOW as she moves through the concrete sub-basement, through a jagged hole in the wall — and into a bedrock  
sage. .

She moves down the passage to a threshold point between the cold grey of the world above and the warm earth tones of the world below. She peers into a steam filled tunnel. Soon Vincent appears, out of the mist...

CATHY

Vincent...

VINCENT

(coming to her)

Catherine we've made progress...

CATHY

(nods)

The supervisor of Waverly is about to be arrested.

Vincent now shows her the drawing of Naj

VINCENT

This is the man who took Eric's sister.

CATHY

Who is he. .?

VINCENT

A thief, a man who uses children — the worst kind. He's connected with the supervisor of Waverly — I saw them arguing about money..

CATHY

(putting it together)

He's selling kids..?

(horrified)

Guffey's selling kids out of Waverly.

VINCENT

Only the ones with no known relatives, the ones who are all alone...

CATHY

(indicating Naj)

He has Eric's sister?

Vincent nods.

(CONTINUED)

CATHY

(continuing)

Where is he? Do you know? Take me there, Vincent..

VINCENT

(shakes his head)

Too great a risk.

CATHY

(passionate)

It's the only way I can move on them. Vincent, you can't testify against them. The only way I can get an arrest warrant is to see it with my own eyes... I'll take the risk.

He looks at her, with admiration, then takes her hand and leads her into the mist...

CUT TO:

85 INT. BASEMENT - HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

85

Except for a few kids in the common area, no one appears to be around...

CATHY

FOLLOW as she emerges from an air vent in the basement. She begins to make her way through the crazy maze of blankets and curtains on clotheslines that serve as room dividers. She looks around, looking for some sign of Ellie, looking for any evidence... She comes into an area that appears to be the girls living quarters (pictures of rock, heart throbs, cheap cosmetics)... Suddenly she HEARS SOUNDS of several people entering the basement...

NAJ

(O.S., raging)

You try that again I'll hang you)  
You don't run away from me! You want to spend a few months tied. to a bed??

ELLIE

(O.S.)

Let go..!

As the VOICES APPROACH, FOLLOW Cathy as she disappears into an adjoining curtained off area...

86 INT. TEE GIRLS' QUARTERS

86

Naj is tying Ellie to a chair.

ELLIE  
(struggling, weeping)  
Don't... I won't do it again...

NAJ  
You're stayin' right here. I  
can't trust you...

Naj storms off...

NAJ  
(yelling)  
Deb..! Where are you..?

He disappears down the corridor of curtains and blankets..

NAJ  
(O.S.)  
You're supposed to keep an eye  
on her..!

CATHY

She's behind the curtains in a nearby area. She waits until Naj is safely away, then comes through the curtains, ENTERING the girls' quarters. She approaches Ellie.

CATHY  
(whispering)  
Ellie.

Ellie looks confused., knowing she's seen Cathy's face before.

CATHY  
I'm taking you out of here — to Eric.

ELLIE  
Who are you?

CATHY  
(untying her)  
Shh — we have to hurry. I'm the  
one Eric talked to at Waverly...

ELLIE  
You found him?

CATHY  
Yes... Let's go...

(CONTINUED)

Cathy starts to lead her out -- when they DISCOVER Deb standing there(

ELLIE  
Deb, don't say anything --  
please.

CATHY  
Come with us... You can all  
come..

A moment — Deb grapples with what to do. At first she looks about to cry, then she turns tough again.

DEB  
(yelling)  
Naj..! Naj..!

Deb runs out...

Before Cathy and Ellie can escape, Naj is there...

NAJ  
What's this??  
(to Ellis)  
You know this woman?

CATHY  
I'm taking Ellie out of here.  
Don't try to stop me.

NAJ  
(laughs)  
Wouldn't think of it.

Es grabs Cathy by the wrist. Cathy breaks the hold and drives the flat of her hand into Naj's face, shattering his nose... Naj is sent to his knees, reeling in pain...

Deb hides a smile..

Cathy grabs Ellie by the hand and they run — through the walls of curtains...

NAJ  
(screaming)  
Freddie! Freddie..

FREDDIE

One of Naj's big, young sergeant-at-arms comes running... As he rounds a corner, Vincent's arm reaches out from an air vent and snares him by the leg, upending him then sweeping him through the vent with frightening force...

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: (2)

86

NAJ

His nose bleeding, Naj charges after Cathy. As he barrels through the blankets, he pulls a small revolver.

CATHY AND ELLIE

They dart through the curtains, just ahead of Naj, trying to get to the air vent...

67 NAJ

87

He whips aside a curtain and FINDS

VINCENT

Fangs bared, poised to strike. He lets go a blood-curling SNARL and brings both claws down on Naj, crushing him...

DEB AND THE OTHER KIDS

They react to the strange snarl from behind the blankets, not yet realizing that it heralds their freedom..

CUT TO:

VINCENT'S CLOAK

As it disappears through the vent, and the grill work is replaced.

CUT TO:

88 TNT. WAVERLY BALL - NIGHT

88

The place is swarming with police. Children watch solemnly as Guffey, the Custodian and the Receptionist are led out in handcuffs. All the files are wheeled out, confiscated...

CUT TO:

88A EXT. BASEMENT AND ALLEY - HELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

85A

The children of the pickpocket ring are loaded into vans by social workers from the Department of Special Services for Children...

DISSOLVE TO:

Eric sits with Kipper and a few of the tunnel kids playing a board game of their own invention — something like Chinese Checkers. Eric seems preoccupied, worried... Suddenly he looks up and breaks into a thankful smile...

ERIC

Ellie..!

He jumps up...

ANGLE - ELLIE, CATHY, VINCENT AND FATHER

They stand in the doorway of the dormitory.

ELLIE

(rushing to him)

Eric. . !

Brother and Sister embrace, laughing with tears of joy. .

ELLIE

It's sort of like a dream,  
isn't it?

ERIC

No — better.

Cathy, Vincent and Father watch, all deeply moved...

DISSOLVE TO:

- Vincent and Cathy stand at the threshold point leading to Cathy's sub-basement. Vincent, standing at the mouth of the tunnel, is bathed in a warm golden light...

CATHY

(looking at him,  
lovingly)

Vincent, I have been all over the world — met people, done things — I've lived in luxury that most people could never imagine — but, I can't remember a time when I've felt as good, or complete as I do right here, right now...

VINCENT

I can feel it, in you — through you

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

CATHY  
. . .You really can?

VINCENT  
(nods)  
. . . It's very beautiful.

CATHY  
(smiles at him)  
. . .Sort of like a dream?

She embraces him, tenderly, gratefully...

VINCENT  
(softly)  
Better. . .

They gaze at each other for a final moment and then they  
silently part — each returning to their own world.

THE END

FADE OUT