



SAVING SALEM, M.I.

"DISSAPEARING ACT"

OUTLINE

Written by

David Speight

This episode is based on true events.

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DISAPPEARING ACT

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BY DAVID SPEIGHT

TEASER

EXT. GENERAL STORE - NIGHT

DECEMBER 10, 1971 7:55 PM -- SALEM, MI (10 MILES N.E. Of ANN ARBOR, M.I.)

Light drizzle makes the road appear icy, reflecting the golden light from the windows of the small town store. An AMERICAN FLAG perks up, tugging to escape its boundary of light. Its clasps bang against the pole like a warning bell.

Two pieces of trash ride the wind down the street until they are crushed by a BLACK LIMO, running them over. It parks.

LIMO DRIVER hops out, assuring JOHN (LENNON), he'll have him set up with brandy in less than five minutes. JOHN reminds him to get creme de cacao too. (An ingredient in the drink Brandy Alexander.) Driver looks up toward store window.

INT. GENERAL STORE - NIGHT

We look in on the store, entering from the DRIVER's POV, moving through slats in the window like a barred jail cell.

BARBRA DONAVAN (38, store owner) counts out the cash.

MARY ANN (17) holds her bag of groceries, asks if she can wait a few minutes past closing as CALVIN is supposed to pick her up as soon he's finished his TV show. (The Brady Bunch. Davey Jones is special guest on it, Dec 10, 71.)

WARREN (town constable) pops in and asks if they've seen a couple women hanging around, one white one black. They've escaped from the nearby DEHOCO (Detroit House of Corrections - jail.) WARREN departs saying he's gonna go see if PASTOR EVAN SMITH at the church has seen anything. MARY ANN scoffs and says a church would be the last place she'd go if she were a convict.

LIMO DRIVER passes WARREN exiting and asks for directions to Ann Arbor, Crisler Arena, since he is lost. MARY ANN knows the way, she's going there too. Go 3 miles to Pontiac Trail 10 miles to Broadway then left on Main St.

Then he asks for Brandy, BARBRA informs him the church keeps her from selling the stuff.

BARBRA tells them if they take Pontiac Trail to Ann Arbor there is another market at N. Territorial Rd. MARY ANN insists its further down at Dixboro Rd. They tell the DRIVER its one of the other, that both roads cross Pontiac Trail at a "triANGLE." DRIVER repeats the directions mist-speaking the "triANGLE" as "Try ANGLE Road." BARBRA assures they'll make it way before midnight, since other market is half way between here and Ann Arbor. MARY ANN offers for them to wait and follow her and Calvin, but the DRIVER says he has a client. "Would you want someone you're working with to know that you're lost?"

(SPOILER: DRIVER will get lost again, when he turns down ANGLE Road by mistake.)

POINT OF ATTACK

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

DECEMBER 10, 1971, EARLIER IN THE DAY -- 10 AM

A dense fog lingers outside the front window. BARBRA stocks an old cola ice chest near the pastry counter. A DELIVERY MAN pops in dropping off copies of the "DETROIT NEWS."

TEA LADIES gossiping around briefly stop. One of them nods to MARY ANN who picks up the paper and opens it. She confirms the rally is in Ann Arbor, she has got to go. TEA LADIES object: Everyone will be high on dope, just like at the High School. MARY ANN claims she's never seen any drugs at school.

RADIO NEWS tells of a "FREE JOHN SINCLAIR RALLY" in Ann Arbor to secure his release from prison. His ten year sentence for giving away two joints is believed to be excessive.

MARY ANN COMMITS! She's going to see Seager and Wonder. LADIES want her to stay. MARY ANN feels locked up in Salem already -- she needs to escape, at least for one night. LADIES are concerned about her safety. MARY ANN will talk CALVIN into driving her there. She buys batteries for CALVIN's radio and plans to bribe him with those.

INT. PARSONAGE - DAY

In the background, NEWS about JOHN SINCLAIR on a TV set.

BETSY complains to LORETTA that the Ladies Aide closet has been destroyed with DAVID's magic trick from Sunday School. She wants him punished and banned from church.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, CLOSET - DAY

TERRI SMART (22, African-American) and CONNIE LYONS (22, white), both escaped convicts from DEHOCO (jail) rummage through a closet, even trying on Choir gowns. They come across summer camp equipment, but ignore that box. They plot to dress as "homeless individuals" and "someone is bound to help them out."

INT. SALEM CHURCH, BAPTISTRY - DAY

EVAN turns water on to fill the baptistry and finds TWO WOMEN who have set up camp in the empty tub.

They confess they are homeless and ask if they can stay. He wants to help, tells them he'll see what he can do.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, OFFICE - DAY

LORETTA pops in and wants EVAN to handle BETSY, after all, she is his secretary too. EVAN wants LORETTA to invite the homeless WOMEN to dinner, but she is concerned about the safety of her children. EVAN decides to put them in the Sunday School room as that will keep BETSY out of there for now, stall for time and he can bring them left-overs.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, BAPTISTRY - DAY

The WOMEN discuss about their escape from prison and what the next move might be. They plan to hitch a ride to Ann Arbor and blend in with crowd at the rally.

JANITOR SHOWS up... He thinks he's heard things. He has his broom ready to pop them. Then--

EVAN comes back and he informs them he has a place set up in the Sunday School room for them.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - DAY

The women settle in and EVAN gives them the gospel talk. TERRI claims to a Christian already but CONNIE is fed up with religion. CONNIE mentions the rally in Ann Arbor and ponders that they may hitch a ride there. She has a friend who was hauled away to jail for protesting (she really tells her own story, part of it.)

EVAN says he might arrange a ride but would have to bring his wife and get a sitter for the kids. Maybe WARREN the town constable can help...

Fear of getting caught, CONNIE says her friend TERRI (the Christian) has a warrant out, and makes EVAN promise not to turn her in. EVAN COMMITS TO HELPING THEM -- BUT reminds that he can't "harbor" them if someone comes looking directly for them. He encourages TERRI to turn herself in after a good night's sleep.

After EVAN leaves, the women explore the church for possible escape routes.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, CLOSET - DAY

The WOMEN return, looking into the summer camp equipment. Sporting goods include archery gear and a 22 rifle. They gather it up.

END ACT ONE

OUTLINE

ACT TWO

EXT. BAKER HOUSE - DAY

A SHADOW (MARY ANN) sneaks alongside a pickup truck. CALVIN, washing the vehicle, is startled when MARY ANN pops up. She wants CALVIN to drive "them" to Ann Arbor for Friday Night adventures. CALVIN doesn't want to go because he want watch the Brady Bunch guest DAVEY JONES that night. MARY ANN bargains with that they'll leave at 8:30, and they'll go to NICK's house so dad will think they're over there all night. CALVIN also wants new batteries for his radio.

INT. SALEM CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

EVAN calls WARREN, wants advice about warrants. WARREN says a warrant is nothing, they're automatically issued for any little infraction. WARREN asks for description and says he'll check the local bulletins.

WARREN learns the "homeless" are one white and one African-American women. He suspects.

INT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

LADIES prepare to go home for dinner. BETSY brings up gossip about DAVID destroying the Ladies Aid closet with magic. They debate he's brining witchcraft into church and want him punished. MARY ANN wants to give the kid a break, though she can't stand him. She reveals her plan to sneak out, yes NICK will cover her story.

INT. FIRE STATION - DAY

WARREN finds out some information on the escaped convicts, makes a call to DEHOCO.

INT. PARSONAGE - DAY

At dinner table LORETTA talks to DAVID about the magic trick and EVAN suggests they fix the closet, but not until they get the homeless people settled. EVAN explains his motivation for helping them:

FLASHBACK: EVAN's family takes food to POOR people, even though they themselves had nothing. EVAN has to help them.

DAVID gives up some of his food so there are more left overs to take. EVAN and DAVID depart to the church when WARREN calls. BUT EVAN IS GONE.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - NIGHT

EVAN and DAVID give the WOMEN left over food. DAVID goes home to get extra pillows from the porch they could use. Church phone upstairs is ringing off the hook. EVAN says he'll take them to the YWCA in Ann Arbor tomorrow. Everyone is happy. HERO IS SUCCEEDING!

INT. PARSONAGE, KITCHEN

DAVID is getting pillows when LORETTA answers the phone. She tells WARREN that EVAN is at the church, helping some homeless WOMEN. WARREN hangs up as DAVID leaves to return.

INT. GENERAL STORE - NIGHT (REPEATED FROM OPENING 8:00 PM)

The limo DRIVER asks for directions to Ann Arbor Crisler Arena, since he is lost. When he asks for Brandy, BARBRA informs him the church keeps her from selling the stuff. She points them to another market down back streets. BARBRA assures they'll make it by midnight, since other market is half way between here and Ann Arbor.

MARY ANN stocks up on supplies to take... in case she gets the munchies after the rally.

WARREN warns BARBRA about two escaped prison women and to call him if she sees anything. He's going to the church where he thinks they are hiding.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - NIGHT

WARREN stops DAVID just before he enters the church. Then EVAN exits. After the discovery of the information, EVAN decides to go back and talk to the WOMEN. WARREN insists he's coming in after 10 minutes. (The WOMEN listen at the window.)

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - NIGHT

When EVAN enters, CONNIE raises a bow and arrow (from the camping equipment they found earlier) pointed at him.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. PARSONAGE - NIGHT

BETSY has come and insists LORETTA bring DAVID along to inspect the Ladies Aid closet. DAVID mentions homeless people staying there and WARREN was acting weird. BETSY doesn't believe it. They all leave to go next door.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - NIGHT

The DEHOCO Police arrive with sirens. WARREN catches BETSY, tells them to wait. DAVID wants to go in but is held back.

DEHOCO police want WARREN to go in and make arrest, but he is just a constable and refuses to put EVAN in danger. DEHOCO can't make the arrest because it is over the county line. They radio to Washtenaw County, but that department is tied up with the event in Ann Arbor, so they have to call on the State Police. (They're an hour away in Lansing.)

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - NIGHT

EVAN talks the woman in setting the bow and arrow down since CONNIE has never used it. He finds out about their past.

FLASHBACK to their crime of protesting and busting up a store front. EVAN recalls his breaking the fishbowl story.

EVAN agrees to talk to the DEHOCO guy (on their behalf) and then write to the judge, to try and get them probation. He wants to help, they want to run.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - NIGHT

The State Police arrive. Now VILLAGERS have gathered. CALVIN and MARY ANN stop on their way out. CALVIN has idea to ring church bell -- more people come. WARREN is furious CALVIN snuck into the church. DAVID asks CALVIN how he got in. The Police announce they are coming in and to put up their hands.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - NIGHT

The WOMEN are armed with the 22-rifle from the camp closet. CONNIE throws a chair out the window and points the rifle. She announces they have EVAN.

EMOTIONAL SQUEEZE: EVAN could easily grab the gun, but that would break trust. EVAN talks to them more, pleading.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - NIGHT

MARY ANN wants to get going, CALVIN wants to wait. (Limo drives on by.) DAVID wants to go rescue dad, he breaks away and sneaks into a basement window.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - NIGHT

STATE POLICE want to know how the WOMEN got a gun. WARREN says it looks like its from the camping closet. There could be two rifles. STATE POLICE send DEHOCO to cover front doors of church.

STATE POLICE give a boring "You don't want kidnapping charges too" lecture.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, BATHROOM

DAVID climbs into ceiling, hops over wall into the--

INT. SALEM CHURCH, CLOSET

DAVID drops in from ceiling, then sticks note under fake wall/door, leading to the attached Sunday School room.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - NIGHT

WOMEN start asking about other doors in the church. EVAN spots note on floor, woman does too.

NOTE SAYS: Dad use secret escape.

After a debate, EVAN makes up that the secret escape is the window in the kitchen. They decide they are all going.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - NIGHT

WARREN takes over megaphone and yells at the WOMEN telling them he's gonna get the firehoses and drown them all and they best not think of hurting EVAN. (EMOTIONAL.) He even mentions that there is no ammunition with those summer camp guns.

An arrow flies out the window, hit's WARREN's truck tire.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - NIGHT

Turning back from the window the WOMEN are greeted by a curtain across the room that drops from the ceiling.

EVAN uses the magical secret door and rotates into the Ladies Aid Closet. The WOMEN are dumbfounded at his disappearance.

CONNIE decides they should run. TERRI doesn't, it's over.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, CLOSET - NIGHT

DAVID points to the ceiling, EVAN decides for them to wait as they hear CONNIE departing.

INT. SALEM CHURCH, SUNDAY SCHOOL ROOM - NIGHT

EVAN and DAVID pivot back into the room, only to find TERRI. She wants to surrender, wants the letter EVAN promised too.

EXT. SALEM CHURCH - NIGHT

EVAN waves a white hanky in the window and climbs out. The police cars go chasing down the street to find the WOMEN.

MARY ANN and CALVIN depart for their adventure in Ann Arbor.

LORETTA scolds DAVID, BETSY has a change of heart for a brave boy and says she'll rethink magic... on a smaller scale.

EVAN tells WARREN that he still wants to help the WOMEN. Jesus tells us to help anyone in need whose path we cross.

END ACT FOUR

TAG

EXT. SIX MILE ROAD, WEST OF VILLAGE - NIGHT

Driving MARY ANN, CALVIN slams on the brakes, when CONNIE jumps in front of the vehicle.

After an almost fatal crash, CONNIE comes to the window with the rifle demanding a ride to Ann Arbor.

MARY ANN asks where they are going -- the rally of course.

CALVIN tells them they already know there are no bullets in the gun. MARY ANN says get in and come with us anyway.

Passing ANGLE ROAD, MARY ANN notices the limo from the store and tells CALVIN to pull over. This time the DRIVER agrees to follow them.

END OF SHOW