

Plot

LEASH is a feature film set in a former mining village. Lisa, mid twenties, dies suddenly at the canteen where she works. Her partner Cal looks after her two daughters, Rachel and Laurel. He's helped by Kenny Peen, their father, a retro punk who runs dog fights. Lisa's brother Aidan, a fragile, charismatic drifter, forms a relationship with Glenys, a steady, childless older woman who worked with Lisa and saw an angel when she died.

Lisa's family (which she hated) is middle class. Aidan is concerned at the girls growing up in poverty, and wants to do something for Lisa. In fact, helped by neighbours, Cal and Kenny are doing fine as parents. Though he's got no official relationship with the girls Cal is an excellent father. A skinhead, he's a quiet, profoundly sensitive man who mistrusts society and keeps many animals in the garden. Kenny, more dangerous but homely at root, needs the security he gets from the kids he couldn't handle living with. He also sees the threat from Aidan and warns him off. Cal hates dog fights. Kenny needs them to run the household. He wants to take back the family pet, Wadda, to fight again. Cal refuses at first, but finally gives in. Wadda is taken to the woods above the house to be trained and turned wild in preparation.

Without any concerted plan and despite opposition from the grandparents, Aidan persuades Glenys into the two of them taking the girls. Kenny isn't there to help Cal, because he's setting up the fight. The girls go to Glenys's. She immediately realises she's done the wrong thing and tries to return them to Cal, but he can't be found. Losing the girls broke him. He went the woods to try and get Wadda back, but found her too dangerous. He stays in the woods, sleeping there. Kenny returns, sees Glenys, and has Aidan beaten up. Still convinced he was in the right, Aidan leaves town. Cal finally emerges on the night of dog fight. No longer sane, he enters the ring to try and get Wadda, and is killed by her. He dies in Kenny's arms. If Kenny had properly realised the state Cal was in and had been prepared to stop taking money, he could have prevented the death. He knows this. The girls stay with Glenys. She takes care of them well. Kenny still visits.