

BL Morrison School

Postville

“ ‘Cause It’s Not Too Late”

Cast of Characters:

Karen (Mother)Madison Ford-Goudie

RachelKelsey Jacque

DannyEmilie Broomfield

ClaireHaley Shiwak

JakeJames Jacque

LaylaJocelyn Jacque

Summary:

When Danny Hutchens accidentally causes a car accident that injures a small child, he is unable to cope with his guilt and move on. As a result, he finds himself going down a dark path, leaving his parents, sister, and best friend behind. His father is very sick, and numerous people in Danny’s life try to get him to be with the family and face his father’s illness. Will he find the strength to come home before it’s too late?

'Cause It's Not Too Late

Scene 1:

SD: (Lights appear on Karen pacing the floor, talking on the phone.)

Karen: "Yes doctor, I understand what you're saying." (Pause) "No, there's been no improvement at all with the new medicine." (Pause) "Yes, three times a day, I understand." (Pause) "No, we haven't told the children yet." (Pause) "Well, Rachel has exams, and Danny is...well..." (Pause) "No, we haven't heard from Danny. The children have always known their father was sick, but not like this."

(Robert coughing from offstage)

Karen: (Talking offstage) "I'll be right there, honey!" (Talks into the phone) "Yes, he's coughing. More than before. Alright, I'll monitor him after this dose." (Pause) "Thank you, doctor. Goodbye." (Puts down the phone, picks up bottle of medicine and reads it) (Looks up to the ceiling, sighs) "Danny...where are you?"

(Robert coughs again)

Karen: "I'm coming!" (Walks offstage)

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 2:

SD: (Lights appear on Rachel and Claire at school)

Rachel: "So, I guess we're partners for that project for Ms. Greer. I kind of hate science, so you're gonna have to take the lead on this one. What was your name again?"

Claire: "Claire. It was nice of you to take on the new girl. I was in the science club at my old school."

(Jake enters, sneaks up on Rachel)

Jake: "Hey!"

Rachel: (Startled) "Jake! You seriously gotta stop doing that. My heart can't take it!"

Jake: (Ruffles Rachel's hair) "I see you got stuck with the new girl."

Rachel: "It's okay, she was in a club."

Jake: (Holds out hand to Claire for handshake) "Jake Walters. How are ya?"

Claire: (To Rachel) "Do people even shake hands anymore?" (Shakes Jake's hand)

Jake: (Puts hand over Claire's and shakes heartily) "Oh, I do! I believe that a good handshake is the foundation of a truly civilized society."

Claire: "Wow."

Rachel: "Yeah."

Jake: "So anyway, I gotta go to work. See you at supper." (Exits)

Claire: "Is he your brother or something? If so you have my sympathies."

Rachel: "Ha! No, he's my brother's best friend. Since my brother moved out, Jake kind of...moved in. It's complicated."

Claire: "So is this science project. Where do you want to go and work on it?"

Rachel: "Well, we can go to my house, but my dad is sick."

Claire: "My dad's a lawyer."

Rachel: "Alright, we'll go to my house."

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 3:

SD: (Lights appear on Karen at home, on the phone, pacing)

Karen: "If you know where he is, I don't understand why you can't just tell me." (Pause) "I'm his mother! He might need money, or food, or anything!" (Pause) "Of course we don't hate him! It was an accident, everybody knows that." (Pause) "Well maybe you can pass on a message to him. His father is sick." (Pause) "But I need him here!" (Pause) "Fine, I won't call again. But please get him to call me. Goodbye, Layla." (Hangs up the phone, hangs her head)

(Rachel and Claire enter)

Rachel: "Mom, are you alright?"

Karen: (Smiles) "Yes, fine. How was school?"

Rachel: "Great. I brought home a stray." (Nods towards Claire)

Karen: "Hi, there. Always nice to meet another one of Rachel's friends."

Rachel: "Claire, you can go on into my room. It's the last door on the right down the hall."

Claire: "Sure." (Walks offstage)

Rachel: "Mom, what's wrong? Is it dad? Did you hear from Danny? Did something happen?"

Karen: "Oh, Rachel, it's everything. Your father is at the hospital. I'm going to get groceries and then swing by to see visit him later."

Rachel: "So who was on the phone?"

Karen: "Your brother's stubborn girlfriend. I asked her to tell Danny that your dad hasn't been getting any better over the last few weeks, but she doesn't seem to think it would be good for him to know that. And now she's asked me not to call for a while. I just can't handle this now! Your dad is sick, I need him here. He has always been my rock. Well...before all this happened."

Rachel: "Oh mom, It'll be okay. I'll be your rock." (Hugs Karen)

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 4:

SD: (Lights appear on Rachel and Claire in Rachel's room, working on project)

Claire: "Your room is so...small compared to mine."

Rachel: "Well your dad is a lawyer, and my dad is...."

Claire: (Interrupts) "Sick, I know. Sorry about that, by the way. Must be serious, your mom looked pretty torn up."

Rachel: "You don't know the half of it."

Claire: (Picks up a picture frame) "So, is this your brother?"

Rachel: (Sighs) "And there's the other half of it."

Claire: "What?"

Rachel: "Nevermind." (Takes picture and looks at it) "Yeah, that's Danny. He just graduated last year."

Claire: "He's cute."

Rachel: "He's got a girlfriend. Layla."

Claire: "They always do."

(Jake enters)

Jake: "Who are we talking about?"

Rachel: "I was just telling Claire about Danny having a girlfriend."

Claire: "Too bad."

Jake: "I'm single."

Claire: "I'm shocked."

Jake: "No, really, I am."

Claire: (Shakes head) "Where is your brother anyway, Rachel? College or somewhere?"

Rachel: "Not exactly." (Pauses) "I guess I don't really know where he is. But that's a long story, and not nearly as interesting as this science stuff."

Jake: "Well, you see Claire, it's like this. Rachel's brother Danny hit this little kid with his car one evening, and he couldn't take the guilt, so he ran away. The kid is fine and everything, but Danny has been pretty messed up ever since. Or at least he was the last time we saw him. He hasn't been in contact since he left, and apparently only his girlfriend Layla knows where he is. But she's not saying."

Rachel: (Angry) "Jake!"

Jake: "But it's okay, because I moved in and I've been keeping things pretty copasetic since he's been gone. What with their dad being sick and all."

Rachel: "What the heck is wrong with you?! What do you want anyway? You're not even supposed to be in my room."

Jake: "Mom said it's supper time, and the new girl can stay if she wants."

Rachel: "She's not your mom! She's my mom! And you're not my brother! Just get out, okay?!"
(Points to the door)

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 5:

SD: (Lights appear on Rachel in her room, studying)

(Jake enters)

Jake: (Knocks) "Can I come in?"

Rachel: "Do what you want. You will anyway."

Jake: "I suppose I deserve that. But I don't understand what the big deal is. Everyone in town knows what happened with Danny. It was only a matter of time before Claire heard about it too. I figured it was better coming from us."

Rachel: "It's not that I mind telling her. I just don't want it to be true. I hate that he ran away. I hate that mom cries every night. Do you know that Layla called earlier today? She won't tell us anything about where he is. My mom needs him. She was so broken up before. I don't know how much more of this she can take."

Jake: "Your mom's tough, Rach. She'll be okay. And he'll come back. He's just figuring things out." (Pauses) "I know I'm not your brother. I'm sorry if I tried to be. I'm just trying to find my own way until he comes back, and I guess I find it comforting to be here."

Rachel: "And we need you here. I promise." (Hugs Jake) "And if I have to have a fake brother, I guess I could do worse than you."

Jake: (Ruffles Rachel's hair) "That's the spirit."

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 6:

SD: (Lights appear on Danny laying on his bed listening to music)

(Jake enters, angry)

Danny: (Sits up) "Jake! What are you doing here?"

Jake: "What am I doing here? I'm here to try and talk some sense into my best friend who I haven't seen for six months. See if I can get him to come home to a family who loves him. What are you doing in this dump anyway?" (Looks around)

Danny: "Did Layla tell you I was here?"

Jake: "Man, who cares who told me what. You coming home, or what? This place stinks real bad."

Danny: "If I wanted to come home, I know where it is. I assume they never moved the place."

Jake: "Oh, that's right. Be a jerk about it. Your mom's only at home crying her eyes out every night. Layla's called her, but doesn't seem to say much."

Danny: "Layla tells mom what I want her to know. It's not her fault."

Jake: "Your dad's sick. Did she tell you that?"

Danny: "My dad's always sick, Jake. Change the record."

Jake: "Not like this. Your mom needs you."

Danny: "I can't make him better, Jake. Never could."

Jake: "Maybe not, but at least she wouldn't have the added stress of looking for you. She's on the phone day and night."

Danny: "Well, make yourself useful then and tell her to just stop looking for me."

Jake: "You can't stay away forever. You have people who love you. And this self-pitying act is getting old. That kid is fine, and nobody blames you. It was dark!"

Danny: "What do you know about it? You have no idea how I feel, how hard it's been for me."

Jake: "No, I don't." (Starts to walk away) "But we would gladly all share your pain, if you'd just come home." (Keeps walking)

Danny: "Don't you dare tell anyone where you've been!" (Yelling)

Jake: "Wouldn't dream of it!" (Yells back, exits)

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 7:

(Lights appear on Rachel and Claire at school, standing by lockers)

Claire: "I don't know, I think it was nice of Ms. Greer to let us do the project instead of an exam."

Rachel: "I guess."

(Layla walks past the girls, Rachel stops her)

Rachel: "Woah! And just where have you been?"

Layla: "Stalker."

Rachel: "You haven't been in school for like two weeks!"

Layla: "Like I said, stalker."

Rachel: "Where's Danny?!"

Layla: "He's fine. Your family just needs to give him some space."

Claire: "If you know where her brother is, you really should tell them."

Layla: "And what are you, my conscience?"

Rachel: "I don't want to fight with you. Did you tell him my dad is sick? He's in the hospital now. Can you tell him that, at least? He can come and see him anytime. My mom put his name on the visitors list. He can come and visit by himself, no questions asked. We'll leave him alone."

Layla: (Turns to leave)

Rachel: (Grabs Layla's arm) "Please."

Layla: "I'll tell him." (Exits)

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 8:

SD: (Lights appear on Danny laying on bed)

(Layla enters)

Danny: "How was school?"

Layla: "Fine." (Pauses) "Except Rachel stopped me in the hall. I thought she was gonna slug me."

Danny: "I knew it was gonna be hard for you to avoid her once you went back."

Layla: "Danny, I can't keep doing this. I have exams all week, and no idea what's going to be on them because it's been more than two weeks since I've been inside the building."

Danny: "I know. I'm sorry."

Layla: "I don't want you to be sorry. I want you to go back to your family. The only reason they're pushing so hard is that they love you. They want you back. They'll give you time to heal or grieve, or whatever it is that you need."

Danny: "I just need you. I need you to be patient with me. We'll get through this."

Layla: "I don't want this version of you. All you do is lie around listening to music. And this room is starting to smell really bad."

Danny: "That's what Jake said."

Layla: "Jake? He was here? I didn't tell him..."

Danny: "I know." (Pauses) "He said my mom's in a pretty bad way."

Layla: "She is. She has to be. All she does is call people, asking if they've seen you." (Pauses) "And visit your dad in the hospital."

Danny: "He's in the hospital now?"

Layla: "Rachel said they added your name to the visitors list. You can go see him anytime. They won't bother you."

Danny: "I can't. I can't go back to that hospital. Not ever."

(Layla exits and shortly after Jake enters)

Jake: (Stands in the doorway)

Danny: "Well, you never told them where I was."

Jake: "I said that I wouldn't."

Danny: (Stands up, walks around the room) "My dad's in the hospital." (Pauses) "But you know that, because you practically live with them now."

Jake: "You move back in, and I'm gone. It's that simple. I never replaced you or anything."

Danny: "How's my mom doing?"

Jake: "How would you be? She barely leaves the hospital these days. She's wiped out."

Danny: "You think that me being there would help. I promise you, it wouldn't. I'm a mess, Jake. The last thing my mom needs is another patient on her hands. She needs to focus on my dad right now. I'd just be a distraction from all that."

Jake: "As much as you try to play the victim, you're not a burden. You're her son. She wants nothing more than to have you home. You can't fix what's wrong with your dad, nobody can. But you can be there for the people who need you. Be strong for once. Instead of running away."

Danny: "You don't know what I'm going through. I hurt that kid. I can't take that back, no matter where I am or what I do for anybody else."

Jake: "Yeah, you hurt that kid. But she's fine now. Her parents don't hate you, nobody hates you."

Danny: (Starts to cry, head in hands) "They were so angry."

Jake: "Whatever anger anybody had towards you, they've forgiven you now. Forgive yourself and come home."

Danny: "I don't know if I can. I don't know how."

Jake: "It'll take time, but you don't need to stay away to heal. You can do that with your family. They love you, they'll understand everything you're feeling. Start by spending some time with your dad. He's been asking for you."

Danny: "I can't go back there. He must be so hurt that I haven't come to see him."

Jake: "He won't judge you, he'll just be so glad to see you now."

Danny: (Sits on the bed, crying) "What if I've left it too long? What if it's too late?"

Jake: (Sits on the bed, rubs Danny's shoulder) "It's never too late."

(Song: "It's Not Too late" is turned up)

SD: (Lights dim, scene ends – music plays)

Scene 9:

SD: (Lights appear on Danny standing alone)

Danny: "I don't know what to do. I left my family behind so that they wouldn't have to suffer along with me. But by staying away, all I've done is cause them more pain. I'm not sure if I can go back now. What if dad just can't take it all? What if mom can't? I'm such a mess, I don't see how anyone could need me for anything. Or forgive me for not coming sooner. What if I go to that hospital and it's just too much for me?"

(Layla enters, listening in the doorway)

Layla: "Then at least you'll know. (Pauses) Right now all you can do is wonder. And you're their son, they would forgive you anything. Believe me."

Danny: "Will you go with me?"

Layla: "Of course."

SD: (Lights dim, end scene)

Scene 10:

SD: (Lights appear on Karen, Rachel, and Jake in hospital waiting room)

(Layla and Danny enter, holding hands)

(Danny walks up to Karen, Rachel, Jake – hugs them individually; joyous reunion)

(Song: "I'm Coming Home" – Diddy – Dirty Money plays)

(All walk off stage together, smiling)

(End of Play)