

The Juvie Three by Gordon Korman

A Book Talk by C. MacLennan

Douglas Healy wants to make a difference. He knows what it is like to be a young offender. He had spent time in a juvenile detention centre when he was young, and knew it was not the best way to help a young person in trouble with the law. His idea was to run an experimental halfway house in New York City where the juveniles can spend time in the community while living with him. He has the grant; he has the apartment, now he just needs the kids. He looks through his file and he chooses:

1. Gecko Fosse – Ever since he was a kid his older brother had been grooming him to be a getaway driver. He wasn't even old enough to have his license, but he could drive a car like a seasoned racecar driver. The last police chase had not worked out very well. He had crashed the stolen car. His brother Ruben was in jail. He was in juvie.

2. Arjay Morgan – You would never know that Arjay was only 15 years old. He was 6 foot 5, 260 pounds, and built like a wrestler. When he started high school the guys on the football team were relentless. They wanted Arjay on the team. Arjay loved music and had no interest in football whatsoever. One day after school when he was walking home through the park a gang of football players confronted him. He would play, or they would beat him up. He defended himself and punched one of the star players on the team. The player hit his head on a big stone statue. He died. Arjay was charged with manslaughter and put in an adult jail, as he was considered a very dangerous offender.

3. Terence Florian – Terence lived with a father whose favourite pastime was beating up his son. This had made Terence into a very angry young man. He looked to a gang to be his family, and his protection. He ran with the worst gang in Chicago before he was caught while committing a robbery. He was put in a Juvenile Detention Centre on an island with a farm. New York City sounded too good to be true to Terence. A nightlife, and homies. Now if he can just find a way to run away.

These three boys all have to live together, go to school, do community service and attend therapy sessions. In short they have to become model citizens. If they screw up, it's back to juvie. Gecko and Arjay will do anything to make this program work. They have no plans to ever go back to the horrible Juvenile Detention Centers they came from. Terence however has an attitude and if Gecko and Arjay can't keep him under control he will ruin it for all of them. Terence makes a

gang contact at school and has stolen the keys to the fire escape to go and meet the gang leader. Here is what happens

Read page 72 “the key is a perfect fit” to Page 74 “leading the stampede down the fire escape.

Douglas Healy is unconscious. The boys know they will be blamed. They steal a car, drop him off at the hospital doors and take off. They go back to the apartment and wait. Douglas Healy is in a coma. When he wakes up he has no idea who he is. The boys don't know what to do. They try to keep up the impressions that Mr. Healy is still there living with him. When he remembers who he is they will explain everything, and hopefully he will forgive them. However two weeks pass and he can't remember a thing. Social Services is sending mean Mrs. Debra Vaughn to check on the progress of the boys. She will want to meet with Mr. Healy. She has the power to cancel the program. She is coming in one week's time. What are they going to do?

To find out what happens next you have to read *The Juvie Three* by Gordon Korman