

TIPPING POINT

By

Richard F. Russell

Wordmstr007@gmail.com

910-285-3321

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FADE IN:

INT CLASS ROOM - DAY

AARON, 15, good looking, well knit, a bit old for this 8th grade class, sits at the back as the ENGLISH TEACHER drones on.

ENGLISH TEACHER

Huckleberry Finn represents nature,
what people can be when they aren't
subject to the rules of civilization.

Aaron yawns, bored, and pulls the hood of his sweatshirt over his head.

ENGLISH TEACHER

This is an idealized vision of mankind,
one that hardly conforms...Aaron, hood off.

Aaron looks at the English Teacher but does nothing.

ENGLISH TEACHER

You know the rules, Aaron, hood off.

Aaron offers a bored half smile but does nothing.

ENGLISH TEACHER

I don't have time for this today, Aaron.
Hood off or you head for the office.

Aaron ignores everything.

ENGLISH TEACHER

Fair enough. Take your books and go
to the office. I'll call and tell them
you're coming.

Aaron doesn't do a thing.

ENGLISH TEACHER

Do I need to call the police again?

This motivates Aaron who slowly rises, grabs his books, and strolls from the room, giving a grin to the other Students as he passes. He's insolent to the max as he leaves.

ENGLISH TEACHER
Back to Huckleberry--unless you want
to join Aaron.

The Students pay attention.

INT KITCHEN - NIGHT

CAROL, Aaron's mother, snaps raw spaghetti and adds it to boiling water. A resignation fuels her actions. Door opens and in walks STAN, husband and father, a man who has perhaps had enough.

STAN
Hey.

CAROL
Hi.

They hug and peck, husband and wife.

STAN
Where is he?

CAROL
In his room.

He nods and starts out.

CAROL
Remember, he's just a boy.

STAN
How can I forget?

INT AARON'S ROOM - NIGHT

The walls are painted black except for some white spots where holes have been patched, some holes yet to be patched. Bare with the exception of a dresser and bed. No TV, no stereo, no computer, the room has no amenities.

On the bed, Aaron looks at a car magazine. He doesn't read, just looks at the pictures.

Door opens, and in comes Stan who stands in the middle of the room. Aaron doesn't bother standing.

STAN
What was it this time?

AARON

It wasn't my fault. It's a stupid rule.

STAN

How long?

AARON

Three days. But it wasn't my fault. The rule's stupid, and I don't do stupid things.

STAN

We talked about what would happen, remember?

AARON

I didn't do anything. It's a stupid rule.

Stan looks at Aaron who sits up.

AARON

I think I've been caged in here long enough too.

STAN

I think so too. Dinner is almost ready. Spaghetti, your favorite.

Aaron pops up and heads past his dad.

AARON

It wasn't my fault.

Stan looks around the room. There's nothing more to take away.

INT KITCHEN - NIGHT

The family, Aaron, Stan, Carol, and KAYLA, 10, at the table, eating spaghetti.

AARON

School is stupid. I don't know why I have to go.

STAN

You don't like school, do you?

AARON
It's stupid. Who needs it?

STAN
Not you.

CAROL
More spaghetti, Aaron?

AARON
Yeah, thanks.

Aaron digs into the spaghetti as the others watch.

INT AARON'S ROOM - NIGHT

Aaron is back on his bed, with his magazine. Stan comes in.

STAN
I have to make a trip tomorrow. I want
you to come with me.

AARON
Where?

STAN
The city. Put enough clothes for a
couple of days in your backpack.

AARON
Sure, sure.

STAN
Do it tonight. We'll leave early.

Stan leaves, and Aaron grins. He's taking a trip.

INT CAR - DAY

Stan drives. Aaron looks out the window. Easy rock on the radio.

AARON
We haven't been to the city in a long
time. It's gonna be cool. I want to
listen to my music, OK?

Stan nods, and Aaron shoves a CD into the radio. Heavy Rap music
pulsates through the car. Aaron sings along with lyrics. Stan
forces a smile.

EXT SUBWAY PARKING LOT - DAY

Stan and Aaron, backpack in hand, leave the car and head into the station.

INT SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Stan and Aaron, his backpack on, ride along. Aaron grins. This is fun.

EXT SIDEWALK - DAY

Aaron gawks at the people passing by on this crowded sidewalk. Behind him, Stan gets money from an ATM. Aaron smiles. The city promises a lot.

Stan leaves the ATM and grabs Aaron's shoulder. Together, they walk away.

EXT SIDEWALK - LATER

Stan accepts a hotdog from a street vendor and hands it to Aaron. Stan grabs his own dog, and they munch as they walk.

EXT SIDEWALK - LATER

The sidewalk is crowded as people walk past Stan and Aaron who face each other. Stan takes the cash he got from the ATM and hands it to Aaron.

AARON

What's this?

STAN

It's yours. If I were you, I'd hide it before someone takes it from you.

AARON

Mine?

Stan holds out his hand. Aaron reluctantly shakes hands.

STAN

Good luck, son.

AARON

What?

Stan nods, turns, and walks away.

AARON

What?

Aaron looks from cash to his retreating father, and Aaron suddenly understands.

AARON

Yeah? Well, fuck you, dad. FUCK YOU!
HEAR ME?! FUCK YOU, DAD!! FUCK YOU!!

People passing stare at Aaron who really doesn't give a rat's ass. Until a POLICEMAN pops into Aaron's sight. Pulling up his hood, Aaron hustles away.

INT CAR - DAY

Stan drives, determined. He pops Aaron's CD from the player, looks at it a moment, and tosses it out the window.

EXT SIDEWALK - DAY

Aaron moves along the sidewalk, looking at people and stores, lost and getting more lost by the moment as he heads into a seedier side of town.

EXT SIDEWALK - EVENING

Aaron shuffles along a sidewalk in an obviously poorer neighborhood. The PEOPLE he passes look harder, angrier.

INT AARON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Carol patches holes in the wall, spackling over the mesh she's put in place.

Stan walks in. She looks up, and her eyes are red from crying. Without a word, he takes her in his arms, and they hold each other tight.

EXT ALLEY - NIGHT

Aaron, hood up, sits against a wall, next to a dumpster. He's cold. Around the dumpster walk two big THUGS, huge guys. Aaron lowers his head, trying to become invisible. He sits there until Thug 1 kicks Aaron's foot.

Aaron looks up at these menaces.

THUG 1
Give us all you got and maybe we won't
hurt you.

Aaron stares, and the Thugs wait. This can't end well.

FADE OUT.