

Character: DANIEL CASEY, aging owner of small rural gas station. Lives a quiet life, sort of extinguished by his past. However, he's about to be awakened.

Setting: Rural road-side gas station that's been run by Mr. Casey for 35 years. Present day.

FADE IN:

1 EXT. STATION - AFTERNOON

Establishing shot of dusty old station, slightly obscured by sweltering heat of the day.

SERIES OF CUTS showing signs in windows, lock on gas pump.

2 INT. STATION - AFTERNOON

DOWN-ANGLE shots on Casey, asleep in his arm-chair. It is dusky dark in the room, which doubles as his home. No customers ever stop.

Around the room appear the necessities of such a life: an old TV, a kitchen area, a counter with some staple items and an old cash register. On the table next to Casey an old photo album is open -- he'd been looking through it before falling asleep. The only SOUNDS are his breathing and the random passing vehicle.

From OVER CASEY'S SHOULDER, slow ZOOM-IN to TV picture.

DISSOLVE TO:

3 EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

A vague, ghost-like image appears on the screen, mirroring the tired specter of Casey's dreams for sixty years. Shot reveals a young boy lying in a twisted knot.

DISSOLVE TO:

4 INT. STATION - CONTINUOUS

CASEY

Wait a minute!

(Searching his mind)

If he wouldn't of...

It wasn't my goddamn fault!

It wasn't my god damn fault!

CONTINUED:

CONTINUED:

Casey jumps up from his chair and begins quickly pacing around the room.

CASEY (CON'T)

All that time, all that bull shit I put up with. All that thinkin' it was my fault that Henry had his accident.... Well, I'll be.

I hope you're watchin', Henry, 'cause I know what you did now. And all that time you let me go on thinkin' how it was my fault.

(Angry)

Why, if you was here right now, I'd--

Casey breaks into a VIOLENT COUGHING spell. Finally, very winded, he sits down quietly and picks up the photo album.

CASEY (CON'T)

Why, I wouldn't do nothin', Henry. You was just always tryin' to do somethin' to bug me. Everthin' I ever set into, you was two steps back and spittin' oil.

Casey turns a page in the album. A CUTAWAY of a handsome young boy appears, as Casey addresses him.

CASEY (CON'T)

You were a damned idiot. Blame me for your own mistake.

(Pause)

Guess you figured if you could get somethin' on me, you'd keep me down forever! Well, you were almost right little brother. You almost--

He restrains himself, rubbing his eyes. After a moment, Casey gets up and crosses to a shelf to address more family pictures.

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CONTINUED:

CASEY

All that time, Henry. Then you come like some saint, whisperin' in my dreams. Coulda' died, never knowin' that your being miserable all your life wasn't even my fault. It wasn't, though. And that means Pap knows, too-- don't you Pap? You know it wasn't me that messed up Henry's face, he done it his damn self! Right?

(Pause)

Damn right.

Casey moves to his chair and sits down.

CASEY (CON'T)

And that means I don't have to feel guilty no more. All those things I worked my whole life for, then I got 'em and couldn't enjoy 'em. Always thinkin' I owed everthin' to you; but I didn't, and I don't!

The good Lord helps those that help themselves, Henry. An' all that time I was sittin' here thinkin' it was wrong for me to be happy, and it was wrong for me to be proud. WELL IT AIN'T!

Now I know, Henry. I've lived a good life, and now I know the only thing that ever stopped me from bein' happy wasn't even my fault.

Saddened, Casey buries his face in his hands.

CASEY (CON'T)

I've lived a *damn* good life, and I done everthin' in my power to be good to folks, and do good things, and make it up to you, Henry, for--

ANGLE ON CASEY as the SHADE FLIES OPEN, bathing Casey in light.

ANOTHER ANGLE; his face shows anger... then hope.

CONTINUED:

CONTINUED:

CASEY (CON'T)

Ha! You son of a -- you made me do it, didn't you? And to think, I started to get mad at you.

(To photo)

Why, you knew, didn't you Henry? If you hadn't done somethin', I would have been about as rotten as a worm-ate peach. You pulled me back... you set me right. You sure did.

5 EXT. STATION - CONTINUOUS

Casey emerges into the sunlight, looking up into the sky, facing the prospect of a new life, finally free from guilt.

CASEY

Well, I see it all now, Henry. But I'm not gonna sleep anymore -- no tellin' what you might try to tell me next.

FADE OUT

ROLL CREDITS

THE END