

The Boy With Sunshine Eyes

Synopsis

Night. A heavily wooded area. Close in on a throbbing light barely visible through the trees. On a highway nearby, a young hitchhiker is picked up by a passing truck driver. When the boy's face is bathed in the light of a passing car, his eyes are shining brightly.

The first day of school. Magic, the Hispanic gang leader at the high school, challenges Jamie Palacious, the new boy. Jamie stands up to Magic and doesn't resist when Magic beats him up. Because of his courage, Jamie becomes an instant celebrity with the students.

Sixteen year-old Marcella Fuentes and her friend, Shep, are impressed with Jamie. The next day, a Saturday, the three meet in Central Park, and Marcella and Shep are stunned when Jamie shows no wounds from the previous days' beating. After riding the carousel, Jamie demonstrates precognition when he prevents his friends from taking a path staked out by a sniper, and as they pass the sheep meadow, he displays his acrobatic prowess by making an incredible catch of a high-flying frisbee.

Marcella suspects that Jamie is "weird", and that night at a basketball game when he heals one of the players of a broken leg, a gang member, she knows she's right.

Shep sneaks Jamie's phone number out of the office at school; it's not a working number, and when Shep shows Marcella some photos he took at the park, Jamie's eyes are two bright sunspots.

Marcella and Shep follow Jamie to the woods where they're scared off by a huge robot. In limbo, we see Jamie being prepared by the Elders for his final challenge.

Marcella faces Jamie with her suspicions. He admits that he's assumed the name of Jamie Palacious and that his purpose in coming to this planet is to face a challenge that he must meet if he's going to pass his test. Confused, Marcella runs out and is forced into a car with Magic's gang.

That night, the young alien meets Magic in the school gym. Jamie refuses to fight, but when Marcella staggers in having been gang-raped, Jamie loses it and nearly kills Magic. His final test is revealed: it's to show mercy ... which he does. Magic however has none and kills Jamie.

Marcella, who's deeply attached to her new friend, goes to the funeral parlor only to find that Jamie is gone.

The next day at the park, she sees Jamie, alive. He tells her he passed his test, that death is an illusion, and that he'll be waiting for her. His eyes begin to shine, then his whole body, and he disappears in a radiant light as Marcella watches in wonder and her eyes begin to flicker.

THE BOY WITH SUNSHINE EYES

A Screenplay by

Cy Young

THE BOY WITH SUNSHINE EYES

Cast Breakdown

JAMIE PALACIOS.....16, great charisma, eyes his most impressive feature. Great inner strength.

MARCELLA FUENTES.....Beautiful, Hispanic girl, 16, bright, a great smile and sense of humor.

SHEP BLANKENSHIP.....Tall, thin, precocious teenager, wears glasses, voracious reader, funny kid.

MAGIC.....Hispanic, bad-news-guy, deals drugs, ruthless head of a gang of trouble makers, foul-mouthed. 18.

STASH.....Magic's first lieutenant. Stash is tall and tough but has redeeming qualities. 18.

SOCRATES.....Hispanic kid, member of Magic's gang, as bad as his leader.

FAKHIM.....Black kid always wearing headphones. Claims to be a Muslim. 16.

LUIS.....Hispanic kid, one of Magic's gang.

EMOLINE.....Fakhim's pregnant black girlfriend, at Fakhim's beck and call.

MOOSE.....Very tall member of basketball team. Always smiling, a good kid and friend of Jamie's. Moose is black.

HUGGER.....Big, strong white guy on football team. Lifts weights. Jamie's friend.

ROBERT.....New student, 16, small and shy.

CHARLIE BOSTICK.....Black high school principal. Big and muscular, a fair guy who's a straight shooter.

SUE.....Cute teenager, Shep's girl-
friend.

MANNY.....Black teenager.

LULU PETRIE.....Cute 16 year old black girl.

DONNA.....White, 16.

DRIVING INSTRUCTOR.....Black man, in 40s.

MRS. HUFJAY.....Black English teacher.

DANNY.....White gym instructor, lots
of muscle.

MR. CROSS.....White basketball coach.

SOL KLEIN.....White teacher.

MR. BRODSKY.....White. Teaches trig.

MR. BLAKENSHIP.....Shep's dad, mid-fifties.

MRS. FUENTES.....Marcella's mom. 40's.

ELDER.....Jamie's guardian. Strange-
looking, otherworldly.

REGISTRAR.....Female, 50s.

OFFICER ONE

OFFICER TWO

OFFICER THREE

DET. BLAKE

DET. MORALES

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

PARK PATROLMAN ONE

PARK PATROLMAN TWO

OTHER VARIOUS GANG MEMBERS

FRIENDS OF JAMIE

STUDENTS

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERTED WOODED AREA - NIGHT - We HEAR a faint swooshing sound and SEE a brilliant, undulating glow of light streaming through the woods, and just as we're getting closer to the source of light and beginning to have a pretty good idea of what that source is, we suddenly

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - A YOUNG MAN in his early teens, wearing jeans and a jacket, is hitchhiking down the two-lane country road that leads away from the pulsating glow. Although it's dark, we can tell that he's young and agile from his ease of movement...but we still can't make out his features...

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT - The DRIVER is staring at the road. He SEES THE YOUNG MAN hitchhiking.

THE TRUCK pulls over, the Young Man gets in, the truck continues on down the road.

INT. TRUCK - The Truck Driver looks over at the Young Man whose face is in darkness.

DRIVER

What are you doin' out this time of night, kid?

YOUNG MAN

Preparing for my test.

DRIVER

Your test? What's your subject, star gazing?

The Driver laughs. He LOOKS out the windshield and SEES

A CAR approaching from the opposite direction...and now we're looking at

THE YOUNG MAN'S FACE as it's momentarily bathed in the light from the passing car...and we are startled because his eyes are bright...too bright. He closes them and when he reopens them, they're normal.

EXT. HIGHWAY as the truck speeds away down the road and disappears in the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY SKYLINE - ESTABLISH

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL ON MANHATTAN'S UPPER WEST SIDE - ESTABLISH

Over OPENING CREDITS, we SEE the following action:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL, FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY - A gang of teenage boys is dealing drugs, shouting obscenities, and intimidating other students. A new kid,

ROBERT,

walks down the street and approaches the school. He stops when he sees the gang but the gang members have already seen him. They approach, surround him, taunt him, and the gang's leader,

MAGIC,

offers Robert a joint.

MAGIC

First one's free, kid.

ROBERT,

afraid not to comply, does, as the gang members make sucking noises simultaneously with the drag he takes. Robert coughs violently as the gang members laugh and

SOL KLEIN,

a teacher, passes by.

KLEIN

Why don't you leave him alone?

STASH, Magic's first lieutenant, turns on Klein.

STASH

(mimicking)

"Why don't you leave him alone?"

Stash shoves Klein, then the other gang members punch him, knock him to the ground and begin kicking him.

Robert, terrified, backs away, then turns and sprints for the front door, passing

CHARLIE BOSTICK,

the big, muscular high school principal as he runs toward the fighting.

CHARLIE

HEY! HEY! STOP IT, YOU HEAR ME?!

Charlie pushes his way through the gang and kneels beside the fallen teacher.

BOSTICK

You okay, Sol?

KLEIN

No, I'm not okay.

CHARLIE,

filled with rage, stands up and faces the gang.

BOSTICK

You want to try that with me?

THE GANG disperses.

BOSTICK

I catch you dealin,' you're out of here. MAGIC! I'M TALKIN' TO YOU!

MAGIC

stops, turns slowly.

MAGIC

Dealin' what, man? We got no drugs. You wanna search me? C'mon.

CHARLIE

suppresses the urge to take Magic apart, kneels by Klein's side and helps him to his feet.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY - as students enter and we

END CREDITS

INT. WASHROOM - DAY

Klein is washing his face as Charlie paces.

BOSTICK

I can't even search the little fuckers, they'll sic a lawyer on me, he'll hit me with assault, illegal search, all that horseshit.

Klein continues washing his face, then gets a towel and dries off.

BOSTICK

Stick it out a little longer, Sol,
we're gonna beef up security here,
I've already talked to---

KLEIN

---It's no good, Charlie, I've had
it, this is my last day.

BOSTICK

Come on, man, I need you!

KLEIN

I'm tired of being spit on, cursed,
called an 'asshole Jew.' I'm out of
here. Sorry.

BOSTICK

slams his fist on the metal towel container.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY as

MARCELLA FUENTES,

an attractive Hispanic teenager, walks briskly into school.

INT. HALL - DAY

Marcella hurries down the hall, passes the gang members who make
cat calls, sucking sounds and shout sexual obscenities.

MARCELLA

(under her breath)

Jerks!

Marcella turns the corner and runs into SHEP BLANKENSHIP, an
appealing teenager a year older than she is. Shep immediately
changes course and begins walking alongside her.

SHEP

Hi, Marse. Did you pack yet?

MARCELLA

Pack? What do you mean?

SHEP

We're eloping, aren't we? Isn't this
the day?

MARCELLA

(laughing)

Oh, you!

SHEP

I see you made it past the pucker suckers.

MARCELLA

The what?

SHEP

You know, Magic and his guys, they're always going (makes sucking sound). I think they got off of momma's breastie too soon.

MARCELLA

Yeah, they're definitely retarded. I can't wait to get out of this garbage pit.

SHEP

Well, I'm your ticket to paradise. Simply say yes and I'll book us on the Concorde to Beirut. That'd be better than this.

MARCELLA

Yeah, it sure would. This school needs a miracle.

A YOUNG MAN

standing at his locker has overheard Shep and Marcella. His back is to us and when he turns around we SEE that this is Jamie, the Young Man from the opening sequence. We are startled by his eyes which have a depth and intensity rarely seen in anyone, much less a teenager. We should sense his poise and inner strength from the beginning.

Jamie looks off after Marcella and Shep, slowly closes his locker and moves deliberately down the hall with his books and notebook tucked under his arm.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - Present are the black teacher, MISS HUFJAY, Marcella and Shep, and the students, a mix of blacks, Hispanics, and Haitians with several white faces. Jamie is seated at the rear. The words "Your teacher's name is Leona Hufjay" are printed in large letters on the blackboard.

MISS HUFJAY

Well. Did everyone have a great summer?

General ad libs from the students.

MISS HUFJAY

And is everyone glad to be back in school?

Moans, groans, some make vomiting noises, etc.

MISS HUFJAY

Somehow I knew you'd feel that way.
Well. I see we have some new faces
in our midst---

MANNY

---Gorillas in the Midst---

MISS HUFJAY

Very good. I see that some of you have
been attending movies...

MANNY

Saw it on TV...

Other kids cheer and jeer.

MISS HUFJAY

Did you like the film, Manny?

MANNY

Only the sex scenes...

More jeers and shouts.

MISS HUFJAY

Yes, there were some of those. I'd
like to point out that the pun is an
old and vital part of the English
language. Manny's use of the word
"mist" was a play on the word I used
which was "midst," it was clever,
well-turned bon mot.

LEO

What kinda bone was that?

Others laugh.

MISS HUFJAY

Bon mot. It means a terse witticism.
Now I'd like to introduce our two new
tenth grade students...

She walks back to her desk, picks up a folder and examines it.

MISS HUFJAY

...we have...(reading)...Lulu Petrie...

LULU, a cute black girl, stands up.

LULU

Here, Miss Hufjay.

LEO

Hey hey, Lulu's a lulu!

Students laugh, Lulu blushes and sits down.

MISS HUFJAY

(looks at folder)

And we also have...Jamie Palacios...
Did I say it right?

Jamie rises. When he speaks his voice is soft, yet commanding.

JAMIE

Yes.

Miss Hufjay looks up from her notes. Something about him makes her pause.

MISS HUFJAY

Jamie, have we met before?

JAMIE

No, ma'm, I don't think so.

MISS HUFJAY

Well. Welcome to both of you. I know it can be difficult adjusting to new surroundings, so if you have any questions, I'll be glad to help

JAMIE/LULU

Thank you.

Jamie sits down as we're on

MARCELLA

who's staring at Jamie, fascinated by his charisma. As Miss Hufjay continues speaking, Marcella writes the name Jamie Palacios on her note pad and circles it.

INT. HALL - DAY - Students are pouring out of the classrooms into the hall. Jamie goes toward the stairs as Shep joins Marcella. They turn in Jamie's direction.

INT. PART OF HALL BY STAIRS - DAY - Magic, Stash and some gang members are hanging out near Miss Hufjay's classroom. One of them is FAKHIM, a short, black kid with sun glasses and a make-shift turban. He's wearing headphones and moving rhythmically to the beat. His arm is around EMOLINE, a very pregnant black teenage girl.

FAKHIM

...Jinglin' Baby...Jinglin' Baby...
yuh, yuh...uh huh....yeah...

JAMIE

approaches the stairs.

SHEP AND MARCELLA,

not far behind, see the gang.

SHEP

Let's go another route, shall we?

They start back when Marcella realizes that Jamie is headed straight for the gang. She stops.

MARCELLA

Shep, that new boy in English class
doesn't know about Magic, you'd better
stop him...

SHEP

Too late now...

JAMIE

approaches the stairs, is about to start up when Magic bars his way.

MAGIC

Hey, a new customer. I got somethin'
for you.

Magic takes out a vial of crack.

MAGIC

Here, kid. First one's free.

JAMIE is standing very still. He glances at the vial, then back at Magic. His gaze is steady, fearless. He makes no move to take the vial.

MAGIC

What's the matter, kid, you deaf?
Take it.

JAMIE

No.

Magic is startled, not only by Jamie's refusal but by his seeming lack of fear. He looks at Stash and two other gang members, SOCRATES and LUIS, then back at Jamie.

MAGIC

Did you say "no?"

Stash and the others surround Jamie.

MARCELLA

nudges Shep.

MARCELLA

Get a teacher, quick!

Shep sprints down the hall in the opposite direction and now we're back on

THE GANG as they press around Jamie.

MAGIC

You're new here so I'll explain it to you. You got no choice, man. I offer, you accept. Got it?

Magic holds out the vial again. Jamie doesn't move and doesn't take his eyes off of Magic. Magic, caught off guard by Jamie's reaction, pushes him. The others join in, one knocks the books out of Jamie's hands.

MARCELLA

is standing with a group of students watching the gang action.

MARCELLA

Somebody help him!

No reaction. Marcella, angered by their indifference, takes a step towards the gang.

MARCELLA

Leave him alone!

The boys ignore her and continue pushing Jamie.

MARCELLA

You're nothing but a big bunch of cowards! You jerks! (screaming)
LEAVE HIM ALONE!

SHEP AND A TEACHER

are running down the hall.

MAGIC

sees the teacher coming, motions to his gang, they move up the stairs.

MAGIC

Later, kid.

Marcella goes to Jamie.

MARCELLA

Never mind them, they're Neanderthals.

Jamie is picking up his books.

JAMIE

Thanks for what you did.

Shep and the teacher, MR. BRODSKY, run to Jamie at the stairs.

MR. BRODSKY

What happened?

MARCELLA

Magic and his gang were pushing Jamie around, they tried to give him some crack. He wouldn't take it.

MR. BRODSKY

I wish a few of the others around here would do likewise. You okay?

JAMIE

Yes, Mr. Brodsky. Thanks

Brodsky stares at Jamie.

MR. BRODSKY

How did you know my name?

Jamie looks from Brodsky to Shep.

JAMIE

Somebody must have mentioned it. You teach trig, don't you?

MR. BRODSKY

Yes, when I'm not dodging bullets. Look, I'm sorry this happened. This is your first day, isn't it?

JAMIE

Yes...

MR. BRODSKY

I didn't think I'd seen you before.
Well, don't let these punks intimidate
you, we're aware of the problem, we
have a direct line to the 20th Precinct
so help's only a phone call away. I'll
tell Charlie about this.

Mr. Brodsky pats Jamie's shoulder, then walks back down the
hall.

SHEP

Hi, I'm Shep Blakenship.

JAMIE

Thanks for the help.

SHEP

Oh, getting help's my specialty. I've
found running in the opposite direction
from trouble is very healthy. Speaking
of running, I'm due at Spanish II.

Shep runs half way up the steps, then pauses.

SHEP

When's your lunch period, Jamie?

JAMIE

Twelve fifteen.

SHEP/MARCELLA

Mine too.

SHEP

We'll meet! We'll eat! We'll laugh!
We'll get indigestion and die! 'Bye!

Shep disappears up the stairs.

MARCELLA

I'm Marcella Fuentes. We're in
the same English class.

JAMIE

Yes, I noticed you.

MARCELLA

You did?

JAMIE

Yes. Your hair is beautiful.

MARCELLA

So is yours. Well. I've got calculus. That's a class, not a disease. Ha, ha. See you at lunch!

Marcella hurries back down the hall as Jamie watches her go.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - Brodsky is speaking with Bostick.

BOSTICK

Thanks for keeping me posted, Mike, and thanks for sticking it out.

BRODSKY

Yeah. Sorry about Sol. Listen, I think I have the solution for Magic and his gang.

BOSTICK

I'm all ears.

BRODSKY

Poison. A friend of mine brought back a sample of the stuff a tribe of pygmies puts on their arrows. We could sprinkle it on their french fries.

BOSTICK

The fries don't need it. But I like the way you're thinking.

BRODSKY

I'm very creative. I'll stay on it.

BOSTICK

Thanks, Mike.

CUT TO:

INT. LUNCH ROOM - DAY - Crowded, noisy.

FAKHIM, still wearing headphones and listening to rap music, is moving rhythmically through the cafeteria line in front of his pregnant girlfriend, Emoline. Emoline is filling two trays. As they pass down the line, Fakhim points and snaps his finger at the selection of food he wants. Emoline obediently places it on one of the two trays, then fills her own.

They reach the cash register, Emoline pays, then carries the two trays with great difficulty as Fakhim, his hands free, indicates which way to go with a wave of the hand and weaves toward a table on the far side of the cafeteria passing

SHEP, MARCELLA AND JAMIE seated at a table eating.

SHEP

(glances at Fakhim)

I could hear that music from here, his brain must be mouse mucus.

Marcella looks at Jamie.

MARCELLA

Fakhim's a Five Percenter, it's a kind of religious thing they have here...

SHEP

Their girlfriends are called "Earths---"

MARCELLA

---it's their religious duty to stay pregnant.

SHEP

Yeah, religious pretence is the only way most of these guys can get laid.

MOOSE, a tall, gangling black kid, and HUGGER, a big, well-built member of the football team, pass by, their trays heaping.

MOOSE

(big smile)

Hey, Shep! How's my man?

SHEP

Hi, Moosie, Hugger.

MOOSE

How's the genius today?

SHEP

As brilliant as ever. This is Jamie, it's his first day. Jamie, this is Moose and Hugger, our basketball and football stars, respectively.

MOOSE

Hey, Jamie!

HUGGER

Hi, kid. See you around.

They walk away and find a table nearby.

SHEP

I've been helping Moose with trig. He and Hugger are two of the good guys. They're about the only two Magic doesn't mess with.

JAMIE

Magic and his gang seem to be in control here.

MARCELLA

They sure are!

SHEP.

Teachers can't do anything, they either get beaten up or have their families threatened...

MARCELLA

...The police arrest one of them...

SHEP

...the gang just hires some hotshot lawyer, they get off on a technicality.

MARCELLA

We all live in fear of those jerks.

JAMIE

Maybe they don't have as much power as you think they do.

Robert, the new boy who was intimidated in the opening scene, passes by with a tray of food.

ROBERT

Is it okay if I sit here?

MARCELLA

Sure. I'm Marse, this is Shep and Jamie.

ROBERT

Hi, I'm Robert.

Robert seems relieved that someone is being friendly to him. He sits down next to Shep.

MARCELLA

Jamie, what do you mean?

Jamie silently pokes at his food before he speaks.

JAMIE

If you fear something, you give it power. Take away the fear, you take away the power.

Jamie looks at Shep who stares back.

ROBERT

But how can someone not be afraid when a gang is all around you and is going to beat you up if you don't do what they say?

JAMIE

That's the challenge, Bobbie. Maybe that's a lesson as important as math or English, learning not to be afraid.

Magic passes by with Stash, Socrates and Luis. They stop at the table. Magic stares at Jamie without saying a word, then he smiles and moves on. There's a moment of silence at the table before anyone speaks.

SHEP

Well, I was scared shitless, how'd everybody else do?

Robert laughs nervously as does Marcella.

MARCELLA

We all flunked. All but Jamie.

Shep looks at his watch.

SHEP

Hey, hey! History calls. I must away and learn about the Flagellants of the Middle Ages.

Shep slaps himself twice as Robert jumps up.

ROBERT

You have Mr. Galanti?

SHEP

Yep, gallant Galanti!

ROBERT

Me too!

SHEP

C'mon.

Robert and Shep take their trays and leave the table as Marcella looks at Jamie.

MARCELLA

You're a man of mystery.

JAMIE

(laughs)

No, I'm not.

MARCELLA

But you're not afraid of the gang,
are you?

JAMIE

That's my secret. Why don't you ask
me to the dance tonight?

MARCELLA

(throwing her hands up)

See! That's what I mean! How did you
know I was going to do that? I was
just going to say, 'Hey, Jamie, there's
a dance at the gym tonight, why don't
we go?' Are you psychic?

JAMIE

I don't know, but the answer to the
dance question is yes.

They take their trays to the garbage pail and we're on
JAMIE who is obviously troubled.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT - The lights are on; we faintly hear music
coming from the gym. Students are entering and now we're in the

INT. GYM - NIGHT - A rock group is playing from a platform
serving as a stage. In a series of shots we SEE

THE DANCE FLOOR and kids dancing...

THE FRONT DOOR where a burly teacher/chaparone, DANNY, is
checking kids in...

MAGIC AND STASH on the sidelines watching...

FAKHIM AND EMOLINE on the sidelines also watching. Fakhim still
has his earphones on and seems to be moving to his own drummer..

THE ROCK BAND playing a current hit...

SHEP dancing across from a cute teenager...

SOME MEMBERS OF MAGIC'S GANG standing in a small knot talking...
and finally we're on

THE FRONT DOOR as Marcella and Jamie enter. They have to shout
to hear each other.

MARCELLA

They also serve hot dogs here if
you're hungry!

JAMIE
I'm still full from lunch.

MARCELLA
What did you have?

JAMIE
Something in gravy.

MARCELLA
Never have the gravy dish, Jamie,
that was chicken hearts!

JAMIE
Really? I kind of liked it.

They move into the gym as the band finishes a set. Shep sees them and hurries over.

SHEP
Welcome to Bedlam! That's the name of
the group we hired, if they're anything,
they're loud.

JAMIE/MARCELLA
Hi, Shep.

SHEP
What the band doesn't know is that
Bedlam was the name of an insane
asylum in the high middle ages, that's
where the word came from...and maybe
that's where they came from, they're
pretty weird.

He looks over at the bandstand and we SEE

THE BAND for the first time up close as they take their break.
Two of them sport Mohawk haircuts and wear long earrings, three
have their heads shaved including the female lead singer, and
they're wearing purple and orange suits with bright red
sneakers.

SHEP, JAMIE AND MARCELLA laugh.

MARCELLA
Shep's on the Social Activities
Committee, he helps pick the groups.

SHEP
Our other choices were Ultimate
Asparagus, they play acid rock, and
PopEye, a group of girls from the
Christian Church who play "Save Us
Jesus Rock."

MARCELLA

Not much choice.

As they talk, Shep leads them through the double doors to the refreshment stand set up outside the gym in the hall.

SHEP

Yeah, I went with my instinct. By the way Jamie, they only sell soft stuff here but if you want something hard, even a beer, a guy sells it out of his Honda hatchback outside.

JAMIE

Soft is fine. How about you, Marcella?

MARCELLA

Soft is fine, and call me Marse.

SHEP

Oh, and one very important piece of advice. Never go to the men's room at night. Bad things happen there.

JAMIE

But what if---

SHEP

---You go out back like everybody else.

MARCELLA

Except the girls.

SHEP

Except the girls.

INT. HALL - Lulu is standing behind the stand, serving refreshments.

MARCELLA

Hi, Lulu, I'm Marse, this is Jamie and Shep...

LULU

Hi, I remember you from English.

SHEP

I'm buying. Diet Cokes for everybody!
You take food stamps? Just kidding.

Lulu giggles. Shep pays her, takes the Cokes and gives one each to Jamie and Marcella. As they're walking back, two of Magic's gang, Socrates and Luis, enter, and as they pass Shep, Socrates

purposely bumps into him, knocking some of the Coke out of his can.

SHEP

Excuse me, I'm just a clumsy dolt.

SOCRATES

What?

SHEP

Said 'scuse me,' that's all, sorry
I bumped into you.

He flashes a big smile as they go through the double doors back into the gym and Shep says under his breath

SHEP

Sorry I bumped into you, asshole!

INT. GYM - SUE ELLA, an attractive teenager, calls to Shep from across the floor.

SUE ELLA

SHEP, HEY! C'MON OVER!

SHEP smiles and waves to her.

SHEP

She's hot for my bod, this may be
the night she gets to apply all that
fun stuff she's been learning in sex
education. 'Bye.

Shep moves onto the dance floor, does a little turn, waves to Jamie and Marcella and goes to Sue Ella.

MARCELLA

He's totally insane. His humor's
always getting him in trouble.

JAMIE

I like his humor, what's wrong with
it?

MARCELLA

Well, like just now, he smarted off
to that guy, they're very touchy, you
look at them crosseyed and they stick
a knife in you.

RECORDED MUSIC begins playing over the loud speaker.

JAMIE

Want to dance?

MARCELLA

Sure.

CUT TO:

MARCELLA AND JAMIE as they dance to a reggae beat. Marcella moves smoothly but Jamie is having trouble.

JAMIE

How do you do that?

MARCELLA

Practice. You'll get it.

Jamie studies Marcella's movements and tries to emulate her and now we're on

MAGIC on the sidelines with Stash as Magic sees Jamie on the dance floor, nudges Stash who looks in the direction Magic indicates. They both watch Jamie, nod and laugh.

SHEP is dancing with Sue Ella. As they move past Jamie and Marcella, Shep rolls his eyes as if saying "tonight's the night."

CUT TO:

MAGIC on the sidelines talking to Fakhim who can't hear what Magic is saying. Magic rips Fakhim's earphones off and shouts in his ear. Fakhim protests with big gestures and stomping as the SONG ends.

MARCELLA is smiling at Jamie.

MARCELLA

I've got to go to the ladies. Be right back.

JAMIE

Okay. I'll be over there.

Marcella exits through the door leading to the refreshment stand as Jamie walks off the floor. Fakhim approaches him.

FAKHIM

Hey! Magic wants to see you. In the head downstairs.

JAMIE

What about?

FAKHIM

Man, don't ask stupid questions!
You want information, dial 411.

Fakhim weaves back over to Emoline as we're on

JAMIE who watches him go. He thinks a minute, smiles, then exits the gym.

INT. HALL - NIGHT - Jamie passes Lulu at the refreshment stand.

JAMIE

Stairs this way?

LULU

I think so.

Jamie waves to her, locates the stairs and goes down.

INT. BASEMENT HALL - NIGHT - Jamie reaches the hall, SEES the men's room door and is about to enter when he pauses. We can see he's fighting back fear. The fear subsides as he opens the door.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - Magic is there with Stash, Fakhim, Socrates and Luis.

JAMIE enters and stops. He looks from member to member, ending with his eyes on Magic.

JAMIE

You wanted to see me?

MAGIC

Yeah. I want you to know I'm a fair guy. I'm gonna give you another chance. But this time you gotta buy it.

Magic holds out a vial of crack. Jamie looks at it, then back at Magic.

JAMIE

You don't have a very good reputation.

MAGIC

What?

JAMIE

Everybody's afraid of you.

MAGIC

No. Really? I wonder why that is?

THE GANG members laugh.

JAMIE

Maybe it's because you hurt people.

MAGIC

Me? I never hurt anyone before.

Magic turns his back and walks away from Jamie.

MAGIC

Have I, Stash?

STASH

Never.

MAGIC

Fakhim?

FAKHIM

No, man.

Magic turns and faces Jamie.

MAGIC

See? You got it wrong, kid.

Magic spins and delivers a vicious karate kick to Jamie's stomach. Jamie reels from the blow--Magic kicks him again. Jamie bounces off the wall and slides down to the floor as

MAGIC paces back and forth, waiting for him to get up.

JAMIE is sitting on the floor, dazed. He looks up and smiles.

JAMIE

See, Magic, this is what I mean.
This isn't a nice thing to do.

MAGIC, infuriated, grabs Jamie and yanks him to his feet.

MAGIC

You a smart ass, that what you are?

Magic punches him in the stomach, then in the face, then throws Jamie over his shoulder.

JAMIE groans as he lands flat on his back on the tile floor.

INT. GYM - Marcella returns, looks around, doesn't see Jamie.
She SEES

SHEP dancing and calls to him.

MARCELLA

Shep? Have you seen Jamie?

SHEP

No! Probably had to you know what!

Marcella looks worried. She exits the gym.

INT. HALL - REFRESHMENT STAND - Marcella enters from the gym and approaches Lulu.

MARCELLA

Lulu, have you seen Jamie?

LULU

He went that way down the stairs. I saw Magic and some of his gang go down there too.

MARCELLA

Oh, God!

Marcella runs back into

THE GYM and finds Shep on the dance floor.

MARCELLA

SHEP! I think Jamie's downstairs with Magic and his gang.

SHEP

I told him not to go down there!
C'mon!

Shep hurries to the front entrance and says a few words to Danny, the chaperon. Danny hops up and runs with Shep through the double doors leading to the hall. Marcella follows.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - Magic delivers another kick to Jamie who, bleeding profusely now, stumbles, stays on his feet a moment, then falls heavily to the floor.

STASH

Hey, Mag, the kid's had enough.

MAGIC

Fuck you, man! I say when he's had enough!

Magic pulls Jamie to his feet, hits him again and slams his head against the wall.

MAGIC

Don't mess with me, man, you hear me?! (Shakes Jamie) YOU HEAR ME!?

Jamie looks steadily at Magic, blood running ^{down} his nose.
Suddenly his eyes flicker with light.

MAGIC is startled at this phenomenon.

JAMIE shakes his head, closes his eyes, and when he opens them, they're normal. He smiles at Magic.

JAMIE

You have no idea...how far I've come...
to find you...

MAGIC

Well here I am. How you like it?

MAGIC delivers a series of punches, kicks and blows as the

DOOR swings open and Danny runs in with Shep and some GUYS from the football team, including Hugger.

DANNY

Okay, break it up! NOW!!

Marcella pushes her way through the mob, sees Jamie, SCREAMS, and runs to him.

DANNY

Take your boys and get out of here,
Magic. You've caused enough trouble
for one night.

Magic stares a moment at Danny, then motions to his boys and exits the restroom.

DANNY

Okay, everybody, break it up, fight's
over.

Everyone leaves except Shep, Marcella, and Danny.

SHEP

Shall I call an ambulance?

JAMIE

No, no, I'm okay, I'll be fine...

SHEP

(to Marcella)

I told him not to come down here, I
told him!

MARCELLA

Can you walk?

JAMIE

I think so...

Shep and Danny help Jamie to his feet, then over to the wash basin.

SHEP

Why did you do it?

JAMIE

I have a problem with going on the street...

DANNY

You want, we call the cops, you charge him with assault...

Jamie throws cold water on his face. Marcella dampens a paper towel and begins washing off the blood.

JAMIE

No. Shep's right, if I hadn't come down here, it wouldn't have happened.

SHEP

I think you should do it, file a report, charge him with assault and give him the electric chair.

DANNY

I gotta get back upstairs. You okay?

JAMIE

Yes, thanks, I appreciate it.

Danny goes out the door.

MARCELLA

Anything broken?

JAMIE

Nah. I'm invincible.

MARCELLA

Yeah, I can see.

Jamie winces as she dabs at his wounds.

SHEP

Did you get any punches in?

JAMIE

Nope. I didn't want to hurt him.

SHEP

Are you kidding?

JAMIE

No. I've never wanted to hurt anyone.
Makes me feel bad.

SHEP

You couldn't feel any worse than you
do now, could you?

JAMIE

Maybe not...

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT - Marcella and Shep walk out of the school
with Jamie between them. Jamie walks with difficulty but he's
on his feet and functioning.

JAMIE

Thanks for everything.

SHEP

We're going to walk you home.

JAMIE

No, it's okay.

MARCELLA

Jamie, you're in no condition to walk
or take the subway, we're going with
you.

Jamie stops at the curb.

JAMIE

Thanks, Marse, but I want to be by
myself for awhile.

MARCELLA

You live far?

JAMIE

Right around the corner.

MARCELLA

What do you think, Shep?

SHEP

I guess he knows how he feels.

JAMIE

See you both on Monday.

JAMIE starts painfully down the street.

SHEP

Hey! How about we meet tomorrow and
go to Central Park? The three of us!

MARCELLA

Jamie's not going to feel like going anywhere, Shep, not for awhile.

SHEP

Yeah, bad idea.

JAMIE stops and turns back.

JAMIE

Actually I'd like that. What time? Where?

SHEP

Columbus Circle, by the statue. 'Bout ten?

JAMIE

I'll be there.

Jamie continues walking away.

MARCELLA

I don't feel good about letting him go home alone.

SHEP

Neither do I.

Shep darts behind the corner of a building, peeks out comically, then runs on tip toes like a cartoon character across the street and hides behind a car. Marcella laughs, crosses the street to him. Together they begin following Jamie.

JAMIE is walking a little better now, a little faster, and Marcella and Shep have to hustle to keep up with him. And now we're on

JAMIE'S FACE...and his eyes begin emitting light...and as the light grows brighter, his wounds close, then vanish, leaving no mark. He turns a corner and we're back on

MARCELLA AND SHEP as they hurry to catch up. They reach the corner, turn, and Jamie is gone, the street deserted. Shep and Marcella look at each other, run down the street searching but Jamie has disappeared.

COLUMBUS CIRCLE - DAY - ESTABLISH - We're at the statue. The Gulf-Western building looms in the background at 61st and Broadway. Several tattered bums are hanging out, harassing passersby, and there are two vendor's carts: one selling frozen yogurt, the other hot dogs and drinks.

MARCELLA AND SHEP are waiting by the entrance to the park, each wearing a light jacket. The day is sunny but with an autumn briskness.

JAMIE approaches and waves.

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MARCELLA AND SHEP wave back and, as Jamie gets to within ten yards or so, Marcella nudges Shep and says sotto voce:

MARCELLA

Shep? Notice anything?

SHEP

No injuries.

Jamie arrives with a big smile.

JAMIE

Hi! What a great day.

SHEP

How'd you do it?

JAMIE

What?

MARCELLA

Jamie, when we left you last night, you were in pretty bad shape. Now, look at you. Not a mark.

JAMIE

That's the way we are in my family. We heal fast.

SHEP

I wish I knew your secret. I've got a zit, I get rid of it, it rises again, it's the pimple with the Lazarus syndrome.

Jamie and Marcella laugh, they start off into the park.

EXT. PARK DRIVE NORTH - As bright, upscale MUSIC segues in, we're looking at a curve in the road. Bikers come barreling around and suddenly we see

SHEP, MARCELLA AND JAMIE zip around the corner on bikes laughing and weaving in and out of the other bikers. We follow them as they peddle furiously and we stay with them as they reach a dip in the road and glide gloriously down, the wind blowing their hair, smiles on their faces, light streaming through the leaves as if from a thousand suns.

SHEP unstraps a camera he carries around his neck and, gliding without hands, snaps a picture of Jamie as he turns back and smiles.

EXT. BICYCLE STAND - The three are checking their bikes in and now we see

SHEP, MARCELLA AND JAMIE walking down a path toward the zoo.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE IN PARK NEAR ZOO - Jamie, Marcella and Shep are sitting sipping drinks. End MUSIC.

JAMIE

I think I like this a lot.

SHEP

Yeah, Central Park is a great place but not at night. (to Jamie) When you were in that john with Magic and his guys, you were afraid, weren't you?

JAMIE

(thoughtfully)

My heart was pounding...my mouth was dry. Is that fear?

SHEP

Yeah, it qualifies. Did you hear that little voice yelling, 'Run, Shep, run?' No, wait, that's the voice I hear!

Jamie laughs.

MARCELLA

I still don't understand why you went down there.

JAMIE

Just curious I guess. Show me more of the park.

SHEP

This your first time here?

JAMIE

Yep.

SHEP

Well, just follow little 'ol Shep, the east coast Daniel Boone!

SHEP bolts from his chair, sprints onto the sidewalk, gazes into the far horizon posing like an Indian scout, runs in circles, then throws himself down on a bench and pretends to pant heavily.

SHEP

I NEED A STRETCHER!

EXT. NORTHBOUND PATH IN CENTRAL PARK - The three are walking single file with Shep leading the way.

EXT. UPTOWN POND ABOVE 100TH STREET - They stop, Shep points further uptown, and they continue past the pond.

TWO YOUNG MEN on bikes speed past the three and disappear into the woods ahead of them. Shep is about to follow the bikers up the path when Jamie suddenly stops. Marcella is behind him.

JAMIE is very still as though listening to an inner voice.

JAMIE

(to himself)

Silent death.

MARCELLA steps up beside Jamie.

MARCELLA

What?

Jamie is still quiet as though in his own world.

SHEP

(looks back)

C'mon, pioneers, no Indians in these here woods!

JAMIE

(sharply)

Shep! Come back!

SHEP

What?

JAMIE

Let's start back.

MARCELLA

Is something wrong?

Jamie looks from Marcella to Shep.

JAMIE

No, I'm just...a little tired. I want to see the carousel.

SHEP

(John Wayne drawl)

You got it, pilgrim, carousel's back the way we come. Come on!

Shep leads the way back as Jamie lets Marcella go in front of him protectively. He looks over his shoulder as we

CUT TO:

EXT. PATH NORTHBOND - The two bikers are continuing on the northbound path in the direction Shep was going and we are looking through

A GUN SIGHT pointed toward the path and then we SEE

A SNIPER waiting for victims...and now we're on the Two Bikers peddling along and suddenly

BIKER ONE pitches over with no apparent reason and we're back looking through the gun sight at

BIKER TWO as the Sniper eases off another shot and the Biker falls to the ground.

EXT. WOODED PATH SOUTHBOUND - Shep is still leading the way followed by Marcella and Jamie and we're back on

THE SNIPER as he hears a sound on the path coming from the opposite direction the Two Bikers were going and he swings his weapon in an arc to his right and through his gunsights we SEE

A MAN AND WOMAN walking along the path and he squeezes off two quick rounds and we

CUT TO:

THE MAN AND WOMAN on the path as they fall. The woman looks at her side, sees blood gushing out and SCREAMS as the man reaches up and pulls her near him and then yells at some people on the path behind him.

THE MAN

There's a sniper over there! SNIPER!

EXT. PATH SOUTHBOUND- Shep is still in the lead followed by Marcella and Jamie when a

PARK PATROLMAN on a motor scooter tears up the path followed by a second

PARK PATROLMAN, their horns blaring.

Shep jumps out of the way to let them pass as do Marcella and Jamie.

SHEP

Hey! What's going on?

FIRST PATROLMAN

(as he passes)

Stay in the lower part of the park!

SHEP

What's the matter?

FIRST PATROLMAN

Sniper!

MARCELLA

Oh, my God!

The Second Patrolman passes.

SHEP

How come we haven't heard shots?

SECOND PATROLMAN

He's using a silencer!

and the Second Patrolman disappears up the path. Marcella looks at Jamie strangely.

MARCELLA

You knew, didn't you?

SHEP

What?

MARCELLA

(to Jamie)

You said "silent" something...was it "death?" Is that what you said, "silent death?"

SHEP

What are you talking about.

MARCELLA

(to Shep)

Jamie told us to turn around because he knew we were in danger, didn't you?

JAMIE

(evasively)

Well, I get these...intuitions sometimes.

SHEP

Then you are psychic. Hey! Maybe you could help my dad in the stock market, he's been losing his shirt!

MARCELLA

(to Jamie)

You're scary.

JAMIE

No I'm not, lots of people get those feelings. C'mon, the carousel awaits.

EXT. PARK, THE CAROUSEL - MUSIC is playing, a crowd of people ^{are} standing in line to get tickets, a lot of others are watching from benches on the side. The carousel is filled with children.

SHEP runs up and gets in line as Jamie and Marcella buy hot dogs and drinks...

THE HOT DOG STAND - Shep hurries over holding the tickets aloft and takes a frank from Jamie and a drink from Marcella. They go to a picnic table near the carousel, Shep puts his food down and snaps some shots of Marcella and Jamie, then Jamie takes a few shots of Shep and Marcella, and finally Marcella of Jamie and Shep in a buddy/buddy pose.

THE CAROUSEL - Shep, Marcella and Jamie are riding three abreast, with Marcella in the middle. The carousel is whirling around as the three of them laugh, shout and try to carry on a conversation...and an original SONG springs up over the carousel music, something that captures the joy of this moment.

At the high point of this upbeat moment, Marcella looks at Jamie, who is looking at her. They share something here, something beyond the normal teen infatuation, that touches them both deeply.

THE CAROUSEL begins to slow, Shep jumps off, staggers around pretending to be dizzy, as Jamie helps Marcella down and they start back toward Central Park West as the SONG ends.

EXT. SHEEP MEADOW - DAY - Shep, Marcella, and Jamie are walking together with Jamie nearest the meadow. There's an assortment of people playing baseball, touch football, and some kite flyers. Jamie SEES

TWO GUYS close by tossing a frisbee back and forth.

JAMIE

It's been a great day, hasn't it?

One of the frisbee players makes a bad throw. The

FRISBEE curves away from his partner and sails high over his head. Before Shep and Marcella know what's happening,

JAMIE is running incredibly fast toward the spinning object still high in the air.

It seems impossible that he can make this catch but he suddenly springs off the ground as if pushing off from a diving board, does a series of somersaults and flip flops gaining great momentum--and now he's directly under the

FRISBEE which is whirling lazily on against a clear, blue sky, still way out of reach, but Jamie whips out of the last flip

flop going ninety miles a minute and does an amazingly graceful slow layout somersault that carries him up...up...and the

FRISBEE is spinning toward him and he just might make it...and in mid-flight

JAMIE snags the frisbee, makes a perfect landing, and then whips an accurate, bullet-like throw back to the players.

[Note: If this acrobatic manuever cannot be performed authentically by a pro, simplify it. It must be within the realm of possibility and not look faked.]

SHEP AND MARCELLA are standing with their mouths agape as Jamie runs over breathing easily. He's performed out of physical exhilaration, not to show off.

JAMIE

That was fun!

Jamie continues walking ahead, then realizes he's alone. He stops and looks back.

JAMIE

What's the matter?

MARCELLA

Jamie, that was incredible!

SHEP

Yeah, a perfect 10 at least. Maybe an 11!

JAMIE

It felt good.

MARCELLA

We didn't know you were an acrobat!

SHEP

Yeah, were you in the Olympics?

JAMIE

No.

MARCELLA

You should be.

They continue on towards Central Park West, talking and gesturing.

EXT. PARK NEAR CPW - DAY - Shep, Marcella and Jamie are strolling up the sidewalk. Shep stops.

SHEP

You know what? I want to go down to 57th Street and get a Nintendo game. Anybody want to come?

MARCELLA

No, thanks...

JAMIE

You go ahead.

SHEP

Okay. It's been great. See you Monday!

JAMIE/MARCELLA

'Bye, Shep.

Shep takes off toward the Gulf Western building visible through the trees as Jamie and Marcella continue walking.

MARCELLA

I thought he'd never leave.

They both laugh and Jamie takes her hand. They walk a little farther, then Jamie looks at Marcella...who's looking at him. They stop.

JAMIE

I just can't get over your hair.

MARCELLA

Take it, it's yours!

She smiles...Jamie touches her face...she takes his hand...they kiss...then look in each other's eyes and slowly continue along the path.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY - Shep is talking to Sue Ella--some kids from the baseball team are talking baseball. Several have mitts and one a bat. There's the usual glut of students milling about, dreading having to start another day of school.

JAMIE approaches Shep through the crowd.

JAMIE

Shep!

SHEP

Hi, Jamie! Come here, I want you to meet Sue Ella, not to be confused with Marcella, Lulu Bella or The Most Happy Fella!

JAMIE
(laughing)
Hi, Sue Ella, nice to know you.

SHEP is looking past Jamie. His face registers dismay.

SHEP
Back to reality. Here come the
pucker suckers.

SOCRATES, the gang member who bumped into Shep at the dance, pushes his way through the mob. He has half a dozen friends with him.

SOCRATES
What did you say?

SHEP
When? Just now?

SOCRATES
Yeah, just now. I heard you say
something and I don't think I liked
it.

SHEP
Sorry, I didn't mean anything.

SOCRATES
Yeah? Well that's too bad. I think
you did and I'm unhappy about it...

He shoves Shep.

SOCRATES
...and when I'm unhappy, I get pissed,
and when I get pissed, I do bad things.

He shoves Shep again, then slaps him.

JAMIE steps in front of Shep.

JAMIE
I think it's time for you to leave.

SOCRATES stares at Jamie, then looks at his buddies, then back to Jamie.

SOCRATES
No, I think it's time for you to leave...
this planet.

He yanks a knife from his jacket and starts for Jamie. Jamie backs away, sees the kid with the bat, grabs it and takes a fighting stance.

SOCRATES' gang surrounds Jamie but Jamie, surprisingly agile, using well-orchestrated moves, routs them with some well-placed swings of the bat. These movements aren't random but appear to be formal, like a Samurai warrior. (Jamie strikes no one--his actions remain purely defensive.)

SOCRATES

You're dead meat, asshole!

Socrates and his gang leave the scene as Jamie gives the bat back to the startled kid.

JAMIE

Thank you my good man, and may you hit only homers.

SHEP is still shaking from the encounter.

SHEP

What can I say, Jamie. I owe you.

JAMIE

I want it in cash, hundreds, unmarked bills, deposited in my Swiss account.

SUE ELLA

God, you were great! It's great to see somebody give it to those guys.

SHEP

Yeah, I was getting ready to kill him, but like you said before Jamie, I don't like to hurt anybody.

JAMIE

That's the right idea.

The Bell SOUNDS as the students file into school for the first class.

INT. SCHOOL HALL - DAY - Charlie Bostick is dragging a KID down the hall by the arm. Bostick carries an automatic weapon in his hand. Students make way for him.

KID

Lemmo go! Lemme go!

BOSTICK

(muttering)

What the hell's this world comin' to!
I don't believe this! I don't believe this!

The kid, about 15, keeps howling. Bostick stops.

BOSTICK

What are you yellin' about, you little---! You know what this is?

Bostick holds the gun up.

BOSTICK

This is an Uzi! An Israeli machine gun, for God's sake! Whatta you doin' bringin' an Uzi to high school?

KID

I need protection!

BOSTICK

You need a new head! Let's go call your daddy, he'll be thrilled about this!

He continues on past Jamie who's standing at his locker. Marcella approaches.

MARCELLA

It's a war zone.

JAMIE

Yeah, I guess so.

MARCELLA

Well, you're famous. What happened Friday night in the men's room combined with your battle with Socrates this morning's made you an instant celeb!

JAMIE

I didn't 'battle' Socrates.

MARCELLA

You stood up to him, that's something nobody does here, he's one of Magic's lieutenants.

JAMIE

Ready for Shakespeare?

MARCELLA

I guess so. I had a great time in the park.

JAMIE

Yeah, so did I.

They look at each other.

MARCELLA

There's a basketball game tonight if you want to come. I'm a booster, I'll have to sit with some of the girls, but I'm available after.

JAMIE

Sounds good.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY - Miss Hufjay is sitting behind her desk.

MISS HUFJAY

All right, everyone, we're going to talk a little bit about the bard.

LEO

Bar? Where?

MANNY

I'll take a scotch on the rocks!

MISS HUFJAY

I asked for that. The word is bard, with a d on the end. It's a Celtic poet, in this case, Mr. William Shakespeare.

Groans from class.

MISS HUFJAY

I'd like you to note some of the plays we'll be reading. First is Othello, next is Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, and last, The Taming of the Shrew...

Miss Hufjay looks up and sees

MANNY staring at a girl with large breasts.

MISS HUFJAY

Manny, what was the last play I just mentioned?

MANNY

(caught off guard)

Huh? Oh, The Taming of the Screw?

The students scream with laughter.

MISS HUFJAY

That shows you where his mind is.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY - School is out and as Marcella comes down the stairs onto the street, she SEES

JAMIE speaking to a MAN (the ELDER) near the corner. Curious, she keeps her eye on them and, using some students ahead of her as cover, Marcella slowly approaches close enough to see the Man give Jamie money. Not wanting Jamie to see her,

MARCELLA goes back toward school. She runs into a GIRLFRIEND in front of the school and chats with her as a diversion while she watches

THE MAN leaves Jamie, Jamie crosses the street and disappears around the corner, leaving

MARCELLA looking after him wondering...

INT. GYM - NIGHT - The game is in progress. West Side High School's team is in blue, the opposing team in red.

Our team has just scored a basket and the cheerleaders are expressing their delight.

MARCELLA is in the stands with a group of other girls dressed in the school colors. They each have pom poms and they "boost" the cheer given by the cheerleaders.

CHARLIE BOSTICK is sitting with Mike Brodsky and several other teachers.

JAMIE is standing beside Shep and Sue Ella--they're just sitting back down from cheering their team's latest score.

THE FLOOR - The teams are battling for control of the ball. The home team players consist of Magic, Stash, Socrates, Luis and Moose, who is not a gang member. The home team gains control of the ball--they dash down the court. Stash goes for a lay up, makes the basket, but gets twisted around so that when he comes down, he lands heavily on his right leg. There is a terrifying SNAP as he falls and begins SCREAMING in pain.

CHARLIE BOSTICK stands up to get a better view, then heads for the gym floor.

There is a hush from the crowd as the

COACH runs onto the floor and kneels beside

STASH who is rolling on the floor holding his leg as he continues to SCREAM in agony.

STASH'S GIRL FRIEND, one of the cheerleaders, runs over, her face white, as she watches the coach working over Stash.

JAMIE stands up suddenly and heads for the floor.

SHEP

Jamie! Where you going?

No answer as Jamie jumps onto the gym floor.

CUT TO:

MARCELLA as she watches Jamie.

THE COACH AND CHARLIE BOSTICK are leaning over Stash.

JAMIE approaches the team members who are looking on.

JAMIE

Excuse me.

As Jamie pushes through, the coach stands up.

COACH

(to Bostick)

Stay with him, Charlie, I'm gonna call an ambulance.

BOSTICK

Right. (to Stash) Take it easy, kid, help's on the way.

THE COACH hurries to the sidelines.

COACH

(to his assistant)

Get an EMS team out here quick. His leg's broken.

JAMIE kneels beside Stash as Bostick glances at him and Magic turns to Moose who's standing beside him.

MAGIC

What the fuck does he think he's doing?

JAMIE grasps Stash's wrist.

JAMIE

(to stash)

Hi, Stash. Where does it hurt?

STASH

What?

JAMIE

Look at me, look at my eyes...

STASH has stopped writhing long enough for Jamie to get his attention. Now Stash looks at Jamie and is immediately calmer.

JAMIE

That's the place there, isn't it?
(touches the leg)

JAMIE
 (brightly)
 You'll be okay.

MAGIC yanks Jamie to his feet.

MAGIC
 What the hell do you think you're
 doin? Get outta here!

Bostick stands up.

BOSTICK
 Take it easy, the kid's tryin to help.

MAGIC
 We don't need his help!

BOSTICK
 (to Jamie)
 Thanks, we'll take care of things
 here, go on back to your seat.

JAMIE leaves the crowd, looking back at Stash as he goes.

STASH is sitting up now, staring through the legs of his
 teammates at

JAMIE as Jamie walks away. There is eye contact here, this is a
 valuable moment, maybe slow motion for emphasis.

STASH'S pain seems to be subsiding and he's stopped screaming.
 He looks puzzled as he stares at the spot on his

LEG that was beginning to swell. It's now normal.

CUT TO:

MARCELLA in the stands who has been watching the drama on the
 gym floor with increasing interest.

BOOSTER ONE
 What's happening?

BOOSTER TWO
 Is he hurt or not?

MARCELLA
 I heard something snap.

BOOSTER THREE
 Yeah, me too!

THE COACH runs back and joins Bostick who's kneeling beside Stash with an odd look on his face.

COACH

Take it easy, son, an ambulance is
on the way---

STASH

---I'm okay...

COACH

...you just stay on the floor, it
won't be long...

STASH

I'm okay, Coach, I feel okay. Really.

COACH

Huh? (to Bostick) What's going on?

BOSTICK

I don't know...

STASH gets to his feet, tries the leg, limps slightly, then
looks over at

JAMIE who's looking back at him. Jamie smiles and waves.

THE COACH is watching Stash who's regaining the full use of his
leg.

COACH

I think you should stay off it until
the ambulance---

STASH

(impatiently)

---What for? The leg's fine, Coach,
c'mon, let's finish the game!

MAGIC and the other team members don't know what to think.

STASH

C'MON, LET'S GO!

STASH runs down the court with no limp whatsoever.

THE COACH AND BOSTICK look after him.

COACH

That leg was broken, I'd swear
on my mother's grave...

BOSTICK

Yeah, looked like it. Damndest
thing I ever saw.

CUT TO:

THE COURT as Stash makes another basket.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT - We HEAR the ambulance SIREN as it
pulls up outside. Two guys jump out and unload a gurney.

INT. GYM - NIGHT - The gym doors swing open as the EMS team
rushes in and looks around for the injured party.

CUT TO:

THE COACH'S TABLE on the sidelines. The emergency team is
talking to the coach who is trying to explain. The EMS guys are
mad as hell at the false alarm, the coach apologetic.

INT. HALL - NIGHT - The game is over. Spectators are filing out
of the gym.

INT. GYM - Jamie, Shep and Sue Ella are waiting for the stands
to clear before leaving. Jamie looks over to the Booster's
section and SEES

MARCELLA practicing a move with three other Boosters.

JAMIE gets up and starts in her direction.

JAMIE

(to Shep)

I'm going to check on the Booster.

He goes to Marcella who's just finishing her practice. The
girls leave as Jamie approaches.

JAMIE

Looking good.

MARCELLA

We messed up one of the cheers.
Jamie, what happened down there?

JAMIE

Stash had a little problem, but
he's okay.

MARCELLA

But he was screaming, like his leg
was broken. We heard the snap all
the way up here. It was frightening!

JAMIE

He must have had a cramp, they're real painful, I had one in my leg when I was a kid, I thought I was going to die.

MARCELLA

(looks at him strangely)

Jamie, what's going on?

JAMIE

What do you mean?

MARCELLA

You scare the hell out of me.

JAMIE

Why?

MARCELLA

Weird things happen when you're around. You knew about the sniper in the park and tonight Stash is badly hurt, you go to talk to him and suddenly he's okay. Now that's weird!

JAMIE

How about some Hagen Daz?

MARCELLA

Stop trying to change the subject!

JAMIE

I'm not trying---

MARCELLA

---Yes you are! I don't understand you, you keep holding back on me, I can feel it.

JAMIE

Marcella...

MARCELLA

Look. You go ahead with Shep and Sue. I just want to stay here a few minutes by myself.

JAMIE

Okay.

Jamie looks at her a moment, gives up, and instead of going back to Shep, heads for the exit and goes out as

SHEP and Sue Ella come over.

SHEP

Hey, what's with you two? Have a fight?

Without a word, Marcella jumps up and runs out of the gym.

SHEP

(to Sue Ella)

I sure have a way with words, don't I?

EXT. SCHOOL - Most of the crowd have left. Jamie is sitting alone on the steps as Marcella approaches.

MARCELLA

Jamie? I'm sorry for the way I acted.

JAMIE

That's okay.

MARCELLA sits down by him.

MARCELLA

I figured out what's bothering me. I don't think you're telling me the truth. Oh maybe half truths, but not everything. (looks at him) Are you?

JAMIE

I can't tell you everything, Marse, we'd be here all night. (looking at sky) You know what's wrong with this city? Too much artificial light. You can't see the stars.

MARCELLA

Jamie? I think you healed that boy, just like you healed yourself. Did you? I have to know.

JAMIE

(touching her hair)

I like you very much, Marse.

MARCELLA

Jamie? Tell me.

JAMIE

I did tell, I think it was a cramp.

MARCELLA stares hard at Jamie, then jumps to her feet, runs across the street and disappears around the corner.

JAMIE looks after her for a moment, then covers his face with his hands...and now we're

HIGH UP looking down at Jamie sitting on the steps, then higher, and now we're in space and we can see stars, millions of bright specks, and all is peaceful...and very, very quiet.

INT. MARCELLA'S HOME - NIGHT - Marcella has just finished dialing a number.

MRS. FUENTES (o.s.)
It's pretty late to be calling anyone, Marse!

MARCELLA
I know, mom, it'll just be for a second, I have to talk to Shep.

CUT TO:

INT. SHEP'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - The phone is ringing in the living room.

SHEP bolts out of his room with a history book in his hands and beats his dad, in slippers and a bathrobe, to the phone.

SHEP *James Cameron's*
Probably for me, dad, ~~Grant Tinker's~~
supposed to get back to me about
writing sitcoms for NBC... ~~somebody's~~
~~gotta save the network.~~ *A movie with Hill*

MR. BLANKENSHIP
Make it fast, it's late.

SHEP
I am fast, you know that.

Shep's dad, weary with the witicisms, sighs and shuffles back into his den and closes the door as Shep picks up the receiver.

INTERCUT BETWEEN SHEP AND MARCELLA:

SHEP
This is the great Shepard Blankenship speaking. I only have three hours so make it quick.

MARCELLA
Shep, it's Marse, I have to talk to you about Jamie.

SHEP
So talk.

MARCELLA

That was so weird, what happened tonight with Stash...

SHEP

(shrugs)

Maybe not, maybe he had a cramp.

MARCELLA

Come on, Shep, we all heard a snap! Mr. Cross even called an ambulance...

SHEP

Yeah, so what do you think we have here, another Mary Baker Eddy?

MARCELLA

Shep, will you try to be serious, just once in your life? I'm trying to figure this out, it's driving me crazy!

SHEP

You really like him, don't you?

MARCELLA

(a pause)

Yes.

SHEP

(all business)

Okay. Let's take stock. He's a guy who's wise beyond his years, he's psychic, an incredible acrobat and maybe he has healing powers. That's a pretty cool dude.

MARCELLA

(pacing)

You don't think he's from an insane asylum or something, do you?

SHEP

Of course not, I like him a lot. He sure saved my asscot.

MARCELLA

But he never talks about his family or where he's from. (stops pacing) *school*
Shep, you still work in the office a few nights a week, don't you?

SHEP

Yep.

MARCELLA

Could you get his home number for me?
I want to call there, see if I can
find out anything.

SHEP

Okay. I'll get it for you tomorrow.
~~Oh, hey, I'm picking up the pictures
from our Central Park outing in the
p.m. I had a set made for you.~~

*Oh, hey, I'm downloading
those photos from our
C.P. Outing for you. I
have seen most of 'em yet.*

MARCELLA

Okay...and thanks, Shep.

SHEP

Anytime.

They both hang up and we are on Shep only.

MR. BLANKENSHIP (o.s.)

Shep? Don't forget to move the
car tomorrow morning! It's Tuesday,
park it on the North or West side.
Okay?

SHEP

(calling to his dad)

Okay, dad! (to himself) Oh, the joys
of parking in ~~New York~~. *the Apollo.*

Shep goes back into his room and closes the door as we

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - DAY - Shep is filing a form. He peeks over
at the REGISTRAR who's talking on the phone, her back to him.
Shep secretively sneaks to the cabinet where the students' files
are kept. He finds the right one, pulls it out, writes down
the phone and address of Jamie's parents and puts the folder
back into the cabinet. He glances over, the Registrar is still
gabbing on the phone.

INT HALL - DAY - Shep meets Marcella and slips the piece of
paper to her. He looks over his shoulder.

SHEP

Here's the microfilm. Leave my
payment in a brown sack in the phone
booth.

MARCELLA

Thanks. I'll tell you what I find
out.

SHEP

Let's meet today at 4:00, front steps. I'll have the photos by then.

MARCELLA

Okay.

INT. CLASS ROOM - DAY - Marcella is sitting in a class, tapping her fingers. She glances at her watch. It reads 3:30...and the buzzer goes off ending the period. Marcella races for the door.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY - As Marcella tears down the stairs and runs to the nearest pay phone on the street.

EXT. PAY PHONE - DAY - Marcella lifts the receiver, drops a quarter in, looks at the piece of paper given to her by Shep, and dials. We HEAR the phone ringing. After several rings, someone answers.

FEMALE VOICE (o.s.)

Halo?

MARCELLA

Hello? I'd like to speak to Mrs. Palacios, please.

FEMALE VOICE (o.s.)

Halo?

MARCELLA

Habla Englis?

FEMALE VOICE (o.s.)

No.

MARCELLA

Senora Palacios?

FEMALE VOICE (o.s.)

No, esta---(the voice is heard relaying information to someone)

MARCELLA

Yo intende habla a Senora Palacios.

FEMALE VOICE (o.s.)

No! No!

A CLICK is heard as the party hangs up.

Marcella hangs up, tries the number again. It rings several times before she gives up. She looks at the piece of paper, notes the address on West 98th Street, and starts walking.

EXT. STREET - DAY - Marcella approaches 98th Street, turns east, locates the address and enters a brownstone. She finds the name

PALACIOS on the apartment listing, and rings the buzzer. The intercom doesn't work but the buzzer sounds opening the door and Marcella enters.

INT. HALL - Marcella looks at her piece of paper and goes up the stairs to the

SECOND FLOOR - She finds the apartment at the end of the hall and knocks on the door. The door is opened by an eight year old

GIRL.

MARCELLA

Hi. I'd like to talk to Mrs. Palacios.
Is that your mother? Madre?

The girl, very shy, nods and runs back into the apartment. In a moment, a YOUNG BOY, about 10, comes to the door.

MARCELLA

Hi. I'm a friend of Jamie's, I want
to see his mother if it's okay.

The Boy stares at her a minute, then opens the door.

INT. APARTMENT - The Boy leads the way into the living room. He continues into the bedroom and we can hear voices in Spanish. Marcella, still in the living room, notices some photos on a shelf. There are three, one of the little Girl, one of the Boy, and a third photo of a teenager Marcella's never seen before.

The Boy reenters.

THE BOY

My mother doesn't want to talk to you.

MARCELLA

Oh. Well...I just wanted to ask her
about Jamie. Are you his brother?

THE BOY

Yes.

MARCELLA

I'm Marcella Fuentes, a classmate of
Jamie's at high school and---

MRS. PALACIOS, drunk, hurtles out of the bedroom dressed in a slip and begins cursing Marcella in Spanish. The Boy says something to her, also in Spanish. Mrs. Palacios, stunned, slowly looks from the Boy to Marcella, then screams in pain, bursts into tears shouting obscenities at Marcella, storms into the bedroom and slams the door.

MARCELLA
Mrs. Palacios, I'm sorry, I only---

THE BOY
My mom wants you to leave...

MARCELLA backs toward the door.

MARCELLA
I just wanted to ask her about Jamie...

THE BOY
Jamie's dead.

Marcella stops and stares at The Boy.

MARCELLA
What?

THE BOY
He was shot in the head.

MARCELLA
But...Jamie's at school, he...

She looks at the three photos and points to the oldest boy.

MARCELLA
Is that...was that your brother?

THE BOY
Yes. It happened before school started.

THE PHOTO is definitely not the Jamie Palacios we know.

MARCELLA
I'm so sorry. Forgive me.

She runs for the door, opens it and steps out into

THE HALL - In total confusion, Marcella leans with her back against the apartment door trying to put it together. She glances at her watch and bolts for the stairs.

EXT. STREET - As Marcella comes out and runs toward school.

EXT. STREET NEAR SCHOOL - DAY - Jamie is standing on the curb looking up and down the street as a grey Nissan Sentra pulls up and Jamie gets in...and now we're looking at the Sentra from the driver's side and we see that the driver is

THE ELDER.

EXT. SCHOOL - Shep is waiting on the front steps as Marcella runs down the street toward him. He holds the package of photos in his hand.

MARCELLA

(breathless)

Shep! You'll never believe this...
I just came from Jamie's house---

SHEP

---I have the photographs...

MARCELLA

(not hearing)

...I tried to call, Mrs. Palacios
wouldn't talk to me or didn't under-
stand, whatever, so I went over there,
it's just a few blocks away and...are
you ready? Jamie Palacios was killed
just before school started!

SHEP

What?

MARCELLA

I swear to God! His little brother
told me, I saw a photograph of him,
it's not the Jamie Palacios we know.

SHEP

Well, I hate to compound your upset,
but I have the pictures we took...

MARCELLA

Shep, that's not important---

SHEP

---oh yeah? Wait'll you see 'em.

Shep opens the packet and takes the photographs out.

SHEP

The guy at the foto lab said at first
he thought it was a foul-up in the
development process, but every picture's
the same.

MARCELLA

Shep, what is it?

SHEP

See for yourself.

Marcella takes the photographs and looks at the first one, and
now we're looking at the

PHOTOGRAPH Shep took when Jamie turned around on the bike. Jamie's eyes appear as two brilliant sun spots. She shuffles through each one and in every photo, Jamie's eyes are dazzling while Shep and Marcella's eyes are normal.

MARCELLA begins crying.

EXT. STREET NEAR SCHOOL - Jamie and the Elder have been talking in the car. Now the Elder pulls away from the curb and we're back on

SHEP AND MARCELLA just down the street.

SHEP

Look, there has to be some logical explanation, there just has to be!

MARCELLA

(through her tears)

I am really confused! I don't know what's going on, I think I'm losing my mind!

SHEP

No you're not! We'll figure this thing out together. C'mon, I'll take you home, my dad's car is double-parked over there.

They walk to the car and get in.

INT. HONDA - DAY

MARCELLA

Are you supposed to be driving alone?

SHEP

No, but dad let's me alternate park it which I did this morning...but this afternoon I realized that if I can find a place on the south or east side of the street we won't have to move it until Friday because on Wednesday you can park anywhere and this is Tuesday and it's past 2:00 and on Thursday there's no parking on the north or west side so... okay, cut to the chase. Anyway, I was moving it and I decided to bring it here, give you the photos and then park it.

THE NISSAN SENTRA drives by with Jamie in the passenger seat.

SHEP

Hey! Look! That was Jamie! Who's
he with?

MARCELLA

That's the man I saw giving him money.

Shep starts the car.

MARCELLA

What are you doing?

SHEP

I'm going to follow him!

MARCELLA

But all you have's a student license!

SHEP

Shhhh!

THE HONDA pulls into the street not far behind the Sentra.

THE SENTRA turns west toward the West Side Highway

SHEP'S HONDA approaches the intersection, waits for it to clear,
and follows the Sentra.

THE NISSAN continues west to Riverside Drive and enters the West
Side Highway going North.

INT. SHEP'S HONDA - They SEE the Sentra make the turn and
follow.

MARCELLA

What if your father misses the car?

SHEP

He won't. He only uses it weekends
to get out of town and mom doesn't
drive. He might miss me, though
for dinner.

MARCELLA

Same with my mom, we'll have to call
and give them some excuse...

EXT. WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - DAY - The Honda is two car lengths
back from the Nissan on the Highway. The Honda cuts over
abruptly into the fast lane.

SHEP (o.s.)

I wonder where he's going?

MARCELLA (o.s.)

I don't know but I have a strange feeling in my stomach.

SHEP (o.s.)

That's probably the chow mein we had for lunch.

A SERIES OF ACTION CUTS now as we see the cars moving up the Highway, stopping at toll booths, passing through Riverdale and continuing north.

THE ELDER looks through the windshield and SEES a sign that says CHAPPAQUA. The car is overheating. He takes the next exit and finds a gas station.

SHEP'S HONDA follows.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY - The Elder's car is parked with the hood open. An attendant is helping him put water in the radiator.

EXT. PHONE ACROSS THE STREET - Shep is on the phone.

SHEP

Yeah, so we're just gonna have some pizza and go to flick...okay. Yeah I found a great place to park. See you, dad.

He hangs up and sneaks back into the driver's seat of the Honda.

SHEP

Okay, I told him the same thing you told your mom, we had pizza and went to see a movie. What'd we see?

MARCELLA

Presumed Innocent.

SHEP

I'd rather see Total Recall.

MARCELLA

Okay, Total Recall...

SHEP

How about Darkman?

MARCELLA

Shep!?

SHEP

Okay, okay, Presumed Innocent.

MARCELLA

Are you okay on gas?

SHEP

Yep, dad filled it up Sunday and it goes about 250 without refill..(looks out window)...he's getting in the car.

THE ELDER is opening the car door. He looks in the direction of

SHEP AND MARCELLA who quickly scoot down in their seats...then Shep peeks out the window and SEES

THE ELDER get in and drive away.

SHEP AND MARCELLA follow in the Honda.

A SERIES OF ACTION SHOTS - EVENING - The cars move into an isolated area as it grows dark and now we're approaching the place where we originally saw the glow in the woods.

EXT. SENTRA - NIGHT - The Sentra slows, pulls over and stops. The lights go out. The Elder exits the car with Jamie who turns his collar up as they head for the woods.

SHEP'S HONDA, its lights off, pulls off the road about a quarter of a mile back.

INT. HONDA - NIGHT - Shep turns off the engine.

SHEP

We'd better get up there fast.

MARCELLA

I'm scared, Shep, I'm a city girl, what if there are snakes out here?

SHEP

They won't be as bad as the ones in town. C'mon!

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT - Shep and Marcella exit the car and hurry down the road to the Elder's car. It's a bright, moonlit night with a zillion stars.

SHEP

Now the big question is...which way did they go?

From here on they speak only in whispers. They stand looking around for a moment as Shep studies the woods. Suddenly he grasps Marcella's arm.

SHEP

Marse, look...There's a light, isn't there?

MARCELLA

Shep, let's go back, we're in way over our heads!

SHEP

Could you stand that? Never knowing what's going on?

Marcella stares intently at the soft, pulsating glow emanating from the woods, then sighs wearily.

MARCELLA

No, I guess not. Let's go.

They cross the road, go down a shallow ditch, and head for the undergrowth about 200 yards away...and now we're watching

MARCELLA AND SHEP as they approach and we're SEEING them from someone or something's POV...and now we're back to

MARCELLA just behind Shep in ankle-deep grass.

MARCELLA

This grass is wet!

SHEP

Shhh! I thought I saw something.

They stop and we can HEAR them holding their breaths as they stare at the

WOODS in front of them. Nothing moves...it is very quiet.

SHEP

Aren't there supposed to be katydids or something out here making noise?

MARCELLA

You're asking me?

SHEP

Sorry. Let's go.

SHEP AND MARCELLA move cautiously toward the woods and enter the tree line which is dense with underbrush.

MARCELLA

Not so fast!

SHEP

Hold onto my jacket.

MARCELLA grasps Shep's jacket.

SHEP

(in a strained voice)

Not that tight, you're choking me!

MARCELLA

Sorry.

They continue past several trees and we're on

SHEP'S FACE and he is hypertense, his eyes wide as we move through the woods from

SHEP'S POV, through bushes, past tree branches that make a gentle "swooshing" sound, and we're back on

SHEP'S FACE, his eyes even wider as he moves slowly ahead and now we SEE

MARCELLA clutching Shep's jacket, looking from left to right, her eyes as wide as his, and now we're back to

SHEP'S POV as the throbbing light grows brighter and we begin to HEAR something faint that could be voices and maybe a slight WHIRRING sound but we're not sure and a SUDDEN NOISE jolts them both as a

RABBIT darts away through the underbrush and we SEE

SHEP swallowing hard and

MARCELLA with her eyes closed trying to get her breath back and now they're moving again slowly and the light ahead is growing brighter and yes, those are definitely voices we hear, mumbled, but voices...

SHEP

Do you hear that?

MARCELLA

Yes, ...and something else...

and once again we're SEEING from

SHEP'S POV as they approach the source of the light and they can't see through the density of the woods but something is definitely there, and they come to a tree that faces a small clearing and stop behind the tree to catch their breath and to listen...they HEAR snatches of talk...someone mentions a "test" and a voice that could be Jamie's is saying..."I'm ready..." and someone seems to be questioning him and saying..."You don't have to try, yet..." and we can't make out any more than that.

SHEP AND MARCELLA are huddled against the tree hidden from the clearing. Beyond the open space is another dense cluster of trees and the source of the pulsating light.

SHEP

(to Marcella)

Are you getting this?

MARCELLA

Something about a test? Is that what you heard?

SHEP

Yes, we have to get closer. Now, here's the plan. There's a clearing just beyond this tree. When we cross it, we'll be exposed, excuse the word. So let's stay low and get across it as fast as we can. Okay?

MARCELLA

I've never been so scared in my life.

SHEP

That's because you're a girl. Girls are supposed to be scared, they even have a course, Female Fear. Ready?

MARCELLA

I guess so.

SHEP

Hold my jacket, let's go!

SHEP AND MARCELLA move out from behind the tree, take two steps into the clearing---and stop dead. A large

METAL ROBOT is standing in the clearing, an electrical impulse darting across its mask, huge metal fists by its side as it emits a faint whirring sound.

SHEP is the first to SCREAM followed by Marcella and suddenly they are running blindly through the woods, branches stinging their faces, bushes blocking their path, fallen logs tripping them, and each time they go down, they look frantically behind, certain the huge THING they saw will be upon them, devouring them, tearing them to pieces.

SHEP looks back and runs into a tree, nearly knocking himself out, but Marcella is there to help him up and they're running once again and now when they glance back the glow is growing less apparent and they break onto

THE ROAD running for their lives and make it to Shep's car, get in, slam and lock the doors, as Shep searches frantically in pocket after pocket for his keys and can't find them.

MARCELLA

Hurry, Shep, HURRY!

JAMIE

Shit, shit, shit...!

He finds the key, jams it into the ignition, jerks on the lights, does a quick U-turn, plunges the pedal to the floor as they hightail it down the road.

INT. CAR - NIGHT - They ride in silence for a moment.

SHEP

That was you screaming, wasn't it?

MARCELLA

Yes, but I wasn't alone.

SHEP

What was that thing?

MARCELLA

I don't know but nobody's going to believe us.

SHEP

I don't even believe us.

MARCELLA

Can you find the way back to the city?

JAMIE

Sure. I'll follow the smell of urine.

MARCELLA shakes her head in disgust as we're

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT - The Honda disappears into the darkness.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - ESTABLISH

INT. GYM - DAY - The basketball team is working out.

STASH has just made a basket. The Coach comes up to him.

COACH

Can I see you a moment?

STASH

Sure.

Stash throws the ball to Moose and walks to the sidelines with the coach.

COACH

I want to show you something.

Cross goes to a table and picks up a folder.

COACH

Just got this back from the hospital. These are the X-rays I insisted you take after you got hurt. Well, after you seemingly got hurt.

STASH takes the X-rays and studies them.

STASH

What am I looking at?

COACH

(pointing)

See that line, right there? That means your leg was broken. Ever break it before?

STASH

No.

COACH

Well, that picture says you have. Pretty strange, huh?

STASH is studying the X-ray. He shrugs and hands it back to the coach.

COACH

Okay, you can go back.

STASH runs back to practice...but he's thinking about what's happened...and trying to make sense of it.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY - Marcella is standing at her locker. Jamie comes up behind her.

JAMIE

Hi, Marse.

Marcella gasps.

MARCELLA

(angry)

What are you doing, sneaking up on me like that? You scared the life out of me!

JAMIE

(surprised at her reaction)

I'm sorry.

MARCELLA

I'm late for class.

JAMIE

Are you mad at me?

MARCELLA

(stares at him)

No. Mad isn't the word. I don't know what I am at you. I have to go.

JAMIE

I'd like to see you tonight.

MARCELLA

No.

JAMIE

Why?

MARCELLA

Because you're not telling me the truth. Because I'm afraid of you.

JAMIE

Marse, have you ever seen me hurt anyone or do anything bad?

MARCELLA

No, but---

JAMIE

---Meet me at the basketball court on the corner, seven o'clock.

Jamie smiles and walks away. Marcella stands looking off after him, undecided.

CUT TO:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - EVENING - Moose and Hugger, along with some guys from school, are playing a game as Jamie approaches on the sidewalk. These are all Jamie's friends.

MOOSE/HUGGER

Hey, Jamie!

JAMIE

Hi guys.

Jamie leans against the mesh wire fence and looks down the street. He SEES

MARCELLA walking toward him and goes to meet her.

MARCELLA

I must be crazy.

JAMIE

No you're not.

Jamie takes her hand--Marcella withdraws it. They begin walking. Marcella studies Jamie intently.

MARCELLA

Who are you?

JAMIE

What do you mean?

MARCELLA

I went to see "Jamie Palacios's" mother yesterday. Her son died just before school started. I saw a picture of Jamie. It wasn't you. Shep and I followed you last night... there was a light in the woods and we heard voices, one sounded like yours...and we saw this huge...thing there and we ran for our lives. Who the hell are you?

*Mention Her
Eyes In Photos*

INT. CAR - EVENING - Loud Hispanic MUSIC is playing. Magic, Socrates, Fakhim and two other gang members are in the car. Fakhim is driving.

Magic is in the front right passenger seat. He looks out the window and SEES

JAMIE AND MARCELLA on the far sidewalk.

MAGIC (o.s.)

Hey! There's El Freako!

SOCRATES (o.s.)

Who?

MAGIC (o.s.)

Palacios! Get over to the other side!

FAKHIM (o.s.)

I can't, man! Traffic's right up my ass!

MAGIC (o.s.)

Then go around the block!

EXT. STREET - The gang car speeds ahead two blocks, makes a SCREECHING right turn, and we're back on

JAMIE AND MARCELLA who haven't yet seen the gang.

JAMIE

Look. There's a logical explanation for all this. I wanted to transfer here from Andrew Jackson and I wasn't in the right district so I heard about this Jamie Palacios and pretended to be him, I thought once I got in here I could eventually tell the truth and get accepted...

MARCELLA

...Uh huh, good story, and the woods incident?

JAMIE

(with a twinkle)

That was my boy scout troop.

Marcella stops and stares at him.

MARCELLA

What?

JAMIE

Sure, we're camping out there and I was talking to my scout master.

MARCELLA

I see, and that glow was from your campfire and that big hunk of metal was something you built for a crafts merit badge, right?

JAMIE

You're not buying any of this, are you?

Marcella just stares at him.

JAMIE

(breaking into a big smile)
Of course you're not. I knew I'd have to tell you sooner or later...

THE GANG CAR pulls along side of them and slows to their pace.

MAGIC

Hey, Palacios! What are you doin'n
on my street?

JAMIE AND MARCELLA look at the car.

JAMIE

(to Marcella)

Ignore him.

MARCELLA

Jamie, I'm afraid.

Now we're moving, looking back at the car and Jamie and Marcella
as they slowly move down the street toward us.

MAGIC

I want you offa my street!

JAMIE

(to Magic)

I want to be your friend, Magic.

MAGIC

These are my friends. I got enough
friends, asshole!

JAMIE

Please don't talk that way around
Marcella.

MAGIC

Don't what---!? (to Fakhim) Stop the
car!

A CAR has pulled up behind the gang car. It begins HONKING.

GUY IN CAR BEHIND

HEY! MOVE IT!!

FAKHIM

I can't stop the car, man! There's
traffic!

MAGIC

Then go around the fucking block
again!

THE GANG CAR speeds down the street and SCREECHES around the
corner.

JAMIE grabs Marcella's hand.

JAMIE

They're coming back. C'mon!

They start to run.

JAMIE

My place is just around the corner!

JAMIE AND MARCELLA cross the street dodging through traffic, sprint down the block and turn the corner as

THE GANG CAR speeds up the street a few blocks behind and continues past the side street Jamie and Marcella have taken.

JAMIE runs up the stairs of a beat-up brownstone pulling Marcella along, yanks the door open, and takes her inside. He opens the second door with his key and they step into the vestibule of a typical west side apartment building.

JAMIE

I'm on the second floor.

Marcella hesitates.

JAMIE

You're right. I owe you an explanation.

Jamie starts up the stairs. Marcella gives in and follows him.

INT. HALL - NIGHT - Jamie and Marcella enter the second floor, turn down the hall and stop in front of an apartment door. Jamie lets them in.

INT. JAMIE'S ROOM - NIGHT - It's a plain-looking studio with a bed, a few pieces of furniture, a closet and a sink. There's a small breakfast table and two chairs.

JAMIE

We're safe here. Nobody knows where I live.

Marcella sits at the kitchen table as Jamie looks out the window, then sits down across from her. He looks at her for a long moment, studying her.

JAMIE

You're right. I haven't told you the truth about myself, but what I'm about to say, is.

Jamie takes her hand.

JAMIE

What do you know about rite de passage? (use French pronunciation)

MARCELLA

What?

JAMIE

Rite of passage.

MARCELLA

It's some kind of ceremony, I think...

JAMIE

It has to do with passing to another, more advanced stage. Your American Indians practiced the rite of passage... by having the young male member of the tribe prove himself, either in combat or by some other accomplishment.

As Jamie talks, we SEE

A YOUNG INDIAN BOY scaling a mountain...toward an eagle's nest.. he struggles up and up and finally arrives at his destination... he battles the eagle and plucks a feather from its body...and, though bloody, triumphantly holds up his prize to the heavens...

JAMIE

...some civilizations still practice it, including mine.

MARCELLA

But where are you from? Why are you here?

JAMIE

(smiling)

I'm from far away, Marse. Not so much in distance as in thought. What people think is what they see...our race is nearing a perfect state of existence.

MARCELLA

How's that possible?

JAMIE

Through many trials, many battles, and a lot of pain. (Jamie says this almost wearily, as though he's had a lot of struggles) But individually we have one more challenge before we

JAMIE (cont'd)
can achieve our final rite of
passage...(looks off into space
with a sense of forboding)...one
last test...

MARCELLA
...and you're here for that test...

JAMIE
Yes. Where we are there's no
conflict, no strife.

MARCELLA
There's plenty of that here.

Now we SEE

A CEREMONY as Jamie prepares to leave his civilization, along
with others, for his journey to earth. The forms are hazy but
bright.

JAMIE (o.s.)
We choose our adversary. Mine is...
Magic.

MARCELLA (o.s.)
Is your test to beat him in combat?

JAMIE (o.s.)
I don't know. I won't know until
the time comes.

And we are back on

MARCELLA AND JAMIE sitting at the table. Marcella looks around
the room.

MARCELLA
How did you get this room?

JAMIE
We have guardians, Elders who have
been here a long time. They help
us, monitor our progress...

MARCELLA
Was that who I saw giving you money
after school?

JAMIE
Yes.

Marcella studies Jamie for a moment, seeing him from this new perspective.

MARCELLA

Then these weren't marred in the darkroom. Your eyes...really are like that.

Marcella tosses the photos on the table. Jamie picks them up and looks through them. He smiles.

JAMIE

I thought I was hiding it.

Now he looks into Marcella's eyes, and his eyes begin to shine, brighter and brighter...and suddenly the room is flooded with light and

MARCELLA is out the door and running, crying as she stumbles down the stairs, races along the hall and out into the cool night air, runs down the steps of the brownstone, crosses the street and disappears around the corner.

INT. MARCELLA'S ROOM - NIGHT - Marcella is sitting on the edge of her bed with a far off look. Jamie's revelation has been too much for her to grasp. There's a knock on the door.

MRS. FUENTES (o.s.)

Honey? What's wrong? Can I come in?

MARCELLA

(starting to cry)

I'm okay, mom.

MRS. FUENTES (o.s.)

I can't stand to hear you cry like that.

She opens the door and comes in.

MRS. FUENTES

Baby, what's wrong?

She sits on the bed and holds Marcella who begins sobbing.

MARCELLA

I feel so alone, momma, I don't know anything anymore...

MRS. FUENTES

Shhh...it's alright, honey, I'm here, I love you and it's alright...

MARCELLA
Momma? You know what's wrong with
living here? It's too bright...you
can't see the stars...

Mrs. Fuentes holds her daughter tighter and smooths her hair as
she tries not to cry also...

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY - Magic, Socrates, Fakhim and several other
gang members are doing business.

MOOSE approaches.

MAGIC
Hey, the Moose! Come over here!

MOOSE ambles over, smiling.

MOOSE
How ya doin,' Mag?

MAGIC
Good, my man, real good. You want
some stuff?

MOOSE
Nah, I ain't into that no more, it
was hurtin' my game...

MAGIC
Hey, c'mon, Moosie, you need a
little boost. Tell you what,
I'll give you a discount.

Magic takes a vial out of his pocket and offers it to Moose.

MAGIC
Ten percent off the regular price.

MOOSE
No, man, I'm off the stuff, I gotta
think about my future. See you at
practice.

Moose strolls up the steps as

HUGGER approaches.

MAGIC
Hug, where you been?

HUGGER
Workin' out, liftin' a ton...

MAGIC

Got somethin' for you...

HUGGER

(holds up hands)

No thanks, I'm stayin' clean. I'm even off steroids.

Hugger waves and goes up the steps.

MAGIC

What's goin' on? Business stinks.

SOCRATES

I think it's that kid, Jamie.

MAGIC

What?

SOCRATES

Ever since he said no, lotta our regs quit.

FAKHIM

You know somethin'? The man's got a point, man.

MAGIC

What do you know?

FAKHIM

Emoline's girlfriend told her everybody thinks this Jamie's the cat's ass, he's like a hero or somethin'.

MAGIC

That what you think, 'Fuckhim'?

FAKHIM

Hey, man, my name's Fakhim, don't mess with my name!

MAGIC

What?

Magic pushes Fakhim who whips out a knife.

FAKHIM

You stop treatin' me like shit, ya hear?
I ain't shit!

MAGIC backs off.

MAGIC

Hey, hey, hold it, hold it, c'mon,
whata we doin,' fightin' each other.
We got a common enemy, right? Let's
nail the right asshole!

Fakhim holds Magic's gaze, then relaxes and puts his knife away.

MAGIC

C'mon, let's do somethin' about this.

Magic puts his arm around Fakhim's shoulder as they head into the school building.

INT. HALL - DAY - Magic is talking to Socrates and some other gang members.

MAGIC

Pass the word around. Anybody, and
I mean anybody, so much as say's 'boo'
to Palacios or has anything to do
with him, has to answer to me. Do it!

The gang members split up and now we SEE them all over school, spreading the word, talking to every student they meet, passing on Magic's directive.

INT. HALL - DAY - Jamie, on his way to class, passes

ROBERT who's coming toward him.

JAMIE

Hi, Rob!

Robert looks the other way and continues on without saying a word. Jamie stops and watches him walk away.

ANOTHER PART OF THE HALL - Jamie passes students who give him lots of space. Magic's plan to isolate him is working. Even

SHEP turns and walks the other way when he sees Jamie coming. Jamie runs and catches up with him.

JAMIE

Hey, Shep, what's up?

SHEP

(under his breath)

Magic's passed the word. Anyone seen talking to you will be pulverized.

JAMIE

Thanks for telling me.

JAMIE goes in the other direction to protect his friend. Shep realizes what a shit he's being, stops and lowers his head in shame.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY - Jamie is sitting at a table alone. Students purposely pass by. Several of Magic's gang are monitoring the lunchroom and everybody knows it.

SHEP approaches the table, starts to go by, then stops. He thinks a moment, sighs, then sits down beside his friend.

SHEP

What am I worrying about? I'm 17, I've had a full, happy life, I've seen it all, I'm ready for death city.

JAMIE

Shep, you'd better not sit here.

ROBERT approaches the table, looks around, then also sits.

ROBERT

What could be more fun than expiring with friends?

MOOSE and HUGGER are walking together. They see the table, come over and sit.

HUGGER

Nobody tells me who I can be friends with.

MOOSE

I concur.

Other students join Jamie, mostly male, until Jamie's table is as full as any others in the lunchroom.

JAMIE

(looking around the table)

Thanks.

Nobody speaks as they eat in silence.

SOCRATES and two gang members approach the table.

SOCRATES

(to Jamie)

We got a message for you. Magic wants to invite you and your 'friends' to a little party in the gym...after dark... 'bout ten o'clock.

JAMIE

Thank you, Socrates, we decline.

SOCRATES

(staring blankly)

You what?

SHEP

Decline. It means no. It's an English word of seven letters which is probably why you don't know it because your vocabulary doesn't go any higher than four-letter words.

Shep smiles sweetly at Socrates.

HUGGER

I think we should take 'em up on their little offer...whatta you think, Moose?

MOOSE

That's cool, man, there's only room for one Magic on the globe, and he ain't it.

JAMIE

(to guys at table)

Magic doesn't make the rules. (to Socrates) Tell him no. He wants to talk, tell him I'll talk anytime.

SOCRATES looks at Jamie, scans the table contemptuously, then walks away with his buddies.

SHEP

I don't know, Jamie, maybe we should do it, settle it once and for all.

ROBERT

My dad's got a shillelegh, it's as good as a baseball bat, I could use that!

MOOSE scowls and stares hard at Robert.

MOOSE

A what?

ROBERT

A shillelegh, it's an Irish walking stick.

MOOSE
 (laughing)
 "Shillelley?" Man, what'll they think
 of next!

SHEP
 How about it, Jamie?

JAMIE
 No. This is between myself and
 Magic...

CUT TO:

CAFETERIA as the bell sounds ending the lunch period. The guys
 at Jamie's table are leaving. Moose is one of the last to
 go.

MOOSE
 Stay cool, Jame, my man. You got
 a lot of friends you don't know about.

JAMIE
 Thanks, Moose.

Only Shep is still seated at the table.

JAMIE
 Have you seen Marse?

SHEP
 No. She must have stayed home today.

Shep is nervous; Jamie notices.

JAMIE
 Shep, I know you have a lot of
 questions about me...Marse can
 explain everything. I have to go
 now.

JAMIE leaves the cafeteria as

SHEP looks after him.

INT. HALL - DAY - Socrates is at his locker. Jamie approaches.

JAMIE
 Take a message to Magic. Tell him
 I'll meet him in the gym--alone.
 Those are my terms.

SOCRATES
 I'll pass the word.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - DAY - Shep is alone in the office working behind one of the desks. He glances up to be sure no one's coming, then dials a number.

INTERCUT with Marcella in a robe, looking frazzled.

MARCELLA

Hello?

SHEP

Hi, Marse, it's Shep. Are you sick?

MARCELLA

No, I just...

SHEP

What happened with Jamie last night?

MARCELLA

He told me the truth. (long pause)
I wish he hadn't.

SHEP

What did he tell you?

SHEP looks up as the Registrar opens the door but pauses before entering as she finishes a conversation with a student.

SHEP (cont'd)

I gotta go! I'm dying to hear what Jamie told you, I've got a dental appointment after school, then I have to go to a dinner dad's alumni group from Berkley is giving, but I'll call you as soon as I get home.

THE REGISTRAR enters the office. Shep is all business.

SHEP (cont'd)

Thanks, Mrs. Wilcox, I'll give Petie the message.

He hangs up and smiles at the Registrar.

REGISTRAR

What was that all about?

SHEP

Peter Wilcox's mom wants me to give him a message after school.

The Registrar looks at her watch.

REGISTRAR

That's now, time for you to go.

Shep looks at his watch as the school bell rings.

SHEP

So it is, so it is! Well, I'm off to the dentist. If you never see me again, you'll know it's because I got drilled! A little joke, very little, they can't all be winners. Ta ta.

Shep waves to the Registrar and leaves the office.

INT. HALL - DAY - Socrates sees Magic walking toward him and runs to meet him.

SOCRATES

Hey, Mag? Got a message for you!

MAGIC

Who from?

SOCRATES

Palacios. Says he'll meet you in the gym tonight, just you and him.

MAGIC

(laughs)

Yeah? He's stupid enough to do that. We'll surprise him. I want everybody there, spread the word.

SUE ELLA has overheard Magic's last remarks. She hurries on by.

INT. REGISTRAR'S OFFICE - Sue Ella enters.

SUE ELLA

Mrs. Mervyn, is Shep around?

REGISTRAR

Sorry, Sue, you just missed him. Said he had a dental appointment.

SUE ELLA

Darn! Okay, thanks Mrs. Mervyn.

SUE ELLA exits the office, looks up and down the hall, and SEES a classmate.

SUE ELLA

Donna? Have you seen Jamie Palacios?

DONNA

Who?

SUE ELLA

You know, the boy Magic's after.

DONNA

Oh, him. Huh uh. Sorry.

SUE ELLA

Okay, thanks.

SUE ELLA walks quickly down the hall looking for someone to tell what she's overheard.

INT. HALL - DAY - Stash is at his locker as Fakhim hurries up.

FAKHIM

Hey, Stash! Where you been lately?

STASH

Ah, you know, tryin' to keep up with the studies. What's happenin'?

FAKHIM

Magic's meetin' Palacios tonight in the gym. Palacios thinks it's just gonna be the two of 'em, but we gonna surprise him.

STASH

That sounds like a fair fight.

FAKHIM

Magic wants you there.

STASH

I'll be there.

STASH watches Fakhim go. He hesitates, makes a decision, quickly closes his locker and starts off down the hall.

INT. HALL BY STAIRS - Stash appears and looks around. He SEES ROBERT coming toward him.

STASH

Hey, kid? You know where I can find Palacios?

ROBERT

(obviously afraid)

No, I haven't seen him.

STASH

If you do, tell him I gotta talk
to him.

ROBERT

Sure, okay.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY - Jamie is talking to his guardian.

ELDER

Tonight?

ROBERT

Yes.

ELDER

And if you fail, you're prepared
for the consequences?

JAMIE

Yes. I wish I knew more.

ELDER

I'm sure you'll do the right thing.
You've been carefully taught. Be
well, be strong. The reward is
worth the risk.

THE ELDER pats Jamie's shoulder, then leaves him. Jamie, deeply
troubled and filled with doubt, watches him go.

STASH appears in front of the school, looks over the crowd of
STUDENTS but just misses Jamie who's disappeared around the
corner.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH ON STREET - Sue Ella has just made a call.

INTERCUT WITH MARCELLA

SUE ELLA

Hi, Marse, it's Sue. I heard
something I thought you should know.
It's about Jamie.

MARCELLA

What is it?

SUE ELLA

Socrates and Magic were talking in
the hall about seeing Jamie tonight
at ten. Jamie thinks he's meeting
Magic alone, but the whole gang's
going to be there.

MARCELLA

Did you tell Shep or any of Jamie's friends?

SUE ELLA

No, I just heard at the end of school, everybody'd gone home. I thought maybe you'd know how to reach Jamie.

MARCELLA

Where are they supposed to meet?

SUE ELLA

The gym.

MARCELLA

Okay. Thanks a lot, Sue.

MARCELLA hangs up, thinks a minute, then dials a number.

MARCELLA

(into receiver)

Hi, Mrs. Blankenship, this is Marcella. Do you know when Shep will be home tonight? (nodding)...It's real important that I talk to him before ten...okay, thanks.

MARCELLA hangs up, throws on some jeans, a sweater and a pair of sneakers, grabs a jacket and runs out the door.

EXT. JAMIE'S STREET - DAY - Marcella hurries up the steps to Jamie's apartment house, enters the vestibule and rings his buzzer. There's no answer. She rings again and again, still nothing.

CUT TO:

INT. JAMIE'S ROOM - DAY - As the buzzer continues to RING, we SEE that the

BLINDS are drawn and now we're looking at the

CEILING and we see flickering light, as if from a fire - and we slowly move down the wall until we're looking at

JAMIE'S REFLECTION in a mirror on the dresser. He is sitting in the center of the floor surrounded by golden candelsticks--and as we slowly come around face to face with him, his eyes begin to shine and we SEE

FIGURES MOVING as in a ceremony--and

JAMIE is being prepared for his rite of passage. A

HIGH PRIEST is blessing him as the elders watch. Jamie's head is bowed. The elders pass by him in ceremonial robes...and the last one carries a crown.

LAST ELDER

(his voice echos)

During your test, you will be asked three questions. If you answer them correctly and behave accordingly, you will pass...and this will be your reward.

He holds up the

CROWN...it begins to radiate light brighter and brighter and suddenly we are in the

VESTIBULE of Jamie's building as Marcella gives up and goes out the door.

EXT. JAMIE'S BUILDING - Marcella comes down the stairs and runs up the street.

EXT. BROADWAY - DAY - Marcella rounds the corner, runs uptown and enters her building.

EXT. MARCELLA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - ESTABLISH

INT. MARCELLA'S APARTMENT - DAY - Marcella flies into the living room as her mom comes out of the kitchen dressed in a business suit carrying a bag of groceries.

MRS. FUENTES

I just got in. I thought you were going to stay in bed today.

MARCELLA

Mom, Jamie's in terrible danger and I don't know what to do! He's not at home, Shep's not going to be back 'til late, I don't know who to call---

MRS. FUENTES

---Whoa, whoa, slow down! What's the problem?

MARCELLA

Jamie's walking into a trap tonight at the gym, it's Magic and his gang, and they'll kill him, I know they will! I can't reach anybody, I

MARCELLA (cont'd)
 don't know how to reach any of the
 teachers---Mom, what can we do---?!

Mrs. Fuentes puts the bag of groceries on the table, walks to
 the phone, looks up a number in her address book and dials.

MRS. FUENTES
 Yes, my name is Fuentes, I live at
 2410 Broadway, Apartment 3C. My
 daughter attends the West Side High
 School, she just told me there's going
 to be some kind of gang fight tonight
 at school...I don't know, hold on.
 (to Marcella)
 What time?

MARCELLA
 Ten o'clock!

MRS. FUENTES
 (into the receiver)
 Ten o'clock...yes...thank you, officer,
 we appreciate it.

She hangs up.

MRS. FUENTES (cont'd)
 He said they'd send a squad car
 around tonight to check it out.

MARCELLA
 That's all?

MRS. FUENTES
 I don't know what more they can do,
 honey, it's only six o'clock.

Marcella begins pacing.

MARCELLA
 You think anybody'd be left at
 school? One of the teachers?

MRS. FUENTES
 Not this late...

MARCELLA runs to the door.

MARCELLA
 I've got to go there and see, I'll
 be back in a minute!

MRS. FUENTES
 Marcella! Wait, let's call the
 school and---

Marse is out the door as her mother throws her hands in the air.

EXT. JAMIE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING - ESTABLISH

EXT. ROOF - Jamie is leaning on the wall looking at the city...
 the sky...we see

HIS FACE...he is having a battle with fear and his own sense
 of inadequacy about his ability to meet and master his coming
 ordeal.

Suddenly he begins to hyperventilate, perspiration covers his
 face, he drops to his knees, then sits on the tar roof and leans
 with his back against the wall, his face to the sky, his eyes
 closed. It's as if he's been kicked in the stomach. After a
 moment of extreme agony, it passes, his face becomes calm, he
 opens his eyes and looks at the sky.

EXT. STREET - EVENING - Marcella is running east now towards the
 school. She passes a playground and a number of double-parked
 automobiles, one of which belongs to

SOCRATES who's washing the car beside an open fire hydrant
 gushing water. Several other

GANG MEMBERS are lounging on benches in the playground adjacent
 to the street.

SOCRATES
 (seeing Marcella)
 Hey, hey, hey! Ooo, ooo! Hey, baby?
 Where's your boyfriend?

The other gang members join Socrates in his harassment.

MARCELLA ignores the insults and runs on toward the school.

SOCRATES
 (looking after her)
 HEY! DON'T YOU WANNA TALK TO ME?
 (to his buddies)
 C'mon, let's take a ride!

His friends run to the car and jump in. Socrates hops behind
 the driver's seat and can't find his keys.

SOCRATES
 Where's the keys for Christ's sake?

EXT. STREET - EVENING - Marcella passes Amsterdam on the run and continues east until she arrives at the school building. The door is locked. She pounds on it to no avail, then tries another door with same result.

EXT. SIDE STREET - Marcella checks for other possible means of entry into the building but, finding none, she walks back toward the front of the school.

SOCRATES' CAR - He finds his key, turns on the ignition and speeds off after

MARCELLA, now back at the school's entrance. She tries the front door again, bangs on it and waits. No one comes. She's about to start around the corner to the other side of the building when Socrates' car approaches slowly.

SOCRATES

Hey, Marcella? Wanna go for a ride?

LUIS

Yeah, ride this!

His buddies laugh as Socrates leans out the window and says

SOCRATES

C'mon, baby, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon!

MARCELLA is frightened...but she's also mad.

MARCELLA

(under her breath)

Assholes.

THE CAR stops at the corner.

SOCRATES

Hey, c'mon, Marsellabella, I wanna make you feel good...real good....

MARCELLA

Go away, jerk!

SOCRATES

Jerk? Me? I ain't no jerk!

LUIS makes masturbating gestures.

LUIS

Jerk! Jerk! Jerk! Jerk!

His two buddies laugh.

SOCRATES

All me and my friends want to do is have a good time! Let's play some games.

MARCELLA'S anger is overcoming her fear.

MARSELLA

Go play with yourself!

LUIS

He does that all the time, right Socky?

SOCRATES is getting a little pissed himself.

SOCRATES

Not right, asshole! I don't need that, I get all I want without it.

LUIS

Yeah, sure..!

MARCELLA gives up trying to rouse anyone in school and starts walking downtown.

SOCRATES moves the car slowly alongside her.

LUIS

Hey, Socky? Ask her if she wants to play with my dick.

SOCRATES

Hey, that ain't no way to talk to a lady.

LUIS

How do you talk to a lady?

SOCRATES

You say, 'Do you wanna play with my dick, please!'

They howl as

MARCELLA stops and faces them down.

MARCELLA

You're so brave, aren't you? Four big, brave men against one female. Those are the odds you like, aren't they? If you ever had to stand up one to one with a man, you'd run and hide behind momma's skirts!

MARCELLA (cont'd)
That's why you're all ganging up
on Jamie tonight, isn't it?
Because you're all cowards!

LUIS
Hey, man, she knows!

MARCELLA continues walking downtown. She reaches a cross street
and turns west toward Broadway.

LUIS
Whatta we gonna do about it, man?
She'll tell her boyfriend!

Socrates is momentarily thrown.

SOCRATES
Maybe she did already...

LUIS
Then what's she doin' comin' back to
school? C'MON, MAN, WHATTA WE GONNA DO?

SOCRATES guns the engine and drives up on the corner cutting off
Marcella's path.

SOCRATES
GET HER!

Luis and his buddies jump out of the car and grab Marcella who
begins SCREAMING. She kicks one in the shins and knees another
in the groin and runs.

SOCRATES
C'mon! C'mon! She's getting away!

The three gang members jump back into the car as Socrates backs
up, shifts to first and SCREECHES off after Marcella who is
running down the street.

LUIS
Hurry, man, hurry!

MARCELLA reaches Amsterdam Avenue, and though the light is red,
threads the needle through traffic to the other side of the
Avenue as cars HONK and drivers YELL. She turns uptown and
continues running as

THE CAR speeds to the intersection, slows at the red, but goes
on through. Rush hour is over but traffic is still considerable

and the gang car narrowly escapes hitting oncoming vehicles as it knifes over to the far side of Amsterdam and continues uptown after

MARCELLA who looks back, SEES the car, and crosses to the other side of the avenue. Inside the

GANG CAR, Luis SEES Marcella cut over.

LUIS

She cut over!

THE GANG CAR slices from the far left lane to the far right lane as several cabs HONK, the drivers YELL.

MARCELLA turns around and runs back up the sidewalk the other way.

THE GANG CAR SCREECHES to a halt--it's nearly rear ended by a guy in a limousine who BLASTS his horn.

LUIS

Whatta ya doin'?

SOCRATES

She ain't gettin' away!

Socrates waves the limo around, then jams the car in reverse. All the cars in the lane behind him have gone around and due to a red light, the street behind him is empty. Socrates shoves the pedal to the floor as he backs up the entire block narrowly missing several pedestrians jaywalking. The car catches up with

MARCELLA at the end of the block who runs up a side street.

THE CAR jerks to a stop, Socrates shifts to drive and the car shoots forward, whips around the corner and quickly catches Marcella. The car SQUEALS to a stop just ahead of her, Luis and the others jump out and chase her and she's SCREAMING now as she runs toward Columbus Avenue and SEES

TWO WOMEN walking her way and she YELLS

MARCELLA

HELP! HELP ME!

and the two women stop and watch horrified as Luis and the other gang members grab Marcella and drag her SCREAMING into the street as

SOCRATES opens the back door and the gang throw Marcella into the back seat.

MARCELLA jumps out of the car on the other side but Luis runs

around, grabs her and pulls her back in.

SOCRATES floors the pedal as a MAN on the other side of the street who has seen the kidnapping runs into the street and stares off after the disappearing car.

ONE OF TWO WOMEN
(shouting to Man)
DID YOU GET THE LICENSE NUMBER?

MAN
(shouting back)
NO, BUT I CAN DESCRIBE THE CAR!

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CAR Marcella is screaming and fighting the three gang members in the back seat.

LUIS
Whatta we gonna do with her?

SOCRATES
Take her to Magic!

LUIS
Hey! Like a hostage, right?

SOCRATES
Yeah...then we have some fun...

EXT. STREET - The car speeds to Columbus and disappears around the corner.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET ACROSS FROM SCHOOL - NIGHT - Jamie approaches the school, then stops. The building looms forbodingly. He glances at his

WATCH. It reads 9:50. He crosses the street.

EXT. SCHOOL - NIGHT - Jamie tries the door, it's unlocked. He looks around, then enters the school, closing the door behind him.

INT. HALL - NIGHT - No lights are on anywhere in the school. Jamie goes slowly down the hall, turns a corridor, and continues on, finally arriving at the

GYM FRONT DOOR. It's locked. He looks for another way in, realizes there's an entrance from the basement, goes toward the stairs and takes them into the

INT. BASEMENT - He follows the basement corridor until he reaches

A DOOR, goes inside, passes through several more doors until he comes to an iron circular staricase spiralling upward. He slowly takes the stairs and comes out in a

HALLWAY. He follows this to the pair of

DOUBLE DOORS, goes through them and is in the

GYM. It's as black as the inside of a tomb. As his eyes adjust, however, he sees a small amount of light filtering through from the windows facing the street. He walks cautiously under one of the baskets and out into center court. He looks around at

THE STANDS,

THE FAR COURT,

THE SIDELINES and sees nothing but blackness.

A BASKETBALL bounces out of the shadows toward

JAMIE who sidesteps it and watches as it slowly rolls into the darkness at the

FAR END OF THE COURT. A beat, and

A FIGURE steps out of the shadows holding the basketball...and slowly walks toward Jamie in the center of the gym...and when the Figure gets to within 20 paces, it stops, its face still in darkness. Suddenly 34 to 40 powerful

FLASHLIGHTS flick on creating a circle of light around the two figures standing at the gym's center...and we now SEE

JAMIE AND MAGIC facing each other.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - A squad car cruises by the front of the school and shines a spotlight on the doors and windows.

INT. SQUAD CAR

OFFICER ONE

Looks quiet.

OFFICER TWO

Let's try in back.

The squad car turns the corner, cruises slowly down the side street shining the light on the

WINDOWS of the school building. No sign of life...however the
 LAST WINDOW has been forced open slightly but the policeman's
 spotlight snaps off before they come to it.

OFFICER ONE (o.s.)
 False alarm.

OFFICER TWO (o.s.)
 We'll check it later.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET as the squad car moves down the street.

INT. GYM - Jamie and Magic stand facing each other, the many
 pinpoints of light creating an eerie effect...

MAGIC
 Where's your gang?

JAMIE
 I don't have a gang.

MAGIC
 (looks around circle)
 I do...

and Magic is looking at Jamie now, the flashlights giving
 Magic's face a grotesque appearance...

INT. BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT - Forty to fifty people are sitting
 around tables listening to a SPEAKER intoning on and on.
 They've had dinner earlier and some are still sipping coffee.

SHEP AND HIS DAD are seated at a table with some other people.
 Shep yawns, glances at his

WATCH which reads 10:00.

SPEAKER
 ...our coffers are not overflowing
 but they're adequate to meet our
 current fiscal responsibilities...
 and I hate to bring up the subject,
 but many of us are up in years and
 our deaths can be a benefit to our
 school...through trusts set up in
 our memory...these trusts would...

SHEP
 (whispers)
 Dad, I've got to make a call.

MR. BLANKENSHIP

Go ahead. Sorry, I didn't know this was going to take all night.

SHEP

That's okay. (to others at table)
Excuse me.

SHEP gets up, leaves the banquet room, and goes into

THE OUTSIDE HALL, looks for and SEES

A PHONE at the end of the hall, hurries to it, drops in a coin and dials.

INTERCUT between Shep and Mrs. Fuentes as the

PHONE RINGS in Marcella's apartment. Mrs. Fuentes, distraught, hurries over and answers it.

MRS. FUENTES

Marcella?

SHEP

No, Mrs. Fuentes, this is Shep.
Where's Marse?

MRS. FUENTES

I'm very worried about her, Shep, she ran out of here four hours ago to go over to school and try to find a teacher and she didn't come back.

SHEP

Why did she go to school, what's going on?

MRS. FUENTES

Something about Jamie being in trouble, meeting Magic's gang alone tonight at the school, she wanted to warn Jamie---

SHEP

---Wait a minute, Mrs. Fuentes, Jamie's not going, I was there when he told---

MRS. FUENTES

---he evidently changed his mind, someone told Marcella about it. Shep, I'm very worried!

SHEP

Okay, okay, I'm going over there and see if I can get in or find out what's going on. Call the police again, I'll let you know what I find out as soon as I can.

MRS. FUENTES

Thank you, Shep.

MRS. FUENTES hangs up and dials another number as

SHEP runs down the hall, dashes into the

BANQUET ROOM, and hurries to his dad as everyone turns and stares.

SHEP

Dad! I have to go to school, Marcella's in trouble!

MR. BLANKENSHIP

I'll drive you.

Shep's dad looks at the Speaker.

MR. BLANKENSHIP

Sorry, Wally, emergency.

He follows Shep who runs out the door and we're back in

THE GYM as the two warriors stand in the arc of light surrounding them.

JAMIE slowly looks around the circle. His eyes are calm and he seems to have overcome the anguish he was experiencing earlier. Even the gang doesn't faze him. His gaze comes to rest on Magic.

JAMIE

(softly)

There's no need for us to fight.

MAGIC

Yeah?

JAMIE

I have no animosity towards you.

MAGIC

Not yet you don't. That may change.

JAMIE

I meant it when I said I want to be
your friend.

JAMIE walks up to Magic and offers his hand. Magic spits on it.
Jamie looks at the

HAND with spittle dripping off it, then back to Magic.

MAGIC

We ain't never gonna be friends,
asshole!

He slaps Jamie...

MAGIC (cont'd)

We come from different worlds,
asshole!

...another slap...

MAGIC (cont'd)

You're not one of my people,
asshole!

...and again. He's been backing Jamie up.

MAGIC (cont'd)

You gonna fight me like a man or
should we put a dress on you before
I take you apart, ASSHOLE!?

He starts to slap Jamie a fourth time but Jamie grabs his hand
and holds it in an iron grip...and tightens it.

MAGIC is stunned at Jamie's quickness and power.

JAMIE

Physical combat is the last resort
of my people.

MAGIC

Well, it's the first resort of mine!

He spins and delivers a lethal kick but Jamie leaps away and the
kick catches only air.

MAGIC again is caught off guard by this maneuver as Jamie lands
easily a few feet away.

CUT TO:

THE GYM'S DOUBLE DOORS - There is a slight noise as one of the
doors opens and we SEE

STASH enter unobserved by the other gang members...he takes in his surroundings, then takes out a knife and now we're back on

JAMIE who is looking steadily at Magic.

JAMIE

I still want to be your friend.

MAGIC

(in a rage)

You don't get it, do you? I hate you! I hate your friends! I hate everything about you! I WANT YOU DEAD!

MAGIC pulls out a knife and lunges at Jamie who easily sidesteps him.

JAMIE

I have no choice then.

We HEAR a noise and SEE

A KNIFE sliding across the floor. It comes to rest at Jamie's feet. Before

JAMIE can pick it up, Magic lunges at him again, his knife flashing, but Jamie dives, sommersaults across the floor under Magic's weapon, grabs the knife on the floor and does a nip-up to his feet.

CUT TO:

A MIDTOWN GARAGE where Shep and his dad are waiting for their car. At least a dozen people are ahead of them.

SHEP

Dad, I can't wait, I'm going to get a cab...

Shep runs into

THE STREET.

MR. BLANKENSHIP

I'll meet you at the school! You have money?

SHEP

Yes!

A cab SCREECHES to a stop, Shep jumps in, the cabbie's FOR HIRE sign goes off, the cab speeds away.

INT. GYM as the fight begins. The two combatants circle each other.

NOTE: Jamie's battle is defensive. He uses offense only when confronted by some unexpected chicanery posed by Magic. Also, Jamie's mode of fighting should be something unique and not the ordinary martial arts components. He is self-contained, his movements are spare and succinct.

MAGIC jabs, Jamie deflects. The knives pick up the flashlight beams, reflecting bright splashes of light on the ceiling and walls of the gym. On one of the

FLASHES we see a long pole with a metal hook on the end hanging on the wall. This pole is used to open the windows higher up.

MAGIC swings at Jamie's face, and again Jamie deflects the blow.

MAGIC does a series of quick spin/kicks, each one expertly avoided by Jamie, who then counters with an acrobatic somersault to the side putting him about ten yards away.

JAMIE

Over here, Magic!

As Magic spins in the direction of Jamie's voice, Jamie somersaults high over Magic's head.

JAMIE (cont'd)

Over here!

MAGIC spins again as Jamie does a third leap placing him behind his opponent.

JAMIE (cont'd)

Magic!

Magic whirls in a circle frantically trying to locate his enemy.

A figure steps forward holding a flashlight, its face hidden in shadow.

SOCRATES

You want help, Magic?

MAGIC

NO!

Socrates steps back into the circle as Magic locates Jamie and charges him. Jamie drops to his knees; Magic sails over him and lands against the gym's far side, ramming his head against the wall. Magic clears his head, then looks at Jamie, his eyes narrow.

MAGIC

Where's your girlfriend, Jamie?

JAMIE

What?

A figure slowly walks out of the darkness--and at first we can't see who it is, but now we can make out

MARCELLA, her hair disheveled, her blouse torn so that her breasts are exposed. She's only wearing a slip. She stumbles painfully to the center of light.

JAMIE looks on ~~horrified~~ as she stops near him, her head bowed. He slowly goes to her, removes his jacket and wraps it around her, then lifts her head gently. Her face is tear-stained, her eyes filled with humiliation and pain...and we're close on

JAMIE'S FACE and for the first time, we see etched there the vestige of hate. Jamie whirls, stares at Magic as Magic gets to his feet, faces Jamie and smiles.

MAGIC

She's a great lay, Jamie. Still
wanna be my friend?

Jamie runs at Magic and, still five yards away, jumps in the air. Magic tries to avoid him but it's too late as Jamie arrives in mid-flight, feet first, and delivers a powerful kick to Magic's chest (an Argentine Rocca maneuver).

JAMIE lands on his side and hops up quickly but Magic doesn't get up. Jamie steps to him, grabs his leg, spins him in a circle and throws Magic half-way across the gym.

MAGIC slams into some of his gang knocking several flashlights into the air...they soar dizzily up, then come down and skitter noisily across the gym floor...and before anyone can move,

JAMIE somersaults across the gym, lifts Magic over his head and we sense that Jamie can kill him easily by throwing him to ground...and again we're close on

JAMIE'S RAGE-FILLED FACE...but before he can crush Magic, we hear, as though in an echo chamber, a voice saying

ELDER (o.s.)

WHO IS THE ENEMY?

Jamie stops. He's near tears from seeing Marcella--he's forgotten all about the test. He tries to clear his head, to think, but he's having a struggle resisting the urge to follow his animal instinct and revenge Marcella.

JAMIE

Why was she involved? Why did this
have to happen, I wasn't ready for---

Once again the Elder's voice reverberates, commanding Jamie's
attention:

ELDER (o.s.)

---WHO IS THE ENEMY?

JAMIE blinks back tears, lowers his head--and when he lifts it,
he's regained some of his control. When he speaks, it's as
though he's remembering his teaching, but this is a difficult
transition for him.

JAMIE

The enemy is...has to be...hate...
my own...hate...

Jamie holds Magic aloft a little longer, then lowers him to the
floor. Magic reacts by kicking Jamie in the stomach. Jamie
goes down.

JAMIE

(to himself)

Hate...hate is the enemy...not Magic...
it's not Magic...

Jamie gets to his feet slowly and faces Magic who grabs Marcella
and puts his knife to her throat.

MAGIC

You fight me to the end or she dies.
Now!

MARCELLA whimpers, tries to fight back tears. Jamie holds up
his hands.

JAMIE

Alright. Alright. Let her go.

Magic releases his grip on Marcella and takes the knife from her
throat. Jamie and Magic square off again.

EXTERIOR 63RD AND BROADWAY - NIGHT - Traffic near Lincoln Center
is snarled as the shows let out.

EXTERIOR SHEP'S CAB - Shep is going crazy.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

SHEP
I'll give you a twenty dollar tip
if you'll get us out of this!

THE CAB DRIVER, a Haitian, turns around, his eyes wide.

CAB DRIVER
Twenty dollar? You dot it, mon!

EXT. STREET - The cab, first at the red light, takes off like a shot without waiting for it to turn green, flies recklessly over the curb and up onto the sidewalk as

PEDESTRIANS scatter and yell and jump out of the way and at the next intersection the cab shoots into the intersection, turns right and continues through another red light at 65th Street, barely misses cars, careens toward the park, side-swipes another cab, speeds over to Central Park West, SCREECHES around the corner barely making it, and barrellasses it uptown.

INT. GYM - The fighters circle each other. Magic attacks suddenly--Jamie throws him effortlessly over his shoulder and as Magic lands, Jamie is upon him, grabs his knife hand and twists it behind Magic's back. He takes the knife away and stands in front of Magic, holding both knives as Magic gets slowly to his feet. Jamie's eyes have again lost their humanity, and as Magic reaches a standing position, we're close on Jamie's face and just as he seems about ready to plunge both knives into his opponent, once again we hear the voice of the Elder echoing inside Jamie.

ELDER (o.s.)
WHAT ARE THE WARRIOR KING'S TWO
GREATEST WEAPONS?

JAMIE again is startled. He almost seems to resent these intrusions on his battle. He has to struggle to subdue this powerful negative emotion--but he does--then looks at the knives and says...

JAMIE
His weapons are...are...(and as the truth dawns on him, he says with quiet humility)...his weapons are...innocence...and purity.

Jamie throws the knives into the bleachers as Magic slams him in the face. Jamie backs away.

MAGIC
Do you know how many of us banged
your girlfriend?

Magic kicks Jamie in the stomach.

MAGIC

There was me...and Socrates...

He slams Jamie in the ribs.

MAGIC

...and Luis...and Carlo...and...

He hits Jamie on each name.

SOCRATES, on the sidelines by the windows, SEES the window pole hooked on the wall, and grabs it.

SOCRATES

MAGIC!

MAGIC turns, Socrates throws him the weapon, he catches it.

JAMIE has fallen to the floor...we see his eyes...and he's lost it. He can't resist Magic's taunts. He looks up at Magic as Magic raises the pole to plunge the hook into Jamie's chest--but Jamie evades the thrust with an acrobatic move, then proceeds to take Magic apart with kicks, blows, punches, head slams, ending the barrage holding Magic in a death choke-hold. As he begins tightening his grasp, and as Magic's eyes begin to pop out, the Elder's voice speaks within Jamie, stating the last question.

ELDER (o.s.)

WHAT IS THE FINAL DEED OF THE
WARRIOR KING?

Jamie continues choking Magic.

ELDER (o.s.)

WHAT IS THE FINAL DEED OF THE
WARRIOR KING?

JAMIE tightens his grip, ignoring the voice, his eyes blank...

ELDER (o.s.)

(with great authority)

WHAT IS THE FINAL DEED OF THE
WARRIOR KING?

and we are close on

JAMIE'S FACE as the question begins to sink in. He struggles to overcome his desire to kill Magic. As the realization sinks in of what the last question means, Jamie's face relaxes, his grip on Magic loosens, and he says simply

JAMIE

The final deed of the warrior king...
is to show mercy.

JAMIE releases Magic who is struggling to stay conscious. Jamie gets up slowly and stands looking at Magic...who comes to, rests a moment on his hands and knees, then gets to his feet. Someone tosses Magic a knife...he stares at Jamie for a long beat, then says

MAGIC

You should have killed me when you
had the chance.

He walks over and slashes Jamie's arm.

MAGIC

Your mercy's your weakness.

JAMIE

(smiles)

No it's not. It's my strength.

MAGIC slashes Jamie's other arm.

STASH steps out of the darkness.

STASH

Let him go.

Magic looks slowly at Stash.

MAGIC

No way.

STASH

He had you beat.

MAGIC

That's why he dies. Nobody beats
Magic.

Stash makes a threatening move toward Magic. Half a dozen of Magic's boys stand in his way.

SOCRATES holds a heavy chain which he swings at Stash.

STASH grabs the chain, pulls it out of Socrates' hands and swings it at the immediate group facing him. The group back away as Stash runs for the exit, grabbing Marcella on the way. He pulls her through the gym's double doors.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE GYM - Stash puts the chain through both door handles and loops it in a knot. The gang tries to force the door but it holds as Stash grabs Marcella's hand and they run down the hall.

INT. GYM - Jamie is now defenceless and won't defend himself. Magic has him and knows it. He slashes Jamie again, and we're looking into Jamie's eyes. He truly has no hatred toward Magic.

JAMIE

I still want to be your friend.

Magic roars with laughter.

SOCRATES

Who does he think he is, Jesus Christ?

MAGIC

Yeah. (getting an idea) Hey, yeah!

CUT TO:

Shep arrives in the cab and jumps out. As he's approaching the front of the school, he HEARS a noise near the door and scampers behind a car.

STASH AND MARCELLA come through the door. When Shep sees them, he steps from his hiding place.

SHEP

Marse!? What are you doing with him?

STASH

I don't have time to explain! Call the cops! I have to find some of Jamie's friends!

SHEP

Try the basketball court on the corner!

STASH runs toward the basketball court a few blocks away.

SHEP

What did they do to you?

Marcella begins to cry.

SHEP

Those sons of bitches!

MARCELLA

We've got to help Jamie, they'll kill him!

SHEP

There's a phone on the corner, c'mon!

They start for the corner as we

CUT TO:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - Stash crosses the street and runs to the park where the usual group of guys is having a game. These include Moose and Hugger.

STASH

Hey! Jamie needs your help, now!

MOOSE

What?

STASH

Jamie's alone in the gym with Magic and his gang!

HUGGER

You expect us to believe you?
(to his buddies) It's a trap, guys,
Stash is pullin' us into a---

STASH

---For Christ's sake, you gotta believe me! I split with Magic after what Jamie did for me!

Jamie's friends look at each other, then at Stash.

MOOSE

Let's go!

The guys run to the open gate and head down the street following Stash.

EXT. FRONT OF SCHOOL - Stash runs up the street followed by Jamie's friends--they enter through the front door.

EXT. SIDE STREET BY SCHOOL - The squad car cruises by again. They shine the light on the school windows and this time they SEE the broken window...and catch a quick glimpse of a light reflecting through one of the taller windows.

INT. SQUAD CAR -

OFFICER ONE

Hey! Somebody's in there!

The squad car pulls over, the two officers get out.

EXT. PAY PHONE ON THE CORNER - Shep's about to call 911 when he looks down the street and SEES

THE SQUAD CAR and the two officers.

SHEP

There they are! HEY! HEY!! OVER HERE!

Shep grabs Marcella's hand and together they start for the officers.

CUT TO:

EXT. GYM - DOUBLE DOORS - Stash and Jamie's friends arrive at the door. Stash undoes the chain.

INT. GYM - Dark and quiet. Stash and company enter and look around cautiously. They make their way to center court trying to see through the darkness. They hear a SOUND coming from the wall opposite the bleachers and start toward it.

FROM THEIR POV we move slowly ahead and we can see something on the wall...and as they approach we're on

STASH'S FACE which we can see from the slight light filtering in through the windows facing the street and suddenly Stash stops dead, his eyes widen.

STASH

Holy Christ!

Suddenly the flashlights flick on and we SEE Jamie hanging on the wall. He's been crucified. We can also see Jamie's friends bathed in the light from the flashlights.

MAGIC

Couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

Magic approaches out of the ring of light as Stash turns on him in a fury. In two deft movements, Stash slams the chain against Magic's right arm, breaking it, then the left arm, breaking that one too as

MAGIC'S GANG and Jamie's friends begin fighting and suddenly the

GYM LIGHTS flick on as the police arrive with Shep and Marcella, their guns drawn, and one of them FIRES into the air. The fighting stops.

OFFICER ONE

OKAY! EVERYBODY QUIET DOWN!

OFFICER TWO

My God, Billy, look on the wall!

OFFICER ONE looks at the wall and SEES

JAMIE hanging there as Marcella SCREAMS and runs to him. A ladder is close by with hammer and nails on it.

MARCELLA
GET HIM DOWN, FOR GOD'S SAKE, SOMEBODY
GET HIM DOWN!

While Officer One holds the gang at bay with his gun, Officer Two runs to Jamie's side, grabs the ladder and climbs it.

OFFICER TWO
CALL AN EMS TEAM, QUICK! HE'S STILL
ALIVE!

MOOSE runs out the door to make the call.

MAGIC trys to run but Hugger tackles him and holds him pinned to the ground.

Officer two climbs down from the ladder. He's visibly shaken.

OFFICER TWO
I can't get the nails out without
some help! (He turns on the gang)
I've seen some brutal things in
my 20 years in the streets, but this
is---(he has tears in his eyes)---
the son-of-a-bitch that did this
is going to rot in hell!

MARCELLA is hysterical as Shep holds her.

CUT TO:

THE GYM is swarming with police. An EMS team has gotten Jamie down and has him strapped on a stretcher. Marcella is bending over him. Jamie opens his eyes.

JAMIE
Hi, Marse...are you alright?

MARCELLA
Shhh...yes.

JAMIE
How'd I do?

MARCELLA
(fighting tears)
You were magnificent!

JAMIE

Is...Magic okay?

Jamie's eyes shine with brilliant light momentarily, then the light flickers and vanishes; he smiles, and dies.

Marcella goes to Shep, who's standing with his dad, and dissolves in his arms. He holds her as an EMS team wheels Jamie out of the gym and Bostick stands talking in subdued tones to a police officer.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MARCELLA'S BEDROOM - DAY - A doctor is standing with Mrs. Fuentes looking at Marcella who's lying in bed.

DOCTOR

She should sleep a long time. When she wakes she'll be hungry. Try some soup, nothing heavy.

MRS. FUENTES

She'll be alright, won't she doctor?

DOCTOR

Yes, she's young and healthy. She's going to need counseling, it was a brutal experience...

MARCELLA

(in her sleep)

...eyes....eyes...sunshine eyes....

DOCTOR

What's she saying?

MRS. FUENTES

Something about eyes...

They close the door as we're close on

MARCELLA as she tosses and turns in her sleep...and now we're looking at

JAMIE with Marcella on the carousel. She's standing beside the rocking horse he's riding as it rises and falls, rises and falls, and he's looking at her with those wonderful eyes and he's saying

JAMIE

You don't buy all that stuff about death, do you?

MARCELLA

But...you were dead. I saw you die!

JAMIE

Death is just an illusion, Marse, a door we go through...I'm still here, I can still kiss you...

...and Jamie sweeps Marcella up in his arms onto his horse and kisses her...and the horses rise and fall around them in a mist and sunlight reflects off the carousel roof...and suddenly

MARCELLA awakens and sits upright, her eyes wide.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLIAM & SON FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY - ESTABLISH

A MAN walks up the steps to the funeral parlor and enters. His back to us, he goes to the desk. He is the Elder.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - The Elder approaches the front desk.

ELDER

I've come to pay my respects to Jamie Palacios, the young man.

DIRECTOR

Certainly. What a terrible tragedy. Come with me.

They begin walking down a hall.

DIRECTOR

You're related to the deceased?

ELDER

Yes.

DIRECTOR

The father?

ELDER

No, a brother.

The Director looks him up and down.

DIRECTOR

My, what a spread. The young man can't be much more than 17 and you're---

ELDER

---This is the room, isn't it?

The Elder has stopped in front of a showing room.

DIRECTOR

Yes. How did you know?

ELDER

May I go in alone?

DIRECTOR

Of course. Spend as much time as you wish.

ELDER

Thank you.

The Elder enters and closes the door. It's a simple room with no frills. The coffin is resting in the center of the room. The Elder approaches the coffin and looks in.

JAMIE is lying in state with a half-smile on his face. The Elder studies him a moment, and then we SEE

THE ELDER'S FACE as he gazes at Jamie...and his eyes begin to sparkle, then shine with greater and greater effulgence until there is so much light we can't see Jamie or the coffin or the room...

CUT TO:

THE FRONT DESK - The Director is facing away from the entrance while he speaks on the phone. He happens to glance at the front door--and SEES the Elder leaving...with a young man.

DIRECTOR

Goodbye! (to himself) Who was that with him? (into receiver) What? Oh, yes John, I'm sorry, something strange just happened...well, a man came in to view a beloved one and he came in alone... but he left with somebody. Oh well, the other party must have snuck in when I was out back. Anyway, let's go ahead and run the three by five another week...

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF FUNERAL PARLOR - From quite a distance away, we see an elderly man and a young man exit the building and enter a car. The car pulls slowly away from the curb...

INT. MARCELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - Marcella wakes up with a start, sits up in bed, and is compelled to go to the window. She looks up at the sky and we see her

FACE gazing in astonishment...and now we SEE

THE SKY and you can actually see it, and a billion stars are sparkling as never before and suddenly Marcella is running out of the apartment in her jeans and the door SLAMS behind her as

MRS. FUENTES awakens out of a sound sleep.

MRS. FUENTES

Marse?

She looks at her clock. It reads 11:00.

EXT. MARCELLA'S APARTMENT HOUSE - NIGHT - Marcella runs out of the building, hails a cab and we see the cab speed off.

EXT. WILLIAM & SON'S FUNERAL PARLOR - The cab pulls to the curb. As Marcella's paying the cabbie, she looks out the window and sees a squad car parked in front, its light flashing. She exits the cab, runs up the steps of the home and goes through the open doors.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT - Marcella hurries to the front desk. One of the OFFICERS is filing a report as the other one talks to the Director.

DIRECTOR

I've never had this happen before in my 30 years with this firm, I'm very embarrassed.

OFFICER THREE

What time did you make the discovery?

DIRECTOR

Around nine fortyfive---(sees Marcella)

MARCELLA

(her eyes are very bright)
He's gone, isn't he?

DIRECTOR

What?

MARCELLA

Jamie Palacios. He's not here, is he?

The Director and Officer Three exchange looks.

OFFICER THREE

How did you know about the missing body?

MARCELLA

(she begins to laugh)

I had a dream, I---I don't know, I---

OFFICER THREE

Miss? We'd like to talk to you...

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT - ESTABLISH

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT - The squad room. Two detectives are talking in subdued tones as they look at Marcella and her mother through a glass partition.

DET. BLAKE

...yeah, she's the one that was gang raped at West Side...

DET. MORALES

...that explains it...

Det. Morales goes into the waiting room.

DET. MORALES

Mrs. Fuentes? You can go now. Sorry for the inconvenience, we have to check out every lead.

MRS. FUENTES

Thank you.

She and Marcella start for the door. Marcella turns back and speaks to Det. Morales who's watching them go.

MARCELLA

You'll never find the body...because there isn't one!

Marcella turns and walks out the door with her mother. Det. Morales walks back into the squad room.

DET. MORALES

I hope she gets help.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - Marcella and her mother come out of the police precinct.

MRS. FUENTES

I don't understand any of this!

MARCELLA

Don't you see, momma, Jamie's not dead! I know it, I can feel it!

MRS. FUENTES

(very worried)

But honey, he was pronounced dead, he was lying in state at the home for a whole day---(looks at Marse)--how did you know the body was missing?

MARCELLA

I don't know, I don't know, Momma I had this dream and Jamie was there and it was so real and I could actually see the stars, billions of stars, and I felt so good, so...warm, and I knew he couldn't be dead, I just knew it...

MRS. FUENTES

Come on, let's go home, honey.

Mrs. Fuentes glances at Marcella, her face weary with concern.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAROUSEL - DAY - Marcella is standing in line to get a ticket...it's a cool day and there aren't many customers. She buys the ticket, gets on the carousel...finds a horse...a horse that looks very much like the one Jamie was riding in her dream, and climbs up in the saddle. It's very quiet. She looks around the carousel. A few children are sitting on horses, their parents by their sides...she looks off into the park...then her eyes light on the spectators watching the carousel...and she sees a young man with his back turned...and she doesn't think anything of it at first...but the young man's head looks familiar...and just as she looks back at him the carousel music starts and the carousel begins to move...and she loses sight of the young man...

...but as it comes around again to the benches where the young man was standing, he's still there and Marcella strains her head to keep him in sight but she can't as the carousel spins faster and faster and the next time around she can't find the young man but on the next turn, the very next turn, she does see him and he's looking at her and it's

JAMIE, she's positive, and

MARCELLA'S FACE is filled with wonder and joy with expectancy but she's not absolutely sure...and it turns around again and the young man is gone...and she can't find him on the next turn or the next and her face registers dismay, frustration and pain...

...as the carousel slows, comes to a stop and

MARCELLA jumps off and runs to the spectators and searches the faces of each of them...but Jamie's not there.

EXT. PATH NEAR THE SHEEP MEADOW - DAY - Marcella is despondent. As she walks along the sidewalk near the sheep meadow, she notices that the meadow is empty...except for two men playing with a frisbee...and both are exceptionally athletic and jumping higher in the air to make a catch than anyone would have thought possible...and doing turns and making amazing catches...and she looks away and when she looks back, they're not there...

MARCELLA shakes her head as if to clear it and looks back...but the sheep meadow is empty...and she hears FOOTSTEPS behind her but no one is there...and she begins to be afraid as the park is fairly deserted...and then she thinks she SEES

A MAN ahead of her behind a tree and she stops...but something draws her to the man, to the tree near the walk...and she can see that the man is leaning against the tree but she can't see his face...but as she approaches she can see that he's an elderly man who looks like someone she's seen before...maybe just now playing with the frisbee or sometime in the past, and then he looks at her and smiles, and Marcella flashes on seeing

THE ELDER with Jamie on the street but now we're back in the park as the Elder says

ELDER

Hello, Marcella.

MARCELLA

How do you know my name?

ELDER

Oh, we all know your name. And one day you'll know all of us. Someone wants to see you...

MARCELLA

(she knows who)

Who?

ELDER

The man behind you.

Marcella turns and Jamie is standing a few feet away. He's holding a frisbee. Marcella gasps, then faints. When she comes to, Jamie is leaning over her, smiling.

MARCELLA

Jamie? Is it really you?

JAMIE

There aren't two of me.

MARCELLA

Am I dreaming this?

JAMIE

No.

MARCELLA

How can this be?

JAMIE

That's just the way things are, Marse.
I told you, death is an illusion.

MARCELLA

But that was a dream!

JAMIE

No it wasn't. It was as real as this
is.

MARCELLA

Then...this is a dream?

JAMIE

Marse, when will you stop doubting?
I passed my test.

MARCELLA

Oh, Jamie, I'm so happy for you.

JAMIE

Thanks.

MARCELLA

If you hadn't passed, what would have
happened?

JAMIE

I'd have had to go back to a lower
form of existence and work my way
up again.

MARCELLA

You mean, back to the apes?

JAMIE

No, not that far, but I would have had
to learn it all over again, take
another test.

MARCELLA

What's your true being like, Jamie?

JAMIE

You don't want to know.

MARCELLA

Show me, please! Are you like those beings in Close Encounters?

JAMIE

I loved that movie! It was one of 2000 films we saw on our trip down here.

MARCELLA

You have our films?

JAMIE

If it's been transmitted, we've got it. No, we're not like that. You really want to see it? It's pretty scary.

MARCELLA

I don't care, I want to know.

JAMIE

Okay.

He steps behind a tree, then jumps out unchanged.

JAMIE (cont'd)

This is it! This is the way we look, just like you...except that we don't need these bodies...and someday soon you'll be with us...

His eyes begin shining...

JAMIE (cont'd)

...and you'll be like us...and see what we see...and so will Magic and Shep...

He starts to spin the frisbee faster and faster...it becomes his crown...as his body starts to glow...and gets brighter and brighter...and his voice gets farther and farther away...

JAMIE (cont'd)

...and we'll all have fun and roam around the universe at will...appearing wherever we want to because we've overcome the limitations of time and space...and I'm saving a place for you...I'm waiting for you...I'm waiting for you...I'm waiting for you...

and the screen is flooded with light, nothing but light, and more light, as we

FADE OUT.

The End